Independent Assessment of the Afghan National Security Forces

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This assessment, tasked by the United States Congress, was made by analysts in CNA's Center for Strategic Studies. Dr. Jonathan Schroden led this work, and many CNA analysts contributed to the results. Their names are on the cover. The CNA analysts involved in this assessment have considerable experience with Afghanistan's security situation, many having been assigned in Afghanistan and having worked with United States, NATO, and Afghan security forces, and knowing the local language.

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Eric V. Thompson, Ph.D.
Vice President and Director
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Cover photo: Afghan national security forces stand in formation after the flag-raising ceremony that established Security Base Najil in the Alishang Valley of Laghman Province during Operation West Hammer in December 2012 (U.S. Army photo/Capt. Paul McCarthy).

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President and CEO

January 24, 2014

United States Congress
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators and Representatives:

The 2013 National Defense Authorization Act, Section 1215, required that the Secretary of Defense "provide for the conduct of an independent assessment of the strength, force structure, force posture, and capabilities required to make the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) capable of providing security for their own country so as to prevent Afghanistan from ever again becoming a safe haven for terrorists." The Act also required that the organization making this independent assessment provide a report of its findings to the Congressional Defense Committees, which I am doing, and to the Secretary of Defense. CNA was selected by the Under Secretary of Defense (Policy) to make this independent assessment. I enclose our report for your consideration.

The CNA report concludes that the security environment in Afghanistan will be more challenging after the draw-down of international forces in 2014; that the Taliban insurgency will become a greater threat to stability than now; and that a small group of al Qaeda members will remain active in remote valleys of northeastern Afghanistan. We also conclude that the ANSF will require a security force (Afghan National Army and Police) of 373,400 people – smaller than their present size but significantly larger than was envisaged at the 2012 NATO summit in Chicago. A force of lesser size than 373,000 would, in our assessment, increase the risk of instability of Afghanistan and make success less likely for the U.S. policy goal for Afghanistan.

The ANSF we recommend is different in composition and in deployment than the existing ANSF. We conclude that the ANSF will be more successful if it has fewer infantry units and more support units, and if a portion of the ANSF were re-allocated from low threat to higher threat areas. These measures would increase the likelihood of ANSF success through 2018, thereby improving the longer-term prospects for a negotiated political settlement to end the war. We also conclude that continued advisory, material, and financial support from the United States and the international community is essential to the viability of the ANSF and the security of Afghanistan and therefore to the likelihood of a negotiated political settlement.

We are pleased to provide any additional information or assistance that you wish.

Yours sincerely,

Robert J. Murray

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Senior Review Panel members

The Senior Review Panel was convened by CNA's chief executive officer, the Honorable Robert J. Murray, and was asked to signify that they endorsed "the general policy thrust and judgments reached by CNA's analysis, though not necessarily every finding and recommendation." They participated in the Senior Review Panel in their individual, rather than their institutional, capacities.

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Former Under Secretary of the Army

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Contents

Executive summary **1**
NDAA mandated assessment 1
Additional assessments 5
Conclusion 8

Summary of assessments **11**
Introduction 11
Summary of independent assessment of the ANSF 18
Summary of additional assessments 33
Summary of conclusions 40

NDAA mandated independent assessment of the ANSF **43**
Threat assessment 43
ANSF force-sizing framework 79
Assessment of ANSF size, structure, capabilities, posture, and regional differentiation 83
Assessment of post-2014 ANSF capability gaps 147
Assessment of current ANSF resource proposals 159
Conclusion of independent assessment of the ANSF 162

Additional assessments **165**
Supporting the ANSF: Assessment of the capabilities of the MoD and MoI and the requirement for MoD and MoI advising 165
Supporting the assistance mission: Assessment of legal authorities required post-2014 186
Supporting regional stability: Assessment of the ANSF – PAKMIL relationship 201
Testing our assumptions: Assessment of likely ANSF responses to political scenarios 224
Conclusion of additional assessments 252

Appendix A: Biographies of the authors **253**

Appendix B: Biographies of Senior Review Panel members **259**

Appendix C: Organizations contacted during the study 267

Appendix D: Threat assessment case studies 271
1987–1992: Soviet withdrawal, Mujahideen offensive, collapse of the government 271
1994–2000: The Taliban's conquest of Afghanistan..... 282
2006–2009: Taliban offensive in the south and east..... 289
Today: Assessment of current threats 307

Appendix E: Afghanistan's districts by security tier 319

Appendix F: Ministry of Defense and Interior organizational charts..... 325

Appendix G: Matrix of authorities 327

Appendix H: Model law for Afghanistan authorities post-2014 337

Acronyms 345

Bibliography..... 349

List of figures..... 363

List of tables 365

Executive summary

The 2013 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), Section 1215, directs: "The Secretary of Defense shall provide for the conduct of an independent assessment of the strength, force structure, force posture, and capabilities required to make the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) capable of providing security for their own country so as to prevent Afghanistan from ever again becoming a safe haven for terrorists that threaten Afghanistan, the region, and the world." The Under Secretary of Defense (Policy) asked CNA to make this independent assessment. The Under Secretary also requested CNA make several additional assessments of related issues.

NDAA mandated assessment

The NDAA mandates that the independent assessment of the ANSF should address the following matters, which this report does:

1. The likely internal and regional security environment for Afghanistan over the next decade, including challenges and threats to the security and sovereignty of Afghanistan from state and non-state actors.

2. The strength, force structure, force posture, and capabilities required to make the ANSF capable of providing security for their own country so as to prevent Afghanistan from ever again becoming a safe haven for terrorists that threaten Afghanistan, the region, and the world.

3. Any capability gaps in the ANSF that are likely to persist after 2014 and that will require continued support from the United States (U.S.) and its allies.

4. Whether current proposals for the resourcing of the ANSF after 2014 are adequate to establish and maintain long-term security for the Afghan people, and implications for U.S. national security interests of the under-resourcing of the ANSF.

These tasks are focused on the future security environment in Afghanistan. They do not address topics of political stability, such as governance, social development, corruption, or tensions among Afghanistan's ethnic and sectarian groups. As such, we do not consider these topics when sizing and structuring the ANSF. Rather, we assume that the current level of political stability in Afghanistan will remain during the timeframe of this study. We recognize that events that might perturb this political stability—such as changes in the stability of Afghanistan's neighbors, their policies and actions with respect to insurgents targeting Afghanistan, reconciliation of insurgent groups, the upcoming Afghan presidential election, and whether the international community continues to support Afghanistan—have the potential to alter the security situation in Afghanistan in significant ways. We therefore consider these events and their implications for the ANSF in the section of this report addressing ANSF responses to political scenarios.

To make our assessment of the ANSF, we assessed the future security environment; defined a set of operational objectives for the ANSF that support the U.S. policy goal in Afghanistan through 2018; conducted a troop-to-task analysis of ANSF force structure required to achieve these operational objectives; identified critical gaps in the ANSF's capabilities to achieve these objectives; and assessed the adequacy of current resource plans to support the ANSF in the coming years. Subject to this method and the caveats above, we draw the following conclusions in regards to the questions posed by Congress.

We conclude that the security environment in Afghanistan will become more challenging after the drawdown of most international forces in 2014, and that the Taliban insurgency will become a greater threat to Afghanistan's stability in the 2015–2018 timeframe than it is now.

The insurgency has been considerably weakened since the surge of U.S. and NATO forces in 2009, but it remains a viable threat to the government of Afghanistan. The coalition's drawdown will result in a considerable reduction in counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations by Afghan, U.S., and NATO forces. History suggests that the Taliban will use sanctuaries in Pakistan to regenerate their capabilities as military pressure on the movement declines. In the 2015–2016 timeframe, we assess that the Taliban are likely to try to keep military pressure on the ANSF in rural areas, expand their control

and influence in areas vacated by coalition forces, encircle key cities, conduct high-profile attacks in Kabul and other urban areas, and gain leverage for reconciliation negotiations. In 2016–2018, once the insurgency has had time to recover from the last several years of U.S. and NATO operations, a larger and more intense military effort will become increasingly likely.

We conclude that a small group of al Qaeda members, many of whom have intermarried with local clans and forged ties with Afghan and Pakistani insurgents, remains active in the remote valleys of northeastern Afghanistan.

However, as a result of sustained U.S. and Afghan counterterrorism operations, this group of al Qaeda members does not currently pose an imminent threat to the U.S. and Western nations. Further, *so long as adequate pressure is maintained via U.S. and Afghan counterterrorism operations*, the group is unlikely to regenerate the capability to become a substantial threat in the 2015–2018 timeframe.

We conclude that, in the likely 2015–2018 security environment, the ANSF will require a total security force of about 373,400 personnel in order to provide basic security for the country, and cope with the Taliban insurgency and low-level al Qaeda threat.

This number is slightly smaller than the current ANSF force size of 382,000.[1] We assess that this small reduction in force size can be achieved, despite the expectation of a growing insurgent threat, by redistributing some of the ANSF from areas of low threat to those of higher threat—for example, from the northern and western regions of the country to the east—and by restructuring some elements of the ANSF. For example, we conclude that the Afghan National Army needs fewer combat battalions, but substantially more logistics and support forces to enable sustained combat operations.

We conclude that the ANSF will continue to have significant gaps in capability that will limit their effectiveness after 2014.

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[1] This includes the 352,000 personnel approved in the ANSF Plan of Record and an additional 30,000 Afghan Local Police. By comparison, our figures include a base force of 344,300 plus 29,100 Afghan Local Police (for a total of 373,400 ANSF).

We identify critical capability gaps in six areas: mobility; air support; logistics (e.g., supply, maintenance, and contracting); intelligence gathering and analysis; communications and coordination among ANSF components; and recruiting and training of people with specialized skills. These are systemic gaps in capability that can be mitigated via materiel solutions but not closed by them.

We therefore conclude that international enabler support—to include advisors—will be essential to ANSF success through at least 2018.

We were unable to conduct a detailed analysis of the cost of an ANSF sized at 373,400 personnel, due to a lack of data to support an independent cost estimate. Rough estimates using two existing models put the sustainment costs of the 373,400-member force in the range of $5-6 billion per year, though these are highly approximate and further work should be done to develop a more accurate cost estimate.

The last formal announcement of the international community's plan for the post-2014 ANSF came at the 2012 Chicago Summit. At this conference, it was agreed that, subject to the developing security environment, the ANSF should be drawn down to a force size of 228,500 (not including an additional 30,000 Afghan Local Police to be sustained by the United States). The estimated annual cost of this force was $4.1 billion per year.

Our calculated ANSF of 373,400 personnel is significantly larger, and likely to be more expensive, than the force envisioned by the United States and NATO at the Chicago Summit.

Our earlier conclusion that the threat in Afghanistan is likely to increase in 2015–2018 *stands in direct contradiction* to the assumption of a reduced insurgent threat made at the Chicago Summit.

We therefore conclude that proceeding with the drawdown of the ANSF as announced at the Chicago Summit will put the current U.S. policy goal for Afghanistan at risk. Instead, we recommend that the international community establish a new plan to fund and sustain the ANSF at an end-strength of about 373,400, with a proportionally sized assistance mission (including advisors), through at least 2018.

If the international community did this, and *if the ANSF are successful through 2018:*

We assess that a negotiated political settlement to end the war would become much more likely in the 2019–2023 timeframe.

Additional assessments

In addition to our independent assessment of the ANSF, the Under Secretary of Defense (Policy) asked us to conduct additional assessments on several related issues.

Task: Assess the capabilities of the Ministry of Defense (MoD) and Ministry of Interior (MoI) to perform required functions in support of their respective forces and the appropriate proportion of military and civilian advisors to assist these ministries and their required expertise.

We conclude that for the MoD and MoI to carry out their responsibilities to support army and police forces in the field, they require four core capabilities: logistics; strategy and policy planning; financial management; and personnel management.

In addition, we found that six institutional enablers are important for ministerial success: anti-corruption; gender integration; local ownership; information technology; intelligence; and civilianization.

We conclude that the MoD and MoI are not likely to be independently capable in any of these areas by 2018. We therefore assess that international advisors within the MoD and MoI will be required through at least 2018.

Our analysis suggests that the absence of these advisors has the potential to undermine the ANSF's combat effectiveness over the timeframe of this study, thereby imparting additional risk to the U.S. policy goal for Afghanistan.

Task: Assess legislative authorities that would enable—or hinder—success of the U.S. assistance mission.

We identified over 20 specialized legal authorities and many more standing authorities and international agreements that enable the U.S. military's mission in Afghanistan. The U.S. military will likely focus on four missions in Afghanistan in 2015–2018: counterterrorism;

training, advising, assisting (and possibly equipping) the ANSF; retrograding personnel and equipment; and protecting U.S. civilians working on the ground. Having analyzed the authorities required to conduct these missions:

We conclude that the U.S. Department of Defense will require the same types of authorities that it has today with the possible exception of authorities for counterinsurgency programs which are not part of the envisioned post-2014 mission set for the U.S. military.

We also conclude that the decentralized and makeshift nature of the current authorities regime promotes waste and inefficiencies.

Accordingly, we suggest that a new, consolidated approach consisting of a single, omnibus authority be considered.

Task: Assess opportunities for cooperation—or prevention of conflict—between the ANSF and the Pakistani military.

We conclude that there will be areas of enduring conflict in the relationship between the ANSF and the Pakistani military that may prevent full normalization of relations between the two countries and will threaten to periodically escalate tensions between them. These include Afghanistan's reluctance to recognize the border with Pakistan; Pakistan's continued relationship with elements of the Taliban; and Afghanistan's growing security relationship with India. However, we also find that there are areas of common interest, as well as enduring mechanisms for cooperation, that could help reduce conflict and stabilize the relationship over time. These include cross-border trade; repatriation and resettlement of Afghan refugees currently in Pakistan; and countering improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

In our interviews with officers in both countries' militaries, we identified interest in continuing, and in some areas expanding, initiatives for cooperation. However:

We conclude that if the United States and NATO significantly decrease their commitment to Afghanistan and Pakistan, areas of enduring conflict are likely to be exacerbated and areas of potential cooperation are unlikely to reach their full potential.

If the U.S. and NATO continue their commitment to Afghanistan and Pakistan, it will help mitigate some, but not all, of the areas of enduring conflict between the two countries and it will bolster opportunities for cooperation.

Task: Assess likely ANSF responses to several political scenarios.

We created three scenarios to identify possible ANSF reactions to events that might impact political stability in Afghanistan. Our first scenario considered Taliban reconciliation.

We conclude that as long as the Afghan president adequately consults, listens to, and addresses the concerns of ANSF leaders as part of the reconciliation process and during the implementation of a settlement, the ANSF are likely to accept the settlement's terms.

That said, we assess that there is a low probability of the Taliban reconciling by 2018.

Our second scenario considered the possibility of a "bad" presidential election or transfer of power in 2014.

We conclude that as long as the winning presidential ticket maintains the current ethnic balance of power, the ANSF will largely accept the results of the election.

If a non-Pashtun were to win, it could lead to desertion or defection among rank-and-file ANSF along with increased violence in the south and east of the country and protests in the major cities. We assess these possibilities are of low-to-moderate likelihood.

Our third scenario considered the loss of international community support.

We conclude that if the United States and NATO do not maintain a training and advisory mission in Afghanistan, the absence of advisors in 2015 is likely to result in a downward spiral of ANSF capabilities—along with security in Afghanistan—unless the ANSF can find other patrons to fill the resulting "enabler vacuum."

We find this excursion to be of moderate likelihood. Further:

We conclude that the loss of international community funding, or even a too-rapid decline in funding, is likely to result in another civil war in Afghanistan.

Conclusion

Taking all of our assessments into consideration, we conclude that for the ANSF to successfully support the U.S. policy goal of preventing Afghanistan from ever again becoming a safe haven for terrorists that threaten Afghanistan, the region, and the world, they will need a force size of about 373,400 with some structural and posture adjustments, through at least 2018. We conclude that this force is not likely to defeat the Taliban militarily, but that if it can hold against the Taliban insurgency through 2018, the likelihood of a negotiated settlement to the war will increase. We conclude that this force, as well as the security ministries that support it, will require international enabling assistance—including advisors—through at least 2018, and that this assistance mission will need authorities similar to those of the mission in Afghanistan today. Finally, we conclude that sustained commitment of the international community in Afghanistan is likely to mitigate tensions in the region and increase prospects for regional cooperation, but that withdrawal of international community support is likely to have consequences up to and including a renewed civil war in Afghanistan and increased instability in the region.

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Figure 1. Afghanistan and Pakistan administrative divisions (University of Texas, available at: <www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle_east_and_asia>, accessed September 2013).

Summary of assessments

Introduction

The 2013 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) states, "The Secretary of Defense shall provide for the conduct of an independent assessment of the strength, force structure, force posture, and capabilities required to make the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) capable of providing security for their own country so as to prevent Afghanistan from ever again becoming a safe haven for terrorists that threaten Afghanistan, the region, and the world.[2]" The Under Secretary of Defense (Policy) asked CNA to conduct this assessment.

The NDAA mandates that the independent assessment of the ANSF should address the following matters, which this report does:

1. The likely internal and regional security environment for Afghanistan over the next decade, including challenges and threats to the security and sovereignty of Afghanistan from state and non-state actors

[2] For the purposes of this paper, and per the NDAA, the ANSF are defined as including all forces under the authority of the Afghan Ministries of Defense and Interior (MoD and MoI, respectively). These include: the Afghan National Army (ANA); the pillars of the Afghan National Police (ANP), which are the Afghan Border Police (ABP), Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP), Afghan Uniform Police (AUP), and Afghan Anti-Crime Police (AACP); the Afghan Local Police (ALP); the Afghan Air Force (AAF); Afghan National Army Special Operations Forces (ANASOF); Afghan Police Special Units; and the Special Mission Wing (SMW). While the Afghan Public Protection Force (APPF) does have a relationship with the MoI, it is a state-owned for-profit enterprise and thus fell outside the scope of this study. Also, while we acknowledge the important role played by the National Directorate of Security (NDS), direct consideration of that organization was also outside the scope of this study. 2013 National Defense Authorization Act, H.R. 4310, Section 1215, accessed Sep. 10, 2013, at www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-112hr4310enr/pdf/BILLS-112hr4310enr.pdf.

2. The strength, force structure, force posture, and capabilities required to make the ANSF capable of providing security for their own country so as to prevent Afghanistan from ever again becoming a safe haven for terrorists that threaten Afghanistan, the region, and the world

3. Any capability gaps in the ANSF that are likely to persist after 2014 and that will require continued support from the United States (U.S.) and its allies

4. Whether current proposals for the resourcing of the ANSF after 2014 are adequate to establish and maintain long-term security for the Afghan people, and implications for U.S. national security interests of the under resourcing of the ANSF

In addition, the Under Secretary of Defense (Policy) directed the study to analyze and provide recommendations on the following:

1. ANSF regional differentiation in capacity, capabilities, resources, challenges, and relationships with Kabul

2. The capabilities of the MoD and MoI to perform the planning, programming, budgeting, management, oversight, and sustainment functions for their respective forces

3. The appropriate proportion of military and civilian advisors to assist these ministries and the required functional/professional expertise

4. Recommendations on legislative authorities that would enable—or hinder—success of the U.S. assistance mission

5. Assessment of opportunities for cooperation—or prevention of conflict—between the ANSF and the Pakistani military, especially along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border

6. Difficulties the ANSF may face—and likely responses and directions they could go—under several potential political scenarios

We address all of these additional topics in this report, though not separately in each case. During the course of our study, we discovered that the first additional task was naturally addressed in our analysis of the NDAA tasks, so we have integrated discussion of it with our independent assessment of the ANSF. Additionally, tasks 2 and 3 above

both pertain to the MoD and MoI, so we have combined the discussion of these tasks in the report.

Methodology

In order to ensure that our assessment of the ANSF was independent, we identified and used a method that has not been applied to this problem before. This methodology consisted of the following steps:

1. Create a future threat assessment.
    a. We performed a comparative historical case study analysis of periods in which non-state actors launched large-scale military campaigns against the government of Afghanistan in order to understand insurgents' past actions and their implications for the future. We focused on three case studies: the years following the Soviet withdrawal (1989–1992); the emergence of the Taliban (1994–2000); and the Taliban's resurgence as a guerrilla force (2006–2008).
    b. We conducted interviews and gathered data (e.g., U.S., NATO, and Afghan threat assessments) in the United States, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, in order to understand and characterize the current security situation in Afghanistan.
    c. We used an understanding of the past and present generated via the previous two steps to make judgments about the likely future threat beyond 2014. These take the form of narrative assessments of the Taliban's intent and capabilities at strategic, operational, and tactical levels (with regional nuances), as well as a map of Afghanistan assessed against the security tiers defined below.
2. Conduct a troop-to-task analysis to determine the ANSF's size, structure, capabilities (and capability gaps), posture, and required resources in the 2015–2018 timeframe.
    a. We used the future threat assessment to identify the missions that the ANSF would need to conduct, and in which areas, in order to achieve the operational goals that support the U.S. policy goal for Afghanistan through 2018. We used

this force-sizing framework to calculate the size, structure, capabilities, and posture of each component of the ANSF.

b. We compared our calculated ANSF to the current ANSF, in order to identify capability gaps that are likely to persist after 2014.

c. We compared current U.S. and international community resourcing plans for the ANSF to the resources that would be needed to address these capability gaps.

To link our qualitative future threat assessment with our quantitative troop-to-task analysis, we created a construct that enables the categorization of areas of Afghanistan by threat—via the following five "security tiers":

1. **Strategic/National areas:** These are areas that the insurgency would need to gain control of in order to topple the current government and claim political control of the country.

2. **Operational areas:** These are areas that the insurgency would want to control in order to project power and influence into the Strategic/National (Tier 1) areas.

3. **Tactical areas:** These are areas that the insurgency would want to control in order to project power and influence into the Operational (Tier 2) areas.

4. **Support/Transit areas:** These are areas that the insurgency would utilize in order to move fighters or materiel into Tactical (Tier 3) areas or seek to temporarily control as peripheral support zones.

5. **Civil Order areas:** If Afghanistan did not have an active insurgency, it would still require a base level of security forces to maintain civil order and protect the population from criminality. These are areas in which the insurgency is not likely to have a presence during the timeframe of this study. This could be due to a number of reasons, to include inhospitable local populations (e.g., due to ethnic or religious differences) or disinterest by the insurgency.

There is a certain "linearity" to this construct, in which insurgents take control of tactical areas to enable taking control of operational areas, to eventually enable taking control of national/strategic areas. While this may not be universally applicable to all insurgencies, it does apply to the situation in Afghanistan, as will be explained in the threat assessment below.

Since the additional directed assessments were stand-alone topics and not analytically connected, we used distinct methodologies for each. These will be described briefly with the summary of each individual assessment below.

Execution

In the execution of this method, we followed three lines of effort.

1. **An integrated, multi-functional, and diverse study team.** This team comprised a nucleus of senior analysts with Afghanistan and military functional expertise and served as the core of the analytic effort. It included the travel team described below and reached across CNA to bring in additional expertise as required. Appendix A contains biographies of the core study team members.

2. **A Senior Review Panel.** The Senior Review Panel consisted of 10 members with experience in leading major organizations that focused on the military functional areas (e.g., ground forces, air forces, personnel, intelligence, logistics), as well as law enforcement and policing. None of them were employed by the U.S. government at the time of the study. The panel met twice during the study to critically review CNA's methodologies, assumptions, and interim analytical results, and to provide recommendations for further analysis. The panel members were also asked to review this report, and to signify that they endorsed "the general policy thrust and judgments reached by CNA's analysis, though not necessarily every finding and recommendation." All 10 panel members so affirmed. Biographies for the Senior Review Panel's members can be found in Appendix B.

3. **A small travel team composed of experienced analysts.** A significant amount of the data required for this assessment could on-

ly be obtained via interviews of military officers, civilian officials, and political leaders in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Our travel team consisted of four senior analysts, all with significant prior experience in Afghanistan. This team was on the ground from 10 to 25 August and traveled individually to each of four geographic regions: the Kabul cluster; eastern Afghanistan; southern and south-western Afghanistan; and western and northern Afghanistan. One analyst also traveled to Pakistan to speak with the Pakistani military, the Office of the Defense Representative – Pakistan (ODR-P), and the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad. In all cases, we interviewed Afghan and Pakistani leaders and those from other pertinent organizations in addition to members of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and U.S. commands. A list of the organizations with whom we engaged can be found in Appendix C.

Timeframe

The wording of the 10 tasks for this study makes clear that the study's focus is on the future. We were not asked to conduct an independent assessment of the ANSF's *current* capabilities. Accordingly, this study will not assess the ANSF's current fighting effectiveness or military proficiency. Rather, it will focus on identifying requirements for the ANSF and the Afghan ministries in the future. Moreover, while the NDAA states that the timeframe for the future threat assessment should be "the next decade," this study will focus mainly on 2015–2018, and less on 2019–2023. Our analysis of historical case studies and the current security situation allows us to make plausible conjectures about events in Afghanistan through 2018, but making predictions beyond that timeframe with sufficient granularity to inform force structure analyses is exceedingly difficult and would not serve as a sound basis for policy decisions.

Overarching assumptions

In order to set the analytic parameters of our assessment and focus on the ANSF as a force for security in support of political stability, we made the following assumptions.

- The current level of political stability in Afghanistan remains during the timeframe of this study.

- The current level of political stability in Pakistan remains during the timeframe of this study.
- Regional powers continue to meddle in Afghanistan's internal affairs and Pakistan continues to support armed proxy groups in Afghanistan,[3] but these activities are tempered so as not to significantly alter the level of political stability in Afghanistan.
- The Taliban do not reconcile with the Afghan government during the timeframe of this study.[4]
- The 2014 Afghan presidential election is acceptable to Afghans and the international community and leads to a peaceful transfer of political power.
- The international community continues to fund and resource the government of Afghanistan and the ANSF.
- The United States and NATO continue a training and advisory mission, and the U.S. maintains a counterterrorism mission, in Afghanistan during the timeframe of this study.

Our Senior Review Panel highlighted that these assumptions should be the subject of detailed studies themselves, as it is unclear that all of them will hold true.[5] In particular, invalidation of any of the first three would lead to such a radically different security environment in Afghanistan as to make our findings irrelevant. In this study we cannot fully explore the ramifications of each assumption proving false; however, we will examine the last four and analyze how the ANSF

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[3] Jerry Meyerle. *Unconventional Warfare and Counterinsurgency in Pakistan: A Brief History*. CNA Report DRP-2012-U-003250-Final. Nov. 2012.

[4] The insurgency in Afghanistan is composed of a host of insurgent groups beyond the Taliban (e.g., the Haqqani network, Hizb-i-Islami Gulbuddin, and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan). However, for the sake of simplicity, in this report we will generally use the terms "Taliban" or "insurgents" to encompass these groups unless the discussion warrants more specific language.

[5] Our Senior Review Panel was especially concerned about the future role that Pakistan might play and its ability to impact events in Afghanistan in both positive and negative ways. They highlighted the importance of the U.S.–Pakistan relationship in that regard.

might respond if they proved invalid. We will do this as part of our assessment of likely ANSF responses to various political scenarios.

Organization

The remainder of this summary will be divided into three sections. The first section contains the major conclusions and recommendations from our independent assessment of the ANSF, per the requirement in the 2013 NDAA. This section constitutes the heart of the study and its sub-sections are analytically connected. The second section contains the major findings from our additional assessments on the topics that were directed by the Under Secretary of Defense (Policy). The third section provides some overarching conclusions to our assessments.

Summary of independent assessment of the ANSF

This section contains our independent assessment of the ANSF. In addition to addressing the four NDAA-mandated tasks, the Under Secretary of Defense (Policy) asked us to look separately at ANSF regional differentiation. Over the course of the study, we discovered that this was naturally addressed in our force size and structure analysis. Therefore, we have integrated these tasks in our discussion below.

Summary of threat assessment

Our analysis of Afghanistan's modern insurgencies concludes that although the current insurgency in Afghanistan has been considerably weakened since the surge of U.S. and NATO forces in 2009, it remains a viable force. The continued drawdown of U.S. and NATO forces in the coming year will lead to a considerable reduction in counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations by Afghan as well as coalition troops. Precedent suggests that the Taliban will use sanctuaries in Pakistan to regenerate at least some of its lost capability as military pressure on the movement declines. From 2015 to 2018, insurgents are likely to increase operations in order to gain leverage in reconciliation negotiations and test the ANSF's capabilities in the absence of large numbers of U.S. and NATO forces.

We assess that the reduction in U.S. and NATO counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations combined with the continued existence of insurgent

sanctuaries in Pakistan will make the insurgency a greater threat in the 2015–2018 timeframe than it is now.

Our historical analysis of three case studies in which insurgents conducted a campaign against the Afghan government (Appendix D) showed that in all three cases, insurgents employed a strategy in which they focused first on controlling and influencing rural areas, to enable a later focus on taking key urban areas and cities—and they were largely successful at doing so in all three cases.[6] Based on these past precedents:

We conclude that the Taliban will follow a gradualist campaign in the two years immediately following the drawdown of coalition forces.

Such a campaign will involve keeping military pressure on the ANSF in rural areas, expanding insurgent control and influence in areas vacated by coalition forces, encircling key cities, and conducting high-profile attacks in Kabul and other important urban areas.

In the medium term (2016–2018), once the insurgency has had time to recover from the last several years of U.S. and NATO operations, we conclude that a larger and more intense military effort will become increasingly likely.

We assess that the Taliban will conserve resources in the near term for such an offensive, while carrying out enough attacks in the interim to remain relevant.

In Tier 1 areas, the Taliban is likely to escalate complex attacks and assassinations against leaders and institutions—especially in Kabul. These attacks will pose the greatest near-term strategic threat to the national government. Insurgents will seek to expand bases in the rural areas around Kabul, especially in the south, from which to conduct terrorist attacks in the capital. The Taliban is likely to use similar

[6] These cases are: the years following the Soviet withdrawal in 1989-1992; the emergence of the Taliban in 1994-2000; and the Taliban's resurgence as a guerrilla force during 2006-2008. In the third case, the Taliban were ultimately unsuccessful in achieving their strategic aims, but it took a significant surge of forces by the U.S. and NATO and a sizeable increase in ANSF end-strength to reverse the Taliban's momentum.

methods against regional capitals, especially Jalalabad in the east and Kandahar in the south.

In Tier 2–3 areas, there are likely to be various small offensives aimed at expanding insurgent control and regaining ground lost during the surge of U.S. and NATO forces.

We conclude that the Taliban will continually test the ANSF—first in outlying areas and then, if Afghan forces fare poorly, increasingly in more central locations.

Most of these attacks will be small, but we also expect massed assaults in outlying areas where insurgents have freedom of movement. The Taliban will use captured ground to rebuild its military capabilities and surround and put pressure on district centers and other key areas.

We assess that insurgents will seek to regain freedom of movement in Tier 4 areas through key corridors from Pakistan and between strategically important districts and cities, especially the Ring Road (Highway 1) and the main highways to Pakistan.

In the south, the Taliban will seek to infiltrate back into northern Helmand and districts of Kandahar, from which to put pressure on the capitals of both provinces. The Taliban's primary aim in the south is likely to be control or influence over the population in rural areas and the seizure of vulnerable district centers. We expect massed attacks on outlying Afghan Local Police positions and targeted killings in key towns such as Sangin in northern Helmand. Once insurgents have had time to regroup in 2017 or 2018, they may attempt multiple massed assaults on outlying district centers, as they did in 2006.

In the east, we expect insurgents to focus on protecting their key bases and transit areas. A major coordinated campaign of significant scope or scale is less likely than it is in the south, though there may be intense fighting in some areas. Insurgents in the northeastern provinces of Kunar and Nuristan will periodically attack isolated ANA positions and target resupply convoys in the mountains, in order to fix the ANSF, disrupt their resupply, and make outlying positions untenable.

A small group of al Qaeda members, many of whom have intermarried with local clans and forged ties with Afghan and Pakistani insurgents, remain active in remote valleys of northeastern Afghanistan. However, this group is likely to maintain a low profile and remain largely contained to remote valleys in the northeast. These members of al Qaeda may regenerate capability if the tempo of U.S. counterterrorism operations declines and the ANSF pull back from Kunar and Nuristan. Al Qaeda may also look to expand to other remote areas of the east, such as Ghazni province.

In the north and west, Taliban influence will remain largely contained to isolated pockets with large Pashtun populations in these regions. We also expect a modest increase in terrorist attacks and assassinations in Herat and Mazar-e-Sharif.

We assess that Pakistan will not take military action against the Haqqani network or other Afghanistan-focused insurgent groups until there is greater clarity on the future regime in Kabul and the long-term viability of the ANSF.

It is also unlikely that Pakistan will take action against Quetta-based Taliban leaders. Instead, Pakistan will use its control over insurgent sanctuaries to ensure that leaders amenable to Pakistani interests dominate these movements.

Iran is likely to engage in activities to oppose the Taliban and stabilize the government in Kabul, while pulling back from tactical support to Taliban insurgents as additional U.S. forces depart. Iran may, nonetheless, continue to aid insurgents in attacks on strategic bases and airfields in the west if U.S. forces or aircraft are present there.

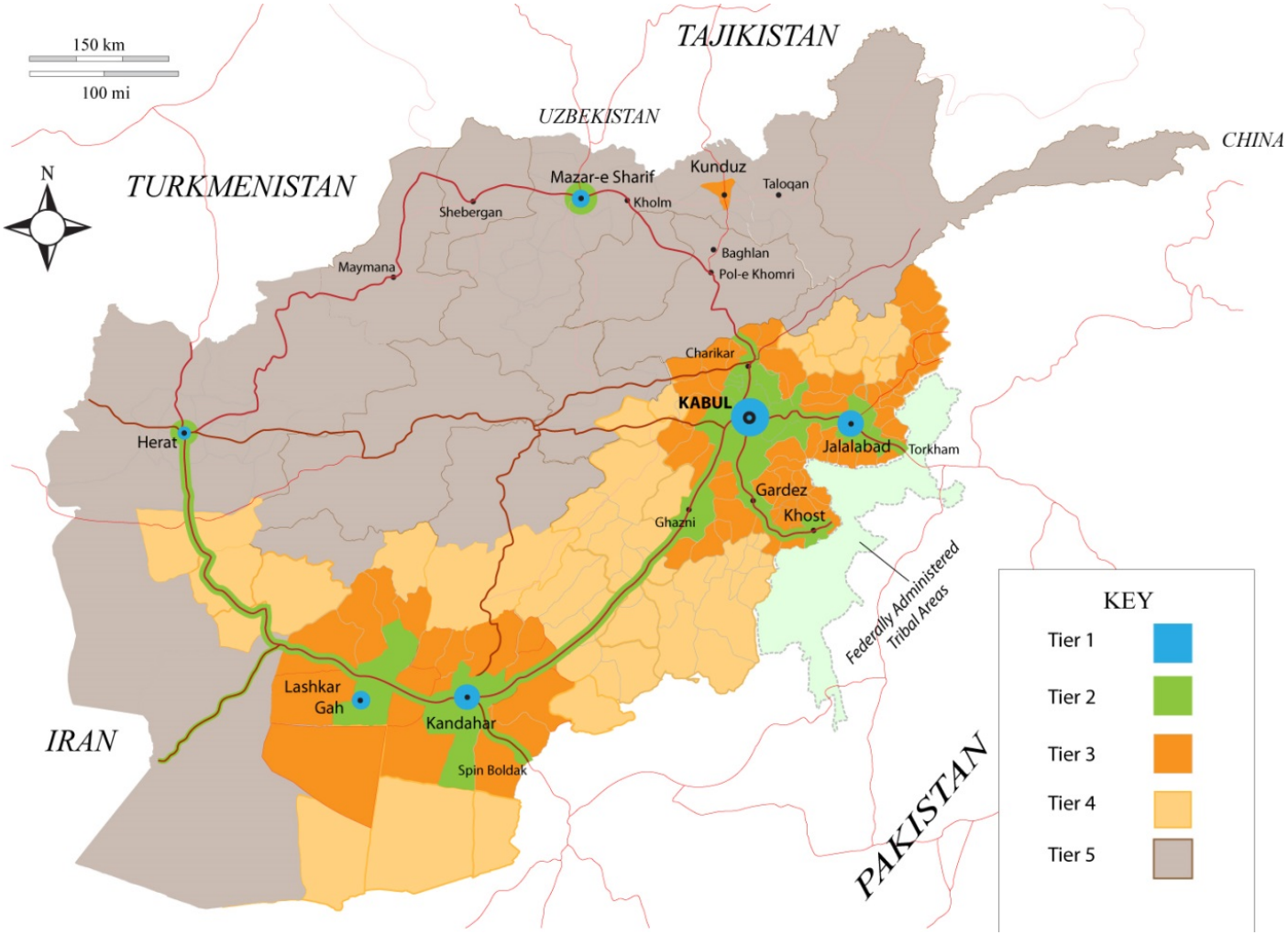
Using the implications of our case study analyses and current threat assessment, we derived a map depicting areas of Afghanistan categorized by the five security tiers defined above (Figure 2; see Appendix E for a list of districts by security tier). The Taliban are likely to first test the ANSF in Tier 3 and 4 areas, attempting to gain control of these in order to project power and influence into many of the Tier 2 and Tier 1 areas. If they are successful, they are likely to gain recruits and momentum, enabling them to increase pressure in Tier 2 areas and terrorist attacks in Tier 1 areas in order to discredit the Afghan government and the ANSF. If they are successful in doing this, they

will likely continue to ratchet up pressure on the ANSF and in the cities until they can capture the latter and claim political control of the country.

Looking further into the future, if the ANSF achieve their operational goals and hold against the insurgency for several years after 2014, they will prove their ability to endure independent of substantial coalition support. This will remove the uncertainties associated with U.S. and NATO withdrawal and decrease incentives for insurgents to continue fighting, thereby creating the conditions for an enduring political solution to the conflict.

Assuming that the ANSF are successful through 2018, we assess that a negotiated political settlement to end the war will become much more likely during the 2019–2023 timeframe.

Figure 2. Map of Afghanistan by security tier



Summary of ANSF force-sizing framework

The U.S. policy goal for Afghanistan as stated in the 2013 NDAA is: "Prevent Afghanistan from ever again becoming a safe haven for terrorists that threaten Afghanistan, the region, and the world."[7]

To conduct a troop-to-task analysis, we needed to operationalize this policy goal by writing nested goals at the operational level—focused on security—that the ANSF could reasonably be expected to achieve with U.S. and NATO support (per our overarching assumptions). Using the construct of security tiers, we assess that the operational goals for the ANSF in 2015–2018 should be to:

- Neutralize the insurgency in Tier 1 (National/Strategic) and Tier 2 (Operational) areas.
- Disrupt the insurgency in Tier 3 (Tactical) and Tier 4 (Support/Transit) areas.
- Maintain civil order in Tier 5 (Civil Order) areas.

These operational goals are minimalist in nature. They are designed to prevent the overthrow of the government of Afghanistan and disrupt insurgent and terrorist safe havens within its borders. They are *not* designed to result in the military defeat of the Taliban. While the latter may be a desirable outcome, *it is not the stated policy goal of the United States.*

We assess that if the ANSF can achieve these operational goals through 2018, it will translate to achievement of the aforementioned U.S. policy goal—*but only through 2018*. Continued attainment of the U.S. policy goal past 2018 will require continued achievement of these operational goals or a political settlement to end the war.

Using these operational goals and our future threat assessment, we were able to conduct a troop-to-task analysis to determine the overall size, structure, posture, capabilities, and regional differentiation needed for the ANSF to achieve the operational goals (in support of the U.S. policy goal) in the 2015–2018 timeframe.

[7] 2013 National Defense Authorization Act, H.R. 4310, Section 1215.

Summary of ANSF force size, structure, capabilities, posture, and regional differentiation

Given the immediacy of the study's timeframe (2015–2018), we took the general contours of the ANSF as constant (i.e., it has an army, police force, special operations forces, and so on). We then used a variety of planning factors (Table 1) in conjunction with our force-sizing framework to calculate a size for each of the ANSF's force types.

Table 1. Summary of ANSF troop-to-task analysis planning factors

Force type	Security tier	Planning factor
Afghan Uniformed Police and Anti-Crime Police	Tier 5	2.2 police per 1,000 population
	Tier 4	2.5 police per 1,000 population
	Tier 3	6.0 police per 1,000 population
	Tier 2	2.9 police per 1,000 population
	Tier 1 (other)	3.5 police per 1,000 population
	Tier 1 (Kabul)	3.8 police per 1,000 population
Afghan Local Police	Tier 3	300 Guardians per each Tier 3 district (97 districts total)
Afghan Border Police	Tier 5	0.6 – 2.0 police per 50 square kilometer (sq km) of border zone
	Tier 4	3.8 – 5.9 police per 50 sq km of border zone
	Tier 3	3.8 – 8.8 police per 50 sq km of border zone
Afghan National Army infantry battalions	Tier 5	Area of operations aligned with political boundaries and sized for battalion response within one day
	Tier 4	Simultaneously conduct one battalion-size clearing operation and reinforce one district center per province
	Tier 2 & 3 (rural areas)	Average battalion area of operations of 4,800 sq. km
	Tier 2 (roads)	Varies by region, but a combination of three factors: 1. Number of personnel per checkpoint (12–20 soldiers) 2. Response time to each checkpoint (10–20 minutes) 3. Travel speed between checkpoints (25–100 km/hour)
	Tier 2 (urban areas)	"Ring of Steel" based on city circumference relative to Kabul
ANA combat support battalions	All	1 combat support battalion per combat brigade
ANA headquarters and logistics forces	All	Minimum historical U.S. Army tooth-to-tail percentages (16% headquarters and 36% logistics forces)
Afghan Air Force	All	Sized to capacity for growth and sustainment
ANA SOF	All	Sized to capacity for growth and sustainment
Other supporting forces (e.g., recruiting and training)	All	Sized based on relative percentage to current force

Using these planning factors, we derived the force structure shown in Table 2. As this table shows:

We conclude that the ANSF will need about 373,400 personnel (including ALP) in the 2015 to 2018 timeframe in order to achieve the operational goals described above.

This figure is slightly smaller than the current total end-strength of the ANSF (382,000, including ALP[8]). We assess that this small reduction in force size can be realized, despite the expectation of a growing insurgent threat, by redistributing some of the ANSF from areas of low threat to those of higher threat as described below, and by restructuring some elements of the ANSF. For example, we conclude that the Afghan National Army needs fewer combat battalions, but substantially more logistics and support forces in order to enable sustained combat operations (Table 3).

Table 2. Summary of calculated ANSF force levels in the 2015 to 2018 timeframe

Force type	Current force level	Calculated force level	Change
Afghan Uniformed Police and Afghan Anti-Crime Police	97,500	104,000	6,500
Afghan Local Police	30,000	29,100	(900)
Afghan Customs and Border Police	23,900	27,300	3,400
Afghan National Civil Order Police	14,600	0	(14,600)
ANP support (logistics and medical)	3,200	3,200	0
ANA infantry battalions	70,100	60,300	(9,800)
ANA combat support battalions	11,500	10,000	(1,500)
ANA national swing force (Mobile Strike Force)	4,500	4,500	0
ANA headquarters (brigade and above)	22,500	25,000	2,500
ANA logistics and support	37,200	56,100	18,900
ANA Special Operations Forces	11,900	11,900	0
Afghan Air Force and Special Mission Wing	7,800	7,700	(100)
Recruits and students (ANA and ANP)	19,300	18,700	(600)
Recruiting and training staff (ANA and ANP)	15,600	15,600	0
Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior staff	12,400	0	(12,400)
Total forces	**382,000**	**373,400**	**(8,600)**

[8] This includes the 352,000 personnel approved in the ANSF Plan of Record and an additional 30,000 Afghan Local Police. By comparison, our figures include a base force of 344,300 plus 29,100 Afghan Local Police (for a total of 373,400 ANSF).

Table 3. Key force size and structure takeaways, by ANSF force type

Force	Key force size and structure takeaways
Afghan Uniformed Police and Afghan Anti-Crime Police	**Overall assessment: Police require a small (5%) increase in force structure** • The current ratio of police to population in Afghanistan is in line with other countries facing significant security threats, but the number of police should be increased slightly in certain areas (e.g., in eastern Afghanistan). • The role of police in Afghanistan is likely to begin evolving from paramilitary functions to community policing and law enforcement, especially in larger cities and more secure rural areas, but we assess that the pace of change will be slow and so do not see a need to significantly change the number of police to reflect this changing mission by the 2015–2018 timeframe.
Afghan Local Police	**Overall assessment: Decrease by 900 personnel (3%)** • The ALP are most effective at securing rural areas from insurgent threats, so we size them to provide 300 Guardians in each of the Tier 3 districts.
Afghan Customs and Border Police	**Overall assessment: Increase border police by 15%** • The number of forces providing security and customs functions at border crossing points and airports is sufficient. • The number of border police operating in the 50-kilometer zone adjacent to the border, especially along the northeastern border with Pakistan, should be increased.
Afghan National Civil Order Police	**Overall assessment: No requirement for the ANCOP in our force sizing framework** • The roles and missions of the ANCOP overlap with other police and army functions, so we do not see a requirement for their force structure and zero them out accordingly. • ISAF has argued that the ANCOP are an effective counterinsurgency force in practice and that they should be kept. We acknowledge this position and recommend further analysis be done on the role and size of the ANCOP.

Table 3. Key force size and structure takeaways, by ANSF force type

Force	Key force size and structure takeaways
Afghan National Army	**Overall assessment: Reduce the number of infantry battalions from 95 to 81 (15%) but increase logistics and support forces that enable combat operations (net increase of 7% in overall ANA end-strength)** • Based on our threat assessment, northern and western Afghanistan will remain relatively secure and the ANA can maintain that security with fewer—but more mobile—forces. • The ANA requires significantly more logistics forces to support its operations than it has today.
Afghan Air Force	**Overall assessment: Afghanistan has a significant need for air support, but the AAF cannot support more air power than is currently planned** • The AAF is struggling to find sufficient numbers of qualified recruits to grow to its planned size. • Even if additional recruits are found, only a small number could be fully trained by 2018.
Special Operations Forces	**Overall assessment: Afghanistan has a significant need for special operations forces, but the ANSF cannot support more SOF** • The ANA could potentially recruit and train more SOF—but increasing the number of SOF recruits would likely require additional international personnel to provide them training. • ANA SOF currently depend on the U.S. and ISAF for logistics, intelligence, and air mobility. Simply increasing the number of ANA SOF personnel without addressing these support requirements would not increase the overall capability of SOF to disrupt insurgent and terrorist networks.

Table 3. Key force size and structure takeaways, by ANSF force type

Force	Key force size and structure takeaways
Other	**Recruiting and training: Reduce the number of recruits proportionally to the overall decrease in ANSF force structure** **Ministries: No requirement for uniformed personnel in the security ministries** • Attrition in the army and police will likely continue at or near current levels, so the ANSF will need to recruit and train proportionally as many people as they do today. • The uniformed ANSF positions in the MoD and MoI should be civilianized. If civilians with the appropriate expertise cannot be recruited or trained for these positions—or if active-duty ANSF personnel cannot be transitioned to the civil service—then ANSF force structure will need to be increased to accommodate them.

In terms of regional differentiation of the ANSF, our conclusions (Table 4) are as follows:

- The northern parts of Afghanistan are relatively stable today and the insurgency is unlikely to make significant inroads into these areas in the 2015–2018 timeframe. Thus, we assess that the ANA presence in northern Afghanistan can be reduced by five battalions. Similarly, we reduced the number of ANA battalions in western Afghanistan by one.
- The Haqqani network poses a significant threat to eastern Afghanistan and the ANSF should refocus its efforts from a counterinsurgency strategy to a dedicated counter-network strategy in that region. Therefore, we reduced the ANA by six combat battalions in the remote parts of eastern Afghanistan, but we increased the police and border police in those areas, and we assess that ANA SOF should increase their presence and operations in these areas as well.
- Tier 3 areas in southern Afghanistan will continue to require a significant ANA presence to conduct up-to battalion sized counterinsurgency operations, and a large-scale police presence to protect communities and hold areas after ANA clearing

operations. Based on our threat assessment, however, we assess that the Tier 4 areas of southern Afghanistan will be a lower priority for the insurgency, and so will require fewer ANA and police forces to maintain security in the 2015–2018 timeframe than they have today. We also assess that fewer police will be required in the Tier 1 and 2 areas of southern Afghanistan, as these areas no longer face the same insurgent threats as in the past.

Table 4. Difference between current and calculated ANSF force levels by region[9]

	Current forces	Calculated forces	Difference
Kabul	26,900	27,300	400
East	63,500	74,000	10,500
South & southwest	55,600	44,500	(11,100)
West	23,700	22,800	(900)
North	33,300	31,700	(1,600)

We recognize that the Afghan government might find it politically difficult to reduce the number of combat forces in northern Afghanistan, since a reduction could create an imbalance in the current power-sharing relationships across regional and ethnic lines. In addition, reducing the number of ANA personnel in the north would result in an increase in unemployment in this region. Although these areas are currently more stable than the rest of Afghanistan, reduced employment opportunities might adversely affect that stability. Similarly, reducing the police force in Tier 4 areas of southern Afghanistan might mean increased unemployment in these rural areas, which could also result in increased instability. While we acknowledge that the Afghan government can distribute its forces as it deems appropri-

[9] The regional figures shown in this table do not include the Mobile Strike Force or the ANCOP, as the MoD and MoI have the option to relocate these forces across regions. We also did not apportion the ANA headquarters, logistics, and support forces by region, because we did not assess a specific troop-to-task assignment for the additional headquarters or logistics personnel. Thus, it is not clear how many of these additional personnel should be physically located in the regions and how many should be at the national headquarters in Kabul.

ate, our analysis suggests that the ANSF could be used more efficiently against the future threat by adjusting the regional laydown of forces.

Summary of post-2014 ANSF capability gaps and resource proposals

By synthesizing a host of prior studies with our own observations from in-theater interviews, we conclude that the ANSF have a number of significant capability gaps. Our analysis suggests that six of these in particular may prevent the ANSF from adequately performing the missions required to achieve their operational goals in the 2015–2018 timeframe.

Specifically, the ANSF are likely to have systemic shortfalls in mobility; logistics (e.g., maintenance, supply, and contracting); air support; communications and coordination between ANSF pillars; intelligence gathering and analysis; and the recruiting and training of personnel with specialized skills.

Our analysis suggests that materiel solutions (e.g., the so-called "enhancements above the ANSF Plan of Record (APoR)" currently before the U.S. Congress) can help mitigate some of these capability gaps; however, they cannot close them completely, as most of the gaps are systemic in nature. As a result:

We conclude that international support (to include the presence of advisors) will be required to address the gaps in mobility, logistics, air support, and intelligence gathering and analysis though at least 2018.

We attempted to calculate the cost of the 373,400-member force, but were unable to find detailed data on the costs of the current ANSF and did not have adequate time to conduct a detailed cost analysis of our own. Rough estimates using two existing models put the sustainment costs of the 373,400-member force in the range of $5-6 billion per year, though these are highly approximate and we conclude that further work should be done to develop a more accurate cost estimate of our calculated force.

Conclusion of independent assessment of the ANSF

Using a quantitative troop-to-task analysis tied via five security tiers to a qualitative future threat assessment:

We conclude that the ANSF (including the Afghan Local Police) should have a total end-strength of about 373,400 through at least 2018. This force size is significantly larger, and likely to be more expensive, than that envisioned by the United States and NATO at the 2012 Chicago Summit.

The declaration from the 2012 Chicago Summit stated that:

> The pace and the size of a gradual managed force reduction from the ANSF surge peak [of 352,000 plus 30,000 ALP] to a sustainable level will be conditions-based and decided by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in consultation with the International Community. The preliminary model for a future total ANSF size, defined by the International Community and the Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, envisages a force of 228,500 with an estimated annual budget of US$4.1billion, and will be reviewed regularly against the developing security environment.[10]

The envisioned drawdown of the ANSF to a significantly smaller force size than exists today was predicated on an assumption of a much-reduced insurgent threat in the post-2014 timeframe. *Our threat assessment finds this assumption to be faulty.* As such:

We conclude that proceeding with the drawdown of the ANSF as announced at the Chicago Summit will put the current U.S. policy goal for Afghanistan at risk. Instead, we recommend the international community establish a new plan to fund and sustain the ANSF at an end-strength of about 373,400,

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[10] "Chicago Summit Declaration on Afghanistan Issued by the Heads of State and Government of Afghanistan and Nations contributing to the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force." *Chicagonato.org, The official Host Committee Website for the Chicago NATO Summit*, May 21, 2013, accessed Oct. 10, 2013, at www.chicagonato.org/chicago-summit-declaration-on-afghanistan-news-44.php. The 228,500 force described at the Chicago Summit did not include separate U.S. plans to maintain an additional 30,000 Afghan Local Police (i.e., these two together would yield a total security force of 258,500).

with a proportionally sized assistance mission (including advisors), through at least 2018.

If the international community did this, and *if the ANSF are successful through 2018:*

We assess that a negotiated political settlement to end the war would become much more likely in the 2019–2023 timeframe.

The next section will discuss the findings from our additional assessments.

Summary of additional assessments

This section contains summaries of our assessments of the additional topics of interest to the Under Secretary of Defense (Policy).

Summary of the capabilities of the MoD and MoI and the requirement for MoD and MoI advising

We were asked to assess the capabilities of the Ministries of Defense and Interior to perform the planning, programming, budgeting, management, oversight, and sustainment functions for their respective forces. We were also asked to assess the appropriate proportion of military and civilian advisors to assist the MoD and MoI and their required functional/professional expertise.

To do so, we examined the relevant security sector reform (SSR) literature, to identify best practices and "ideal types" of security institutions and what their required capabilities are. We used results from our earlier ANSF capability gap analysis, along with our in-country interviews, to identify required core capabilities for the MoD and MoI, as well as critical "institutional enablers." We used these same sources, along with organizational charts of the ministries (Appendix F), to identify whether the MoD and MoI were likely to be able to perform these core capabilities and institutional enabling activities independently by 2018 and if not, what their key shortfalls would be.

We analyzed field research in Afghanistan, government reports, and the SSR literature to identify and assess the characteristics that advisors working in the MoD and MoI should possess, and to identify the advantages and disadvantages of different approaches to advising. Fi-

nally, we leveraged studies on advising in previous conflicts to provide recommendations on identifying, recruiting, and training advisors to enhance the effectiveness of ministerial reform in Afghanistan.

Using this method:

We conclude that for the MoD and MoI to function at a reasonably proficient level, and to carry out their responsibilities to support army and police forces in the field, they require the following four core capabilities: logistics; strategy and policy planning; financial management; and personnel management.

In addition, we found that six institutional enablers are important for ministerial success: anti-corruption; gender integration; local ownership; information technology; intelligence; and civilianization.

We also conclude that the MoD and MoI are not likely to be fully independent at any of these capabilities or enablers by 2018. We therefore assess that international advisors within the MoD and MoI will be required through at least 2018.

The absence of ministerial advisors will not likely lead to the collapse of the fielded forces in the short term, but it has the potential to undermine their combat effectiveness over the timeframe of this study, thereby imparting additional risk to the U.S. policy goal for Afghanistan.

We examine several different ways an advisor program could be constructed (e.g., bilateral versus multilateral, civilian versus military), but we conclude that there is no obvious "best choice" as each approach has significant advantages and disadvantages. We therefore refrain from making a specific recommendation and instead suggest the U.S. should make a clear-eyed decision on the structure of an advisor program based on the pros and cons we identify. Finally, we conclude that a thorough and deliberate advisor selection and training process—one that emphasizes previous experience, maturity, professional skills, and the ability to work across cultures—would help strengthen the post-2014 ministerial advisory effort.

Summary of legal authorities required post-2014

We were asked to assess and provide recommendations on legislative authorities that would enable—or hinder—success of the U.S. assistance mission post-2014.

To do so, we constructed a matrix that aligns current assistance missions with mission managers and the legal authorities that allow them to operate. We reviewed U.S. operational plans to identify which missions are currently being conducted. Using open source literature and our own interviews, we then identified who is conducting these missions and under which legal authorities they operate. We reviewed public statements from U.S. leaders and government officials, and interviewed U.S. personnel to identify the types of missions the U.S. military will carry out in Afghanistan in the 2015 to 2018 timeframe. We then compared current assistance missions to future planned missions to identify which legal authorities will need to remain in place. To present our findings, we prepared a "model law" which details all of the legislative components needed enable the post-2014 assistance mission.

Using this method, we identified over 20 specialized legal authorities and many more standing authorities and international agreements that enable the U.S. military's mission in Afghanistan. The current "authorities regime" is an amalgam of Title 10 and Title 22 authorities with different managers, accounting rules, and reporting requirements (see Appendix G). This collection of laws allows the U.S. Department of Defense to maintain a presence and engage in combat operations in Afghanistan, transfer goods and services to the ANSF and coalition partner nations, and receive and spend public funds on specified programs. Some of the authorities have sunset clauses; others are permanent but require funding re-authorization each year.

Our research suggests the post-2014 mission will focus on four missions: counterterrorism operations; training, advising, assisting (and possibly continuing to equip) the ANSF; retrograding personnel and equipment from Afghanistan; and when called upon, protecting U.S. civilians working on the ground. In terms of authorities for this post-2014 mission set:

We conclude the U.S. Department of Defense will require the same types of authorities that it has today with the possible exception of authorities for counterinsurgency programs which are not part of the envisioned post-2014 mission set for the U.S. military.

These include civil infrastructure development, economic development programs, and combatant reintegration programs. In addition:

We conclude that the decentralized and makeshift nature of the current authorities regime promotes waste and inefficiencies.

Having been developed in piecemeal fashion, the existing regime is cumbersome and difficult to track and manage. Instead of relying on the existing, disjointed assortment of authorities, we recommend they be consolidated into one omnibus authority where possible.

As an illustration of this, we prepared a U.S. assistance mission "model law," which contains all the authorities necessary for the post-2014 mission set (see Appendix H for text of the full law). It is structured to lower administrative and transactional costs, speed up and simplify transfer processes, and provide the on-scene commander flexibility to adjust programs as needed. Key features of the model law include:

- Centralization of management and oversight with the Secretary of Defense;
- Codification and reaffirmation of the right to conduct counterterrorism operations alongside the train, advise, and assist mission;
- Establishment of a single fund to pay for all incremental expenses associated with the training and assistance mission; and
- The provision of broad transfer authorities to the ANSF (and allies and friends) outside the typical Foreign Military Sales (FMS) program, since Afghanistan can neither afford nor manage participation in this program.

The difficulties of enacting the model law notwithstanding, we assess it can serve as a useful checklist of authorities needed to enable the post-2014 mission in Afghanistan.

Summary of the ANSF – PAKMIL relationship

We were asked to conduct an assessment of the opportunities for cooperation—or prevention of conflict—between the ANSF and the Pakistani military (PAKMIL), especially along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border.

To do so, we documented the past and current dynamics of the relationship between the ANSF and the PAKMIL, using secondary sources in the literature and our own interviews in the U.S., Afghanistan, and Pakistan. We then used this understanding of the past and present to elicit areas of likely enduring conflict, as well as areas where the two countries may increase cooperation or, at the very least, reduce tensions in the future.

Relations between Afghan and Pakistani forces are often strained and prone to escalation, yet tensions between the ANSF and PAKMIL have yet to lead to open warfare. There is considerable demand among officers on both sides for a more stable relationship. We assess that there will be continuing opportunities for cooperation between the two forces post-2014, especially at the tactical and operational levels, as well as a reduction in tensions along the border. At the same time, there will be areas of enduring conflict that will require constant attention—some of which may worsen in the coming years.

Having conducted numerous interviews with Afghan, Pakistani, U.S., and NATO forces at multiple levels on both sides of the border:

We conclude that a significant reduction in the U.S. and NATO commitment to Afghanistan or Pakistan will destabilize the border region, exacerbate existing tensions between the two countries, and jeopardize fragile mechanisms for cross-border cooperation and de-escalation that have been built in recent years.

Many in the Pakistani military do not believe that the international community will provide sufficient resources for the ANSF to survive past 2014 or that the U.S. will continue to resource Pakistani military operations in the border areas. Uncertainty about the future is forcing the two militaries to plan for worst case scenarios.

We conclude that there will be continual conflict on a number of issues in the foreseeable future. These include Afghanistan's reluc-

tance to recognize the border, difficulties associated with demarcating the border line, the tendency of some Afghan leaders to exploit anti-Pakistan sentiment among the Afghan population, Pakistan's continued relationship with elements of the Taliban, insurgent sanctuaries inside Pakistan (and increasingly in parts of Afghanistan as coalition forces withdraw), and Afghanistan's growing security relationship with India.

Despite the likelihood of conflict over these issues, there are areas of common interest as well as potentially enduring mechanisms for communication and cooperation that could help reduce conflict and stabilize the relationship over time. Some of these include: expanding road networks and cross-border trade, repatriation and resettlement of Afghan refugees living in Pakistan, continued counterterrorism and counterinsurgency operations on both sides of the border, expansion of border coordination mechanisms at the tactical and operational levels, bilateral meetings between the two forces at all levels, and, finally, cooperation on countering IEDs, which officers on both sides see as a major future threat to their forces.

Summary of likely ANSF responses to political scenarios

We were asked to assess difficulties the ANSF may face—and likely responses and directions they could go—under several potential political situations or scenarios.

To do so, we used our overarching assumptions to create a set of political scenarios in which some of these assumptions are tested. In particular, we chose to individually test our assumptions pertaining to Taliban reconciliation, a peaceful and acceptable transfer of political power in 2014, and the continuance of U.S., NATO, and international community support. We then conducted literature research to understand which aspects of our scenarios have been studied and analyzed previously and what conclusions were drawn by others. We interviewed subject matter experts, to include a significant number of Afghans, to gather their views on how the ANSF might respond under these scenarios. We consolidated these views to derive most likely responses for the ANSF to the scenarios, focusing our attention broadly on leadership and rank-and-file reactions. We also considered what events might have to occur to cause a negative reaction (e.g.,

fragmentation, desertion, military coup) on the part of these aspects of the ANSF.

We considered three political scenarios and the ANSF's likely response to them. For the first scenario (reconciliation happens):

We conclude that so long as the Afghan president adequately consults, listens to, and addresses the concerns of ANSF leaders as part of the reconciliation process and during the implementation of a settlement, the ANSF are likely to accept the settlement's terms.

Given Afghan culture and the current Afghan President's precedent for calling *Loya Jirgas* prior to making significant national decisions, it seems likely there would be considerable behind-the-scenes consensus building before the President agreed to any terms or conditions of a settlement. However, we assess that there is a low likelihood of reconciliation actually happening before 2018.

For the second scenario (a "bad" presidential election):

We conclude that as long as the winning presidential ticket maintains the current ethnic balance of power, the ANSF will largely accept the results of the election.

That said, it is possible that in a Pashtun versus Pashtun runoff that some rank-and-file ANSF members loyal to the losing ticket could desert or defect to the insurgency. If a non-Pashtun were to win the election, it could lead to more widespread desertion or defection on the part of rank-and-file ANSF (especially within the police) along with increased violence in the south and the east of the country and protests within the major cities. We assess that these possibilities are of low-to-moderate likelihood.

For the third scenario (loss of international community support), if the U.S. and NATO do not continue a training and advisory mission for the ANSF:

We conclude that the absence of advisors in 2015 is likely to result in a downward spiral of ANSF capabilities, along with security in Afghanistan—unless the ANSF were able to find other patrons to fill the resulting "enabler vacuum."

We assess that the speed of this downward spiral would likely be most strongly dependent on the level of continued international community financial aid. If the U.S. and NATO discontinue training and advising the ANSF, we assess that many ANSF leaders would likely soldier on, since they are well-invested in the future of Afghanistan and its security forces. At the rank-and-file level of the ANSF, however, the loss of U.S. and NATO enablers could have a more dramatic effect—to include increased desertion and defection rates and the possibility of unit fragmentation or dissolution. We find this excursion to be of moderate likelihood, with moderate-to-high likelihood of these negative ANSF responses as a result.

With respect to the loss of international community financial support, this was the one point on which every one of our interviewees agreed. The loss of funding, or even a too-rapid decline in funding, to the ANSF would carry with it a high likelihood of increased desertion rates; fragmentation or fracture of ANSF units; or defection of units to the insurgency. As such:

We conclude that the absence of international community funds for the ANSF and Afghanistan's government is likely to result in another civil war in Afghanistan.

In the absence of such funding, the centripetal forces of Afghanistan's various power centers are likely to pull the country apart once again.

Summary of conclusions

Taking all of our assessments into consideration, we conclude that for the ANSF to successfully support the U.S. policy goal of preventing Afghanistan from ever again becoming a safe haven for terrorists that threaten Afghanistan, the region, and the world, they will need a force size of about 373,400 with some structural and posture adjustments, through at least 2018. We conclude this force is not likely to militarily defeat the Taliban, but if it can hold against the Taliban insurgency through 2018, the likelihood of a negotiated settlement to the war will increase. We conclude that this force, as well as the security ministries that support it, will require international enabling assistance—including advisors—through at least 2018, and this assistance mission will need similar authorities to the mission in Afghanistan to-

day. Finally, we conclude that sustained commitment of the international community in Afghanistan is likely to mitigate tensions in the region and increase prospects for regional cooperation, but withdrawal of international community support is likely to have consequences up to and including a renewed civil war in Afghanistan and increased instability in the region.

The next section will provide additional details on our analysis and conclusions in support of the NDAA mandated independent assessment of the ANSF.

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NDAA mandated independent assessment of the ANSF

This section contains the details of our independent assessment of the ANSF. In it, we assess the future internal and regional security environment for Afghanistan over the next decade; the size, structure, capabilities, and posture needed by the ANSF to prevent Afghanistan from again becoming a safe haven for terrorism; the gaps in capability that might impede the ANSF's success in doing so; and resources required for the ANSF relative to current U.S. and international community plans. In addition, the Under Secretary of Defense (Policy) asked us to look separately at ANSF regional differentiation. Over the course of the study, we discovered that this was naturally addressed in our force size and structure analysis. As such, we have integrated these tasks in our discussion below.

The following sections will address each of the NDAA mandated tasks in turn, and will conclude with a summary of our findings.

Threat assessment

We analyzed the likely internal and regional security environment for Afghanistan over the next decade, including challenges and threats to the security and sovereignty of Afghanistan from state and non-state actors. Given that futures projections are inherently uncertain, and become more uncertain the further into the future one looks, we broke "the next decade" into two segments (2015–2018 and 2019–2023). We emphasized the first of these, as it was the most critical timeframe for the analysis in our subsequent tasks.

Scope and caveats

Given the vast scope of this assessment—which includes the insurgency across Afghanistan, the al Qaeda threat, and regional powers—we have chosen to focus on the military threat from the Taliban and al Qaeda. Below are two aspects that are believed to be significant fac-

tors in the threat but that we could not address given the constraints of our study.

- *The trade in opium and other illicit drugs and their precursors*. Some argue that the drug trade is a major driver of the insurgency, especially in the south. There is, however, no consensus on the degree to which this is the case, or on whether the ANSF could in any capacity significantly alter this dynamic.
- *Corruption and poor governance*. Some believe that corruption is the major threat to the Afghan government—i.e., that the regime is its own worst enemy. Corruption undermines the legitimacy of the government and its security forces and gives strength to the Taliban. Yet corruption is too amorphous a problem to be adequately addressed in this study.

Assessment

This assessment is predicated on understanding the past and present of insurgencies in Afghanistan in order to inform judgments about the future. We begin with an analysis of three cases in Afghan history when insurgents launched major offensives against government forces:

- The period 1989–1992 when the Soviet military withdrew from Afghanistan and various insurgent groups (at the time, known as the Mujahideen) attempted to overthrow the government
- The period 1994–2000 when the Taliban first emerged and conquered much of Afghanistan, and al Qaeda established bases in the country
- The period 2006–2009 when the Taliban resumed the offensive and sought to retake large areas of southern and eastern Afghanistan.

For each case, we examined the historical record and derived key findings about insurgents' strategy, operations, and tactics, as well as the actions of regional actors. These findings constitute relevant lessons that current insurgents are likely to use when planning their future actions. As such, we use them to derive a plausible set of implications for the future actions of the Taliban in the 2015–2018

timeframe, to help inform our understanding of the missions the ANSF will need to conduct. We also use them to derive implications for future threats at the strategic level (Tier 1 areas), and the operational and tactical levels (areas comprising Tiers 2–4), to help inform our categorization of areas via the security tier construct.

We also independently assessed the current security situation in Afghanistan based predominantly on our own extensive interviews in theater, but also via a review of current U.S., NATO, and Afghan threat assessments. We used these sources to identify implications for future insurgent actions and to categorize areas of Afghanistan by security tier, similar to our analysis of the historical case studies.

Using the implications for future insurgent actions and threats to various areas of Afghanistan derived from our analysis of the past and present, we made judgments about the future in the form of narrative assessments of insurgents' capabilities and intent, and a map of Afghanistan categorized by security tier.

The following sections provide a brief description of, and the key points from, the three historical case studies and our analysis of the current threat. Additional details can be found in Appendix D.

1987–1992: Soviet withdrawal, Mujahideen offensive, collapse of the government

The Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in 1979 and spent the next 10 years battling a variety of insurgent groups known as the Mujahideen. Soviet forces also rebuilt the Afghan army, police, and security ministries, and they raised irregular forces to secure more remote areas. The Mujahideen employed a dual-track strategy focused on terrorism in Kabul and massed attacks in the provinces. They used guerrilla tactics against Afghan and Soviet forces, targeting patrols, bases, and lines of communication. They intimidated pro-government populations, targeted officials, and built parallel governments.

In January 1987, the Soviet Union announced the end of major combat operations and the transition of security responsibility to Afghan government forces, and began a withdrawal that lasted until February 1989. The Mujahideen generally conserved their resources until after the Soviets withdrew, and then launched a series of major offensives in regional cities (e.g., Herat and Kandahar), to include a large-scale,

failed assault on Jalalabad. Pakistan maintained a strategy of covert support to the Mujahideen through key commanders, and maintained control over insurgent sanctuaries in the tribal areas. The Afghan army was heavily dependent on Soviet aircraft and money; when the Soviets stopped providing these resources, the army failed and the government in Kabul collapsed relatively quickly.

Table 5 summarizes our key findings from this case study and their implications for the future threat assessment. This case implies that insurgents will likely employ a dual-track strategy again. First, certain groups (e.g., the Haqqani network) would target Kabul via terrorism and assassinations against targets of national significance from sanctuaries in Pakistan and bases in the rural areas around Kabul. Second, the Taliban would conduct larger attacks in the provinces, to expand control in rural areas and enable attacks on central locations. The insurgency is likely to hold back its resources as U.S. and NATO forces draw down, saving them for actions in the post-2014 timeframe. There is risk of another massed attack on Jalalabad or other regional city. Pakistan will likely preserve control of insurgent sanctuaries and use this to influence insurgents' actions post-2014 and pressure the Afghan government. Finally, major cuts to air support and funding to the ANSF could have serious negative effects.

In terms of categorizing areas by security tier, this case study suggests that Tier 1 areas should include Kabul, Jalalabad, Mazar-e-Sharif, and the cities of Herat and Kandahar. Tier 2–4 areas might include Khost, Kunar, Nuristan, significant airfields (e.g., Shindand), and rural district centers and surrounding villages in the south and southwest.

Table 5. Summary of findings and implications of the "Soviet withdrawal, Mujahideen offensive, collapse of the government" case study

Finding	Implications for future threat assessment
Threats to the national government (Security Tier 1 implications)	
Mujahideen factions close to Pakistani intelligence prioritized attacks on Kabul in order to threaten key members of the regime and force the collapse of the central government. They infiltrated the districts around Kabul and carried out high profile attacks against national leaders and institutions.	• These factions, which remain a key element of the insurgency today, may seek to expand bases around Kabul from which to conduct high profile attacks in the capital against national-level leaders and institutions, in the hopes of destabilizing the government at the national level. • These groups may continue to utilize terrorist methods and operate through underground networks in urban areas.
The majority of Mujahideen leaders focused on seizing key regions and provinces first before moving on Kabul. They did so through a combination of guerrilla attacks and massed assaults on garrisons. The Afghan army held at Jalalabad, but was overrun in Mazar-e-Sharif, Herat, and Kandahar. Kabul fell soon after.	• There will likely be debate within Taliban senior leadership over the balance between focusing on the provinces versus the capital, the use of terrorism versus traditional guerrilla warfare, and the importance of rural versus urban areas. It is likely that they will pursue all lines of operation simultaneously, but with varying degrees of emphasis. • The vast majority of insurgents, which have local or regional aims, will likely focus on expanding control in the provinces, beginning with outlying areas and moving to more strategic locations—seeking to surround and isolate government forces before attempting direct assaults on locations that have high concentrations of ANSF. The Taliban, which is focused on the south, is especially likely to follow this strategy.
As the Soviet Union pulled back between 1987 and 1989, the Mujahideen reduced their operational tempo in order to conserve resources for major offensives following the full withdrawal of Soviet forces. The Mujahideen launched a number of direct assaults on garrisons beginning in 1989.	• The Taliban may be conserving resources for a larger series of offensives post 2014.
Threats in Afghanistan's geographic regions (Security Tier 2–4 implications)	
During the first year after the Soviet withdrawal, the Mujahideen overran garrisons. Insurgents launched major attacks in Khost, Herat, Kandahar, and Kabul, and overran garrisons in Kunar and Nuristan. Remote and difficult-to-reach areas were the first to fall, especially in the mountains near Pakistan.	• Insurgents may seek control over mountainous areas more easily severed from the rest of the country due to the difficult terrain and easily blocked roads—particularly Khost, Kunar, and Nuristan.

Table 5. Summary of findings and implications of the "Soviet withdrawal, Mujahideen offensive, collapse of the government" case study

Finding	Implications for future threat assessment
The largest insurgent operation was against Jalalabad one month after the completion of the Soviet withdrawal. The Afghan army held, by using a series of layered checkpoints that stretched well outside the city, as well as artillery and limited air support. Several thousand insurgents were killed, resulting in an operational-level defeat for the Mujahideen in the east and blunting its momentum.	• Insurgents may attempt a massed assault on Jalalabad or other major city in the Pashtun belt if they have the capability and believe that ANSF defenses are vulnerable. • If the ANSF succeed in repulsing such an assault while holding elsewhere, fractures may emerge within the Taliban and the group may whither over time. If they do not, other towns and cities may fall in short order, putting Kabul in danger.
The Mujahideen, particularly the Pashtun factions, were not skilled at coordinating large-scale direct assaults involving more than 100–200 fighters. The more effective Pashtun groups were those that employed terrorist and commando-style operations in urban areas involving small numbers of highly trained fighters.	• Insurgents may achieve tactical victories in outlying areas, but will likely have difficulty overrunning cities or major military garrisons in the provinces (i.e., winning what could be characterized as operational-level victories against the ANA). Terrorist attacks in cities will likely be the greatest immediate threat to the stability of provincial governments. • The Taliban may have difficulty sustaining large-scale coordinated assaults for any length of time, especially without the presence of foreign forces to galvanize the rank and file.
The Mujahideen launched major assaults on airfields, especially at Shindand in the west.	• The Taliban is likely to target airfields transitioned to the ANSF—including Shindand, where insurgents have a significant presence within striking distance.
Tactics (Security Tier 3–4 implications)	
The Mujahideen employed massed ambushes, and, to a lesser extent, roadside bombs against Afghan convoys. Insurgents surrounded isolated garrisons, tying the Afghan army down and leaving few soldiers available for maneuver in strategically vital areas.	• Insurgents are likely to use a combination of IEDs and massed ambushes to cut or disrupt ANSF lines of communication and ground-based resupply, forcing the ANSF to rely on aerial resupply or to cede outlying areas and consolidate into larger bases. Insurgents may harass outlying positions in order to fix the ANSF inside their bases and limit their maneuver.
Insurgents focused on controlling rural areas, while ceding most urban areas to government forces until after the Soviet army withdrew. After 1989, they targeted the cities from established bases in rural areas abutting major cities and towns.	• The Taliban will likely focus first on surrounding key district centers and cities by controlling adjacent villages, in preparation for later offensives against larger population centers.

Table 5. Summary of findings and implications of the "Soviet withdrawal, Mujahideen offensive, collapse of the government" case study

Finding	Implications for future threat assessment
Insurgents negotiated ceasefires with Afghan forces in many local areas, especially in outlying locations where government positions were vulnerable and the insurgents were in a strong position.	• The Taliban may seek to co-opt local ANSF through a combination of financial inducements and offers of amnesty. • Some Afghan Local Police units may defect to the Taliban, especially in outlying areas where government support and over-watch of these units is weak and positions are surrounded and/or under considerable pressure.
External threats and the influence of regional powers	
Pakistan's strategy during the 1980s rested on covert support to the Afghan resistance, in order to raise the costs of the Soviet occupation. Pakistan built an extensive infrastructure of insurgent training camps, recruitment centers, and arms depots near the border with Afghanistan.	• Pakistan is likely to preserve much of the existing insurgent infrastructure on its side of the border. Pakistani intelligence may seek to increase control over this infrastructure in order to influence the insurgency inside Afghanistan.
Following the Soviet withdrawal, Pakistani intelligence worked to forge unity among the disparate insurgent factions and to focus their energies on Kabul.	• Pakistani intelligence will seek to influence Taliban leadership by helping forge consensus among Taliban factions and lending them strategic direction. These efforts may include directives to target Kabul.
Iran backed various Shia Mujahideen factions, as well as regional warlords in the west and north, against both the Soviet-backed regime and the Sunni Pashtun Mujahideen groups based in Pakistan. Iran deepened its involvement with Hazara and other pro-Iran Shia guerrillas near the end of the war, seeking to influence the makeup of the post-Soviet regime.	• Iran is likely to work through non-Pashtun (particularly Shia) powerbrokers. Iran may deepen this involvement post-2014 in order to influence the future makeup of the regime and counter Taliban influence.

1994–2000: The Taliban's conquest of Afghanistan

Civil war followed the collapse of the central government in 1992. In the absence of law and order, rival warlords fought over control of towns and cities and preyed on the population. In 1994, the Taliban surged into Afghanistan under the banner of: "Restore peace, disarm the population, and enforce Sharia Law."[11] They began as a regional movement in the south, but quickly grew to a national force.

The Taliban moved first on Kandahar, then on Helmand, Jalalabad, and Herat. They were welcomed by Afghans in the Pashtun south and later in the east, but met resistance in the north and west. They often used the offer of amnesty and cash payments to take control of areas without a fight. Eventually, they were able to isolate Kabul from the south, east, and west. By 1996, the Taliban controlled 22 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces, including Kabul. By 2000, they controlled over 90 percent of the country. Throughout their campaign to take Afghanistan, senior Taliban leaders maintained a firm grip on the movement, enforcing a coherent, though changing, strategy. All major military decisions were made by senior leadership and there was generally unity among leaders, with few regional or tribal divisions.

Table 6 summarizes our key findings from this case study and their implications for the future threat assessment. This case implies that the Taliban would likely focus first on Kandahar, then on Helmand, Farah, and southern Herat. If Kandahar were to fall, the Taliban would gain momentum and recruits, which they would use to pressure and mass against Kabul. Taliban leaders would likely seek to enforce a coherent but changing strategy while minimizing disagreements among operational leaders. The Taliban would likely seek defection of ANSF units and powerbrokers at local levels, via a combination of threats, financial incentives, and offers of amnesty. In terms of categorizing areas by security tier, this case study suggests that Tier 1 areas should include Kabul, central Helmand, Jalalabad, and the cities of Kandahar and Herat. Tier 2–4 areas might include the provinces of Zabul, Kunduz, Farah, Herat, and Nuristan, as well as rural district centers and villages across the south and southwest.

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[11] Ahmed Rashid. *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010: 22.

Table 6. Summary of findings and implications of "The Taliban's conquest of Afghanistan" case study

Finding	Implications for future threat assessment
Threats to the national government and in Afghanistan's geographic regions (Security Tier 1–4 implications)	
The Taliban began as a regional movement in Kandahar and Zabul provinces and snowballed into a force with national aims. After Kandahar fell with little fighting, the group gained momentum and recruited thousands of local fighters to launch campaigns further afield.	• If Kandahar falls, the Taliban would likely gain momentum and recruits from which to expand and put pressure on the national government.
The Taliban took Kandahar first, then Helmand, then Jalalabad, cutting off Kabul from the passes into Pakistan. The group then tried to take Kabul but was repulsed. Taliban forces moved on Herat instead. They then regrouped and again targeted Kabul—surrounding the city on three sides and forcing rival militia commanders to withdraw before taking the city. Fighters also pushed into Kunduz from the northeast.	• The Taliban will likely put pressure on Kandahar and act to consolidate support bases in Zabul province to the north. They will likely move on Helmand and attempt to expand into Farah and southern Herat, and from there put pressure on Herat city. • The Taliban may activate networks in Kunduz and infiltration routes between the northeastern provinces of Kunar and Nuristan and key areas of the north. • The Taliban are likely to move on Jalalabad or, at the very least, cut the Torkham-Kabul road east of Jalalabad. • The Taliban may attempt to surround Kabul before any major assault on the capital.
Taliban leadership exerted considerable control over the movement, which acted according to a coherent, though changing, strategy. There were few divisions along regional or tribal lines. Major decisions, including on military operations, were made by Mullah Omar and largely obeyed by subordinate commanders.	• Taliban leadership may seek to regain control over errant commanders and improve command and control that was attenuated during heightened U.S. and NATO operations from 2009–2013. The group will likely follow a coherent strategy and adapt its war aims according to changing circumstances.
Tactics (Security Tier 3–4 implications)	
The Taliban relied largely on support from the Pakistani military and some militia commanders for logistics, air, and other capabilities requiring advanced education or higher-order skills.	• The Taliban may have difficulty sustaining a prolonged offensive against the ANSF without substantial external support. • Whether Pakistan provides material support and military advice to the insurgents could be a decisive factor in the Taliban's capability to threaten the ANSF at the operational level.
The Taliban bribed many local tribes and militias into switching sides. The group often mixed the threat of military defeat with the promise of generous payments for a peaceful surrender.	• The Taliban will likely seek the defection of local ANSF, as well as independent powerbrokers, through a combination of threats, financial incentives, and offers of amnesty.

Table 6. Summary of findings and implications of "The Taliban's conquest of Afghanistan" case study

Finding	Implications for future threat assessment
The Taliban immediately built rudimentary, but relatively effective, interim administrations in the areas that fell under their control.	• The Taliban, especially in the south, will likely seek to openly govern outlying areas under their control, and use these areas as sources of revenue and recruits for operations elsewhere.
The Taliban exploited divisions among the warlords, coopting rival militias and benefitting from fighting among them.	• The Taliban will likely attempt to exploit infighting and lack of unity among the ANSF. The group may also exploit divisions among local powerbrokers, co-opting those at odds with the government.
External threats and the influence of regional powers	
The Taliban emerged from madrassas in Pakistan's border areas. The group's leaders, as well as most of its early recruits, came from these institutions.	• It is likely that a major Taliban offensive would be preceded by pro-Taliban madrassas closing their doors and pushing their students into Afghanistan.
The Taliban were largely an extension of Pakistani regional strategy and were greatly influenced and aided at the strategic and tactical levels. Pakistan provided extensive political and military support, increasing its involvement as the Taliban grew stronger.	• If relations between Islamabad and Kabul deteriorate and the Taliban gain momentum, Pakistani support to the movement will likely increase. This could include the provision of heavy weapons and military advisors.
Iran opposed the rise of the Taliban and provided extensive military and financial support to the Northern Alliance and other non-Pashtun militias.	• Iran is likely to oppose the Taliban, and to provide military assistance to powerbrokers that oppose the movement.

2006–2009: Taliban offensive in the south and east

In 2006, after having been strategically defeated in 2001–2002, the Taliban tried to make a comeback inside Afghanistan, launching attacks across the south, and to a lesser extent, in the east. Over about three years, the Taliban reestablished networks, recruited new fighters, and reconstituted militarily to fight a guerrilla war against coalition and Afghan government forces. The Taliban followed a multifaceted strategy in which they infiltrated rural areas, assassinated and intimidated local leaders, overran smaller towns in Kandahar and Helmand, surrounded garrisons, and threatened Kandahar city and Helmand's provincial capital at Lashkar Gah. The insurgency was more fragmented in the east, but violence there still increased considerably.

A surge of U.S. and NATO forces managed to blunt the Taliban's offensive, retake many areas that had fallen under insurgent control, and increase the capability and capacity of the ANSF. As thousands of additional forces were deployed to Afghanistan in 2009, it became clear that the Taliban would not be able to force the collapse of the Afghan government or the immediate withdrawal of coalition forces.

Table 7 summarizes our key findings from this case study and their implications for the future threat assessment. This case implies that the Taliban would likely seek to press militarily against the ANSF once U.S. and NATO forces draw down—following a gradualist campaign in which they would likely first target outlying areas by surrounding district centers and conducting massed assaults, before moving to pressure more strategic locations. They would likely also seek to establish bases in orbital districts of the major cities in order to enable terrorist acts in them. But they would likely bide their time in testing the ANSF while preparing for major offensives in the future.

In terms of categorizing areas by security tier, this case study suggests that Tier 1 areas should include Kabul, Kandahar city, Jalalabad, and Lashkar Gah. Tier 2–4 areas might include the provinces of Logar, Wardak, Kapisa, Kunar, Nuristan, Khost, Paktika, Paktiya, Ghazni, and Kunduz, along with the districts around Kandahar city and those of northern and southern Helmand. They might also include some areas of Takhar, Baghlan, Baghdis, and Ghor provinces, the areas of the border with Pakistan in the northeast, and the Ring Road (Highway 1) and other major lines of communication.

Table 7. Summary of findings and implications of "Taliban offensive in the south and east" case study

Finding	Implications for future threat assessment
Threats to the national government (Security Tier 1 implications)	
The Taliban sought to force the withdrawal of all coalition forces through a series of concerted military offensives.	• The Taliban are likely to again seek military victory, this time against the ANSF once U.S. and NATO forces are no longer present to blunt such an effort.
The Taliban's strategy was to overtake outlying rural areas first through a combination of intimidation and direct assaults on vulnerable ANSF positions and district centers. They established bases along the outskirts of major population centers from which to undermine security in urban areas. The provinces of Logar, Wardak, and Kapisa near Kabul came under increasing pressure.	• The Taliban will likely pressure outlying rural areas and district centers first before encroaching on more strategic locations. They are likely to use intimidation to control surrounding villages and then launch massed assaults on vulnerable outposts. • The Taliban are likely to make concerted efforts to control rural areas around key cities, especially Kabul and Kandahar, from which to conduct acts of terrorism and assassination in advance of any major campaign in urban areas. Priority areas will likely be around Kabul, especially parts of Logar and Wardak south of the capital.
In urban areas such as Kabul, Kandahar, and Jalalabad, insurgents relied on intimidation, terrorism, and assassination. Well-planned commando-style attacks involving a mix of suicide bombings, car bombings, and direct fire executed by well-trained operatives emerged as a serious threat to Kabul. These attacks, many of them attributed to the Haqqani network, directly threatened national leaders and centers of power, as well as high-security foreign diplomatic and military installations.	• Terrorism, assassination, and other high-profile attacks are likely to be a key component of the Taliban's strategy post-2014, especially in Kabul, but also Kandahar and Jalalabad. • In Kabul, there are likely to be sophisticated complex attacks on ministries, national leaders, U.S. and NATO military installations, and the embassies of countries supporting the government. These attacks would pose the most immediate strategic threat to the national government.
Threats in Afghanistan's geographic regions (Security Tier 2–4 implications)	
After facing strategic defeat in 2001–2002, the Taliban regrouped, reorganized itself for guerilla warfare, and planned and executed a series of renewed offensives. It took roughly three years for the group to regenerate.	• It is likely the Taliban will recover from the last 3–4 years of intensified U.S. and NATO counterinsurgency operations and regenerate at least some of its lost combat power. While doing so, the group's leadership will likely plan to resurge.
In 2004 and 2005, Taliban cadres quietly laid the groundwork for attacks in 2006, forming alliances, carrying out targeted killings, and infiltrating rural areas around Kandahar city.	• Any renewed offensives will likely be preceded by a period of relative quiet as the Taliban conduct targeted killings, infiltrate the ANSF, form alliances, establish bases, and posture their forces around key government centers. • The Taliban will likely place a high priority on regaining bases in rural areas around Kandahar city, in order to carry out high profile attacks. It is likely that they will consolidate these bases before attempting a major campaign of violence in the city.

Table 7. Summary of findings and implications of "Taliban offensive in the south and east" case study

Finding	Implications for future threat assessment
In early 2006, the Taliban launched a series of direct and simultaneous military offensives in Kandahar and Helmand provinces. These operations were large scale and centrally directed by Quetta-based leaders. Thousands of fighters were killed during massed attacks in 2006 and 2007, causing the Taliban to operate in smaller groups and avoid direct assaults.	• It is likely that the Taliban will attempt another series of coordinated offensives in the south some time during the 2015–2018 timeframe. Their scope and scale will depend on the group's capabilities, which will take time to regenerate. • The Taliban will be careful not to mass until they have had time to regenerate, have tested the ANSF in outlying areas, and are confident of success. In the meantime, insurgents will likely operate in small formations and follow a gradualist campaign.
In the rural areas of Kandahar province, the Taliban targeted 11 of 13 rural districts beginning in January 2006 and escalating into the warmer months. They took over most rural areas, recruited fighters, and built fortified camps near key bases. They attacked outlying ANSF positions, forcing Afghan and coalition forces to become increasingly fixed and spread out. Insurgents withdrew under pressure from clearing operations and then re-infiltrated to target forces left behind to hold and build.	• In Kandahar, the Taliban may attempt to overrun outlying district centers, supplant the ANSF, and use these areas as bases from which to recruit fighters and threaten the central areas of the province. • Insurgents are likely to pull back in the face of clearing operations or quick reaction forces, then re-infiltrate to target those forces left behind. • The Taliban will likely target the police most aggressively. Against the ANA, they will likely attempt to lure units into outlying areas and tie them down, causing the ANA to become increasingly fixed, spread out, and unable to maneuver.
Tactics (Security Tier 3–4 implications)	
In Kandahar city, the Taliban carried out suicide attacks and car bombings aimed at police commanders and other senior officials.	• The Taliban will likely attempt to assassinate key leaders and ANSF commanders in Kandahar city, especially those deemed essential to forging unity among the ANSF and key powerbrokers, and those necessary for the success of layered security in and around the city.
In Helmand, there were simultaneous massed attacks on district centers across the northern part of the province, especially Sangin, Musa Qala, and Now Zad districts. When U.S. and NATO forces reinforced these areas, insurgents targeted central Helmand, the heart of the province, and overran positions in southern Helmand. They ambushed convoys and cut ground lines of communication. The Taliban infiltrated Nad Ali west of Lashkar Gah and then massed on the provincial capital.	• The Taliban will likely focus first on the towns of northern Helmand, attempting to overrun outlying positions, and then threaten key district centers—especially Sangin and Musa Qala. • Insurgents may attempt to re-infiltrate the districts of central Helmand, but will likely maintain a low profile as long as the ANSF hold in the north. They may attempt targeted killings in Lashkar Gah from rural areas near the city, such as Nad Ali. Garmser to the south may come under pressure if attacks in the north succeed.

Table 7. Summary of findings and implications of "Taliban offensive in the south and east" case study

Finding	Implications for future threat assessment
In the southeast (Khost, Paktika, Paktiya, and Ghazni provinces), insurgents launched a series of less expansive offensives beginning in 2007 and 2008, attributed mainly to the Haqqani network. The group sought control over key bases and transit areas in the southeast between sanctuaries in Pakistan's North Waziristan tribal agency and the southern reaches of Kabul. Attacks began in Khost and later spread to the Khost–Gardez highway and a number of police positions and district centers. There were massed attacks in western and northern Paktiya and Andar district in Ghazni, fueled by an influx of fighters from Pakistan.	• There is likely to be an increase in massed attacks on isolated Afghan Local Police positions, especially in key insurgent transit corridors between Pakistan and Kabul, as insurgents seek to secure these routes and expand bases of support from which to target Kabul. • There are likely to be ambushes along the Khost-Gardez road, as insurgents seek to cut this key line of communication and sever the Khost bowl from the rest of the country. • If the Taliban are widely perceived to be resurgent, there could be an influx of Pakistani fighters from South Waziristan, leading to significant increase in massed attacks in the southeast.
The Haqqani network was tightly-run and secretive, and employed terrorist methods. Its primary aim was Kabul. The group expanded into Wardak and Logar provinces from bases farther east and targeted outlying ANSF posts. From there they executed high-profile suicide bombings and sophisticated commando-style assaults on heavily guarded targets in the capital.	• The Haqqani network will likely continue operating as a terrorist cum-insurgent organization, organizing as an underground network in and near the capital but drawing on a larger and more overt insurgent organization in the southeast and in sanctuaries in North Waziristan. This combination of capabilities—terrorist networks in the capital, secure bases near the capital and across the southeast, safe transit between Pakistan and Kabul, and a robust sanctuary inside Pakistan—will likely make the group the greatest strategic threat to Afghanistan.
There was heavy fighting in isolated mountain valleys of central Kunar and eastern Nuristan, especially the Korengal valley and Kamdesh and Barg-e-Matal areas along the northern border with Pakistan. Insurgents targeted convoys, cutting roads through the mountains and forcing U.S. and Afghan forces to use air support and aerial resupply.	• Local insurgents loosely affiliated with the Taliban are likely to pose a serious threat in parts of the northeast, if the ANA push into certain capillary valleys such as the Korengal. These attacks are likely to involve massed assaults on outlying outposts and massed ambushes from the high-ground on mountain roads. • Insurgents are likely to move freely across the border with Pakistan. Additional Pakistani militants are likely to find sanctuary in the region, especially if the ANA pulls back from the northeast. The ANSF may come under intense pressure if they threaten this logistical network or take aggressive steps against Pakistani militants.

Table 7. Summary of findings and implications of "Taliban offensive in the south and east" case study

Finding	Implications for future threat assessment
Al Qaeda cadres fleeing U.S. drone strikes took refuge in Kunar and Nuristan. In some valleys they integrated with local fighters, and in others they were rejected. They kept a low profile and worked behind the scenes. There were various Pakistani, Afghan, and foreign fighters in the region with different goals and areas of influence.	• There is likely to be further integration of various Afghan, Pakistani, and other foreign militants in the northeast. Those focused primarily on Pakistan will avoid direct confrontations with the ANSF. • Al Qaeda cadres are likely to maintain a low profile but may assist Afghan insurgents by providing training, funding, and higher-order expertise. They are likely to place priority on maintaining sanctuary, and will avoid involvement in attacks on the ANSF.
The Taliban reactivated old networks in pockets of Kunduz, Takhar, and Baghlan beginning in 2006, and later outlying parts of Baghdis and Ghor. They focused on attacks against key highways running north into central Asia, disrupting ISAF's northern distribution network. Insurgents moved into Farah province in 2006, fleeing British operations in Helmand. They overran district centers at Bakwa, Bala Baluk and Gulistan, and carried out massed ambushes. There were major battles in the Zerikoh valley in southern Herat near Shindand, as well as sporadic terrorist attacks in Herat city.	• Insurgents are likely to step up massed ambushes on the Ring Road through Farah, and to consolidate their control over the eastern parts of the province, especially Bakwa, Bala Baluk, and Gulistan. Southern Herat, including Shindand airfield, may come under pressure from insurgents based in Shindand district. • There may be limited terrorist attacks in the cities of Farah and Herat from bases in these areas. • With the exception of Farah and southern Herat, the Taliban will likely seek to make their presence known in pockets of the north and west, but are not likely to pose a substantial threat.
External threats and the influence of regional powers	
The Taliban reconstituted their networks and organization, rebuilt their military capabilities, and planned their resurgence from sanctuaries inside Pakistan. Pakistani operations in its tribal areas focused on al Qaeda and the Pakistani Taliban, not insurgents fighting in Afghanistan. No action was taken against the Taliban in Quetta. There is some evidence that Pakistani intelligence provided advice on strategy and brokered agreements among insurgent factions.	• Pakistan is not likely to take concerted action against insurgents operating in Afghanistan from sanctuaries in Pakistan. • Sanctuaries in Pakistan will likely make it impossible for the ANSF to militarily defeat the Taliban. Particularly robust sanctuaries in the tribal areas, especially North Waziristan, will enable the Taliban to regenerate and prepare for an escalation in violence after 2014—particularly against the national government in Kabul. Insurgents operating from these sanctuaries will pose an enduring strategic threat to Afghanistan.
During this period, Iran backed the central government while providing limited military support to factions of the Taliban in the southwest in order to tie down U.S. forces.	• Iran is likely to support the government in Kabul but continue limited military aid to Taliban field commanders in the southwest as long as U.S. forces are present. Iran may also provide aid to insurgents targeting strategic bases that Iran views as a potential threat, such as Shindand airbase in southern Herat or the Bastion airfield in Helmand.

Today: Assessment of current threats

Since 2009, additional ISAF forces have pushed the Taliban back from many areas in the south and east and killed and captured thousands of fighters. The Taliban's offensives were blunted and they were forced to settle into a long war of attrition that has become increasingly difficult to sustain. The last few years of intensified counterinsurgency operations have forced them deeper underground, disrupted their communications, and put strains on their organization and command and control.

Vastly expanded operations by U.S., NATO, and Afghan SOF have eliminated many insurgent leaders at different levels and degraded their networks. Drone strikes into Pakistan's tribal areas have eliminated higher-level commanders, removed some of the security provided by sanctuaries in Pakistan, and disrupted insurgents' ability to communicate and plan. Insurgents are not as militarily capable as they were in 2006–2008.

At the same time, the U.S. and NATO built up the ANSF—raising new units, such as the 215th Corps in Helmand, expanding training, education, and combat advising. As a result, the ANSF now have the capability to provide for security in many areas. The ANA can operate in difficult areas such as Kunar and Nuristan in the northeast and in northern Helmand—areas that have been difficult even for U.S. and NATO forces. The capabilities of ANA SOF, including highly trained raiding units, have expanded. Compared to the period 2006–2008 when the ANSF were clearly overmatched in many key areas, the balance of power has shifted towards the ANSF.

Nonetheless, there are still threats to Kabul and key areas in the provinces. The Taliban have not been strategically defeated and remain a viable force capable of targeting national leaders and institutions in Kabul and overrunning government positions in the south and east. Insurgents have retained their bases in some rural areas around Kabul, and there continue to be attacks in the cities of Kandahar and Jalalabad. Insurgents have largely retained key sanctuaries in Pakistan—the Haqqani network in particular—and continue to move men and materiel across the porous Afghanistan–Pakistan border.

Table 8, on the next few pages, summarizes the key findings from our analysis of the current situation in Afghanistan and their implications

for the future threat assessment. It is likely the U.S. and NATO withdrawal will reduce pressure on the insurgency, via a reduction in counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations, to include drone strikes against insurgent sanctuaries. This reduction is likely to create space for the Taliban to regroup and regenerate lost capability.

The Taliban are likely to continually test the ANSF and probe their weaknesses in the absence of coalition forces, and to keep pressure on them in rural areas in an attempt to reclaim ground lost during the surge of U.S. and NATO forces. The Taliban are likely to use mainly small probing attacks, but they may also conduct massed assaults in remote locales. They are also likely to try and infiltrate orbital areas around the key cities in order to conduct high profile attacks in the cities themselves (especially against national-level targets in Kabul).

The Taliban's current state of weakness (relative to their past strength) will likely result in their taking a gradualist approach to reconstituting capabilities and influence in the near term; however, in the out years (i.e., 2017–2018), they will likely conduct a much larger campaign.

In the short term, the Haqqani network is likely to be the primary threat to the national government, as it was not nearly as affected by the surge of U.S. and NATO forces. The Haqqanis maintain robust sanctuary in Pakistan and have secure bases and transit areas between Pakistan and Kabul, which enable them to strike at national-level leaders and institutions.

Looking at the areas of Afghanistan relative to insurgent strength today, our current threat assessment suggests that Tier 1 areas should include all of the major population centers (i.e., Kabul, Jalalabad, Mazar-e-Sharif, and the cities of Kandahar and Herat). Tier 2 areas might include the areas around these population centers and central Helmand. Tier 3 and 4 areas might include northern and southern Helmand, rural areas of Kandahar province, much of the northeast and southeast (especially areas along the border with Pakistan), and some small Pashtun pockets in the north and west (e.g., Kunduz).

Table 8. Summary of findings from current threat assessment

Finding
Threats to the national government (Security Tier 1 implications)
• The Taliban have not fundamentally altered their strategy to undermine the government through a combination of high-profile attacks in Kabul and key regional capitals and guerrilla warfare in the provinces.
• The group remains capable of striking in Kabul, though a number of recent attacks have been foiled or prevented from reaching their intended targets. In support of attacks in Kabul, the Taliban has continued to retain bases near the capital, especially in Logar and Wardak provinces.
• U.S. and NATO operations since 2009 have significantly degraded the insurgency. The Taliban was pushed out of strategically important locations and relegated to the periphery. Special Operations Forces' raids and drone strikes killed many mid- and high-level insurgent commanders.
• The Taliban has not been strategically defeated and it remains a viable force in many areas of the south and east, and in small pockets of the north and west.
Threats in Afghanistan's geographic regions (Tier 2–4 implications)
• The Taliban have not retaken any district centers. Insurgents overran some local police checkpoints but failed to hold them. There have been terrorist attacks in cities but no major offensives against population centers.
• Insurgents have inflicted several tactical defeats on the ANSF in remote areas, but these appear to have been isolated events. The Taliban have yet to achieve any successes at the operational level involving multiple coordinated tactical actions.
• The Taliban have maintained pressure on key lines of communication—particularly the Kabul–Kandahar highway and parts of the Ring Road in the southwest between Helmand and Herat. Insurgents have also targeted the Kandahar–Spin Boldak and Torkham–Kabul highways.
• The Taliban remain shut out of key areas in central Helmand and around Kandahar city; its overall capability substantially degraded. Yet, the Taliban in the south remain a viable force. They have adapted by improving command and control and reducing factionalism among their leadership. o Kandahar city has remained stable, with relatively few high profile attacks. The rural areas around the city (Zharey, Panjwai, and Arghandab) have remained relatively secure as well. o The Taliban remain active in some outlying areas in northern Kandahar, especially Maiwand district, a key insurgent transit zone between Kandahar and Helmand. o There appears to be little immediate threat to Helmand's central districts or the provincial capital, though there have been terrorist attacks in Lashkar Gah and assaults on checkpoints in Nad Ali. o In northern Helmand, insurgents recently overran local police positions around the Sangin district center and were later forced back with the help of NATO forces. The northernmost district of Musa Qala has come under pressure. o Local powerbrokers in northern Helmand appear to be holding the Taliban back, but fissures have emerged among them.

Table 8. Summary of findings from current threat assessment

Finding
o Much of the southwest appears to have fallen under the control of the Taliban and powerbrokers associated with the insurgency—especially the districts of Gulistan, Bakwa, and Bala Baluk in Farah province. There have been terrorist attacks in Farah city and several massed assaults on the ANSF along the southwestern portion of the Ring Road between Helmand and Herat.
• The eastern provinces were left relatively unscathed by U.S. and NATO counterinsurgency operations in 2009–2012, which focused on the south.
o In the southeast, the Haqqani network lost many mid- and higher-level commanders, but the group remains largely intact. Its ability to move between Pakistan and Kabul remains substantial. The group is entrenched in parts of Khost, Paktika, Paktiya, and Ghazni.
o In Ghazni province and parts of Paktiya, insurgents have assassinated leaders of local anti-Taliban movements and massed on local police checkpoints in key transit areas, killing significant numbers of police but failing to hold ground.
o Insurgents in the east continue to have access to robust support zones in Pakistan's tribal areas. There is considerable insurgent infiltration in all sectors, as U.S. forces have pulled back from bases near the border. Many Afghan border posts are under pressure.
o Terrorist attacks and assassinations in the city of Jalalabad have increased, driven in part by recent inflows of sophisticated small arms and high-end explosives designed for targeted killings.
o Insurgents have failed to cut any major line of communication in the east. However, there is pressure on parts of the Torkham–Kabul road that runs through Jalalabad, the key highway into Pakistan, as well as parts of the Kabul–Kandahar highway in Ghazni.
o The Taliban have made gains in some areas of the northeast but remain localized and largely contained to particular valleys.
o Since U.S. forces began pulling back from the northeastern provinces of Kunar and Nuristan in 2009, the region has become a sanctuary for Afghan and Pakistani militants from a variety of organizations whose operations span both sides of the border, as well as for members of al Qaeda.
o Fewer than 100 al Qaeda members are taking refuge in parts of Kunar and Nuristan. They have integrated with Afghan and Pakistani insurgents and intermarried with local clans. They continue to move to and from Pakistan and may have a presence in remote parts of Ghazni in southeastern Afghanistan.
• The insurgency in the north and west is struggling to survive in a handful of isolated pockets with large Pashtun populations.
o There does not appear to be a concerted push by the Taliban to expand their influence in the north or the west. Links to Taliban senior leadership in Quetta are weak. Much of the violence attributed to the Taliban is localized and criminal in nature.
o The Taliban in the north and west have focused on assassinations and attempts to create and exploit divisions among non-Pashtun powerbrokers. So far, they have had limited success.
o In parts of the west, insurgents have targeted low-level ANSF, often on their way home on leave from remote outposts. Some checkpoint commanders in remote areas have agreed to local ceasefires. Few checkpoints have been overrun.

Table 8. Summary of findings from current threat assessment

Finding
o There is little substantial threat to the populated areas in and around Herat. ANSF assisted by non-Pashtun powerbrokers have kept the region relatively secure.
External threats and the influence of regional powers
• Haqqani network leadership remains based in Pakistan's North Waziristan tribal agency where it has a robust infrastructure of camps and recruitment centers. The Pakistani military has not moved to shut down the group's sanctuaries there. Sanctuary in North Waziristan is essential for the Haqqani network's operations in Kabul, which involve considerable planning, coordination, and training.
• There have been several confrontations between Pakistani and Afghan forces along poorly demarcated portions of the border. Also, Pakistan has fired artillery into northeast Afghanistan, apparently targeting insurgents taking refuge there. Despite these altercations, there appears to be little threat of conventional military action by Pakistan along the border.
• Since 2009, Iran has continued to pursue a hedging strategy in Afghanistan. It has supported the government in Kabul and funded development projects in the west. At the same time, it has provided limited military aid to the Taliban in the southwest.
• India has increased its involvement in Afghanistan, mainly in the civilian sector. India has invested in government infrastructure and provided training to ANA officers. India continues to operate consulates in Kabul and the regional capitals.

2015–2018: Assessment of the near- to mid-term future threat

In order to make predictions about likely Taliban actions in the 2015–2018 timeframe, we draw on our analysis of the above case studies, looking for courses of action that Afghan insurgents have taken in the past and that they are likely to pursue again when U.S. and NATO forces draw down. We also make predictions based on our assessment of the current situation mapped against certain near-term trends that are all but certain—in particular, the reduction in U.S. and NATO forces and concomitant reduction in military pressure on the insurgency. Finally, we use all of these sources to categorize areas of Afghanistan according to our security tier construct.

We assess that in the near term (2015–2016), the Taliban will follow a gradualist approach of keeping military pressure on the ANSF, expanding its control and influence in areas vacated by coalition forces, encircling key cities, and conducting high-profile attacks on strategic targets in Kabul—roughly the same mix of actions conducted in all three of our historical case studies. The Taliban will seek to press militarily via activities akin to, but lower in intensity than, offensives they conducted in 2006–2008 and those by the Mujahideen in 1989. Even if the ANSF falter or are under-resourced, the Taliban will not likely be capable of direct assaults of substantial scope and scale before 2016. In the medium term (2017–2018 and beyond), once the insurgency has had time to recover from the surge of U.S. and NATO forces, there will be greater likelihood of a larger and more intense Taliban military effort.

Much of the threat post-2014 will depend on the extent to which the insurgency is able to regenerate following the drawdown of coalition forces. The current state of the insurgency, coming after several years of intense U.S. and NATO operations that will not be sustained past 2014, is only one data point from which to gauge the future threat. Past precedents suggest it is highly likely that the insurgency will regenerate at least some of its lost capability.

We expect there to be internal debates among Taliban leaders over the appropriate time, manner, and intensity of future offensives—just as there were within the Mujahideen during the Soviet withdrawal. These debates will revolve around questions of whether to focus on urban or rural areas; what constitutes an appropriate mix of indirect methods, such as subversion and intimidation, and direct assaults on

ANSF positions and government centers; and whether to continue with a gradualist approach or risk a bid for immediate military victory.

Threats to the national government (Tier 1 implications)

We assess that the Taliban will attempt to escalate complex attacks and assassinations against high-level targets in Kabul, an aim that they have pursued consistently since 2006 and that dates back to the 1980s. Through these attacks, insurgents will try to directly threaten key national leaders and institutions, as well as remaining U.S. and NATO personnel. They will also seek to undermine the overall security of Kabul, in order to counteract the perception that the insurgency has been confined to rural areas in the provinces. Insurgents—the Haqqani network in particular—will attempt to conduct surveillance of high-security installations, move weapons and equipment into safe houses in the capital, expand their underground networks, and establish sleeper cells to be activated after 2014 at a time deemed propitious by the Taliban senior leadership in Pakistan.

In support of attacks in Kabul, the Taliban will attempt to expand and consolidate control over rural areas around the capital, particularly along its southern reaches. Insurgents will maintain a relatively low profile in these areas. As in the past, they will place priority on ensuring freedom of movement and securing bases from which to put pressure on the capital. To this end, they will seek to control key transit and base areas and to protect their networks from exposure and penetration; they are less likely to pursue overt political control. Insurgents will also protect key transit corridors between safe areas around the capital and central bases in Pakistan, particularly North Waziristan.

The seriousness of the threat to Kabul will depend largely on the capabilities of the Haqqani network post-2014 and the robustness of layered security in and near the capital. The strength of the Haqqani network will depend in turn on the tempo and effectiveness of Afghan intelligence and SOF operations around Kabul and southeast towards the Pakistani border. Reduced pressure on the group's sanctuaries in Pakistan—or, perhaps, support by Pakistani intelligence in the form of materiel, intelligence, expertise, or training—could greatly increase the group's striking power.

The Haqqani network has been weakened by several years of high-tempo U.S. and Afghan SOF operations, drone strikes in Pakistan, U.S. and NATO counterinsurgency operations, and intense pressure on the Pakistani military to restrict the group's activities in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). Despite these efforts, the group remains a viable force capable of carrying out attacks in Kabul. We believe that future reductions in these efforts will allow the Haqqani network to regenerate a significant amount of lost capability, making it a greater threat post-2014 than it is now.

The Taliban will seek to maintain a limited operational tempo through 2014, in order to remain relevant, preserve their momentum, maintain morale within their ranks, and keep pressure on the ANSF. At the same time, they will conserve resources for a more concerted series of military offensives in the 2015–2018 timeframe. As was the case in the late 1980s, insurgents will keep the war going but will not seriously target departing foreign forces or force a confrontation with the ANSF until after the U.S. and NATO have executed their planned drawdown of personnel and enablers.

Following 2014, the Taliban will marshal additional resources to put greater pressure on the ANSF, in order to test their strength and gauge their weaknesses in the absence of substantial coalition support. This prediction is based on three key findings from our historical case studies: first, that the Mujahideen reduced their operational tempo during the Soviet withdrawal in order to conserve resources for later offensives; second, that various Mujahideen groups debated how and when to target the government following the Soviet withdrawal; and third, that the Taliban spent nearly four years rebuilding their capabilities following the U.S. intervention before going on the offensive in 2006.

The various insurgent groups that focus on Afghanistan—particularly the Taliban and the Haqqani network—will maintain and perhaps strengthen their alliance. As long as the regime in Kabul survives and U.S. forces remain in Afghanistan, these groups will remain largely united. There will be infighting at local levels as U.S. forces pull back and are no longer a conspicuous presence on the ground to unify local factions; this low-level in-fighting will weaken the Taliban in many areas. However, we do not expect to see major rifts within the insurgency's leadership that would make the Taliban vulnerable to strate-

gic defeat. This prediction is based on two factors: the Taliban's long record of maintaining unity among their senior echelons and efforts to rein in errant field commanders; and on dynamics among the Mujahideen, who remained largely united at the higher echelons until the Soviet-backed government ultimately collapsed.

Threats in Afghanistan's geographic regions (Tiers 2–4 implications)

In the provinces, we expect there will be various small offensives aimed at expanding insurgent control and regaining important ground lost during the U.S. and NATO surge. The Taliban will continually test the ANSF, first in outlying areas and then, if the ANSF fare poorly, increasingly in more central locations. Most of these attacks will be small-scale assaults on outlying positions, but we also expect there to be massed assaults in areas of the country where the Taliban enjoy considerable freedom of movement, as was the case prior to the surge. Insurgents will agree to local ceasefires and offer amnesty to ANSF members willing to cooperate or switch sides. The Taliban will use newly captured ground to rebuild their military capabilities and surround and put pressure on district centers and other key areas.

Insurgents will seek to regain freedom of movement through key corridors from Pakistan and between internal safe havens and strategically important districts and cities. At the same time, they will step up attacks on vulnerable stretches of key highways—especially the Ring Road between Helmand and Herat, parts of the Kabul–Kandahar highway through Ghazni, the Torkham–Jalalabad road east of Jalalabad, and the Kandahar–Spin Boldak highway towards the border with Pakistan. There will also be attacks on smaller arteries passing into outlying areas. The Taliban will target ANSF lines of communication, attempting to disrupt resupply and isolate outlying positions. Insurgents will do so mainly with IEDs, but will also conduct massed ambushes for effect in remote locations.

There will be continual assassinations of officials and pro-government leaders, particularly in areas where government influence is strong and the Taliban are facing difficulties establishing control; most of these killings will occur in urban areas where the Taliban are able to establish an underground network but are unable to move openly.

They will try to assassinate strong police chiefs in these areas through suicide bombings and complex attacks.

The southern provinces

The Taliban will focus on Kandahar city, just as they have in past campaigns. They will attempt to reestablish support zones in the rural areas to the south and west of the city, especially the districts of Zharey and Panjwai. They will also seek inroads into the Arghandab valley north of the city, populated by traditionally pro-government tribes; they will do so by assassinating elders and exploiting tribal divisions. From bases in nearby rural areas, the Taliban will try to penetrate the city's defenses, develop underground networks, and assassinate key officials deemed essential to the continued success of layered security in and around the city.

The Taliban's strategy in 2006 suggests that the group will take a patient approach focused on quietly and gradually building secure bases in the city's suburbs and executing carefully planned assassinations for at least a year or two before attempting larger-scale operations in or around the city. Kandahar city has been relatively secure for at least the past year due to a robust layered security apparatus. The Taliban are not likely to risk a direct confrontation in or near the city until they are confident that this apparatus has been considerably undermined.

The Taliban will focus on regaining control over outlying districts, particularly Maiwand and other areas in the northern part of the province. It is likely they will conduct probing attacks on ANSF positions and attempt to lure ANA and police quick reaction forces into remote areas, but they will largely refrain from overt attempts to overrun district centers until at least 2016. Once the Taliban have had time to recover and consolidate control in outlying areas of the province, they may attempt simultaneous attacks on vulnerable district centers, as they did in 2006. It is unlikely that they will attempt such a risky campaign before they have had at least one year to recover (i.e., in 2016 or later).

In Helmand province, the Taliban will put considerable pressure on the northern districts, especially Musa Qala and Sangin. Indeed, the Taliban have already begun to do so—their activities have included a

major attack on ALP positions near Sangin that was ultimately repulsed. They will likely try to surround Musa Qala and establish de facto control over the town. From there, insurgents are likely to put pressure on Sangin through targeted killings and probing attacks on ANSF positions around the town. The Taliban may seek agreements with influential powerbrokers in northern Helmand who worked with the group in the past, particularly those who provided fighters in 2006. Whether northern Helmand remains with the government or falls to the Taliban will depend in large part on where the allegiances of these powerbrokers ultimately lie.

In central Helmand, the Taliban will follow a less direct approach. They will try to return to Marjeh and infiltrate back into Nad Ali. From Nad Ali, they will try to put pressure on the provincial capital at Lashkar Gah. Assassinations and complex attacks in the city are likely to increase in 2015 and 2016. We do not expect another massed attack on Lashkar Gah from bases in Nad Ali. It is highly unlikely that the Taliban will be able to mass sufficient forces to conduct direct assaults on government centers in central Helmand for at least two years after 2014. After 2016, there will be an increasing likelihood of major attacks in the province's central districts, especially if the Taliban are able to establish secure bases in the northern districts.

The eastern provinces

In the eastern provinces, we do not expect a coordinated campaign of significant scope or scale, though there is likely to be intense fighting in certain pockets. The insurgency in the east has always been relatively fragmented and localized, the exception being Haqqani network activities in parts of the southeast that have focused on maintaining bases and facilitation routes.

In Kunar and Nuristan provinces in the northeast, we expect a variety of different Afghan and Pakistani militant groups to coalesce and develop cross-cutting linkages. There will be an increase in attacks on Pakistani government positions from Afghan territory by elements of the Pakistani Taliban supported by Afghan insurgents and occasionally involving Afghan fighters. These developments will provoke Pakistan to retaliate by firing over the border and possibly providing support to local insurgents targeting Afghan forces.

Insurgents in Kunar and Nuristan will periodically attack isolated ANA positions and target resupply convoys in the mountains, in order to fix the ANA in their bases and disrupt their resupply in the hopes of eventually making these positions unsustainable. Insurgents will have the capability to mass against one or more ANA positions, resulting in potentially large losses. Insurgents will not likely attempt such an attack as long as the ANA move with caution into capillary valleys and avoid confrontations with local powerbrokers.

We expect that Arab and Uzbek fighters with links to al Qaeda, along with a small number of core al Qaeda members, will remain in certain valleys where they enjoy good relations with Pakistani and Afghan insurgents and have intermarried with local tribes and powerbrokers. In the near term, al Qaeda members will keep a low profile, but will contribute to insurgent activities through training and other support. They are likely to prioritize maintaining relations with local insurgents and the population over direct involvement in the insurgency.

Beyond 2016, it is possible that al Qaeda may regenerate to some extent, if the tempo of counterterrorism operations declines. If this happens, the group could establish networks in areas such as Ghazni or other parts of the east. There are many paths through the mountains to Kabul and other parts of Afghanistan, and al Qaeda and associated groups continue to transit to and from Pakistan, particularly in the hard-to-reach northern sectors of the border.

In the southeastern provinces of Khost, Paktiya, Paktika, and Ghazni, we expect the Haqqani network to expand its operational networks and control over smuggling, and to expand control over areas of transit between North Waziristan and Kabul. The group will relentlessly target and occasionally mass against ALP positions in Ghazni and Paktiya that threaten key transit routes to Kabul and the Kabul–Kandahar highway. The Haqqani network will seek to consolidate control over its key support zones in Khost and parts of Paktiya and Paktika, as it did in 2006–2008 and during the Soviet withdrawal. If the group is successful, it will use these areas to recruit and train additional fighters with which to put additional pressure on Kabul.

In Ghazni, the Taliban is likely to step up attacks on ALP positions, as well as targeted killings of leaders associated with local anti-Taliban

movements. There are likely to be massed attacks against ALP positions in the province. From bases in Ghazni, there are likely to be major attacks on convoys transiting the Kabul–Kandahar highway.

The north and west

A serious insurgent threat is not likely to emerge in the north or west in the 2015–2018 timeframe. The Taliban will seek to expand their influence among Pashtun populations, particularly around Kunduz, but will remain largely contained to a limited number of isolated pockets. Non-Pashtun local and regional powerbrokers are likely to prevent any serious Taliban resurgence in the north and west. Insurgent activities are likely to be focused on creating localized instability and limited assassinations of local ethnic powerbrokers, particularly leaders affiliated with the former Northern Alliance. If the insurgency achieves success in the south and divisions emerge between Kabul and powerbrokers in the west, the Taliban may once again seek inroads into Herat through targeted killings and alliances with sympathetic militia commanders.

External threats and the influence of regional powers

We expect that outside powers will take a wait-and-see approach. They will not substantially alter current policies towards Afghanistan until there is greater clarity in regard to the capabilities of the ANSF to stand on their own against the Taliban, the negotiations between the insurgents and the government, and the future makeup of the government in Kabul. This will be the case with India and Iran; it will be so to a lesser extent with Pakistan, which may seek to influence the dynamics of the Taliban's campaign against the ANSF post-2014.

Pakistan

We expect that the Pakistani militarily will remain focused on containing the fallout from Afghanistan inside Pakistan. It will fight militants that insist on attacking the Pakistani state, while pushing as many as possible into Afghanistan to fight with Afghan insurgents. It is not likely that Pakistan will take further military action against the Haqqani network in North Waziristan. Pakistan will maintain its relations with the Haqqani network and will lean on the group to carry out operations specific to Pakistani interests—in particular, attacks on Indian targets. Pakistan will seek to pressure the Afghan government

through the Haqqani network, and may press for an increase in attacks inside Kabul.

In regard to the Taliban's leadership in Quetta, Pakistan will not disrupt their movements, but will use its control over insurgent sanctuaries to ensure that Taliban leaders amenable to Pakistani interests dominate the movement. It is possible that Pakistan will increase materiel support to the Taliban, including the provision of heavy weapons, especially if relations between Kabul and Islamabad deteriorate further after 2014. It will be difficult to monitor this activity, due to Pakistan's past practices of moving weapons and materiel through proxies or making it openly available in arms bazaars near the border.

India

India will seek to stabilize the Afghan government by maintaining its investment and bilateral agreements. India may send a limited number of security forces to Afghanistan to secure its installations, which will likely come under increased attacks from Pakistani proxy forces. It is unlikely that India will deploy security forces to help stabilize the Afghan government, for fear of being drawn into the conflict or risking another war with Pakistan.

India will, to the extent possible, increase its efforts to strengthen Afghan ministries and train ANA officers in India. If India perceives the Taliban as regaining the initiative against the government, it may provide support to former leaders of the Northern Alliance and help them to rearm. India and Iran are likely to share common interests in these areas.

Iran

Iran is likely to engage in activities to stabilize the government in Kabul, while pulling back from tactical support to insurgents as additional U.S. and NATO forces depart. Tehran largely shares Washington's objective of ensuring a stable Afghan government that is capable of combating Sunni extremists, policing its own borders, and stemming the flow of narcotics into Iran—though Iranian officials would not say so openly. The departure of a large U.S. military presence on the ground in Afghanistan will remove a major impediment to improved relations between Kabul and Tehran. The histori-

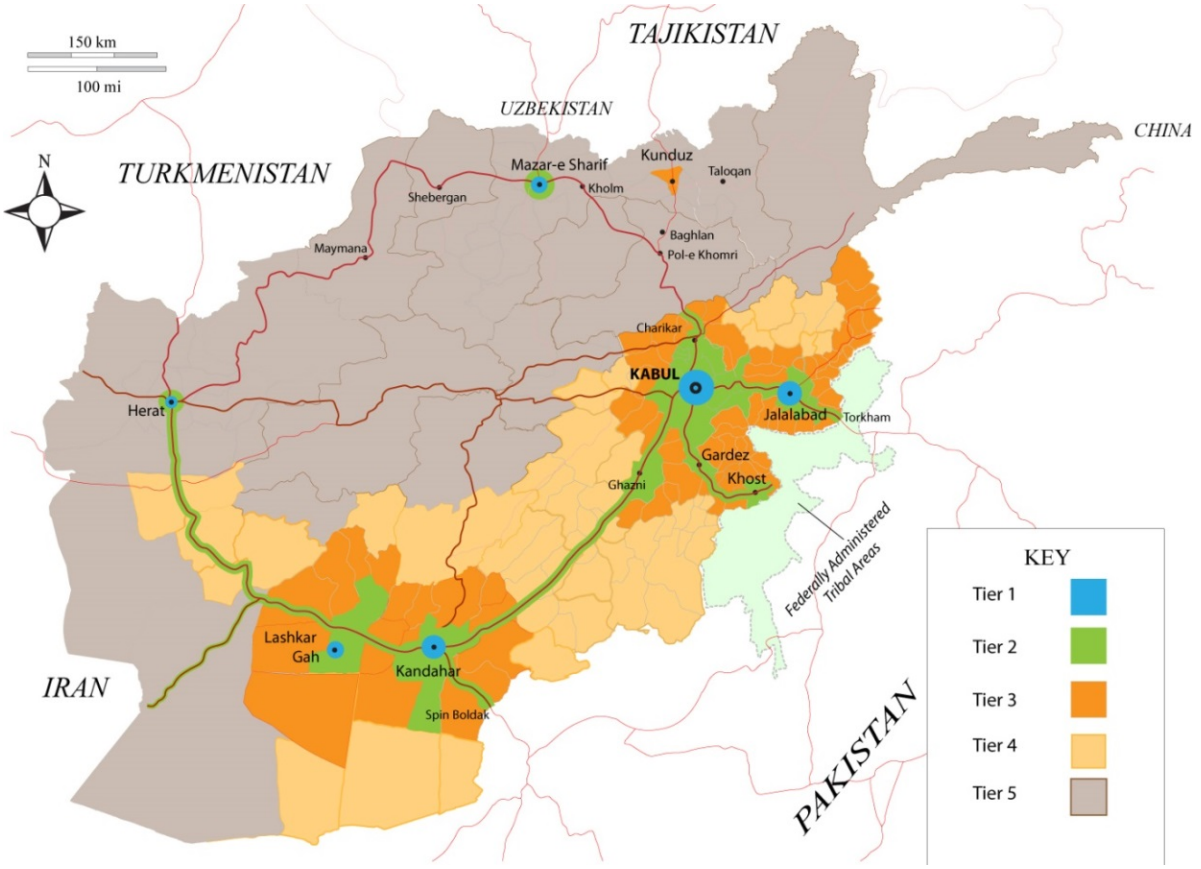
cal animosity between Iran and the Taliban is likely to reassert itself, especially as Pakistan seeks to fill the void left by the U.S. departure.

If the Afghan government looks to be in danger of collapsing, or if the Taliban come to dominate the central government and shut out pro-Iran Afghan leaders, Tehran is likely to shift its focus to former commanders in the Northern Alliance and other pro-Iran regional powerbrokers. If the U.S. retains a substantial presence inside Afghanistan, especially in the west (e.g., at the Shindand airbase in Herat and possibly the Bastion airfield in Helmand), Iran may assist elements of the Taliban in targeting those installations.

Map of Afghanistan by security tiers

Using the above narrative assessment along with the implications of our case study analyses and current threat assessment, we derived the map shown in Figure 3 (this is the same map as in Figure 2, but reproduced here for ease of reading). This map depicts areas of Afghanistan categorized via our five security tiers. (Appendix E provides a full listing of Afghanistan's districts by security tier).

Figure 3. Map of Afghanistan by security tier



As the discussion to this point has highlighted, the Taliban are likely to first test the ANSF in Tier 3 and 4 areas, attempting to gain control of these in order to project power and influence into many of the Tier 2 and Tier 1 areas. If they are successful, they are likely to gain recruits and momentum, enabling them to increase pressure on the Tier 2 areas and terrorist attacks in Tier 1 areas in order to discredit the government and the ANSF. If they are successful in doing this, they will likely continue to ratchet up pressure on the ANSF and in the cities until they are able to capture the latter and claim political control of the country.

Table 9 summarizes our key assessments for the threat in the 2015–2018 timeframe.

Table 9. Summary of assessments for the future threat: 2015–2018

Assessments
Overall key points
• The Taliban in the near term will follow a gradualist approach of keeping military pressure on the ANSF, expanding their control and influence in areas vacated by coalition forces, encircling key cities, and conducting high-profile attacks on strategic targets in Kabul.
• The Taliban will seek to press militarily via activities akin to, but lower in intensity than, offensives they conducted in 2006–2008 and those that the Mujahideen conducted in 1989. They will not likely be capable of direct assaults of substantial scope and scale before 2016.
• In the medium term (2017–2018), once the insurgency has had time to recover from the U.S. surge, there will be greater likelihood of a larger and more intense military effort. The Taliban will conserve resources in the near term for such an offensive.
• Following 2014, the Taliban will marshal additional resources to put greater pressure on the ANSF, in order to test their strength and gauge their weaknesses in the absence of substantial coalition support.
• It is highly likely that the insurgency will regenerate at least some of its lost capability as U.S. and NATO forces draw down and the tempo of counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations declines.
• We expect there to be internal debates within the Taliban senior leadership over the appropriate time, manner, and intensity of future offensives.
Threats to the national government (Security Tier 1 implications)
• The Taliban will attempt to escalate complex attacks and assassinations on high-level targets in Kabul. Through these attacks, insurgents will try to directly threaten key national leaders and institutions, as well as remaining U.S. and NATO personnel. These attacks pose the greatest near-term strategic threat to the national government.
• In support of attacks in Kabul, the Taliban will attempt to expand and consolidate control over rural areas around Kabul, particularly along the southern reaches. To this end, they will seek less to exert overt control over key transit and base areas and more to protect their networks from exposure and penetration.
• The Haqqani network will regenerate a significant amount of lost capability, making it a greater potential threat post-2014. Withdrawal of U.S. forces and enablers will reduce the tempo of intelligence and SOF operations, reducing pressure on the group and enabling it to regenerate.
• Taliban senior leadership will remain united and will continue to follow a coherent strategy for at least several years after 2014, as long as the U.S. continues to support the Kabul government politically and militarily.
• Regardless of how well the ANSF perform post-2014, the Taliban will remain a viable force at the strategic level as long as their leaders remain safe inside Pakistan.
Threats in Afghanistan's geographic regions (Security Tier 2–4 implications)
• In the provinces, there will be various small offensives aimed at expanding insurgent control and regaining important ground lost during the U.S. surge. The Taliban will continually test the ANSF, first in outlying areas and then, if the ANSF fare poorly, increasingly in more central locations.

Table 9. Summary of assessments for the future threat: 2015–2018

Assessments
• Most of these attacks will be small-scale assaults, but we also expect there to be massed attacks in areas of the country where the Taliban enjoy considerable freedom of movement.
• The Taliban will use newly captured ground to rebuild their military capabilities and to surround and put pressure on district centers and other key areas.
• Insurgents will seek to regain freedom of movement through key corridors from Pakistan and between internal safe havens and strategically important districts and cities.
• The Taliban will target ANSF lines of communication, attempting to disrupt resupply and isolate outlying positions. Insurgents will increase attacks on vulnerable stretches of key highways.
• There will be continual assassinations of security officials and pro-government leaders, especially those deemed effective at creating unity among ANSF units and political factions.
• In the southern provinces, the Taliban will seek to infiltrate back into Kandahar city and Lashkar Gah, while seeking to regain lost ground in northern Helmand and Kandahar. o The Taliban will seek to reestablish base areas in the rural areas around Kandahar city, especially Zharey, Panjwai, and Arghandab. From bases in nearby rural areas, the Taliban will try to assassinate key officials deemed essential to the continued success of layered security in and around the city. o In Kandahar province, the Taliban will attempt to regain control over outlying districts, particularly Maiwand and areas in the north. Once insurgents have had time to regroup, they may attempt multiple attacks on vulnerable district centers in 2016 or beyond. o In Helmand province, the Taliban will put considerable pressure on the northern districts, especially Musa Qala and Sangin. There will be massed assaults on outlying ALP positions and targeted killings in the town of Sangin. o In central Helmand, the Taliban will try to infiltrate back into Nad Ali, and from there conduct high profile attacks in the provincial capital of Lashkar Gah. Massed attacks are unlikely to occur in central Helmand.
• In the eastern provinces, we do not expect a coordinated campaign of significant scope or scale, though there is likely to be intense fighting in certain pockets. Insurgents in the east will focus on protecting key bases and transit areas. o Insurgents in Kunar and Nuristan will periodically attack isolated ANA positions and target resupply convoys in the mountains, in order to fix the ANSF, disrupt their resupply, and make outlying positions untenable. o If the ANA pulls back from the northeast, attacks on nearby Pakistani border positions are likely to increase, exacerbating tensions between Kabul and Islamabad and between Afghan and Pakistani forces along the border. o The remnants of al Qaeda are likely to maintain a low profile and remain largely contained to remote valleys in the northeast, but may regenerate if the tempo of counterterrorism operations decline and the ANSF pull back from Kunar and Nuristan. Al Qaeda may expand to other remote areas of the east, such as Ghazni.

Table 9. Summary of assessments for the future threat: 2015–2018

Assessments
o In the southeastern provinces of Khost, Paktiya, Paktika, and Ghazni, the Haqqani network will expand its networks, as well as control over areas of transit between North Waziristan and Kabul.
o The Haqqani network will target ALP commanders and occasionally mass against ALP positions in Ghazni and Paktiya that lie on key transit routes.
o There are likely to be massed ambushes on convoys transiting the Kabul–Kandahar and Khost–Gardez highways.
o The Taliban will seek to expand its influence among minority Pashtun populations—particularly around Kunduz—but these efforts will be limited.
o If the insurgency achieves success in the south and divisions emerge between Kabul and powerbrokers in the western part of the country, the Taliban may once again seek inroads into Herat through targeted killings and alliances with local powerbrokers at odds with the government.
External threats and the influence of regional powers
• It is not likely that Pakistan will take further military action against the Haqqani network in North Waziristan or other factions of the Taliban. Regardless of how well the ANSF performs post-2014, the Taliban will remain a viable force at the strategic level as long as their leaders remain safe inside Pakistan.
• Pakistan will seek to pressure the Afghan government through the Haqqani network, and may press for greater attacks inside Kabul. If relations between the two governments improve, Pakistan may use its influence to restrain the Haqqani network.
• In regard to the Quetta-based leadership, Pakistan will not disrupt its movements, but will use its control over continued sanctuary to ensure that Taliban leaders amenable to Pakistani interests dominate the movement and future negotiations.
• India will increase efforts to strengthen Afghan ministries and train ANA officers in India. If India believes the Taliban is resurgent, New Delhi may support former leaders of the Northern Alliance.
• Iran is likely to engage in activities to stabilize the government in Kabul, while pulling back from tactical support to Taliban insurgents as additional U.S. forces depart, but it may continually aid insurgents in attacks on strategic bases and airfields in the west. Iran may shift focus to pro-Iran powerbrokers if its influence in Kabul erodes.

2019–2023: Assessment of the long-term future threat

It will take at least two to four years for the ANSF to prove themselves in the absence of substantial U.S. and NATO involvement. If the ANSF manage to hold areas of strategic and operational importance and disrupt the insurgency in key rural areas, they will enable the government in Kabul to remain viable and allow key political actors on all sides to stop hedging and plan for the long term. It may then be possible for an enduring political solution to be negotiated between the government and the Taliban. The ANSF are not likely to be able to enforce stability in the absence of a political solution, or to succeed in decisively defeating the Taliban on the battlefield.

The Taliban will test the ANSF for several years after 2014, until it is clear what the force is truly capable of without substantial U.S. and NATO support. The group will not likely relinquish the military option until it is clear the ANSF cannot be defeated and that violence no longer promises to increase its leverage in negotiations. The Taliban will likely retain their overall unity and command and control as long as they have momentum; but they may weaken and fracture if the ANSF hold and prove stronger than anticipated. Once Taliban leaders have pushed the military option to its limits, they will likely seek a negotiated settlement and insurgent threats to the ANSF will diminish over time.

Looking further into the future, if the ANSF achieve their operational goals and hold against the insurgency for several years after 2014, they will prove their ability to endure independent of substantial coalition support. This would remove uncertainties associated with U.S. and NATO withdrawal and decrease incentives for insurgents to continue fighting, thereby creating the conditions necessary for an enduring political solution to the conflict. Assuming that the ANSF are successful through 2018, we assess that this is the most likely strategic end-state during the 2019–2023 timeframe.

Table 10 summarizes the key points for this portion of our future threat assessment.

Table 10. Summary of assessments for the future threat: 2019–2023

Assessments
• Assuming that the ANSF will have the capabilities required to sustain themselves long-term, the most likely strategic end-state during the 2019–2023 timeframe is an enduring political solution following several years of fighting in which the ANSF prove themselves capable of holding with minimal U.S. and NATO support.
• Once Taliban leaders have pushed the military option to its limits, it is likely that they will seek a negotiated settlement and that insurgent threats to the ANSF will diminish over time. It is not likely that the ANSF will decisively defeat the Taliban on the battlefield or succeed in stabilizing the country in the absence of a political solution.
• If the ANSF manage to hold areas of strategic and operational importance and disrupt the insurgency in key rural areas through 2018, this will enable the government in Kabul to remain viable and allow key political actors on all sides to stop hedging and plan for the long term. Then, as a result, the Taliban may come to terms with Kabul. These conditions will be necessary for a lasting settlement.

Conclusion

Based on our analysis of Afghan history and the present situation:

We conclude that the insurgency will pose a greater threat post-2014 than it does now.

The last several years of counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations have weakened the insurgency considerably, while the ANSF have grown stronger. The Taliban nonetheless remain a viable force with sanctuaries in Pakistan. Their overall intent appears unchanged, and they remain capable of high profile attacks in key cities and massed attacks in rural areas. It is likely that the insurgency will regenerate at least some of its lost capability as U.S. and NATO forces draw down and the tempo of counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations declines.

Our historical analysis of three case studies in which insurgents conducted a campaign against the Afghan government showed that in all three cases, insurgents employed a strategy in which they focused first on controlling and influencing rural areas, to enable a later focus on taking key urban areas and cities—and insurgents were largely successful at doing so in all three cases.

Based on these past precedents:

We conclude that the Taliban are likely to follow a gradualist campaign in 2015–2016, focused on continually testing the ANSF in order to gauge the force's vulnerabilities in the absence of coalition forces.

Such a campaign would involve terrorist attacks in key cities from bases in nearby rural areas, expansion of bases and transit corridors between Pakistan and Kabul, a combination of small and large-scale attacks on outlying ANSF outposts and district centers in rural areas, and ambushes along vulnerable stretches of key highways. We assess that the Taliban will conserve resources in the near term for such an offensive, while carrying out enough attacks in the interim to remain relevant.

We also conclude that there will be increased risk of a large-scale offensive after 2016.

We assess that Pakistan will not take further military action against the Haqqani network or other insurgent groups focused on Afghanistan until there is greater clarity on the future makeup of the regime in Kabul and the long-term viability of the ANSF. Pakistan also is not likely to take action against Quetta-based Taliban leaders. Instead, Pakistan will use its control over insurgent sanctuaries to ensure that leaders amenable to Pakistani interests dominate these movements.

With our future threat assessment in hand, we next describe the framework that we used to size and structure the ANSF.

ANSF force-sizing framework

The U.S. policy goal for Afghanistan as stated in the 2013 NDAA is: "Prevent Afghanistan from ever again becoming a safe haven for terrorists that threaten Afghanistan, the region, and the world."[12]

To determine the size, structure, capabilities, and posture of the ANSF, we needed to operationalize this policy goal by writing nested goals at the operational level—focused on security—that the ANSF

[12] 2013 National Defense Authorization Act, H.R. 4310, Section 1215.

could reasonably be expected to achieve with U.S. and NATO support (per our overarching assumptions).

Using the construct of security tiers, we can state operational goals that, if achieved, will support the U.S. policy goal in Afghanistan during the timeframe of this study. As such, we assess that the operational goals for the ANSF in 2015–2018 should be to:

- Neutralize the insurgency in Tier 1 (National/Strategic) and Tier 2 (Operational) areas.
- Disrupt the insurgency in Tier 3 (Tactical) and Tier 4 (Support/Transit) areas.
- Maintain civil order in Tier 5 (Civil Order) areas.

For the sake of this study, we use the following definitions in support of these goals:

- Neutralize: To put out of action or make incapable of action.[13]
- Disrupt: To cause disorder or turmoil.[14]
- Maintain: To keep in a specified state.[15]

To be clear, these operational goals are minimalist in nature. They are designed to prevent the overthrow of the government of Afghanistan and the presence of insurgent and terrorist safe havens within its borders. They are *not* designed to result in the military defeat of the Taliban. While the latter may be a desirable outcome, *it is not the stated policy goal of the United States.*

Using these operational goals and our future threat assessment (most notably, the map of security tiers shown in Figure 2), we identified the missions the ANSF would need to conduct to counter insurgent threats in the 2015–2018 timeframe. These missions are:

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[13] Dictionary.com Unabridged. Random House, Inc. Accessed Sep. 10, 2013, at http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/neutralize.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid.

- Maintain security and civil order
- Deter insurgent massing against, and prevent infiltration into, the major cities
- Secure key lines of communication
- Secure points of entry and interdict in the border zone
- Conduct counterinsurgency operations
- Conduct counter-network and counter-facilitation operations
- Conduct reinforcement and quick response operations

We then cross-referenced these missions against the various force types within the ANSF and our map of Afghanistan by security tier to identify which force types are required for each mission, and in which tiers (areas) those forces would need to conduct the missions. The resulting "force sizing framework" is shown in Table 11 on the next page.

This framework allows us to clearly identify which force types we need to size, for which missions, and in which areas—in other words, it enables a troop-to-task analysis. In the next section, we perform this analysis to determine the overall size, structure, posture, capabilities, and regional differentiation needed for the ANSF to achieve the operational goals (in support of the U.S. policy goal) in the 2015–2018 timeframe.

Table 11. Force sizing framework (ANSF missions by force type and security tiers)

	ANSF Missions						
Force Type	**Maintain security and civil order**	**Deter insurgent massing and prevent infiltration**	**Secure key lines of communication**	**Secure points of entry and interdict in the border zone**	**Conduct counter-insurgency operations**	**Conduct counter-network and counter-facilitation operations**	**Conduct reinforcement and quick response operations**
Uniform Police	All Tiers	Tier 2	Tier 2	N/A	Tiers 3 and 4	N/A	Reinforce local police in Tier 3
Local Police	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Tier 3	N/A	N/A
Customs and Border Police	N/A	N/A	N/A	Tier 1 airports and Tiers 3, 4, and 5 border areas	N/A	N/A	N/A
Army (includes AAF and supporting forces)	N/A	Tier 2	Tier 2	N/A	Tiers 3 and 4	N/A	Reinforce police in Tiers 2–5
SOF and Special Police	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	All Tiers	Quick response in all Tiers

Assessment of ANSF size, structure, capabilities, posture, and regional differentiation

The NDAA asked us to analyze the strength, force structure, force posture, and capabilities required to make the ANSF capable of providing security for their own country so as to prevent Afghanistan from ever again becoming a safe haven for terrorists that threaten Afghanistan, the region, and the world. Additionally, the Under Secretary of Defense (Policy) asked us to analyze ANSF regional differentiation in capacity, capabilities, resources, challenges, and relationships with Kabul. As our analysis proceeded, it became clear that these tasks were intertwined; thus, we have integrated their discussion here.

Assumptions and caveats

In addition to the study's overarching assumptions, we assume that the ANSF's counter-narcotics missions in 2015–2018 will not be substantially greater than they are today. Therefore, we do not size a force type to conduct this mission. If the government of Afghanistan or the U.S. and the international community want an increase in counter-narcotics operations in 2015–2018, it would require forces beyond what we calculate here.

In structuring our analysis for this task, we realized that calculating the size and structure of the ANSF in the abstract could lead to a force so different from the current one as to be unreachable during the timeframe of this study. To avoid this, we made a conscious decision to constrain our analysis by holding certain aspects of the ANSF constant. Specifically, we took the following as design constraints:

- The broad contours of the ANSF will stay roughly constant. We considered each of the forces that the ANSF currently have relative to the missions needed in each security tier to accomplish the operational goals. We did not consider the creation of new forces.
- The broad contours of each force type also will stay roughly constant. For example, the ANA will continue to have six regional (corps) headquarters (though we do allow the number of troops and battalions in each corps to vary).

Finally, there are many different ways to size security forces, none of which is perfect or free of criticism. As a means of providing additional rigor, and avoiding the pitfalls of any single technique, we used several approaches for determining the number and type of forces required whenever possible. By using several methods to determine force requirements, we were able to identify where the different approaches converged and where they diverged. We then looked more closely at the latter, consulted with subject matter experts, reviewed the literature, and used these sources to make our best judgment as to the appropriate force levels needed.

Assessment

The following sections describe our troop-to-task analysis for the various components of the ANSF. In each section, we briefly describe the current mission and activities of each force type, as well as the force levels in comparable situations (such as historical conflicts or the current force levels in neighboring countries), before calculating the size of the force. We conclude this section with a comparison of the force levels calculated via our analysis and the ANSF forces currently expected in 2015.

Our analytical approach is intended to identify the *minimum* force size and structure required to counter the expected threats in the 2015–2018 timeframe. Throughout this section, however, we test the sensitivity of our results to our key planning assumptions and highlight how different assumptions and planning factors could lead to different estimates for the ANSF force size.

Afghan Uniformed Police, Anti-Crime Police, and special police

The police in Afghanistan today differ significantly from a police force in the U.S. or Europe. In most of Afghanistan, the police are better thought of as a paramilitary guard force than as a civilian police force that provides law enforcement. The police secure Kabul, Kandahar, and other major cities in southern and eastern Afghanistan by having large numbers of policemen standing watch on street corners, directing traffic, and deterring violence. The police also stand guard at a number of police outposts and vehicle checkpoints scattered across rural communities and along major roads. In much of southern and eastern Afghanistan, 8 to 20 police will live at these

small police outposts, watching traffic and guarding the communities served by these roads 24 hours a day.

This situation is a result of numerous factors, to include the insurgent threat in Afghanistan, the lack of a functioning statutory judicial system, and a history devoid of the types of community policing familiar to Western audiences. Traditionally, and still today in much of rural Afghanistan, most crimes and civil disputes are resolved through community dispute resolution mechanisms. This means that tribal, religious, or village elders help people resolve their disputes without involving the government. Today, the police in most rural areas bring only a handful of cases per month to district and provincial prosecutors—typically these are the most egregious of crimes that cannot be otherwise resolved via traditional means.

In its 10-year vision for the police, the MoI calls for the police to move from paramilitary-style policing toward community policing and law enforcement.[16] The MoI's vision statement acknowledges that this transition will occur gradually over the next decade and at different rates in various parts of the country. In particular, the police in southern Afghanistan are expected to continue performing checkpoint security and holding areas after counterinsurgency operations have been completed. They are expected to have a limited role in supporting law enforcement, due to ongoing insurgent activity and the limited reach of the statutory judicial system in the south.[17]

The Afghan National Police currently have an end-strength cap of 157,000. The ANP is an overarching term that encompasses the Afghan Uniformed Police, the Afghan Anti-Crime Police, specialty police task forces, the Afghan Border Police, and various headquarters and support personnel. In this section, we are primarily concerned with the approximately 105,000 police working for the AUP, AACP,

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[16] *Ten-Year Vision for the Afghan National Police: 1392-1402*. Afghanistan Ministry of the Interior. Apr. 22, 2013, accessed Sep. 23, 2013, at http://ipcb.files.wordpress.com/2013/06/13-04-02-ten-year-vision-english-final-version.pdf.

[17] Author interviews in Regional Command (RC)–East, RC–South, and RC–Southwest. Afghanistan. Aug. 12- 24, 2013.

and specialty police units.[18] We address the other 50,000 ANP personnel in subsequent sections.

Methodology and assumptions

In the international literature on security sector reform, the size of a police force is often reported as the number of police per 1,000 inhabitants. Thus, to determine the force size for the uniformed police in Afghanistan, we consider police-to-population ratios in other countries (both in the region around Afghanistan and in other post-conflict countries) and review police-to-population ratios across Afghanistan today, compared to current threat levels. We also use insights that we gathered from Afghan leaders, coalition police advisors, and other subject matter experts in the U.S. and Afghanistan regarding the factors to consider when determining the appropriate police-to-population ratios for Afghanistan in 2015. They noted that geography, population density, demographics, and the nature of the threats facing a community also play a significant role in determining police requirements, and we take these factors into account in our analysis.

Determining force sizes for the anti-crime police and special police units is beyond the scope of this study. Some of the requirement for these forces is included in police-to-population ratios, as most countries around the world have major crimes taskforces and police intelligence officers. We acknowledge, however, that Afghanistan has particularly large requirements for crisis response, counterinsurgency and counterterrorism task forces, given the significant threats facing Kabul, and we discuss these requirements when we address the police requirements in the capital.

[18] The AUP include community and paramilitary police working in precincts and districts (and their associated headquarters at the provincial and regional levels); police who are specifically designated to provide security in Kabul, provincial centers, and other key infrastructure such as power plants; and a small number of fire and rescue personnel in Kabul and other provincial centers.

Comparable forces

To provide perspective on the requirements for police forces, we first review the size of those forces in other countries. These numbers are somewhat difficult to compare directly, as different countries include different types of forces in their civilian police.[19]

Across the globe, the median number of police per 1,000 inhabitants is 3.0.[20] Given the security situation in Afghanistan, one would expect its requirement for police to be higher than the global median. On the other hand, the ratio can vary dramatically even among countries that have recently experienced civil war and international interventions; it depends on the level of on-going criminality and violence after the international intervention, the size of the country's army and other security forces, and the number of international forces remaining in the country. Table 12 gives some examples.[21]

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[19] For example, some countries include civil-order police, riot police, paramilitary police, and border security forces in the police force, under the MoI, while other countries authorize such forces under their MoD. In addition, contracted guards may provide fixed-site security to government buildings and infrastructure, such as government ministries, universities, and power plants. Finally, the size and composition of fire and rescue forces varies internationally and these personnel are not uniformly counted across international police forces. For additional discussion, see: Scott Chilton, Eckart Schiewek, and Tim Bremmers. *Evaluation of the appropriate size of the Afghan National Police Force Manning List (Tashkiel).* Report for the European Commission, Letter of Contract No 2009/207401. Jul. 15, 2009.

[20] *State of Crime and Criminal Justice Worldwide*. United Nations Report of the Secretary General, Twelfth UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. Feb. 1, 2010.

[21] James Dobbins, Seth G. Jones, Keith Crane, Beth Cole DeGrasse, *The Beginner's Guide to Nation Building*. RAND National Security Research Division. 2007.

Table 12. Police per 1,000 inhabitants 5 years after an international intervention began

	Police per 1,000 inhabitants
East Timor	1.5
El Salvador	2.1
Kosovo	2.7
Iraq (2 years after)	3.7
Bosnia Herzegovina	4.5
Cambodia	5.8

The police-to-population ratio also varies significantly among countries in central and south Asia, as shown in Table 13. There are several takeaways from these comparisons. First, India's ratio is not the most useful one for estimating Afghanistan's requirement, as India has one of the lowest police-to-population ratios in the world and the Indian government has recently acknowledged that it needs to recruit and train significant numbers of additional police to deal with both criminal activities and the Hindu-Muslim violence occurring in parts of the country.[22] Second, the number of police in Iran is uncertain because the country has a large number of paramilitary and other security forces who maintain order but are not counted in this figure for civilian police.

Pakistan's ratio is the most useful for our purposes. The figure for the police force in Pakistan includes provincial police (who serve in the southern provinces), as well as frontier constabularies who serve in the Tribal Areas and along the border with Pakistan and Afghanistan. It also includes all the federal police agencies, including the anti-narcotics force, airport security forces, highway police, and the police intelligence bureau. It does not appear to include any fire and rescue personnel.

[22] Malavika Vyawahare. "India's Police Force Lags Much of the World." *India Ink, New York Times*, Jan. 16, 2013.

Table 13. Police per 1,000 inhabitants in Central Asia

	Police per 1,000 inhabitants
India[23]	1.3
Iran[24]	2.0
Pakistan[25]	3.3
Turkmenistan[26]	3.3
Kyrgyzstan[27]	4.2
Tajikistan[28]	4.5

Assessment

Overall, Afghanistan currently has about 97,500 police in the AUP, AACP, and specialty police task forces. This yields a police-to-population ratio of 3.1 to 1,000, which is slightly lower than the police-to-population ratio in Pakistan. As shown in Table 14, the police-to-population ratio varies regionally across Afghanistan because the MoI has allocated different numbers of police to each district, based on each district's size and the MoI's assessment of the threat level.[29]

[23] Ibid. and Hassan Abbas. *Reforming Pakistan's Police and Law Enforcement Infrastructure*. United States Institute of Peace, Special Report 266. Feb. 11, 2011.

[24] Anthony Cordesman and Khalid R. Al-Rodhan. *The Gulf Military Forces in an Era of Asymmetric War: Iran.* Center for Strategic and International Studies. Jun. 28, 2006.

[25] Abbas, *Reforming Pakistan's Police.*

[26] "Security and Foreign Forces: Turkmenistan." *Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment–Russia and the CIS*. Nov. 2012, accessed Oct. 1, 2013, at https://janes.ihs.com/CustomPages/Janes/DisplayPage.aspx?DocType=Reference&ItemId=+++1303096&Pubabbrev=CIS.

[27] Chilton, *Evaluation of the appropriate size of the Afghan National Police Force Manning List (Tashkiel).*

[28] Ibid.

[29] The population of Afghanistan is uncertain, as the last official census was conducted in the 1970s. Afghanistan's Central Statistics Office (CSO) provides annual population estimates for each district. The total popula-

Table 14. Current police-to-population ratios by region[30]

Region	Population (millions)	AUP, AACP, and special police per 1,000 inhabitants
Capital (greater Kabul)	4.8	3.8
North and west	13.0	2.2
East	9.3	2.9
South and southwest	4.0	5.9
All Afghanistan	31.1	3.1

Below, we calculate numbers of police needed by security tier. In total we assess a requirement for about 104,000 police, based on our force-sizing framework and the threats expected in each security tier. This corresponds to an increase of about 6,500 police (or 7 percent) from the current force level. Our results for this section are summarized in Table 15.

tion of Afghanistan according to those numbers is 25.5 million. In contrast, the CIA World Factbook estimates the population at 31.1 million. Based on our interviews with ISAF personnel in Kabul, the higher population estimate is considered more accurate. For our analysis, therefore, we scaled district populations reported by the CSO by a factor of 1.22 so that the total population of Afghanistan matches the CIA World Factbook's population. See: Afghanistan CSO. Settled population by provinces: 2012–2013, accessed Sep. 29, 2013 at http://cso.gov.af/en/page/6449; and "Afghanistan." CIA World Factbook. Central Intelligence Agency, accessed Aug. 22, 2013, at www.cia.gov/library/ publications/the-world-factbook/geos/af.html.

[30] Table 14 is broken down by region—based on the boundaries of the ANA Regional Corps—rather than security tier, because the police are currently organized in district and provincial units rather than by security tier. Provincial-level forces, such as provincial headquarters, provincial response companies, and other specialty anti-crime police stationed in the provinces currently have jurisdiction and support operations across entire provinces, and it was not feasible using their current manning document to allocate them across tiers in the provinces that span several security tiers.

Table 15. Summary of calculated police force sizes, by security tier

Threat Tier	Assessment	Force size considerations	Population (millions)	Assessed police per 1,000 population	Calculated number of police
5	These areas will be largely stable, but will require a baseline of security forces.	Unchanged from current average levels in north and west. This police-to-population ratio is well within the international norm for police in stable countries.	12.5	2.2	27,500
4	The threat level in Tier 4 will be higher than in Tier 5, as anti-government forces will pass through and stage in these areas.	The requirement for police is only slightly higher than in Tier 5, as ANA and SOF will conduct the bulk of the counter-network and interdiction operations required in Tier 4.	3.1	2.5	7,800
3	On-going counter-insurgency. The ANA will be conducting up-to battalion sized counter-insurgency operations in these areas.	Large numbers of police are required to protect communities, hold areas after ANA operations, and gather information about insurgent movements. This level of police is approximately the same as the level in the southern Tier 3 areas today, and is at the high end of police-to-population ratios in other countries that have recently faced insurgencies.	5.8	6.0	34,800
2	The ANSF will need to provide a "ring of steel" to protect Tier 1 urban centers, but much of this security will be provided by the ANA.	We size the police here at the high end of the range of police seen internationally. We expect Tier 2 areas to be stable enough that the ANA's operations will be on a smaller scale than in Tier 3, so the police will not need to hold areas after battalion-sized ANA operations.	2.9	3.0	8,700
1 (Kabul)	Security in Kabul is good today, in part because the police have a large and visible presence across the city.	Unchanged from current levels. Maintaining a strong police presence in Kabul is necessary as international forces withdraw. This police-to-population ratio includes the police in the national headquarters and the specialized police task forces.	4.8	3.8	18,200
1 (other cities)	Securing the other Tier 1 cities is also essential for security in Afghanistan as a whole.	Proportional to the force structure for securing Kabul, minus the force structure for national-level police headquarters.	2.0	3.5	7,000
Total			31.1	3.3	104,000

We now describe our force-sizing calculation for the police in more detail, starting with Tier 5.

Tier 5 (Goal: Maintain civil order)

We assess that the number of police in Tier 5 should remain at current levels. Tier 5 areas are relatively secure today, and our threat assessment suggests they will remain relatively secure in the 2015–2018 timeframe. These areas, therefore, need only a baseline of security forces. The provinces in Tier 5 currently have, on average, 2.2 police per 1,000 inhabitants. This ratio is within the range for stable countries around the world (i.e., between 1.0 and 3.0).[31] Moreover, our interviews with subject matter experts in theater indicated that the number of police is roughly appropriate across the Tier 5 provinces.[32]

Tier 4 (Goal: Disrupt the insurgency)

Based on our threat assessment, we conclude that the requirement for security and civil order forces is higher in Tier 4 areas than in Tier 5, but not significantly higher. In our force-sizing framework, much of the additional requirement for security in Tier 4, compared to Tier 5, will be addressed by a higher level of military presence (e.g., ANA) to reinforce the police (as described below). Currently, there is significant variability in the ratio of police to population in Tier 4 areas; from around 2 per 1,000 inhabitants in the eastern parts of Tier 4 (including Kapisa, Ghazni, Laghman, and Nangarhar provinces), to around 6 per 1,000 inhabitants in the southern parts (including Paktika, Uruzgan, and Zabul provinces). The high numbers of police in the southern provinces are likely due to the fact that these areas have seen insurgent activity and high levels of U.S. and NATO operations over the past several years. The MoI, therefore, likely considered these areas to have high threat levels—and thus high police requirements—when it last allocated police across the country. In 2015 to 2018, however, we assess a reduced need for police forces across Tier

[31] *State of Crime and Criminal Justice Worldwide*. United Nations Report of the Secretary General, Twelfth UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. Feb. 1, 2010.

[32] Author interviews in RC–North and RC–West and with police advisors. Afghanistan and Washington, D.C. Aug 12–24, 2013, and Sep. 2013.

4, since our threat assessment identifies these areas as being of lower priority for the insurgency.

Tier 3 (Goal: Disrupt the insurgency)

Our threat assessment concludes that Tier 3 areas will contain active insurgent threats. Given the operational goal of disrupting these threats in Tier 3 areas, we assess that the police will continue to require significant force structure there. The ANA will be conducting up to battalion-sized operations in Tier 3, and the police will need to protect communities from insurgents and hold ground after ANA clearing operations.

Today, the police in parts of southern Afghanistan accomplish this mission by manning a large number of small posts and checkpoints along roads and in rural villages. Several cultural advisors and Afghan police leaders told us that this distributed and visible security presence is an essential part of the police's ability to build public confidence and demonstrate the government's ability to secure the countryside.[33] This approach necessitates large numbers of police. Currently, the ratio of police is just over 6 per 1,000 inhabitants in Helmand and Kandahar provinces. This ratio of police to population is on the high side of ratios worldwide and also on the high end of ratios for countries that have recently experienced international interventions (see Table 12).

Our interviews with U.S., NATO, and Afghan personnel in theater made clear that AUP and ANA commanders desire additional police in southern Afghanistan. Today, the ANA maintain a number of small outposts in southern Afghanistan, which reduces the ANA's ability to mass forces to conduct offensive counterinsurgency operations. ANA commanders, therefore, would like to transition some of these checkpoints to the AUP. U.S. and NATO advisors told us, however, that while a few specific areas in Helmand and Kandahar could use an additional police presence, the overall number of police author-

[33] Author interviews with personnel from RC–South and RC–Southwest. Afghanistan. Aug. 12-20, 2013; and Catherine E. Norman. *What do Afghans want from the police? Views from Helmand Province.* CNA Research Memorandum D0026181.A2. Jan. 2012.

ized for southern and southeastern Afghanistan is appropriate. ISAF personnel also indicated that the AUP in southern and southwestern Afghanistan have excess capacity in some districts that they could redistribute to areas with limited police presence. The AUP could also increase its on-duty manpower in southern Afghanistan by reducing the number of "ghost police" on the payroll (i.e., people who are drawing a paycheck while not actually working).

In contrast, we assess that the police could use additional force structure in the Tier 3 areas of eastern Afghanistan. While the operational goal of disrupting the insurgency is the same in eastern and southern Tier 3 areas, the nature of the insurgent threat is different. The threat in the east largely stems from the Haqqani network. The Haqqanis are not as interested in taking, holding, and administering populated areas as the Taliban are in the south; rather, they run network operations to target cities such as Kabul with high profile attacks and assassinations.

As a result, we assess that the ANSF in eastern Afghanistan should transition from a counterinsurgency to a counter-network approach. This means that the ANSF require fewer ANA to conduct battalion-sized operations in the remote areas of Tier 3, but need more SOF operations to disrupt insurgent networks and more police to secure communities and gather information on insurgent movements. Tier 3 areas in eastern Afghanistan currently have about 4 police per 1,000 inhabitants. To provide sufficient force structure to disrupt insurgent threats in the east using a counter-network approach, we increase the police-to-population ratio in eastern Afghanistan so that it is consistent across the Tier 3 areas.[34]

Tier 2 (Goal: Neutralize the insurgency)

Tier 2 areas are intended to act as a "ring of steel" to protect the major population centers in Tier 1. To address this, we will later articulate a requirement for significant ANA force structure in Tier 2 areas. Based on our threat assessment, however, we anticipate that ANA op-

[34] This force-sizing factor results in an increase of about 9,000 police in the Tier 3 areas of eastern Afghanistan—from about 17,500 to 26,500. The population of these areas is about 4.4 million.

erations in Tier 2 areas will be smaller in scale and more focused on deterrence than the battalion-sized clearing operations we expect in Tier 3. The police in the rural parts of Tier 2, therefore, do not require high levels of force structure to hold areas after ANA clearing operations, as they do in Tier 3. Instead, we assess that Tier 2 areas should have a police-to-population ratio of 3 per 1,000 inhabitants, so they can provide security and civil order within the rural communities of Tier 2 areas. This ratio is at the high end of the international range for stable countries.[35]

Although the police currently provide some checkpoint security on Highway 1, the force requirement for securing roads does not depend on the number of people living near them. Therefore, we address the need to secure the roads designated as Tier 2 below.

Tier 1

Kabul currently has a strong and very visible police presence, and we assess that it should maintain this force structure in the 2015–2018 timeframe. Maintaining security in Kabul is essential to maintaining stability in Afghanistan, so the police must be able to deter and prevent attacks in the capital, as well as successfully respond to and investigate the attacks that will inevitably occur.

Today, the police force in Kabul includes the headquarters of the ANP, as well as the bulk of the personnel in the counterterrorism and other special police task forces. Kabul also has thousands of traffic police, who stand on nearly every major street corner and in every

[35] Internationally, the police-to-population ratio ranges from about 1 to 3 per 1,000 inhabitants in stable countries. Tier 2 areas in eastern Afghanistan have approximately 3 police per 1,000 inhabitants today, while Tier 2 areas in southern Afghanistan have about 6 per 1,000 inhabitants. The MoI sized police forces in southern Afghanistan based on high threat levels in 2010–2011, when ISAF and the ANA were conducting active counterinsurgency operations in central Helmand and Kandahar. Even today, counterinsurgency operations have been largely pushed out to the outlying parts of those provinces (which are Tier 3). As a result, we assess that a gradual reduction in police numbers in central Helmand and Kandahar is appropriate. *State of Crime and Criminal Justice Worldwide*. U.N. Report of the Secretary General.

traffic circle, as well as police who guard government ministries, embassies, and other government infrastructure. Based on our interviews with international police advisors, the AUP in Kabul may have more traffic cops and infrastructure security guards than are required to maintain order and security, especially if some of those functions could be transferred to other organizations such as the Afghan Public Protection Force.

On the other hand, the total number of police in Kabul is well within international norms for a city of its size. A recent examination of major metropolitan areas in the United States noted that its cities have an average of 4.1 police per 1,000 inhabitants (compared to 3.8 in Kabul).[36] Of course, the metropolitan police in American cities have a different role than the police in Kabul—they spend much less effort on guarding buildings and directing traffic and much more on criminal investigations. As the security situation evolves in Afghanistan and police training increases, the MoI's 10-year vision for the ANP includes the idea that some police force structure may be transitioned from guarding streets and buildings to practicing community policing and law enforcement. The MoI expects this transition to take several years, and we assess that the number of police conducting criminal investigations in Kabul is unlikely to increase significantly during the timeframe of this study.[37]

In addition to keeping the number of police constant in Kabul, we use the number of police there as a benchmark to size the police in the other urban areas of Afghanistan. The other Tier 1 cites have a similar need for a highly visible police presence, but they do not require the force structure for the national police headquarters which is located in Kabul. If we were to subtract the police who serve in the national police headquarters and the police specifically designated to protect national-level infrastructure (such as ministerial buildings

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[36] John J. McGrath. *Boots on the Ground: Troop Density in Contingency Operations.* Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2007.

[37] As discussed in the sections on ANA SOF and the AAF, the ANSF's ability to recruit and train additional personnel with specialized skills is hindered by the limited pool of qualified recruits and the limited time remaining before 2015 to train personnel in multi-year university-level programs in areas such as intelligence-led policing and forensics.

and embassies) the police-to-population ratio in Kabul would be 3.5 to 1,000. We assess, therefore, that the other Tier 1 urban areas should have this level of police.

In summary, we assess a requirement for about 104,000 Afghan Uniformed Police, Afghan Anti-Crime Police, and Special Police Units which results in an increase of 6,500 police over the 97,500 police authorized today (Table 15). This force structure yields an overall ratio of 3.3 police per 1,000 inhabitants for Afghanistan—about the same as the police-to-population ratio in Pakistan.

Sensitivity analysis

One advantage of our approach is that our force-sizing framework can be easily adjusted based on different conclusions about the threat or appropriate police-to-population ratios. To illustrate the sensitivity of our results to the planning factors we used in our calculations, we undertook several excursions:

- *Make the cities the same.* We used a slightly lower police-to-population ratio in the cities other than Kabul (3.5 relative to 3.8 for Kabul), arguing that figures for Kabul included national-level headquarters not needed in the other cities. If the ratio for Kabul was simply used for the other cities as well, it would result in an increase of 600 police (or 0.5 percent).
- *Strengthen the "ring of steel."* Increasing the police-to-population ratio in all of the Tier 1 and 2 areas so that it matches the current ratio in Kabul would increase the total police force by about 3,000 (or 3 percent).
- *Further strengthen the "ring of steel."* Increasing the police-to-population ratio in Tier 2 areas so that it matches the highest ratio anywhere (i.e., the level of police in Tier 3), would increase the overall police force by about 8,700 (or 8 percent).
- *Leave the east alone.* In our discussion of police in Tier 3 areas, we argued that the level of police should be increased in these areas in eastern Afghanistan, such that the police would have a greater presence and be able to gather more information on insurgent networks operating in these remote areas. If instead the police-to-population ratio was left at current levels, the

overall police force size would decrease by about 8,800 (or 8 percent).

- *Standardize Tiers 4 and 5:* Taking the threat in Tier 4 (insurgent transit and support zones) to be only marginally higher than in Tier 5 (civil order areas), and using the Tier 5 police-to-population ratio for both areas would result in a net decrease of about 1,000 police (or 1 percent).

These excursions are summarized in Table 16.

Table 16. Sensitivity analysis of police-to-population ratios (police per 1,000 inhabitants)

Tier affected	Police-to-population planning factor in our analysis	Adjusted police-to-population planning factor	Total adjusted force size	Change in total force size	Percent change
Tier 1 areas (other than Kabul)	3.5	3.8 (same as Kabul)	104,600	600	0.5
All Tier 1 and Tier 2 areas (other than Kabul)	3.0 and 3.5	3.8 (same as Kabul)	106,900	2,900	3
Tier 2 areas	3.0	6.0 (same as Tier 3)	112,700	8,700	8
Tier 3 areas in eastern Afghanistan	6.0	4.0 (same as current police levels)	95,200	(8,800)	(8)
Tier 4 areas	2.5	2.2 (same as Tier 5)	103,000	(1,000)	(1)

In much of Afghanistan, the role of the police is likely to evolve from paramilitary to community policing over the next decade or more. In addition, the MoI may choose to adjust the skill sets of the police force, so that it consists of fewer traffic police and more highly trained specialists serving on criminal task forces. However, we do not see a need to significantly increase or decrease the number of police to accommodate these changing roles and missions in the 2015–2018 timeframe. In particular, we see an on-going requirement for large numbers of paramilitary-style police to provide a large and visible presence across the Tier 3 areas that face on-going insurgent threats.

Afghan Local Police

Currently, ALP "Guardians" are located in villages across Afghanistan, including in the north and west. We assess that threat levels will re-

main low in the north and west, and that the ALP there could be transitioned to the AUP. We assess, however, that the conditions that gave rise to the need for the ALP program (e.g., a need to protect rural communities in higher-threat areas from insurgent intimidation) are likely to persist in the outlying and contested villages of Tier 3 areas in the 2015–2018 timeframe. The original planning factor for the ALP was to have no more than 300 Guardians per district.[38] Using that planning factor for each of the 97 districts in Tier 3 yields a total ALP force size of 29,100. This figure is nearly identical to the MoI's long-range plan for 30,000 ALP across Afghanistan, though concentrating these forces in Tier 3 areas would make better use of them against the insurgent threat.

Afghan Customs and Border Police

Internationally, the border security mission involves preventing the illegal movement of weapons, contraband, and people while enabling legal border crossings. This mission has two parts. The blue (or police-type) border mission is to provide security and collect customs revenue at border crossing points and airports. This mission includes immigration screening, personnel searches, and cargo inspections. The green (or paramilitary) border security mission is to provide security and interdict illegal activity in the zone around the border. It includes interdicting potential insurgents or terrorists who may have illegally crossed the border, stopping vehicles with IED components or weapons, and preventing the export of illegal drugs and other illicit goods. Current international practice is for the blue border security mission to be conducted at specific points of entry, while the green

[38] Currently, most districts with ALP have at most 300 Guardians. This number, like the current 30,000 end-strength cap on the ALP, was not analytically derived. Rather, it was the result of a political negotiation between U.S. officials who saw value in the program and Afghan officials who feared that the ALP might become large, armed militias for local warlords. Author's interview with personnel from the American Academy of Diplomacy, Aug. 2013.

border security mission is conducted in a zone along the border (rather than at specific posts on the border itself).[39]

The ANP currently has two components that conduct the border security mission: the Afghan Border Police, who are split into blue and green missions; and the Afghan Customs Police, who are responsible for collecting duties at border crossing points and airports. As shown in Table 17, about two-thirds of the ABP perform the green border security mission by guarding the 50-kilometer (km) zone around the border. Some of these ABP guard the border from posts along the border itself, while others maintain checkpoints along roads emanating from the border.

Table 17. Current ANSF border and customs security forces, by type

Type of border security force	Number of forces
ABP headquarters staff	4,000
ABP at airports and border crossing points	3,700
Afghan Customs Police	700
"Green" ABP battalions	15,500
Total border and customs police	**23,900**

Having reviewed the forces conducting the blue border security mission at border crossings and airports, we conclude that the force level for this mission is appropriate now and will continue to be appropriate in the 2015–2018 timeframe. First, we do not foresee a significant increase in the number of official border crossings or airports in Afghanistan before 2018. In addition, the MoI determined the staffing requirements for the border crossings and airports in consultation with international experts on border crossings and airport security, and, during our review of international reporting on the ANSF and our interviews with Afghans and international advisors, we did not hear any arguments that ABP staffing levels at border crossing points and airports are inappropriate. Moreover, the relatively small numbers of police currently working at border crossing points and airports have a role of great importance to the Afghan government: the

[39] *Assessment of U.S. Government and Coalition Efforts to Train, Equip, and Advise the Afghan Border Police*. U.S. Department of Defense Inspector General DODIG-2013-081. May 24, 2013.

collection of customs duties makes up a significant fraction of the government's overall revenue generation.[40] It therefore seems likely the MoI is already resourcing the security of official border crossings and customs collection missions at reasonable levels.

Methodology and assumptions

Taking the number of ABP conducting the blue border security mission as constant, we determined the force requirements for the green border security mission by examining the security tiers that the border zone falls into, the countries on the other side of Afghanistan's border, and the geography in the border zone itself. We examined the current size of the ABP on each of Afghanistan's borders, gathered subject matter experts' opinions on whether the current force size is appropriate, and developed logical arguments for sizing the border security mission based on current force levels, current capabilities of these forces, and expected threats in the 2015–2018 timeframe.

Assessment[41]

As shown in Table 18, the MoI has already differentially apportioned the ABP along its borders based on the neighboring country, perceived threats, and geography.[42]

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[40] "According to Afghan Ministry of Finance data, this revenue accounted for nearly 50 percent of Afghan domestic revenue in Solar Year 1390, the latest year for which data were available." *Assessment of U.S. Government and Coalition Efforts to Train, Equip, and Advise the Afghan Border Police*. DoD Inspector General.

[41] We attempted to look at comparable border police forces in Afghanistan's neighboring countries, but concluded that the available data on these forces exhibit too much variation and are subject to too many caveats to be of much help in sizing the ABP.

[42] Author interview with former ABP advisor. Washington, D.C. Sep. 24, 2013.

Table 18. Afghan Border Police, by adjacent country

		Length of border	Current number of ABP authorized	ABP per 50 sq km
Pakistan		**2,430**	**10,900**	**4.5**
Other borders		**3,023**	**4,600**	**1.5**
	Iran	936	1,700	1.8
	Uzbekistan	137	150	1.3
	Tajikistan	1,206	1,150	1.0
	Turkmenistan	744	1,600	2.1
Total ABP		**5,453**	**15,500**	**2.9**

We calculate the size of the ABP by security tier below, but overall we assess a need for about 27,300 ABP, which corresponds to an increase of 3,400 police (or 15 percent) from the current force level (Table 19). We hold the number of forces conducting the blue border security mission constant and add 2,800 additional forces to the green border security mission. Given the magnitude of this increase, we assess that the national ABP headquarters may require additional personnel. Currently, the national and regional headquarters are about 17 percent of the total ABP force. To maintain this staffing level, we increase the number of personnel at the ABP headquarters by 600.

Table 19. Summary of calculated Afghan Border Police forces, by tier

Region	Assessment	Force sizing considerations	ABP authorized	Number of ABP forces calculated	Net additional ABP forces
Green border police			**15,500**	**18,300**	**2,800**
North and west	Threat expected to remain low to moderate. Afghan and ISAF advisors assess that the borders have some gaps in security	Increase border police operating north of Mazar-e Sharif, near the border with Uzbekistan	4,600	4,800	200
Tier 5 areas on Pakistan border	Threat expected to remain low. Remote and difficult terrain	Maintain current ABP force levels	600	600	0
Southeast border with Pakistan	Threat expected to remain moderate. Current force levels—with assistance from SOF—can disrupt cross-border threats	Maintain current ABP force levels	5,000	5,000	0
Northeast border with Pakistan	Threat of cross-border infiltration is significant and the forces currently providing border security are insufficient to overmatch the threats, even with current levels of SOF assistance	Increase ABP force levels by 50%	5,300	7,900	2,600
Blue Border Police					
	The number of police securing border crossings and airports and collecting customs duties is largely appropriate	Maintain current force levels	4,400	4,400	0
ABP headquarters					
	Administrative requirements for the larger green border security force require additional personnel at the national ABP headquarters	Maintain the ABP headquarters' proportion to total ABP force size	4,000	4,600	600
Total			**23,900**	**27,300**	**3,400**

Tier 5 (Goal: Maintain civil order)

We now consider the requirements for border security forces by security tier, starting with Tier 5. This tier includes the entire length of the borders with Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan. There is some threat of insurgent or terrorist smuggling and trafficking along Afghanistan's northern and western borders, but the threats facing the ANSF in these areas are relatively low. Based on our interviews in theater, we assess that the current level of border police along these

borders is generally appropriate, although we recognize a need for some additional border police north of Mazar-e Sharif.[43] The force structure along the border with Uzbekistan (due north of Mazar-e Sharif) is relatively low, compared to other areas of the northern and western borders, and cross-border traffic is expected to increase over the next few years with the construction of an additional railroad line heading north from Mazar-e Sharif.[44] By increasing the number of border police by about 200, the number of police in the border zone north of Mazar-e Sharif will be on par with the average number in the border zone with Turkmenistan. That border zone has a higher ratio of border police per area than any other area in northern or western Afghanistan.[45]

The number of ABP operating in the zones that border Pakistan varies by region today, as shown in Table 20.[46] These areas (the far northeastern and southeastern segments of the Afghanistan–Pakistan border) have a relatively low ABP presence compared to other areas of the Afghanistan–Pakistan border, in large part due to the difficulty of operating in—or moving through—these remote areas. Our interviews in theater did not identify any reasons why the number of border police in these areas should be increased (or decreased).[47] We

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[43] Author interviews in RC–West and RC–North. Afghanistan. Aug. 12–24, 2013.

[44] "Afghan Province Upset At Being Left Out Of Touted Rail Network." Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Radio Free Afghanistan, Jul. 31, 2013, accessed Oct. 11, 2013, at www.rferl.org/content/afghanistan-railway-planned-route–shir-khan-bandar/25062586.html.

[45] Although the average number of ABP along the border with Tajikistan appears relatively low, much of this border is nearly impassible—it crosses mountains that are over 3,000 meters (10,000 feet). We assess that the number of border police operating in the lower elevations of this border zone is appropriate.

[46] This table shows combined figures for the ABP for Paktiya/Khost and Zabul/Kandahar because Paktiya and Zabul have very short borders with Pakistan and the ABP battalions that serve in those provinces also have jurisdiction in Khost or Kandahar.

[47] Author interviews in RC–East and RC–Southwest. Afghanistan. Aug. 12–24, 2013.

therefore assess that the level of ABP in the Tier 5 areas of the border with Pakistan is largely appropriate and should remain constant.

Table 20. Current Afghan Border Police on the border with Pakistan, by province

Region	Province	Security tier	Length of border with Pakistan (km)	ABP on border with Pakistan	ABP per 50 sq km
Northeast	Badakhshan	5	416	250	0.6
East			683	5,300	7.7
	Khost and Paktiya	3	226	1,800	7.8
	Kunar	3	162	1,300	8.1
	Nangarhar	3	201	1,800	8.8
	Nuristan	3	94	400	4.7
South			1,331	5,350	4.0
	Helmand	4 and 5	207	1,200	5.9
	Kandahar and Zabul	3 and 4	586	2,200	3.8
	Nimruz	5	177	350	2.0
	Paktika	4	361	1,600	4.4
Entire border with Pakistan			**2,430**	**10,900**	**4.5**

Tiers 3 and 4 (Goal: Disrupt the insurgency)

Likewise, we assess that the number of ABP in the Tier 3 and Tier 4 areas along the southeastern border with Pakistan should remain constant. ABP commanders in Kandahar and Helmand have expressed a desire for additional personnel in these provinces, but ISAF personnel told us that stationing ABP farther south along the actual border with Pakistan is infeasible, even in the 2015–2018 timeframe.[48] U.S. and NATO advisors also estimated that the number of ABP actually on hand in southern Afghanistan is substantially lower than the

[48] In Helmand and southern Kandahar, the actual border with Pakistan passes through remote, unpopulated areas of high desert. The ABP, therefore, have a string of outposts a significant distance inside the border, from which they patrol and conduct interdiction operations. The ABP would face substantial logistical challenges to construct and operate border posts along the actual border in this region. We assess that the ABP will continue operating as they do today in the 2015–2018 timeframe, and so do not provide additional force structure for additional border posts along this segment of the border. Interviews at RC–South and RC–Southwest. Afghanistan. Aug. 12-20, 2013.

number allocated in the official manning document.[49] Thus, actually stationing the number of border police authorized in southern Helmand and Kandahar would result in a significant increase in the size of the operating force and could allow the ABP to close some currently identified holes in border security.

The requirement for border security operations in the Tier 3 portions of the border in northeastern Afghanistan is more substantial, in part because of the insurgent networks that operate in these areas. These networks have demonstrated their intent and capability to move people, weapons, and other contraband across the border with Pakistan. Senior MoI officials have told international personnel that the size of the ABP should be doubled due to these threats. They say they would like to have a 1-to-1 ratio of Afghan to Pakistani border guards along the entirety of this border.[50] The precise number of staffed border posts on both sides of the border is uncertain, though the number on the Afghan side is indisputably lower.[51]

That said, we agree with international advisors who argue that there is limited value in attempting to cover the border with substantially more border posts. The terrain in eastern Afghanistan is difficult and mountainous. Most of the legal and illegal border crossings occur along passes or river valleys, and the most commonly traversed of these passes already have border posts and checkpoints. Given this terrain, we assess that establishing significantly more border posts would have diminishing returns. We assess that border security would be conducted more effectively through mobile interdiction operations. Some parts of this mobile interdiction mission are now and will

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[49] This is the Solar Year 1392 *tashkiel.* Interviews at RC–South and RC–Southwest. Afghanistan. Aug. 2013.

[50] Author interviews. Kabul, Afghanistan. Aug. 12–24, 2013; and *Assessment of U.S. Government and Coalition Efforts to Train, Equip, and Advise the Afghan Border Police*. DoD Inspector General.

[51] ISAF personnel examined satellite imagery of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border and estimated that the Pakistani side had approximately 1.5 to 2 times as many border posts as Afghanistan was planning at that time. The number of border posts on the Pakistani side is uncertain, however, as some are only manned seasonally, and some buildings are intended to be used only temporarily, in times of high threat.

continue to be conducted by ANA SOF (as discussed in more detail below), but we believe that some parts are also appropriate for the ABP.

The ABP battalions in eastern Afghanistan, however, have limited capability to conduct mobile operations, as most of their forces are currently fixed at border posts and checkpoints along roads. While it may be possible to redistribute some ABP personnel from fixed checkpoints to a more mobile border defense mission, we assess that the ABP are unlikely to reduce the number of border posts along this key stretch of the border by the 2015–2018 timeframe, as they actually would like to increase the number of border posts to match the number on the Pakistani side of the border.

We assess, therefore, that the number of ABP in the Tier 3 border areas of northeastern Afghanistan should be increased by 50 percent. We chose this factor because it strikes a balance between the argument that the ABP force size must be doubled to enable the construction of significantly more border posts (with the goal of matching Pakistani construction) and the more modest argument that the border security forces require more checkpoints in key areas, as well as a robust and mobile quick-reaction capability. Note that we do not increase the ABP force structure in these areas in isolation. The ANA will need to reinforce, resupply, and provide casualty evacuation (CASEVAC) for the ABP, particularly in remote mountainous areas. We therefore provide the ANA with substantial force structure in Tier 3 areas as described later in the report.

Sensitivity analysis

The planning factor that most drives the increase in ABP force structure is the increased requirement for border police along the northeastern border with Pakistan. We assessed a requirement to increase this force structure by 50 percent. If the force structure along that segment of the border should be doubled, as the MoI desires, then the total number of ABP needed would increase by another 2,600 personnel (for a total of 29,900 ABP).

Afghan National Civil Order Police

The ANCOP are a national police force akin to a gendarmerie (a military force with police duties among civilian populations). Our inter-

views in theater and our own observations suggest that the ANCOP currently perform a role that is duplicative of the uniformed police and army. As a result, we do not see a requirement for the ANCOP within the set of missions that comprise our force sizing framework, and have thus zeroed out this force in our calculations. That said, discussions with U.S. and NATO personnel in theater highlighted a view that—despite their duplication of army and police capabilities—the ANCOP are a very effective counterinsurgency force in practice. Additionally, we recognize that the Afghan government could keep the ANCOP if it desired. Thus, while we do not find a requirement for the ANCOP within our force-sizing framework, we acknowledge that further analysis of this point is likely warranted. If such analysis determined that the ANCOP should be kept, doing so would require an increase to the overall end-strength of the ANSF beyond what we calculate.

Afghan National Police support forces

The current manning document for the ANP includes about 3,200 personnel who provide logistical, medical, and other support. Some of these billets could likely be civilianized, but given the importance of logistics and medical support to overall police operations, and our recommendation of an only slightly-larger police force overall, we conclude that the number of these personnel should remain unchanged from current levels.

Afghan National Army combat battalions

In this section, we focus on sizing the army's general purpose forces (we address the other elements of the ANA, such as the air force and SOF, separately below). Based on our threat assessment, we expect the ANA's operations to vary by security tier, but in general, the ANA's mission set includes battalion-sized operations to clear insurgent-held areas; interdicting insurgents, weapons, or other contraband materials; maintaining security checkpoints on key roads used to transport insurgent personnel and materiel; providing presence patrols and deterrence around key urban areas that may face significant insurgent threats; and reinforcing police forces when they face more serious insurgent threats than they are equipped to handle.

Methodology and assumptions

Following the same format we used for the AUP and ABP, we consider force requirements for the ANA by security tier. We focus our calculations at the level of infantry battalions (*kandaks*). This level of detail strikes a balance between the overly general brigade level (which would not allow sufficient flexibility to differentiate between the requirements of different regions and threat areas) and an overly detailed analysis beyond the scope of this study.

For each security tier, we considered several analytical approaches. Many of these approaches rely on planning factors, rules-of-thumb, or subject matter expertise, and any one of these arguments, if used by itself, might lead to questionable results. Thus, we considered several methodologies for determining the force requirements in each tier and then compared the results to see where and why they converged or diverged. In the latter case, we used an understanding of the divergence to make a judgment as to which planning factor to use.

We focused on determining the number of battalions based on the size of the battalion's area of operations. This approach captures the ANA's basic mission requirement—to conduct up to battalion-sized counterinsurgency operations in Tier 3 and 4 areas and to have sufficient forces to provide timely reinforcement to police throughout the country. Many other analyses have used the number of counterinsurgents required per population as a planning factor for army forces. At the end of this section, we will compare our results to those attained by using this approach.

Requirement for combat battalions

Today, the number of ANA battalions varies by region, depending on the region's size and the level of threat present. For reference, Table 21 lists the number of battalions in each region today, as well as the number of battalions per population and the average size of the areas of operation of the battalions in each region.[52]

[52] The number of battalions is shown by region rather than by security tier because the ANA force laydown is currently by region. Some units are

Table 21. ANA battalions by region, per population, and per area

Region	Corps	Number of battalions	Population (millions)	Battalions / million inhabitants	Area (sq. km)	Average sq. km / battalion
North	207th	12	8.9	1.3	165,000	13,750
West	209th	12	4.1	2.9	160,000	13,300
South/southwest	205th & 215th	30	4.0	7.5	200,000	6,700
East	201st & 203rd	33	9.3	3.5	120,000	3,600
Kabul	111th Division	8	4.8	1.7	5,000	625
All Afghanistan		**95**	**31.1**	**3.1**	**650,000**	**6,800**

We calculate the requirement for ANA forces by security tier below, but overall we assess that the army requires 81 combat battalions, as summarized in Table 22. This represents a reduction of 14 infantry battalions (or 15 percent) relative to the ANA today.

Table 22. Summary of recommendations for ANA infantry battalions, by tier

Area description	ANA mission	Recommended force level (battalions)
Tier 5 areas that currently have no ANA battalions (Bamyan, Panjshir, Parwan, and Daykundi)	None. (Police and SOF can continue to maintain security and disrupt insurgents passing through these areas, when needed)	No ANA battalions
Other Tier 5 areas	Deterrence and occasional reinforcement for police	7
Tier 4	Deterrence and ability to simultaneously conduct one battalion-sized clearing operation and reinforce one district center per province	20
Rural areas in the south (Tiers 2 and 3)	Disrupt the insurgency and prevent it from threatening Tier 1 and 2 areas	12
Rural areas in the east (Tiers 2 and 3)	Support SOF, reinforce police, and conduct operations to counter networks in eastern Afghanistan	11
Major roads in Tier 2	Security, checkpoints, and patrols along major roads	7

headquartered near Tier 1 and 2 cities, but operate across areas we have designated as Tiers 2 through 5.

Table 22. Summary of recommendations for ANA infantry battalions, by tier

Area description	ANA mission	Recommended force level (battalions)
Kabul	Security around Kabul, with a "ring of steel" of checkpoints and the ability to conduct patrols and operations in rural areas around the city, as needed	8
Other major cities	Security around other major cities	16
Total requirement		**81**

We now describe our assessments of the force requirements for ANA general purpose force battalions, by security tier.

Tier 5 (Goal: Maintain civil order)

Within our security tier construct, we defined Tier 5 as areas the insurgency is not able to penetrate, due to unfavorable local conditions. In these areas, the threats are localized, criminal, and at a low enough level that they can be largely handled by the police and border police discussed earlier. Four Tier 5 provinces (Bamyan, Daykundi, Panjshir, and Parwan) currently do not have any permanent ANA presence. For the reasons given above, we see no need to add ANA to these areas. ANA brigades stationed in adjacent provinces should be able to conduct short-duration operations in these areas to counter specific threats, if needed.

We assess, however, that the rest of the Tier 5 areas will continue to require some ANA forces in the 2015–2018 timeframe to deter insurgent threats from within Afghanistan, as well as from any potentially violent actors located in neighboring countries. The ANA will likely also provide occasional reinforcement to the police, particularly in provincial or district centers.[53] Given the low overall threat level in these areas, however, we assess that the likelihood of several simultaneous and coordinated attacks in Tier 5 is low.

[53] Over the past few years, the Tier 5 areas have seen some violent activity, such as the recent attack on the capital of Badakhshan province that left 18 police officers dead. "Afghanistan militants kill 18 police in Badakhshan." *BBC News*, Sep. 20, 2013.

We determine the force structure requirement for ANA in Tier 5 based on the area in which a battalion can provide reasonable response times to district centers or outlying police checkpoints. According to our interviews with U.S. and NATO personnel in theater, the ANA do not expect to provide reinforcement to outlying district centers or police posts during an attack. Today, most firefights are over too quickly for the ANA to reach the scene in time. In cases where police have abandoned outposts in the face of an insurgent attack, the ANA often take a day or two to plan and gather forces, and then set out to reestablish government control over the area. Given the limited nature of the threats in Tier 5 areas, we assess that this timeline of operations will continue to be appropriate in the 2015–2018 timeframe.

We calculate that the ANA requires between five and nine battalions to reach all areas that may require reinforcement (such as district centers and other important villages) within a day's travel from the battalion headquarters.[54] This calculation also yields an area of opera-

[54] This calculation is based on the following considerations. First, we note that the ANA have limited ability to operate at night, so we assume they will need to reach everywhere within their area of operations within 6 hours. This time frame allows them to leave their battalion headquarters in the morning and have several hours to establish their position before nightfall. We also assume that ANA vehicles can travel at an average speed of 40 kilometers per hour (25 miles per hour) between their headquarters and a site requiring reinforcement. We selected this travel speed because we assume that the vehicles will be traveling primarily on unpaved roads once they leave the vicinity of a provincial center, but that the threat of IEDs in these Tier 5 areas will be low. The ANA should only need to conduct counter-IED route clearance in the vicinity of an overrun checkpoint or contested village.

Given these planning factors, a battalion should be able to reach all the areas requiring reinforcement within 240 kilometers from the battalion headquarters. Based on a review of the road network in northern and western Afghanistan (using imagery from Google Earth) some district centers are connected to their provincial centers via relatively straight roads. For others, it is not uncommon to travel 1.5 to 2 times farther than the crow flies. Assuming the roads are so indirect that battalions must travel twice as far as the crow flies to reach a district center, the radius of an average battalion's area of operations should be no larger than 120 kilometers, which yields an average area of operation for each

tions for each battalion that is about three times larger than that used today.

To determine the appropriate number of battalions within this range, we considered the political geography of northern and western Afghanistan. Aligning ANA operational boundaries with provincial boundaries is desirable, as this enables better communications with the police and provincial governments. Currently, the ANA have one battalion assigned to most provinces in northern Afghanistan and three or four assigned to the higher threat and larger provinces of Herat and Farah in western Afghanistan. Calculating the requirement based on political geography—and assuming that each battalion can cover about three times as much area as today—we find that the ANA would require seven battalions in the Tier 5 areas: three battalions in the nine provinces in northern Afghanistan, three battalions in the four provinces in western Afghanistan,[55] and one battalion in Nimruz.

Tier 4 (Goal: Disrupt the insurgency)

Within our force-sizing framework, the ANA in Tier 4 areas will perform the following missions: deterrence; support to SOF operations to disrupt insurgent movements; reinforcement of the police and district centers; and clearing or cordon-and-search operations, as needed.

Given the results of our threat assessment and this set of missions, we assess that the ANA in Tier 4 will need the ability to simultaneously conduct one battalion-sized clearing operation or reinforce one district center per province. To ensure that one battalion's worth of forces is always available for operations in each province, we assess that the ANA requires three battalions per province—since some forces are always away on leave or in training. In addition, ANA forces

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battalion of about 45,000 square kilometers. Given the overall area of Tier 5, this set of planning factors yields a requirement for about 9 ANA battalions in Tier 5. If the roads are sufficiently direct that the ANA only needs to travel 1.5 times further than the crow flies, then the ANA would require only 5 battalions to cover the Tier 5 areas.

[55] We allocate one battalion for Baghdis and Ghor provinces because most of Ghor province is part of the Hazarajat region of Afghanistan and, like neighboring Bamyan and Day Kundi, has no ANA presence today.

in Tier 4 areas are currently spread thin with a few soldiers stationed in many small outposts across the region. ANA commanders and U.S. and NATO advisors told us that the ANA intend to consolidate their forces into larger positions over the next few years, as they are able to hand security responsibilities for more areas to the police. We assess, however, that it is unrealistic to assume that the ANA will close all of its small outposts by 2015. As a result, we assess that ANA forces will continue to man a number of outposts in key locations. By this reasoning, we identify a requirement for three battalions in each of the six provinces or significant areas in Tier 4.[56]

The remote, high deserts of southern Helmand and Kandahar provinces are also in Tier 4. Given the difficulty of living and operating in this terrain, the ANA have few forces stationed in these areas today, and we assess that they will need few forces stationed there in the 2015–2018 timeframe. To enable the ANA to conduct some operations in these areas—and to support the ABP when required—we allocate one ANA battalion to the Tier 4 areas in Helmand and Kandahar.

The above considerations yield a total requirement of 20 battalions for Tier 4. With this force level, the average area of operations for battalions in Tier 4 is about 6,700 square kilometers, which is somewhat higher than the current average battalion area of operations in eastern Afghanistan and slightly lower than the average area in southern Afghanistan (Table 21). With an area of operations of this size, a battalion headquarters would be within a few hours' drive of the district centers in the region, depending on terrain and road conditions.

Based on our interviews with U.S. and NATO personnel in theater and our research of the ANSF's current performance against the threats in Tier 4 areas, we assess that it is appropriate to reduce the number of personnel stationed in Tier 4 areas in the east. Our threat assessment indicates that these areas face threats from groups such as

[56] These Tier 4 areas include Uruzgan, Zabul, and Paktika provinces (which are mostly or entirely within Tier 4) as well as the Tier 4 portions of Farah and Ghazni provinces. We also allocate three battalions to the Tier 4 area northeast of Kabul, which is split between several provinces.

the Haqqani network that are able to slip past small and dispersed military outposts. We assess that a more dedicated counter-network strategy using SOF and community policing would be more effective at countering the threats in eastern Afghanistan. Thus, we assess that the number of ANA forces currently spread across Tier 4 areas in small outposts can be reduced without lowering the area's overall level of security. Reducing the number of small military outposts in remote areas may also reduce the number of ANA casualties, as fewer soldiers will be defending outposts that are difficult to reinforce.

Rural areas in Tiers 2 and 3 (Goal: Neutralize and disrupt the insurgency, respectively)

In contrast to Tiers 4 and 5 (where the ANA only needed to conduct occasional operations and reinforce the police), the ANSF requires sufficient forces in Tier 3 to hold ground after conducting clearing operations. The police play a significant role in holding ground, and we sized them generously in Tier 3 areas so they can contribute to the counterinsurgency holding mission. We assess, however, that the ANA will also require forces to hold areas in the immediate aftermath of their operations and to reinforce more highly contested areas.

Based on our interviews in theater and our review of current assessments of ANSF performance, we assess that current force levels in southern Afghanistan are the minimum required to achieve these goals in Helmand and Kandahar.[57] With current force levels, the ANA are able to maintain a significant number of small outposts across the region and consolidate enough forces to conduct some battalion-sized operations.

We also reviewed the historical literature to determine whether the current area of operations for battalions in southern Afghanistan is reasonable, compared to those in other counterinsurgencies. We found that the size of a battalion's area of operations has varied considerably in historical conflicts, due to geographical considerations,

[57] Author interviews in RC–South and RC–Southwest. Afghanistan. Aug. 12–20, 2013; and *Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan: Report to Congress in accordance with sections 1230 and 1231 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008*. U.S. DoD. Jul. 2013.

the nature of the insurgent threat, and the constraints of overall force levels available to counterinsurgents.

Here, we consider two historical case studies: the Philippines Insurrection (1889–1901) and the Malaysian Emergency (1948–1960). We find these cases compelling because they are considered two of the most successful counterinsurgency efforts in the modern era and the counterinsurgent forces in these conflicts did not have significant (or any) air support—making them not dissimilar from the ANA's situation today. In both the Philippines and Malaysian conflicts, counterinsurgents had about 0.23 forces per square kilometer,[58] which equates to an area of operations of about 5,100 square kilometers for an ANA-sized battalion.[59]

Calculating the area of operations of battalions in Tier 3 is not easy, as current battalion areas of operation do not coincide with the geographical boundaries of our security tier areas. We therefore examined the entire area of Helmand and Kandahar. The 20 battalions in these provinces currently have an average area of operations of about 5,600 square kilometers. Removing the farthest reaches of the mountains of northern Helmand and the high deserts of southern Helmand and Kandahar (where the ANA rarely operate today) the average area of operations for a battalion today is about 4,800 square kilometers. These numbers are in line with the area of operations in the successful counterinsurgencies discussed above.

To maintain the current force levels in Helmand and Kandahar, therefore, the Tier 3 areas of these provinces require 12 battalions. (In the other parts of this section, we assess a requirement for 8 battalions in Tiers 1, 2, and 4 in Helmand and Kandahar).

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[58] John J. McGrath. *Boots on the Ground: Troop Density in Contingency Operations*. Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2007.

[59] Here, we estimate that an ANA battalion has about 1,170 personnel, based on the 1392 *tashkiel*. This figure includes 745 personnel in the battalion itself, as well as a pro-rated share of the brigade and corps-level headquarters staff and brigade and corps-level enablers such as artillery, engineering, logistics, and maintenance.

In contrast, we assess that the level of conventional ANA forces in the rural areas of eastern Afghanistan is currently higher than necessary.[60] The ANA currently maintain many small outposts in remote mountainous areas, and we assess that these outposts are not effective at interdicting insurgent traffic or at preventing the Haqqani network from operating in the region. We assess, therefore, that the ANSF should take more of a counter-network approach to disrupting the insurgency in eastern Afghanistan. Such a counter-network approach requires a collaborative effort between conventional ANA forces, ANA SOF, and the police. Based on our arguments for police-to-population ratios in Tier 3 above, we increased the number of district police in eastern Afghanistan by about 8,000. We also assessed a requirement for about 2,600 additional border police along the northeastern border with Pakistan, Given these sizable increases in police force structure, we assess that the ANA should be able to hand over checkpoints in many areas to the uniformed or border police, and thereby accomplish the overall security mission with fewer army outposts scattered across the mountains and valleys of the east.

The ANA will still require a significant presence in the rural areas of eastern Afghanistan in order to conduct the following missions: reinforcement of uniformed and border police; support to SOF (both basing and mobility); combat patrolling; and some larger-scale clearing and cordon-and-search operations (we acknowledge the additional requirements to provide security for Tier 2 roads and Tier 1 cities in the next sections).

We assess, therefore, that the ANA requires 11 battalions in the rural areas of eastern Afghanistan. With this number, battalions in the rural areas of eastern Afghanistan have an average area of operations of 4,800 square kilometers (about the same as the average area of operations for battalions in rural Tier 2 and Tier 3 areas in southern Afghanistan). This is somewhat larger than the average area of

[60] Our force-sizing framework is based on author interviews in RC–East, Aug. 12–24, 2013; and current assessments of ANSF performance. For the latter, see *Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*. U.S. DoD. Jul. 2013.

operations in rural parts of eastern Afghanistan today, but smaller than the area of operations in Tier 4.[61]

Tier 2 roads (Goal: Neutralize the insurgency)

Ensuring the safety of travel along the major roads is an essential part of providing security and stability in Afghanistan as a whole. In this section, we provide augmentation for security forces in the areas along the 1,800 kilometers of major roads to account for the additional force structure necessary to secure this key infrastructure.

One method for determining the number of forces needed to secure the roads is to determine the number of checkpoints needed to ensure that they can reinforce each other if one comes under fire. Along some segments of the Ring Road (Highway 1) between Helmand and Kandahar today, the ANA and police have checkpoints about every kilometer. The ANSF positioned the checkpoints this close to each other so that the police or soldiers manning them can see adjacent checkpoints and respond to incidents rapidly (on foot, if vehicles are not available).[62] That said, the entire length of the major highways does not require this level of security now, and we assess that it will not require that level of security in the future.

Personnel in theater report that most small firefights are currently over within about 10 minutes, so we could take as a requirement that security forces need to travel between checkpoints within 10 minutes.[63] Alternatively, we could set the requirement such that ANA checkpoints could be spaced 20 minutes apart—with police checkpoints in-between—such that the ANA could reinforce any interven-

[61] In this force-sizing calculation, we take into account the area of all the Tier 3 areas in eastern Afghanistan, as well as the more outlying Tier 2 areas around Kabul and Ghazni. We include these Tier 2 areas because our "ring of steel" analysis for the Tier 1 areas below does not adequately account for the security requirements of outlying rural communities in Tier 2 areas. The forces allocated to the "ring of steel" are dedicated to protecting the urban centers in Tier 1, not conducting operations to secure the rural areas in Tier 2.

[62] Author interviews in RC–South. Afghanistan. Aug. 12–20, 2013.

[63] Author interviews in Kabul and RC–South. Afghanistan. Aug. 12–24, 2013.

ing police checkpoints within 10 minutes. Table 23 shows the force requirements for four cases, in which we varied the travel speed between checkpoints from 100 to 25 kilometers per hour (to account for road conditions varying from straight, well-paved roads to switchbacks in the mountains), as well as the number of people required per checkpoint.[64] The calculations for the number of infantry battalions needed to maintain the number of checkpoints shown in the table assume that half of the personnel in a battalion are available for checkpoint duty at any given time.[65]

By taking an average of the four cases shown in Table 23, we see that seven battalions are needed to secure the major highways. We are not advocating that the ANSF should set up checkpoints on this scale. However, based on our discussions with subject matter experts, we assess that seven battalions would provide a reasonable number of additional forces to augment security along the major highways. The ANSF could use these forces to provide checkpoint security, to conduct patrols in the vicinity of the major roads, or to support other operations in the areas surrounding the roads in order to prevent or deter insurgents from attacking travelers.

Table 23. Calculation of infantry battalions to augment security on Tier 2 major roads

	Case 1: Straight, well-paved roads	**Case 2: Lower-quality roads**	**Case 3: Lower-quality roads with larger checkpoints**	**Case 4: Mountain switchbacks**
Travel time between checkpoints (minutes)	10	10	20	20
Travel speed between checkpoints (km/hr)	100	50	50	25
No. of checkpoints required	108	216	108	216
No. of personnel per checkpoint	12	12	20	20
No. of infantry battalions	**3.5**	**7**	**6**	**11.5**

[64] If a checkpoint has 12 people, it could have three shifts with four people on duty at any given time. With 20 personnel, a checkpoint would also have capacity to conduct patrols in the vicinity of the checkpoint.

[65] This figure assumes that the other half of the personnel in the battalion would be on leave or required for headquarters administration, logistics, sentry duty at the battalion and company headquarters, or other duties.

Tier 1 urban areas (Goal: Neutralize the insurgency)

The ANA currently have eight battalions stationed around Kabul, and given the results of our threat assessment we assess it pragmatic to maintain that force size in the 2015–2018 timeframe. These ANA battalions form a "ring of steel" around Kabul through a series of layered checkpoints on the roads into the city and frequent operations in the rural areas around it. Reducing the ANA presence around Kabul could encourage insurgents to test the reduced security footprint and thereby threaten the actual—or perceived—security level within the city. Even a few more spectacular attacks in Kabul could reduce public confidence in the government, which could have strategic and political consequences across Afghanistan and internationally.

Having set the security requirements for Kabul, one way of determining the security requirement for the other cities is to ask how many forces they would need to have a proportionally-sized "ring of steel." Table 24 shows how the populations and circumferences of the other cities compare to those of Kabul.[66] The final column shows how many battalions we allocated to the security of each city, based on the city's geographic area, population, and security tier, as well as the security tier of the surrounding areas.

Table 24. ANA infantry battalions calculated for the protection of Tier 1 cities

City	Population	% pop. of Kabul	Approximate circumference (km)	% circum. of Kabul	Calculated force level (battalions)
Kabul	3,289,000	100%	110	100%	8
Kandahar	491,500	15%	40	36%	3
Herat	436,300	13%	35	32%	3
Mazar-e-Sharif	368,100	11%	40	36%	3
Jalalabad	206,500	6%	30	27%	2
Gardez	107,500	3%	20	18%	1
Ghazni	157,600	5%	20	18%	1
Khost	133,700	4%	20	18%	1
Kunduz	304,600	9%	20	18%	1
Lashkar Gah	100,200	3%	25	27%	1

[66] We estimated the circumference of the urban areas in each city by viewing satellite imagery in Google Earth and drawing an approximate circle or box around the areas of each city that appeared densely populated.

Based on our interviews, research, and our own judgment, it seems reasonable to add one to three battalions to the areas surrounding the major urban centers as shown in Table 24. Adding these extra forces for Tier 1 and Tier 2 cities takes into account that there are additional threats in these provinces due to the presence of the major cities. Like the forces we added to provide highway security, these extra battalions would not necessarily need to form a "ring of steel" around each of these cities. Instead, they could provide extra combat power and flexibility to the brigades in the provinces with these urban areas.

All total, we assess a requirement for 81 infantry battalions, based primarily on the area in which a battalion can effectively operate. Table 22 summarizes our force-sizing framework and the number of battalions recommended by tier.

Afghan National Army operational reserve (or national swing force)

In addition to the 81 battalions identified above for the counterinsurgency mission, we assess that the ANA also requires an operational reserve or national-level swing force that the MoD can employ as required to reinforce areas as insurgents adjust their tactics and focus.[67]

According to U.S. doctrine, defending commanders should "retain [operational] reserves as a means of ensuring mission accomplishment and for exploiting opportunities through offensive action."[68] If all the army's forces are committed to static positions and fixed areas of operation, the army lacks flexibility and "can cede the initiative to an adaptive, free-thinking enemy."[69] As noted in our review of the enemy's operations in Afghanistan over the past few decades, various in-

[67] This section discusses the need for an operational reserve of active duty army personnel, not the need for a reserve component of non-active duty personnel who could be recalled for service in time of need. The ANA do not currently have a non-active reserve component, and we do not believe it is feasible or necessary to create such a reserve component in the 2015 to 2018 timeframe.

[68] *Offense and Defense*. Headquarters, Department of the Army, Army Doctrine Publication 3-90. Aug. 2012.

[69] Ibid.

surgent groups have shown themselves to be adaptable and able to exploit holes in the government's defenses.

The ANA have recently begun fielding a force that could be considered an operational reserve or national swing force: the Mobile Strike Force (MSF). The MSF is currently building towards its authorized end strength of seven battalions. Based on our review of U.S. Army doctrine and our interviews with subject matter experts, it appears that an operational reserve of seven battalions compared to 81 regular infantry battalions might be high—if the forces were held back as an operational reserve of last resort and only employed occasionally.

The ANA, however, are more likely to employ the MSF as a national swing force.[70] As such, the MSF would be regularly supporting infantry battalions in Tier 3 areas and reinforcing ANA operations to protect key Tier 1 and Tier 2 areas. Based on our threat assessment, the ANA must defend four Tier 1 and 2 areas in eastern Afghanistan, two Tier 1 cities in southern Afghanistan, and the long stretches of Tier 2 roads connecting Kandahar to Kabul, Herat, and the borders with Iran and Pakistan. We assess, therefore, that having seven MSF battalions to act as a national swing force would not be out of line to counter the threats expected in the 2015–2018 timeframe.

Throughout our discussion of the operations that the ANA must conduct, we have stressed the need for the ANA to conduct mobile operations, to reinforce district centers or police posts, and to actively conduct larger-scale clearing operations to disrupt insurgent strongholds. One could argue, therefore, that the ANA require more than seven MSF battalions. We do not recommend this, however, as we assess that the ANA will face significant logistical difficulties maintaining and resupplying the heavy vehicles in the seven MSF battalions that are currently planned (see our assessment of ANSF capability gaps for more details).

Afghan National Army supporting forces

To determine the *total* number of ANA forces necessary, we must determine not only the number of combat battalions needed to counter

[70] Author interviews with 205th Corps advisors. Kandahar, Afghanistan. Aug. 12–20, 2013.

insurgent threats, but also the number of personnel needed to support those combat battalions. Such support personnel include headquarters (at the brigade, corps, and national levels), combat support (e.g., artillery, engineering, and medical), combat service support (e.g., logistics and maintenance), and other capabilities (e.g., intelligence analysis, communications, and contract management).

During our interviews in theater, we heard repeatedly that the ANA's supporting establishment is too small, mainly because the ANA have been able to rely on the U.S. and NATO for many support functions, including operational planning, intelligence analysis, logistics, medical, and engineering. The commander of ISAF has also highlighted ANSF logistics as one of the top areas requiring significant improvement over the next few years.[71]

Methodology

Given the time constraints of this study, we were unable to conduct a ground-up capabilities-based analysis of the ANA's support requirements. We did not examine whether the current mix of artillery, engineering, counter-IED, and other personnel in the combat support battalions is appropriate. Instead, we reviewed the ratio of combat support battalions to infantry battalions and assumed that the ANA would maintain one combat support battalion per brigade, as described below.

For other support requirements, we examined the "tooth-to-tail" ratio for the ANA and for militaries in several other conflicts in the 20th and 21st centuries. This ratio measures the number of combat forces (tooth) relative to support forces (tail). Based on this historical analysis, we concur with U.S. and NATO advisors who argue that the ANA is extremely lean and will need additional logistics and support capabilities in the future.

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[71] General Joseph Dunford. "Commander ISAF's Afghanistan Update, Summer 2013." *www.ISAF.NATO.int Official Website of International Security Assistance Force Afghanistan*, accessed Oct. 3, 2013, at www.isaf.nato.int/article/isaf-news-list/commander-isaf-s-afghanistan-update-summer-2013.html.

Assessment

Currently, each ANA brigade is assigned one combat support battalion to provide artillery, engineering, and other support, and we assess that this level of combat support will be needed in the future as well. Ensuring the ANA have sufficient combat support—and in particular sufficient artillery—will be essential as U.S. and NATO air power draws down and ANA infantry battalions become more dependent on ground-based artillery fires. We therefore hold constant the ratio of combat support battalions to combat battalions. Given that we reduced the number of infantry battalions by 14, we reduce the number of combat support battalions by 3 (Table 25).[72]

Table 25. Calculated combat support battalions, by region

Region	Infantry battalions today	Infantry battalions calculated	Change	CS battalions today	CS battalions calculated	Change
Kabul	8	8	0	2	2	0
East	33	27	(6)	8	7	(1)
South & SW	30	28	(2)	8	7	(1)
West	12	11	(1)	3	3	0
North	12	7	(5)	3	2	(1)
Total	**95**	**81**	**(14)**	**24**	**21**	**(3)**

To determine the requirement for other supporting forces, we reviewed studies that examined tooth-to-tail ratios for the U.S. and Afghan militaries. For example, McGrath used several approaches to calculate the tooth-to-tail ratios for the U.S. Army in five conflicts from World War I to Iraq, as well as five snapshots from peacetime and the Cold War.[73] He found that both approaches resulted in an

[72] We do not include the MSF in this analysis because the MSF battalions are not currently supported by combat support battalions. The force structure for the MSF battalion includes some organic capabilities that would be considered combat support in the rest of the ANA.

[73] McGrath calculated an "operational tooth-to-tail" ratio by counting the number of forces that were assigned to operational units, defined as divisions prior to 2007 and brigades after the Army's 2007 reorganization. Second, recognizing that "operational units do not consist entirely of combat elements and some combat elements are not found in divisions

average post-1941 tooth-to-tail ratio for deploying forces of approximately 1:2 (i.e., one-third of deploying forces were combat units), although this ratio has decreased somewhat over the years.

We calculated the "tooth-to-tail" ratio for the ANA using its current tables of organization (the 1392 *tashkiel*). We defined the supporting establishment to consist of headquarters staffs, forces required to provide "life support" at major bases (e.g., military police and army medical centers), logistics, and other combat service support elements. Conversely, we defined the combat forces to include the infantry battalions and their associated combat support battalions. We also included the Mobile Strike Forces as part of the combat forces.[74]

Table 26 summarizes the force distribution of the ANA today with McGrath's findings for historical U.S. Army deployments since 1941. Our calculated figure of 59 percent combat forces in today's ANA is significantly higher than the corresponding figures for U.S. forces in any conflict since World War II.[75] In those conflicts, the fraction of combat forces averaged 33 percent, ranging from a high of 39 percent in World War II to a low of 25 percent for the 2005 rotation of

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or brigades," McGrath calculated a more detailed, "functional tooth-to-tail" ratio, by binning units below the division/brigade level according to their roles (combat or supporting). John J. McGrath. *The Other End of the Spear*.

[74] This analysis does not include the ANA personnel working at the MoD or at the recruiting and training commands. In McGrath's analysis, these personnel were located in the U.S. and thus were not part of the deployed forces. The figures also do not include the AAF or ANA SOF, as McGrath's calculations include only conventional U.S. Army forces.

[75] McGrath omitted the numbers from World War I because the command structure of those forces was significantly leaner than in more modern forces. Specifically, U.S. forces in World War I were 65 percent combat forces, 32 percent logistics and life support forces, and just 3 percent headquarters staffs. For example, "Divisions with a size of 28,105 in November 1918 only had a headquarters element of 304 (1.1 percent)." McGrath. *The Other End of the Spear*.

forces in Iraq (the latter figure counts contractors and support troops in Kuwait as part of the tail).[76]

Table 26. Types of forces in the current ANA force structure, compared to historical U.S. Army forces

Category	ANA troops today	% of total ANA	% of historical U.S. Army forces
Combat units	86,100	59	33 (25 – 39)
Headquarters staffs	22,500	15	25 (16 – 38)
Logistics and life support	37,200	26	43 (36 – 57)
Total	**145,800**	**100**	**100**

Most likely, the ANA have a larger fraction of combat forces because the ANA logistics system is relatively immature, as the ANA have relied on the U.S., NATO, and contractors for logistics, maintenance, and other support functions.

We assess that for the ANA to grow into a self-sustaining force, their headquarters and logistical support tails will need to grow to at least the minimum levels found by McGrath. This means that at least 36 percent of the total ANA force structure should provide logistics and support functions and at least 16 percent should be part of headquarters staffs. Based on historical U.S. forces, this is a conservative estimate for the forces needed for logistics and life support. With an active-duty logistics force of this size, the ANA would still require significant additional support from civilians and contractors for maintenance, supply, and administrative support. That said, having civilians provide maintenance, logistics, and other functions such as medical treatment or intelligence analysis has some advantages, primarily that it increases the number of active duty personnel who are available to conduct combat operations. Moreover, modern U.S. forces are also highly dependent on contractor support. In 2010, for example, there were over 95,000 contractors in Iraq and over 112,000 in Afghani-

[76] Counting just the active duty military personnel in Iraq, McGrath calculated that 40 percent of the U.S. forces were combat forces, 36 percent provided logistics and life support, and 24 percent provided headquarters functions.

stan—more than the number of U.S. troops deployed to those countries.[77]

Total conventional force requirement for the ANA

In total, we calculate the size of the conventional ANA at about 155,900 personnel, as summarized in Table 27. This is an increase of about 10,000 personnel over the conventional forces currently allocated to the ANA.[78]

Table 27. Summary of calculated conventional ANA forces

Type of forces	No. of units calculated	No. of forces per unit	Force size calculated	% of the force	Total force calculated	Current ANA forces	Difference
Infantry battalions	81	745	60,300				
Combat support battalions	21	475	10,000	48	74,800	86,100	(11,300)
Reserve / swing force (MSF)	7	640	4,500				
Headquarters				16	25,000	22,500	2,500
Logistics and support				36	56,100	37,200	18,900
Total conventional forces					**155,900**	**145,800**	**10,100**

Taking into account the threats and requisite ANA mission sets in each security tier, we assess that the number of ANA infantry battalions should be reduced from 95 to 81. We also assess, however, that the number of combat support battalions providing artillery and engineering support to the infantry should be reduced by only 3 battalions. In addition, the logistics support structure should be increased from 26 percent to at least 36 percent of the total force size. With this increase in logistical support, ANA infantry battalions will be more sustainable and thus more capable. Even with this substantial increase

[77] *Iraq and Afghanistan: DOD, State, and USAID Face Continued Challenges in Tracking Contracts, Assistance Instruments, and Associated Personnel.* U.S. Government Accountability Office GAO-11-1. Oct. 2010.

[78] The current end-strength cap for the ANA is 195,000. This figure includes the 145,800 operational forces, as well as about 30,000 personnel who work at the MoD, provide the staff for training and recruiting, or are new recruits in training. In addition, the ANA also includes about 20,000 personnel in SOF and the AAF. We address all these personnel in subsequent sections.

in logistics force structure, however, the ANA will likely remain reliant on contractor support for maintenance for the foreseeable future, as discussed in our assessment of ANSF capability gaps.

Sensitivity analysis

To test the sensitivity of our results to our planning factors, we varied several assumptions, as shown in Table 28. In particular, increasing the requirement for logistics and headquarters functions such that combat battalions are only one-third of the force increases the total requirement for ANA by 70,800, which is an increase of 45 percent over the force defined by our force-sizing framework.

Table 28. Sensitivity analysis for ANA planning factors

Planning factor adjustment	Adjusted ANA force size	Change in ANA force size	Percent change
Infantry battalions stay constant at 95, but logistics forces are increased to 36% of the total force.[79]	181,100	25,200	16
Logistics and headquarters forces are set at the median (rather than minimum) values based on the comparison with deployed U.S. Army forces in the 20th century[80]	226,700	70,800	45

As a final comparison, we also considered the number of forces that would result from the commonly cited 14 or 20 counterinsurgent

[79] Based on our force-sizing framework, each infantry battalion yields a total requirement for 1,800 personnel. This figure includes the 745 personnel in the infantry battalion and one-quarter of the personnel in a combat support battalion (120 personnel). These combat forces are 40 percent of the total force requirement, with logistics support (36 percent) and headquarters personnel (16 percent) rounding out the total force.

[80] Our force-sizing construct may still be a conservative estimate for the total requirement for logistics and headquarters personnel, as it assumes the minimum values seen in deployed U.S. forces in the 20th century. The force size here assumes that a sustainable ANA requires the median values seen in deployed U.S. Army forces in the 20th century (i.e., 33 percent combat forces, 43 percent logistics forces and 25 percent headquarters staff).

forces per 1,000 inhabitants.[81] Although the analysis behind these figures has been questioned,[82] it is worth calculating them for comparison with the above analysis, which was based primarily on the area in which combat battalions can effectively operate. These population-based planning factors yield a requirement for 33 to 57 combat battalions in the rural areas of Tiers 2 and 3, compared to the 23 battalions derived in our analysis.[83] This equates to an increase in the size of the ANA of 18,000 to 61,000 (or 11 to 40 percent). That said, the mission set of full-spectrum population-centric counterinsurgency upon which these planning factors are based is significantly more expansive than the operational goals and missions for the ANA as we have calculated it. As a result, it is not surprising that these planning factors yield a requirement for a substantially larger force than the one based on our force-sizing framework.

Afghan Air Force

Air power is generally regarded as a crucial military capability, especially in a counterinsurgency and especially in a country such as Afghanistan where mountainous terrain, a lack of navigable roads, and the prolific use of roadside bombs hinder ground travel. In particular, Afghan and ISAF military personnel interviewed for this study highlighted the benefits of close air support, air mobility, and casualty evacuation via helicopters.

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[81] James T. Quinlivan. "Burden of Victory: The Painful Arithmetic of Stability Operations." RAND, Review 27, no.2, Summer 2003: 28-29, and McGrath. *Boots on the Ground.*

[82] Jeffrey A. Friedman. "Manpower and Counterinsurgency: Empirical Foundations for Theory and Doctrine." *Security Studies*, 20, no. 4, 2011: 556-591.

[83] As these planning factors include all security forces—both military and police—we must take into account that our analysis has already allocated 6.0 police per 1,000 inhabitants. The population of the rural areas in Tiers 2 and 3 is approximately 8.7 million, so these planning factors yield a requirement for 70,000 to 120,000 ANA personnel. We estimate that an ANA battalion has about 1,170 personnel, based on the 1392 *tashkiel*. This figure includes 745 personnel in the battalion itself, as well as a prorated share of the brigade- and corps-level headquarters staff and brigade- and corps-level enablers such as artillery, engineering, logistics, and maintenance.

To determine an appropriate size for the AAF, we concluded that demand for air forces would always exceed supply in a country such as Afghanistan. Therefore, we instead focused on analyzing how much the AAF (and the Special Mission Wing (SMW)) could possibly grow between now and 2018. Our assessment of AAF and SMW growth factors finds that these forces cannot feasibly grow more than already planned in the 2015 to 2018 timeframe. These forces are already struggling to grow to their planned size, and even if additional recruits were found, only a small number could become operational by 2018 given the length of the required training.

Methodology and assumptions

In our interviews in Washington D.C. and Afghanistan, subject matter experts universally agreed that demand for air support in Afghanistan would always exceed supply. Given Afghanistan's limited resources, the AAF will simply not be able to provide as much air support as U.S. and NATO militaries would deem required to counter the threats within Afghanistan.

In this section, therefore, we do not provide a threat- or demand-based analysis of the requirements for air support. Instead, we consider whether it is even feasible to increase the size of the AAF more than is currently planned over the next few years. We first review the current size of the AAF and examine how it is expected to grow by 2018. Then we review the AAF's ability to recruit and train more personnel and maintain its currently planned fleet of aircraft.

A complete review of whether the AAF can support and maintain its expected fleet is beyond the scope of this assessment. We do, however, review the criticisms of the AAF and consider whether it is likely to be able to maintain as many different platforms as it is expected to have in 2018.[84]

[84] Critics argue that the AAF costs too much and provides too few benefits. Even without considering the cost of procuring the aircraft and helicopters, the NATO Air Training Command – Afghanistan estimates that sustaining the AAF will cost $600 million per year by 2017. As the AAF has too few qualified maintenance personnel, this figure includes the international contractors required to keep the AAF flying. Given that current

Current forces and capabilities

There are two components of air power within the ANSF: the Afghan Air Force and the Special Mission Wing. The AAF has been under the control of the ANA since its creation in 2005. It supports the operations of the ANA's regional corps from its three primary air bases in Kabul, Kandahar, and Shindand. The SMW supports ANA SOF and ANP special police units. According to a recently signed air charter between the MoI and the MoD, the intent is for the SMW to fly roughly 50/50 counterterrorism and counter-narcotics missions.[85]

Currently, the AAF and SMW have a combination of Russian helicopters and Western fixed-wing aircraft, for a total of 105 platforms, as shown in Table 29. Based on current procurement projections, the AAF in 2018 will have approximately 120 aircraft and the SMW will have 48, for a total of 168 aircraft.[86]

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levels of international financial commitments may not be high enough to sustain the police and conventional army forces (as discussed further in our assessment of ANSF resources), critics fear that the AAF's planes and helicopters will end up broken and unused. They argue that international resources being spent on aircraft would be better spent on low-tech systems—such as mortars, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) balloons, and trucks—that the Afghans will be able to use and maintain more effectively. Author's interview with NATO Air Training Command. Kabul, Afghanistan. Aug. 19, 2013; and *Afghan Special Mission Wing: DOD Moving Forward with $771.8 Million Purchase of Aircraft that the Afghans Cannot Operate and Maintain.* Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction SIGAR Audit 13-13. Jun. 2013.

[85] The SMW began as the MoI's counter-narcotics Air Interdiction Unit in 2006. The ANSF subsequently identified a requirement for an Afghan aviation capability to support counterterrorism operations, and this unit was re-designated as the Special Mission Wing in July 2012. Author's interview with Special Mission Wing Special Operations Advisory Group. Kabul, Afghanistan. Aug. 17, 2013; and *Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan.* U.S. DoD. Jul. 2013.

[86] Authors' interview with NATO Air Training Command. Kabul, Afghanistan. Aug. 19, 2013; and "NATO Air Training Command Afghanistan (NATC-A)/438 Air Expeditionary Wing Welcomes Center for Naval Analysis." PowerPoint presentation prepared by NATO Air Training Command. Aug. 2013.

Table 29. AAF and SMW inventory, October 2013 and projected 2018

Aircraft Type	Platform	Command	Roles and Missions	Current (Oct 2013)	Projected (2018)
Mi-17	Rotary wing (RW)	AAF	Aerial assault; troop movement; supply, resupply; CASEVAC and human remains transport	48	58
Mi-35	RW	AAF	Close Air Support (CAS); Aerial reconnaissance	6	0
MD-530	RW	AAF	Training	6	6
C-182	Fixed wing (FW)	AAF	Training	6	6
C-208	FW	AAF	Training; troop movement; supply, resupply; CASEVAC and human remains transport	26	26
C-130	FW	AAF	Heavy lift; troop movement; supply, resupply	2	4 (2 delivered in late 2014)
A-29	FW	AAF	CAS; close air attack; aerial reconnaissance	0	20 (2 arrive per month Sep. 14 - Jun. 15)
Mi-17	RW	SMW	Aerial assault; troop movement; supply, resupply; CASEVAC; night flying	10	30 (full delivery by Dec. 2014)
PC-12	FW	SMW	ISR (geospatial intelligence/imagery intelligence)	0	18 (by mid-2015)

The AAF and SMW are nascent forces, and their current capabilities are quite limited. Afghan pilots and air crews currently conduct resupply, casualty evacuation, human remains transport, and passenger transport missions across the country.[87] The AAF, however, has limited capability for air assault, armed escort, and ISR—and none of its crews are capable of flying at night. The SMW has only six crews trained to perform aerial assault and ISR missions at night.[88] The AAF's ability to provide CAS is extremely limited, with only two operational Mi-35 helicopters providing air-to-ground attack capabilities

[87] With a range of 1,000 miles, the fixed-wing C-208 can provide resupply and troop transport across the country, and the rotary-wing Mi-17 can conduct airlift to remote locations across most of the country. *Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan.* U.S. DoD. Jul. 2013.

[88] Authors interview with Special Mission Wing Special Operations Advisory Group. Kabul, Afghanistan. Aug. 17, 2013; and *Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan.* U.S. DoD. Jul. 2013.

in and around the Kabul area.[89] The AAF expects to phase out these attack helicopters by 2016 and replace them with 20 A-29 Super Tucano fixed-wing light-attack aircraft. These new aircraft are expected to give the AAF a nation-wide capability for close air support, as the A-29s are expected to be based in Kabul, Kandahar, and Shindand.

Assessment

One way to increase the overall capability of the AAF and SMW would be to purchase more aircraft for these units. This approach, however, ignores the reality that recruiting qualified personnel is the key shortfall facing the AAF and SMW.

The AAF and SMW are currently about 1,600 personnel short of their planned final end-strengths, and the NATO Air Training Command-Afghanistan (NATC-A) projects that the personnel shortfall will continue to be about 1,000 personnel in the 2014 to 2015 timeframe.[90] To mitigate this, NATC-A is bringing in advisors from recruiting commands in the U.S. to build Afghan recruiting expertise. Even with additional recruiting efforts, however, it will be difficult to overcome the fact that Afghanistan has a limited pool of qualified candidates.[91]

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[89] Author's interview with advisor to the Afghan Air Force 207th Detachment. Herat, Afghanistan. Aug. 20, 2013.

[90] The AAF has about 6,900 personnel (out of a planned force size of 7,900) and the SMW has about 200 personnel (out of 800). Specifically, the AAF has about 650 pilots and aircrew (out of 780 planned), 1,000 maintainers (out of 1,370) and 5,200 support and security personnel (out of 5,750). The SMW currently has about 45 pilots (out of 190 planned), 30 crew chiefs (out of 140), 90 mechanics (out of 385) and 20 security personnel (out of 90). Authors' interview with Special Mission Wing Special Operations Advisory Group. Kabul, Afghanistan. Aug. 17, 2013; and *Afghan Special Mission Wing: DOD Moving Forward with $771.8 Million Purchase of Aircraft that the Afghans Cannot Operate and Maintain.* Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction SIGAR Audit 13-13. Jun. 2013.

[91] The AAF requires recruits to be fully literate in their native language and have a functional literacy in English, but the literacy rate in Afghanistan is less than 30 percent and only 5 percent of the population have had training in the English language. In addition, the SMW has an 18- to 20-month vetting process, designed to eliminate candidates who have asso-

Once qualified and vetted recruits are found, it requires, on average, two to three years to train pilots and five years to fully train mechanics. Crews capable of night operations require several more years of training.[92] The real bottleneck, however, is not the length of the training but the lack of recruits to train. As of August 2013, only 373 out of 1600 slots at the Afghan Air University were filled, and over 100 of the 560 slots for English language training remained empty.[93]

The AAF's inability to organically maintain airframes and systems—resulting from a lack of qualified maintenance personnel—also limits the ability of the AAF and SMW to support additional aircraft.[94] First, relying on international contractors increases the cost of aircraft maintenance. Second, reliance on international contractors limits the geographical distribution of AAF air frames. ANA Corps commanders have told U.S. and NATO personnel that they would like to have the aircraft more widely distributed across the country, but greater dispersion of contracted maintenance personnel would further increase

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ciations with criminal or insurgent activity, and the SMW has had difficulty finding qualified candidates who can pass this strict vetting process. Author's interview with NATO Air Training Command. Kabul Afghanistan. Aug. 19, 2013; "NATC-A Story Level I and II Combined." NATO Air Training Command briefing. 2013; and *Afghan Special Mission Wing.* Jun. 2013.

[92] Author's interview with NATO Air Training Command. Kabul, Afghanistan. Aug. 19, 2013; and author's interview with advisor to the Afghan Air Force 207th Detachment. Herat, Afghanistan. Aug. 20, 2013.

[93] "NATO Air Training Command – Afghanistan (NATC-A)/438 Air Expeditionary Wing Welcomes Center for Naval Analysis [sic]." Aug. 2013.

[94] DynCorp and Northrup Grumman contactors currently perform about half of the maintenance and repairs to the SMW's fleet of 30 Mi-17s, as well as about 70 percent of critical maintenance and logistics management and spare parts procurement. NATC-A planning assumes that contract maintenance will continue until at least 2020 and predicts that contractor support must increase by over 50 percent over the next couple of years in order to support the arrival of new aircraft and integrate the new capabilities *Afghan Special Mission Wing.* Jun. 2013; "NATC-A Story Level I and II Combined." Aug. 2013; and author's interview with NATO Air Training Command. Kabul, Afghanistan. Aug. 19, 2013.

costs and security requirements, and therefore be even harder to sustain.[95]

Maintenance of the infrastructure to support air operations is also a concern. In some locations, such as Herat, some newly built infrastructure is already falling into disrepair and the AAF has shown little capability to maintain it.[96]

Finally, U.S. and NATO personnel expressed concerns that the AAF may have difficulty maintaining the relatively large number of different platforms expected to be part of the force in 2018 (see Table 29).[97] In particular, several subject matter experts have expressed concern about the AAF's ability to operate and maintain C-130s. Based on current plans, the AAF is expected to have four of these aircraft by 2014. The C-130 is a complicated modern aircraft that requires specialized flight crews, specially-trained mechanics, and a completely separate inventory of spare parts, compared to the rest of the AAF's fleet. The AAF is expected to use these aircraft primarily to transport ANA soldiers traveling across the country on leave.[98] We assess that the ANSF could achieve this mission by moving soldiers via ground transportation or chartered commercial flights. For example, Afghanistan's national airline, Safi Airways, already provides flights between Kandahar, Herat, Jalalabad, and Kabul. We assess, therefore, that the AAF does not require C-130s and will be inhibited by the cost of sustaining these aircraft over the long term. Eliminating the C-130s from the AAF fleet would yield a significant cost savings, mainly in international contractor support for these aircraft. In addition, without these aircraft, the AAF would require at least 100 fewer personnel.[99]

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[95] "NATC-A Story Level I and II Combined." Aug. 2013; and author's interview with NATO Air Training Command. Kabul, Afghanistan. Aug. 19, 2013.

[96] Author's interview with advisor to the Afghan Air Force 207th Detachment. Herat, Afghanistan. Aug. 20, 2013.

[97] Author's interview with NATO Air Training Command. Kabul, Afghanistan. Aug 19, 2013.

[98] Ibid.

[99] Current plans indicate that the AAF will have six aircrews of five persons each for the four C-130s. The AAF would also require maintenance per-

In sum, we conclude that the AAF and SMW cannot feasibly grow beyond their current planned end-strength. Additionally, we conclude that the AAF cannot support the addition of C-130s to its fleet, and we therefore reduce its end-strength by the 100 personnel associated with these aircraft.

Afghan National Army Special Operations Forces

Like air support, special operations forces are generally considered an essential part of the overall counterinsurgency and counterterrorism efforts in Afghanistan. We expect ANA SOF to conduct operations throughout Afghanistan—both to protect Kabul, and to prevent insurgent and terrorist networks from gaining strongholds in the remote areas of Tier 3 and 4 where it is difficult for conventional forces to reach.

We conclude that demand for SOF in Afghanistan is likely to always exceed supply. Since this is similar to the case for the AAF, we took a similar approach of assessing how much bigger ANA SOF could feasibly become prior to 2018. We conclude that while it would be possible to train a significant number of additional SOF in the coming years, the ANSF lack the intelligence analysis, air mobility, and logistics capabilities to support their effective employment. We therefore conclude that ANA SOF should stay the same size in the 2015–2018 timeframe.

Methodology and assumptions

Based on our interviews with various subject matter experts, the common wisdom is that the demand for SOF will always exceed supply, especially in areas such as Afghanistan that have a significant threat of high-profile attacks from insurgent and terrorist networks. As such, we do not attempt to calculate an unconstrained force size for SOF. Instead, we follow a similar methodology as with the AAF: we review the current force size and capabilities of ANA SOF and consider the potential for expanding these forces, given difficulties in recruiting, training, and equipping such highly specialized personnel.

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sonnel and additional flight line security personnel for the C-130s. "NATO Air Training Command – Afghanistan (NATC-A)/438 Air Expeditionary Wing Welcomes Center for Naval Analysis." Aug. 2013.

We then consider whether the ANA are likely to have sufficient logistics infrastructure, intelligence, and air mobility to support additional SOF operations.

Current forces and capabilities

Today, ANA SOF include three primary types of forces: the ANA Commandos, the ANA Special Forces (ANASF), and the elite counterterrorism force called the *Ktah Khas*.

The ANA Commandos focus on the enemy, whereas the ANASF focus on the population. More specifically, the Commandos are designed as a light infantry assault force similar in structure and design to the U.S. Army's Ranger battalions. They are a direct-action force, trained in infantry tactics, raids, assaults, high-value targeting, ambushes, cordon and search, and close target reconnaissance.[100] The Afghan government has indicated that it places a high priority on the Commandos and intends to keep these forces after 2014.[101]

The ANASF are modeled after U.S. Army Special Forces. Their training includes preparation for many of the same missions as the Commandos, as well as reconnaissance operations, key leader engagements, information operations, and training for the ALP. Despite this wide range of training and potential mission sets, much of the ANASF's current efforts are focused on the ALP and Village Stability Operations (VSO) program, in large part because U.S. SOF developed the ANASF specifically to be their partners in VSO.[102] That said, the role of the ANASF after 2014 is unclear. Oversight of the ALP is currently in the process of being transitioned from U.S. SOF

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[100] *Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan.* U.S. DoD. Jul. 2013.

[101] Kenneth Katzman. *Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy.* CRS Report for Congress RL 30588. Sep. 19, 2013.

[102] VSO is a U.S. SOF program that was designed to extend government control into the countryside and down to the village level, while at the same time building security, governance, and economic capacity from the bottom up, connecting the villages to the district and provincial government and economic development programs. As part of the VSO program, U.S. SOF recruit and train the ALP, who then defend their villages against insurgent violence and intimidation.

to the AUP at the district level, and it is not clear that the ANASF will have any role with the ALP going forward.[103]

The *Ktah Khas* is Afghanistan's national-level counterterrorism unit. U.S. counterterrorism forces created this force so they could have Afghan partners to support high-value counterterrorist operations. These forces are highly effective, but also highly dependent on U.S. counterterrorism forces (e.g., for intelligence, targeting, and air transportation).[104]

Assessment

Based on the ANA's ability to recruit and train personnel, we assess that the ANA could potentially increase the number of Commando forces by up to 3,000 personnel per year between now and 2018, with additional international assistance. The growth potential for the ANASF is more limited because Special Forces take longer to train, have a smaller base from which to recruit, and have higher attrition rates than the Commandos. Significantly increasing the ranks of the elite *Ktah Khas* counterterrorism force is likely infeasible without lowering its recruiting standards.

Recruiting and training more Commandos is feasible, but would likely require additional international trainers and might negatively impact the quality of the force. The Commandos reached their maximum authorized end strength in late 2012. They currently have an attrition rate of about 3 percent and have no difficulty recruiting and training enough personnel to maintain their overall force strength.[105]

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[103] Interviewees in theater told us that the Chief of the ANA General Staff does not want the ANASF to be formally associated with the ALP program, in part due to the ALP's past record of human rights abuses. Therefore, it does not appear that the government of Afghanistan intends for the ANASF to continue raising ALP after 2014.

[104] *Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan.* U.S. DoD. Jul. 2013.

[105] Author interviews. Kabul, Afghanistan. Aug. 12–24, 2013; and ibid.

From mid-2011 to mid-2012, the international community surged trainers to the ANA Commando School of Excellence and trained about 3,000 Commandos over the course of 12 months.[106] In theory, the ANA could recruit and train Commandos at that level in the future.[107] Recruiting more than 3,000 new Commandos per year could potentially be accomplished by re-designating and training existing ANA battalions as Commandos, as was done to stand up the Commando forces initially. This approach could rapidly increase the number of Commandos, but would result in lower recruiting standards and likely reduced operational performance by those units, compared to the units more recently formed through individual selection and training. Based on our interviews with ISAF advisors, this "bulk approach" to generating additional SOF is not recommended.[108]

The growth potential for the ANASF is more limited because the Special Forces take longer to train, have a smaller base of highly qualified personnel to recruit from, and are still building to their total authorized end-strength. Despite the desire to build the force, the ANASF gained only about 400 personnel per year between mid-2011 and mid-2013, in large part because the recruiting standards are higher than for the Commandos, as is the attrition rate during initial

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[106] Data on the number of Commandos trained over time were compiled from the *Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan: Report to Congress in accordance with sections 1230 and 1231 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008*. U.S. DoD. Oct. 2011, Apr. 2012, Dec. 2012, and Jul. 2013.

[107] The Commando School of Excellence is currently 95 percent staffed by Afghan trainers, but only at a level to train a number of recruits appropriate to maintain the current force size of ANA Commandos. Increasing the number of students at the school would likely require international personnel as instructors. Author interviews. Kabul, Afghanistan. Aug. 2013; and *Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan,* U.S. DoD. Jul. 2013.

[108] The length of time required for training is not a constraint on the number of Commandos that could be trained between now and 2015, as the basic training for Commandos is a 10-week course focused on light infantry tactics and specialty skills that follows the regular basic training for ANA soldiers.

ANASF training.[109] One potential way to increase the recruiting pool for the Special Forces—and reduce attrition during training—would be to recruit Special Forces from within the ANA Commandos, as was done to recruit the original ANASF in 2010.[110] We do not recommend this approach, however, as it would concurrently reduce the capabilities of the Commandos.

Recruiting standards and the intensive 15-week basic training course are not the only barriers to generating more ANASF. Currently, once ANASF recruits finish basic training, they are then partnered with a U.S. Army Special Forces team for an additional six months of on-the-job training.[111] Building additional ANASF, therefore, likely requires not only additional international personnel to conduct basic training; but also a greater commitment of U.S. Special Forces for the six-months of on-the-job training.

As the role of the ANASF evolves away from supporting the VSO and ALP programs, however, the future role for population-centric Special Forces within Afghanistan is not exactly clear. Given the difficulties noted above with expanding the ANASF in size, combined with this lack of clear mission post-2014, we do not recommend increasing the size of the ANASF beyond its current end-strength. On the other hand, eliminating the ANASF force structure is not advisable, as these personnel are already highly trained and they could conduct a wide

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[109] Data on the number of ANASF trained over time were compiled from the *Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan: Report to Congress in accordance with sections 1230 and 1231 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008*. U.S. DoD. Oct. 2011, Apr. 2012, Dec. 2012, and Jul. 2013.

[110] In 2010, the recruits for the first several ANASF classes were drawn from the best performers in the existing Commando battalions, which reduced Commando force strength and capability significantly. So as not to continue decimating the experienced personnel from the Commandos, the ANASF began recruiting from the regular ANA in 2011.

[111] "ANA special forces soldiers receive berets in ceremony." ISAF press release. Jun. 11, 2010, accessed Oct. 6, 2013, at www.dvidshub.net/news/59550/ana-special-forces-soldiers-receive-berets-ceremony.

variety of reconnaissance, intelligence gathering, or direct action missions along with the Commandos.

Significantly increasing the size of the *Ktah Khas* counterterrorism forces would be difficult without reducing training and vetting standards. *Ktah Khas* recruits come from the current ranks of the ANP, NDS, and ANA, or sometimes directly from the Kabul Military Training Center. Recruits have to be approved by the ANA Chief of Staff and have to pass face-to-face interviews, physical tests, psychological exams, counter-intelligence investigations, and polygraph tests in order to be selected for service. Acceptance standards are very high and the training is difficult: recruit attrition is about 98 percent.[112] In addition to these very high standards, *Ktah Khas* is almost entirely dependent on U.S. enablers for intelligence, targeting, and air mobility. As a result, we assess that significantly expanding the *Ktah Khas* is neither feasible nor advisable by the 2015 to 2018 timeframe. On the other hand, assuming that the United States maintains a counterterrorism mission in Afghanistan, it is appropriate to maintain the *Ktah Khas* force structure to provide Afghan personnel to support U.S. operations.

We note, however, that all of the ANA SOF continue to depend heavily on international logistics, intelligence, and air mobility, as described further in our assessment of ANSF capability gaps. Simply increasing the numbers of SOF without addressing these other support requirements will not increase their overall capability to disrupt and degrade criminal, insurgent, and terrorist networks in Afghanistan.

Given the great need for SOF operations to counter insurgent and terrorist activity across Afghanistan and the assessment from subject matter experts that the ANA SOF will be able to continue conducting operations with reduced support from United States forces, we assess that the size of the ANA SOF should remain unchanged from current levels.

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[112] For example, of 300 recent applicants, 114 passed the physical test. Of these, only 38 were admitted to the basic course after the other tests and vetting. Only 20 completed the basic course. Author interviews with *Ktah Khas* commander. Kabul, Afghanistan. Aug. 2013.

Other force requirements

To complete our analysis of ANSF force size and structure, we consider three additional categories of personnel.

First, we assess that the ANSF will continue to require approximately the same number of personnel for recruiting and training as they do today. The number of personnel dedicated to recruiting appears to be sufficient, as the ANSF have been recruiting enough personnel to grow and maintain their end-strength the past few years, despite significant levels of attrition. We assess that the ANSF are likely to continue to face relatively high levels of attrition over the next few years, and so will continue to require today's level of recruiting staff. We also hold the number of training staff constant at current levels, as we assess that the ANSF will likely require approximately the same number of regional training centers since the number of trainees only decreases slightly (see below).[113] Afghan personnel are largely conducting their own basic training today—and this training will need to continue. While the ANA may require a few additional trainers to train specialty skills that are currently trained by ISAF personnel, such as counter-IED and bomb disposal, we assess that the quantitative requirement for such specialty trainers is small.

Second, ANSF manning documents include about 19,300 billets for trainees (i.e., new recruits in basic training). If we assume that this force structure is appropriate to maintain today's force, then the ANSF will need to recruit and train a proportional number of personnel to maintain the force structure that we have recommended. Thus, we also hold the number of billets for new recruits receiving in-

[113] Currently, the number of billets for new police and army recruits in training is about 6 percent of the total ANSF force structure. This percentage is low compared to that of U.S. forces. For example, about 15 percent of the U.S. Marine Corps is currently in the status of "trainee." On the other hand, the U.S. Marine Corps has a longer basic training course and provides more sustainment and follow-on training to its personnel, so one would expect the percentage of trainees in U.S. forces to be larger than it is in the ANA. "Headquarters Marine Corps Manpower Performance Indicators Information." *www.manpower.usmc.mil Official Website of the United States Marine Corps Manpower and Reserve Affairs*, accessed Oct. 7, 2013.

itial training constant at 6 percent of the force, which results in a net reduction of 600 personnel.

Third, ANSF manning documents today also include approximately 5,500 personnel currently assigned to the MoD and just under 7,000 personnel assigned to the MoI. As discussed further in our assessment of the MoD and MoI below, we assess that many of these administrative, ministerial-level functions could and ultimately should be conducted by civilians—so we have sized the ANSF here with zero uniformed personnel on staff at the MoD and MoI. If civilians with the appropriate expertise cannot be recruited or trained for these MoD positions—or if military personnel cannot be transitioned to the civil service—then the ANSF force structure will need to be increased to accommodate them.

Conclusion

Based on our troop-to-task analysis:

We conclude that the ANSF will need about 373,400 personnel in the 2015 to 2018 timeframe to conduct the missions required in support of the operational goals that support the U.S. policy goal in Afghanistan.

This overall figure is similar to the current total end-strength of the ANSF (382,000, including 30,000 ALP), though the structure of the force derived via our analysis differs significantly from the current ANSF force structure. Most notably, we assess a need for fewer ANA combat forces, but substantially more logistics and support forces to enable combat operations.

The Under Secretary of Defense (Policy) also asked us to address the regional implications of our recommended changes to ANSF force structure. Table 30 illustrates four major points along these lines.

First, we assess that the forces in Kabul in 2015 should remain about the same as today. The small increase is due to the additional requirement for border police headquarters personnel. In contrast, our force-sizing calculations yield an increase in the forces required in eastern Afghanistan and a reduction in the forces in northern, western, and southern Afghanistan.

Second, we assess that the northern parts of Afghanistan are relatively stable today and that the insurgency is unlikely to make significant inroads into these areas in the 2015 to 2018 timeframe. Thus, we reduced the ANA presence in northern Afghanistan by five battalions. Similarly, we reduced the number of ANA battalions in western Afghanistan by one.

Third, we assess that the Haqqani network poses a significant threat to eastern Afghanistan and recommend that the ANSF refocus their efforts from a counterinsurgency strategy to a dedicated counternetwork strategy. As a result, we have reduced the ANA by six combat battalions in the remote parts of eastern Afghanistan, but we have increased the police and border police in these areas, and we assess that SOF should increase their presence and operations in these areas as well.

Finally, we assess that the Tier 3 areas in southern Afghanistan will continue to require a significant ANA presence to conduct up-to battalion-sized counterinsurgency operations and a large-scale police presence to protect communities and hold areas after ANA clearing operations. Based on our threat assessment, however, we assess that the Tier 4 areas of southern Afghanistan will be a lower priority for the insurgency, and so will require fewer ANA and police forces to maintain stability in the 2015 to 2018 timeframe than they have today. We also assess a reduced requirement for police in the Tier 1 and 2 areas of southern Afghanistan, as these areas are no longer facing the same insurgent threats as in the past.

Table 30. Difference in calculated force levels and current force levels, by region[114]

	Current force levels	Calculated force levels	Change
Kabul	26,900	27,300	400
East	63,500	74,000	10,500
South & Southwest	55,600	44,500	(11,100)
West	23,700	22,800	(900)
North	33,300	31,700	(1,600)

We recognize that the Afghan government might find it politically difficult to reduce the number of combat forces in northern Afghanistan as starkly as we recommend. Such a sharp reduction could create an imbalance in the current power-sharing relationships across regional and ethnic lines. In addition, reducing the number of ANA personnel in the north could result in a disproportionate increase in unemployment in this region. Although these areas are currently more stable than the rest of Afghanistan, reduced employment opportunities may adversely affect that stability. Similarly, reducing the police force in the Tier 4 areas of southern Afghanistan could also result in increased unemployment in these rural areas, which could result in increased instability.

Our force size and structure analysis, however, is not intended to provide advice to the Afghan government on where to position its forces. Instead, we built this force-sizing construct to provide a logical and traceable framework with which to conduct an independent assessment of the number of ANSF forces required to counter the threats expected in the 2015–2018 timeframe. We acknowledge, therefore, that the Afghan government can distribute its forces as it deems appropriate.

[114] The regional figures shown in this table do not include the Mobile Strike Force or the ANCOP, as the MoD and MoI have the option to relocate these forces across regions. We also did not apportion the ANA headquarters, logistics, and support forces by region, because we did not assess a specific troop-to-task assignment for the additional headquarters or logistics personnel. Thus, it is not clear how many of these additional personnel should be physically located in the regions and how many should be at the national headquarters in Kabul.

Finally, we identify three factors that could significantly increase the number of ANSF forces needed in the 2015–2018 timeframe:

1. As noted in the sensitivity analysis at the end of the section describing the ANA supporting forces, we increased the requirement for ANA logistics and headquarters forces by relatively conservative margins. Increasing these support forces so that they are at the median levels seen for deployed U.S. Army forces in the 20th century would yield a requirement for about 70,000 more ANA soldiers.

2. Our analysis assumes that if the ANA consolidate and reduce forces in the north, west, and east, they will have sufficient mobility to respond to insurgent activity when required—either by conducting occasional larger operations or by having sufficient mobile forces to assist police units requiring reinforcement. As discussed further below, the ANA have significant difficulties maintaining their vehicles today, and it is likely that these capability gaps will persist after 2014. If the ANA are not able to operate in a more mobile fashion, they may require more battalions than calculated here. For example, if the ANA continue to require 95 infantry battalions but the logistics forces are still increased to 36 percent of the total force, the ANA will require an additional 25,000 personnel.

3. We note that our force-sizing analysis has not taken into account the need for unit rotations and collective training across the ANA. Currently, conventional ANA units are always in the field. Soldiers take leave as individuals, but—unlike in the U.S. Army—units never return to their home base to take leave as a group and then conduct unit-level (company- or battalion-sized) training exercises. U.S. and NATO personnel we interviewed for this study stressed that such unit-level collective training is an essential part of the professionalization and development of the ANA.[115]

[115] Of note, the SOF already employ this so-called "red-amber-green" rotation cycle, and ISAF advisors cite this as one of the reasons that ANA SOF have better performance and morale than conventional forces.

If conventional ANA forces were to institute a red-amber-green (leave-training-operation) rotation cycle across the country in the 2015 timeframe, they would require significantly more forces than calculated here in order to have sufficient numbers of fielded forces to conduct the operations necessary to achieve the operational goals identified above. We touched on this issue when we discussed how it takes three battalions in Tier 4 to ensure that one battalion's worth of forces will always be available to conduct operations. We did not include this type of rotation cycle throughout our analysis because it does not seem likely that the ANA will be able to implement a company or battalion-sized leave-training-operations rotation cycle by 2015. If threat levels decrease during the 2015 to 2018 timeframe and beyond, the ANSF may want to implement such a rotation cycle in order to increase professionalization, morale, and retention.

In the next section, we consider the capability gaps of the ANSF in the 2015–2018 timeframe.

Assessment of post-2014 ANSF capability gaps

We were asked to identify any capability gaps in the ANSF that are likely to persist after 2014 and that will require continued support from the United States and its allies.

Assessment

Before we can identify the ANSF's capability gaps, we must first identify what capabilities the ANSF require. In plain language, any security force (military or police) must be able to:

- Sustain its force through recruiting and training
- Gather information to determine what activities are needed
- Conduct police or military operations
- Resupply and maintain equipment

To successfully conduct those functions, a security force also requires:

- An appropriate organizational structure to support operations
- Leadership and planning capabilities

- Information sharing between headquarters and subordinate commands, and communications during tactical operations.

Table 31 summarizes these capabilities using the language of the U.S. DoD's Joint Capability Areas (JCAs).[116] The first column of the table lists the nine overarching JCAs, and the second column lists a subset of the JCA sub-categories that are most relevant to the ANSF. The final column summarizes areas where the ANSF have shortfalls today, which we identified by synthesizing the results of a number of previous studies on ANSF capability gaps with our own observations.[117]

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[116] The JCAs are "collections of like … capabilities functionally grouped to support capability analysis, strategy development, investment decision making, capability portfolio management, and capabilities-based force development and operational planning." See *Capability Portfolio Management*. U.S. Department of Defense DoD Directive 7045.20. Sep. 25, 2008. The JCAs were designed for the U.S. DoD and contain some capabilities that do not apply to the ANSF and some that are more relevant at the level of the Office of the Secretary of Defense or Afghan MoD. We used the list of JCAs simply to ensure we did not inadvertently omit any key ANSF capabilities from our analysis. Also, while the language of the JCAs is military specific, the general categories of capability areas apply to police forces in Afghanistan as well, since the operations they currently conduct have significant overlap.

[117] *Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*. U.S. DoD. Jul. 2013; John R. Allen, Michele Flournoy, and Michael O'Hanlon. "Toward A Successful Outcome in Afghanistan." Center for a New American Security. May 2013; Catherine Dale. *War in Afghanistan: Strategy, Operations, and Issues for Congress.* Congressional Research Service Report R40156. Mar. 9, 2011; Anthony H. Cordesman (with assistance from Bryan Gold and Ashley Hess). "The Afghan War in 2013: Meeting the Challenges of Transition." Center for Strategic and International Studies. May 2013; *Assessment of U.S. Government and Coalition Efforts to Develop the Logistics Sustainment Capability of the Afghan National Army*. Department of Defense Office of the Inspector General DODIG-2012-028. Dec. 9, 2011; *Assessment of U.S. Government and Coalition Efforts to Train, Equip, and Advise the Afghan Border Police.* Department of Defense Office of the Inspector General DODIG-2013-081. May 24, 2013; *Afghanistan: Key Oversight Issues.* U.S. Government Accountability Office GAO-13-218SP. February 11, 2013; *Afghan Army Growing, but Additional Trainers Needed; Long-term Costs Not Determined*. United States Government Accountability Office GAO-11-66. Jan. 27,

Based on our review of prior studies of ANSF capability gaps as well as our own extensive interviews in theater, we assess that the ANSF will likely need continued development in all these capability areas during the 2015–2018 timeframe. That said, not all of these capability gaps are of equal priority. To identify the highest-priority capability gaps, we cross-referenced those in Table 31 against the set of ANSF missions in our force-sizing framework. Doing so highlighted six capability gaps that, if not addressed, might result in the inability of the ANSF to perform those critical missions, thereby imparting risk to the operational goals (and therefore the U.S. policy goal). These are:

- Mobility
- Air support
- Logistics (maintenance, supply, contracting)
- Communications and coordination between ANSF pillars
- Intelligence gathering and analysis
- Recruiting and training of personnel with specialty skills (including police task forces, SOF, and the air force)

Over the next few pages, we describe further how we arrived at these key capability gaps, the nature of each, and how each shortfall could be addressed, using Afghan or international resources. We considered not only financial resources, but the full range of ways and means of addressing capability shortfalls, including doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership, personnel, and facilities (DOTMLPF).

Table 31. Summary of ANSF capability gaps, by Joint Capability Area

Joint Capability Area	JCA sub-categories relevant to ANSF	Current and expected ANSF shortfalls
Force support	Force preparation	Recruiting (specialty skills) Training (specialty skills)
	Health	Casualty evacuation and treatment
Battlespace awareness	Intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance	Collection, analysis, and dissemination

2011; Obaid Younossi et al. *The Long March: Building an Afghan National Army.* Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2009.

Force application	Maneuver	Vehicle and airborne mobility
	Engagement	Battalion-sized operations Fires (ability to employ mortars and artillery) Close air support
Logistics	Supply	Inventory management Supply distribution
	Maintain	Equipment maintenance
	Operational contract support	Contract management (e.g., for food service and equipment/facilities maintenance)
	Engineering	Counter-IED Construction
	Installations support	Base security Facilities maintenance
Command and control	Organization	Unity of effort across ANSF pillars Leadership
	Planning	Strategic, operational, and tactical planning Monitoring and assessment of operations Planning of follow-on operations
Net-centric	Information exchange	Communications (connectivity between headquarters units and tactical radios)
Protection	Prevent and mitigate kinetic attacks	Checkpoint and base security Reinforcement plans and capabilities
Building partnerships	Communications	Relationship building with government officials, community leaders, and the public (especially for police) Relationships with coalition forces
Corporate management	Compliance	Audits, inspections, and other anti-corruption measures

Mobility

Mobility is an essential prerequisite for the ANA to operate as described in our force sizing framework. The ANA require mobility to reinforce district centers or other key areas in Tiers 4 and 5. They also require mobility to conduct battalion-sized clearing operations in Tier 3. We also noted the need for the border police to have mobile interdiction forces, particularly along the northeastern border areas with Pakistan. Special Operations Forces also require mobility to reach their targets. SOF would benefit greatly from air mobility (as discussed in the next capability gap on air support), but they can also conduct many missions via ground transportation.

The gap in ground-based mobility capabilities can be addressed in several ways:

- *Additional vehicles.* Additional international resources would be required to procure additional vehicles, if appropriate (determining how many additional vehicles may be needed was beyond the scope of this study). We note that the ANA Special Operations Command began fielding several Mobile Strike Force companies in early 2013 and the conventional ANA stood up four Mobile Strike Force battalions during this past summer. These forces have armored vehicles and more ground mobility than other ANA forces or SOF, and are intended to act as quick reaction forces to support other ANSF units. That said, because these units are so new, their operational capabilities are not yet known.
- *Redistribution of existing mobility assets.* The MoI and MoD could assess whether the current distribution of vehicles between ANA battalions and ABP units is appropriate, given the threats and terrain in each unit's area of operations. Developing and implementing an equipment redistribution plan, however, depends on whether Afghan decision makers at the MoI and MoD can come to agreement on such an issue. International advisors may be able to assist the MoI and MoD in developing equipment-appropriate plans and to work through the political and personal difficulties involved with transferring equipment between units, regions, and commanders—though we anticipate this could be a difficult, and lengthy, process.
- *Improved logistics and maintenance capabilities.* These would reduce the number of broken vehicles across the country and increase their vehicles' availability. Our interviews in theater identified this as a current point of emphasis of U.S. and NATO forces.

Logistics

The ANSF's ability to maintain its vehicles and aircraft is the most essential factor in the ANSF's ability to be—and remain—a mobile force. The commanding general of ISAF has highlighted ANSF logistics as one of the top areas requiring significant improvement over the next few years, and we heard his comments echoed in nearly all

of our interviews across Afghanistan.[118] Addressing the ANSF's logistical shortfalls will require a comprehensive approach to address several interrelated issues, including:

- *Supply shortfalls.* The Afghan supply system currently has national-level shortfalls in some supplies, such as spare parts required for vehicle maintenance and disposable medical equipment (e.g., personal first aid kits and tourniquets). Currently, financial resources are available to procure these supplies. The problem is that appropriate numbers of parts have not been ordered from international vendors.[119] International advisors are assisting the MoI and MoD with forecasting and ordering supplies.
- *Inventory distribution.* The ANSF logistics system is currently a hybrid between the Western-style pull system (units should order supplies when they need them) and the Soviet-style push system (headquarters sends out supplies and parts on a fixed schedule or as it sees fit). International advisors are assisting the MoI and MoD in developing improved inventory management and distribution systems that will work within the Afghan context. Given the magnitude of this problem, it is likely to remain an issue in the 2015–2018 timeframe.
- *Logistics for SOF.* The ANA Corps commanders own the regional supply centers and ISAF advisors report that they do not always share their scarce resources with military units that are not under their control (e.g., ANA SOF). In addition, SOF have specialty equipment, such as night vision goggles and weapons-mounted lights and lasers that are not part of the conventional ANA forces' supply chain. U.S. advisors told us that U.S. SOF routinely provide parts for and repair these items outside ANA logistics and maintenance processes. This enables ANA SOF to continue conducting operations, but does not help build a sustainable logistics process for them.

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[118] General Joseph Dunford. "Commander ISAF's Afghanistan Update, Summer 2013."

[119] Authors' interview with RC – South personnel. Afghanistan. Aug. 12-20, 2013.

- *Lack of trained maintenance personnel for basic equipment.* This is the case for items such as generators and Ford Rangers (the primary vehicle for Afghan army and police forces). Training courses are available to teach soldiers to repair generators and vehicles, though we note that the ANA have difficulty retaining soldiers with specialized skills: once a solider has these skills, he can earn more money by opening a repair shop than by staying in the army. This problem is not easily solved.
- *Lack of trained maintenance personnel for advanced equipment.* This is the case for aircraft and engineering vehicles. Training personnel to repair specialized equipment takes several years and requires literacy and often proficiency in English. The ANSF could hire additional contractors (international and/or Afghan) to maintain vehicles, other equipment, facilities, and aircraft. This would require additional international financial resources, as well as additional contract management capabilities within the ANSF.
- *Limited staff capacity to manage contracts.* The MoI currently contracts out all vehicle and facility maintenance across the country, and the ANA could resolve some of their maintenance shortfalls by hiring additional civilian contractors. The ANSF, however, have extremely limited staff capabilities to manage budgets, disburse funding, monitor contract progress, and ensure contract compliance. International advisors could help the MoI and MoD develop training courses for staff officers at the provincial police headquarters and corps (or brigade) headquarters.

Air support

The AAF does not have the capability to close the gaps in close air support and air mobility caused by the drawdown of U.S. and NATO forces. Given the AAF's difficulty in recruiting and training personnel and in maintaining the equipment it currently has, we do not recommend procuring additional airframes for the AAF in the 2015–2018 timeframe—especially if they are aircraft not currently in the

AAF inventory.[120] As a result, the ANSF will face two corresponding capability gaps:

- *Limited close air support capabilities.* The AAF currently has very limited capability to provide close air support (CAS) to the ANA, and it will continue to have limited CAS capabilities, even with the twenty A-29 Super Tucano fixed-wing light-attack aircraft it is expected to receive over the next few years. The AAF has considered arming its Mi-17 transport helicopters to provide additional attack capabilities (e.g., by adding rockets and heavy machine guns). If this were done, it could help reduce the gap in close air support by supplementing the A-29s or bridging the gap until the A-29s are fully operational.[121] It does not appear, however, that the AAF currently has concrete and funded plans to do this.

  The ANA could at least partially make up for the reduction in CAS by increasing their ground-based artillery support. Currently, each ANA brigade is authorized to have one artillery unit as part of its combat support battalion. In many parts of Afghanistan today, the ANA are not using their artillery personnel and equipment as intended. Instead, they are using the artillery-trained solders as regular infantry, to increase the number of personnel available to stand on checkpoints. If this practice were stopped, the ANA would have more artillerymen performing their designated role.

- *Diminished air mobility capabilities.* ANA SOF are currently dependent upon U.S. and NATO air transport, and in particular,

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[120] The AAF will be significantly challenged to fly and maintain the aircraft already planned for their inventory. The addition of new type model series aircraft would further complicate the AAF logistics, maintenance, and training systems.

[121] "Afghanistan National Security Forces Airpower Requirements Review." ANSF Program of Record Review Team Information Paper. Feb. 28, 2010. Several members of our Senior Review Panel felt strongly that the A-29s were not the best platform for providing CAS to the ANSF, and that arming the Mi-17s or purchasing additional Mi-35 attack helicopters would be a better option. A number of interviewees in theater expressed similar views.

helicopter lift. Some of this capability could be filled by leaving some U.S. air assets in Afghanistan after 2014, in particular to support the ANA SOF's counterterrorism mission set. As coalition helicopter transport becomes less available, ANA SOF will have to travel more by ground. Since ground transportation is difficult in many areas of Afghanistan, and is inherently slower than air transport, this will reduce the effectiveness and operational reach of the ANA SOF. Furthermore, driving requires coordination with other elements of the ANSF that control roads and check points, potentially slowing ANA SOF forces down even more and increasing the likelihood of friction between them and other pillars of the ANSF.[122]

Coordination

Our observations and interviews in theater identified effective coordination between the pillars of the ANSF as a correlate of operational success and poor coordination as a correlate of operational failure. But the root cause of the ANSF's problems with coordination is no longer equipment—the ANSF have largely solved issues such as radio shortfalls and U.S. and NATO personnel are helping the ANSF set up communications equipment at headquarters facilities, such as the provincial Operational Coordination Centers (OCCs). Instead, the ANSF's coordination issues are a result of:

- *Inter-personal issues and lack of trust.* At the tactical level, the main problem with coordination between ANSF pillars today is interpersonal. Where army, police, SOF, NDS, and Afghan government officials trust each other, they share information and effectively coordinate operations. In areas where Afghan leaders do not trust each other, U.S. and NATO advisors have sometimes been able to facilitate coordination by acting as go-betweens. But this gap will widen as those advisors decrease in number. Going forward, coordination issues must be addressed by Afghan leadership. But given their track record to date, we assess that coordination problems will persist post-2014.

[122] *Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*. U.S. DoD. July 2013.

- *Complex organizational structures.* Another piece of the coordination problem is organizational. For example, the ANA maintains control of SOF and Mobile Strike Force assets at the national level, and ANA Corps commanders must reach up to their higher headquarters to coordinate with these forces. In addition, the police have a complex command and control structure, such that the various types of police (e.g., AUP, ANCOP, ALP, Afghan Anti-Crime Police, and special police units) all work for different deputy ministers within the MoI. U.S. and NATO advisors can provide advice on how to streamline such processes, but streamlining the command structure within the ANA or ANP would require action at the highest levels of the MoD and MoI, respectively.

Intelligence

Like all military forces, the ANSF require information and intelligence to inform operational planning. Over the past few years, U.S. and NATO forces have been sharing a great deal of intelligence with the ANSF—in particular, ANA SOF have been extremely dependent on U.S. SOF for intelligence gathering and analysis, and mission planning based on that intelligence. The ANSF will be able to collect some information and intelligence, particularly from human sources. Additionally, our interviews identified general acknowledgement that the NDS runs a significant and successful intelligence source network across Afghanistan. Going forward, if the police are able to transition from fixed checkpoints to community policing, they should also be able to gather more information. The ANSF will suffer, however, from the decline in technical intelligence such as video from unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and signals intelligence as the United States and NATO draws down their own capabilities in these areas.

- *Diminished capability to gather intelligence, particular via technical and electronic means.* In the short term, the U.S. will continue sharing intelligence with the ANSF, particularly to support ANA SOF and *Ktah Khas* counterterrorism missions. In the longer term, the ANSF could develop greater capacity for intelligence gathering through technical means (such as signals intelligence and UAVs). However, the key capability constraint here is not equipment, but qualified and trained personnel to operate and maintain this equipment.

- *Diminished capability for intelligence analysis.* Similarly, the gap in intelligence analysis and fusion requires additional personnel with highly specialized training and skills—personnel that are in short supply but in high demand across the country.

Recruiting and training personnel with specialty skills

The final potentially show-stopping capability gap is that, in general, the ANSF have limited numbers of personnel with specialty skills, such as intelligence analysis, police task forces, forensic analysts, SOF, pilots, and aircraft mechanics. Several factors work against the ANSF's ability to recruit additional highly-qualified personnel:

- *Limited recruiting pool.* This problem is likely not solvable in the immediate term, given the low levels of education across the country. There is simply a glaring lack of skilled human capital in Afghanistan. In the longer term, the gains made in education over the past decade will broaden the potential pool of recruits, but this is likely to take longer to realize than the timeframe of this study.

- *Lengthy vetting process for sensitive positions*. This is an issue for some units, such as special police, *Ktah Khas*, and the Special Mission Wing.

- *Limited training capacity*. The ANSF also have limited capabilities to train personnel for these specialty functions. While the ANSF are expected to be largely self-sufficient in training for basic police and military skills by 2015, they will not be self-sufficient in training specialty personnel. For example, Afghan trainers provide only about half of the instruction for air crew training.[123] To address this, the international community could provide trainers inside Afghanistan or pay to send highly-qualified and vetted recruits abroad for training.[124]

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[123] "NATC-A Story Level I and II Combined." PowerPoint presentation prepared by NATO Air Training Command. Aug. 2013.

[124] A number of Afghan pilots and pilot candidates have traveled to the U.S. for English language, instrument, and undergraduate pilot training. In limited numbers, trainees continue to travel abroad to schools in the U.S., the United Arab Emirates, and the Czech Republic. "NATO Air

Conclusion

Table 32 summarizes the six key capability gaps that may limit the ANSF's ability to conduct the critical missions we identified in our force-sizing framework and identifies whether the capability gaps require international assistance in the 2015 to 2018 timeframe.[125]

Table 32. Capability gaps that could prevent the ANSF from conducting critical missions in the 2015–2018 timeframe

Critical capability gap	Requires international assistance in the 2015–2018 timeframe?
Mobility	Yes. — May require additional mobility assets, especially vehicles for the border police. — Advisors could help MoI and MoD assess whether vehicle redistribution is feasible and appropriate.
Logistics (maintenance, supply, contracting)	Yes. — Advisors to help ANSF work through inventory management and contracting issues. — May require additional international funding to pay for additional contractors to maintain equipment.
Air support	Yes. — U.S. could leave air assets as part of the post-2015 assistance force, especially to provide air mobility to SOF and counter-terrorism forces.
Communications and coordination between ANSF pillars	No. — These issues must be addressed by ANSF leadership. U.S. and NATO can provide advice on streamlining cross-pillar ANSF coordination processes.

Training Command Afghanistan (NATC-A)/438 Air Expeditionary Wing Welcomes Center for Naval Analysis." PowerPoint presentation prepared by NATO Air Training Command. Aug. 2013.

[125] We derived the ways that the international community could assist with these capability gaps based on our interviews in theater (Aug. 2013) and our research into the ANSF's capability gaps.

Table 32. Capability gaps that could prevent the ANSF from conducting critical missions in the 2015–2018 timeframe

Critical capability gap	Requires international assistance in the 2015–2018 timeframe?
Intelligence gathering and analysis	Yes. — U.S. ISR assets, especially in support of the ANA SOF's counter-terrorism mission, may need to be retained within Afghanistan. — International advisors and trainers to teach intelligence collections, analysis, and dissemination. — International advisors to assist police in developing community policing techniques to better gather police intelligence.
Recruiting and training personnel with specialty skills	Recruiting: No. — The recruiting pool for personnel requiring high levels of education or specialty skills is limited by the low levels of education in Afghanistan. Training: Yes. — International personnel to conduct specialty training within Afghanistan. — Send qualified recruits for training abroad.

We conclude that international support (to include the presence of advisors) will be required to address the gaps in mobility, logistics, air support, intelligence gathering and analysis, and training of specialty skills though at least 2018.

In the next section, we address whether the resources available to the ANSF are sufficient to address these key capability gaps.

Assessment of current ANSF resource proposals

We were asked to analyze whether current proposals for resourcing the ANSF after 2014 are adequate to establish and maintain long-term security for the Afghan people, and implications of the under-resourcing of the ANSF for U.S. national security interests.

Assessment

The last formal declaration of the international community's plan for the future of the ANSF came at the summit held in Chicago in May 2012. At this conference, the Heads of State of ISAF coalition partner nations and the Government of Afghanistan issued a joint declaration on the future of the ANSF. It stated, in part:

> The preliminary model for a future total ANSF size, defined by the International Community and the Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, envisages a force of 228,500 with an estimated annual budget of U.S. $4.1 billion.… As the Afghan economy and the revenues of the Afghan government grow, Afghanistan's yearly share will increase progressively from at least U.S. $500m in 2015, with the aim that it can assume, no later than 2024, full financial responsibility for its own security forces.[126]

At the Chicago Summit, the U.S. pledged $2.3 billion, other countries and international organizations pledged $1.3 billion, and the Afghan government pledged $0.5 billion toward the expected $4.1 billion per year cost of an ANSF sized at 228,500.

At a size of 373,400 personnel, our calculated ANSF is *significantly larger* than that envisioned by the U.S. and NATO at the 2012 Chicago Summit. It is also likely to be more expensive. Unfortunately, due a lack of detailed data on the current cost of the ANSF, we were unable to determine exactly how much more our calculated force of 373,400 would cost. We were able to apply planning factors from several recent official cost estimates to our calculated force. These figures, shown in Table 33, primarily consist of the costs to train and pay forces, as well as the fuel and ammunition required for operations. Having reviewed each source's assumptions, we assess that it is highly likely these numbers underestimate the total cost of sustaining equipment and infrastructure. Therefore, they should be viewed as highly approximate and we recommend further analysis be done to generate an accurate cost estimate of the 373,400-member force.

[126] *Chicago Summit Declaration on Afghanistan*. May 21, 2012.

Table 33. Rough estimates of annual ANSF sustainment costs

Source	Estimated annual cost of 352,000 ANSF	Additional annual cost of 30,000 ALP	Total estimated annual cost (382,000 ANSF)	Total estimated cost of 373,400 ANSF
OSD Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation (CAPE)[127]	$6.5B	$180M	$6.7B	$6.0B
NATO Training Mission – Afghanistan (NTM-A) / Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan (CSTC-A)[128]	$4.6B	$180M	$4.8B	$4.8B

The important take-away from Table 33 is that both estimates significantly exceed the $4.1 billion pledged at the 2012 Chicago Summit. Although the Afghan economy is projected to grow robustly during through 2018,[129] it does not appear that the Afghan government will be able to close this funding gap by itself. The $500 million pledged by the Afghan government at the Chicago Summit already represents 14 percent of Afghanistan's projected 2015 domestic revenues.[130]

In addition to the $2.3 billion per annum that the U.S. has pledged to support ANSF salaries and operations through 2017, the U.S. Congress is also considering a $1.15 billion package of initiatives that was included as part of the DoD's larger Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 Afghan Security Forces Fund submission (this package is sometimes referred to as "enhancements above the APoR").[131] As noted in Table 34, these

[127] Estimate for 2017, from "ANSF Cost Analysis." Office of the Secretary of Defense, Cost Analysis and Program Evaluation briefing. Aug. 25, 2011.

[128] Estimate for 2018, from "Capability Delivered to the ANSF." NATO Training Mission / Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan briefing. May 2, 2013.

[129] *Afghanistan in Transition: Looking Beyond 2014. Vol. 2: Main Report*. The World Bank. May 2012.

[130] *Afghanistan: Key Oversight Issues*. United States Government Accountability Office GAO-13-218SP. Feb. 2013.

[131] As of the writing of this report, the "enhancements above the APoR" had not yet been approved by the U.S. Congress (authors' communication with personnel in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Policy), Nov. 21, 2013).

enabler initiatives may help to mitigate some of the critical capability gaps that we identified in the previous section.

Table 34. Comparison of enhancements above the APoR to critical ANSF capability gaps

Critical capability gaps	Enhancements above the APoR
Mobility	$1.0 billion for 116 armored personnel carriers for two Mobile Strike Force battalions, plus 180 additional specialized MSF vehicles $14 million for man-portable IED countermeasures
Logistics	$49 million for training maintenance and logistics personnel
Intelligence gathering and analysis	$56 million for expanded aerostat-based and tower-based sensor coverage

That said, we do not necessarily endorse any of these specific enabler initiatives; nor were we able to examine whether they are the most cost effective ways to close the ANSF's capability gaps. In addition, the capability gaps we identified for the ANSF are systemic problems that will not be solved quickly via materiel solutions. Therefore, we assess that U.S. and NATO enablers, to include advisors, will be required to assist the ANSF in addressing (at a minimum) capability gaps in mobility, logistics, air support, intelligence gathering and analysis, and training of specialized skills, through at least 2018.

Conclusion

Our threat assessment concludes that the Taliban will resurge in the 2015–2018 timeframe. Thus, the ANSF will require sufficient forces and capabilities to maintain security in the face of significant threats and with substantially fewer U.S. and NATO forces in support. Maintaining the ANSF at 373,400—well above the planned end-strength of 228,500 (plus an additional 30,000 ALP) envisioned at the 2012 Chicago Summit—will likely increase the annual financial requirement for the U.S. and the international donor community. While we were unable to calculate an exact cost, rough estimates suggest the increase will be on the order of $1 billion or more per annum.

Our assessment of capability gaps for the ANSF made clear that the critical gaps are systemic problems not easily solved via the provision of materiel solutions. As such, while it appears the enhancements above the APoR can help mitigate the ANSF's critical capability gaps,

we assess that they will not close them and that additional U.S. and NATO enablers, to include advisors, will be required in theater through at least 2018.

Conclusion of independent assessment of the ANSF

Using a quantitative troop-to-task analysis tied via five security tiers to a qualitative future threat assessment:

We conclude the ANSF (including the Afghan Local Police) should have a total end-strength of about 373,400 through at least 2018. This force size is significantly larger, and likely to be more expensive, than that envisioned by the U.S. and NATO at the 2012 Chicago Summit.

The envisioned drawdown of the ANSF to a significantly smaller force size was predicated on an assumption of a much-reduced insurgent threat in the post-2014 timeframe. *Our threat assessment finds this assumption to be faulty.* As a result:

We conclude that proceeding with the planned drawdown of the ANSF as announced at the Chicago Summit will put the current U.S. policy goal for Afghanistan at risk. Instead, we recommend that the international community establish a new plan to fund and sustain the ANSF at an end-strength of about 373,400, with a proportionally sized assistance mission (including advisors), through at least 2018.

If the international community did this, and *if the ANSF are successful through 2018:*

We assess that a negotiated political settlement to end the war would become much more likely in the 2019–2023 timeframe.

The next section will discuss the findings from our additional assessments.

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Additional assessments

This section contains our assessments of the additional topics of interest to the Under Secretary of Defense (Policy). In it, we address the capabilities of the MoD and MoI and the requirement for MoD and MoI advising; the legal authorities required to enable the post-2014 U.S. assistance mission; the relationship between the ANSF and the Pakistani military; and likely ANSF responses to several political scenarios. Each assessment is a stand-alone topic; as such, the discussion of each will begin with a brief summary of the results, followed by the details of our assessment. We end this section with an overall conclusion of our findings from these additional assessments.

Supporting the ANSF: Assessment of the capabilities of the MoD and MoI and the requirement for MoD and MoI advising

We were asked to assess the capabilities of the Ministries of Defense and Interior to perform the planning, programming, budgeting, management, oversight, and sustainment functions for their respective forces. We were also asked to assess the appropriate proportion of military and civilian advisors to assist the MoD and MoI and their required functional/professional expertise. We begin with a summary of our findings, followed by the details of our assessment.

Summary

We found that the MoD and MoI face a considerable set of challenges, including inadequate long-range planning; a lack of staff development and training; poor logistics; a lack of a professional civil service; pervasive corruption; inadequate budget, accounting, and cost-control systems; and low levels of budget execution. These challenges will almost certainly persist beyond 2014.

We assess that for the MoD and MoI to function at a reasonably proficient level, and to carry out their responsibilities to support army and police forces in the field, they require the following four core capabilities: logistics;

strategy and policy planning; financial management; and personnel management.

In addition, we found that six institutional enablers are important for ministerial success: anti-corruption; gender integration; local ownership; information technology; intelligence; and "civilianization."

Using a combination of primary sources (to include our own observations and in-theater interviews) and previous studies:

We conclude that the MoD and MoI are not likely to be fully independent at any of these capabilities or enablers by 2018. We therefore assess that international advisors within the MoD and MoI will be required through at least 2018.

The absence of advisors will not likely lead to the collapse of the fielded forces in the short term, but it has the potential to undermine their combat effectiveness over the timeframe of this study, thereby imparting additional risk to the U.S. policy goal for Afghanistan.

We examine several different ways an advisor program could be constructed (e.g., bilateral versus multilateral, civilian versus military), but we conclude that there is no obvious "best choice" as each approach has significant advantages and disadvantages. We therefore refrain from making a specific recommendation as to how best to construct an advisor program and instead suggest that the U.S. should make a clear-eyed decision on the structure of such a program based on the pros and cons we have identified in our analysis. Finally, we conclude that a thorough and deliberate advisor selection and training process—one that emphasizes previous experience, maturity, professional skills, and the ability to work across cultures—would help strengthen the post-2014 ministerial advisory effort.

Methodology

To make our assessment, we followed these steps:

1. We examined the relevant security sector reform (SSR) literature, to include studies on Afghanistan as well as other conflict and post-conflict settings such as Iraq. Among other things, analyzing this literature helped us identify best practices and

think about "ideal types" of security institutions and their required capabilities.

2. We used results from our earlier ANSF capability gap analysis to inform where the ANSF needed help from the MoD and MoI. We also drew from our in-country interviews with U.S. and Afghan personnel, government studies, and official documents to identify required core capabilities for the MoD and MoI. Using the same sources, we identified a set of critical "institutional enablers" that are important for helping ministries to function as modern bureaucracies.[132]

3. We used these same sources to assess whether the MoD and MoI were likely to be able to perform any of these of core capabilities and institutional enabling activities independently in the 2015–2018 timeframe and if not, what their key shortfalls would be.

4. We leveraged previous CNA analyses, field research in Afghanistan, government reports, and the SSR literature to identify and assess the characteristics that advisors working in the MoD and MoI should possess. We also identified the advantages and disadvantages of different approaches to advising (e.g., personal mentoring versus functional advising).

5. We leveraged studies on advising in previous conflicts to provide general recommendations on identifying, recruiting, and training advisors in a way that will enhance the effectiveness of ministerial reform in Afghanistan.

Caveats

The scope of this assessment is not comprehensive. Time and resource constraints prevented us from an all-inclusive review and analysis. For example, we do not develop specific recommendations

[132] Our research for this task included in-depth, semi-structured interviews with senior officials, their staffs, and advisors at ISAF, ISAF Joint Command (IJC), CSTC-A, MoI, and MoD. Aug. 12–24, 2013. Two key documents for our research were: *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*. U.S. DoD. Jul. 2013; and *Afghan Ministry of Interior Advisor Guide.* Kabul: NTM-A/CSTC-A, May 2011.

about the size of the security ministries, nor do we identify the numbers of advisors needed to support the MoD and MoI in the future.

Instead, the results of this assessment are intended to show the broad contours of Afghan ministerial capabilities; suggest areas where international advisors should concentrate their efforts; and highlight advisor characteristics that are the most salient in terms of strengthening the security ministries as institutions.

Finally, while the MoD and MoI are distinct and separate ministries, they have much in common. The fielded forces they command and support have different roles, missions, and functions, but these frequently overlap in the field. The general capabilities the MoD and MoI must develop are largely identical—and are in fact features of any competent modern bureaucracy. That said, we recognize these ministries do have some particular requirements, as we note below in our discussion of advisor skill sets.

Assessment

"Ideal-type" security ministries

Having reviewed the relevant SSR literature, we find that there is no universally agreed upon definition of security sector reform. According to one U.S. government definition, SSR is:

> the set of policies, plans, programs, and activities that a government undertakes to improve the way it provides safety, security, and justice. The overall objective is to provide these services in a way that promotes an effective and legitimate public service that is transparent, accountable to civilian authority, and responsive to the needs of the public.[133]

For its part, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development describes the goal of SSR as increasing "the ability of partner countries to meet the range of security needs within their societies in

[133] *Security Sector Reform*, U.S. Agency for International Development, U.S. DoD, and U.S. Department of State. Feb. 2009, accessed Aug. 20, 2013, at www.state.gov/documents/organization/115810.pdf.

a manner consistent with democratic norms and sound principles of governance and the rule of law."[134]

However, the differences among the many SSR definitions in circulation are largely ones of nuance and emphasis.[135] Similarly, an analysis of the literature reveals a widespread agreement among scholars and practitioners about what SSR should be seeking to achieve, at least in very general terms. The literature stresses the importance of transparency, respect for human rights and gender, local ownership, and rule of law.[136]

Transparency, according to Dylan Hendrickson and Andrzej Karkoszka, means that "basic information about security policies, planning and resourcing [is] accessible both to the civil authorities and to members of the public."[137] In the view of David Law, the promotion of transparency and accountability is "the bread and butter of security sector reform."[138] SSR literature also emphasizes the importance of

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[134] *DAC Guidelines and Reference Series: Security System Reform and Governance.* Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, Paris: OECD. 2005:11. The OECD defines the "security system" in broad terms to include not only the security forces (that is, the police, armed forces, and intelligence services), but also penal institutions and the judiciary, as well as "the elected and duly appointed civil authorities responsible for control and oversight (e.g., Parliament, the Executive, and the Defence Ministry)."

[135] For more on the definitional and conceptual problems surrounding SSR, see David Chuter. "Understanding Security Sector Reform." *Journal of Security Sector Management*, Vol. 4, No. 2. Apr. 2006.

[136] For a representative statement, see "EU Concept for ESDP Support to Security Sector Reform." Council of the European Union, Brussels. Oct. 13, 2005, accessed Sep. 21, 2013, at www.initiativeforpeacebuilding.eu/resources/EU_Concept_for_ESDP_support_to_Security_Sector_Reform.pdf.

[137] Dylan Hendrickson and Andrzej Karkoszka. "The Challenges of Security Sector Reform." *SIPRI Yearbook 2002: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security*. Stockholm International Peace Research Institute: Oxford University Press, June 2002, accessed Sep. 5, 2013, available at www.sipri.org/yearbook/2002/files/SIPRIYB0204.pdf.

[138] David M. Law. "Transparency, Accountability and Security Sector Reform in South East Europe: An Analysis of the Stability Pact Self-Assessment Studies." In Eden Cole et al., eds. *Defense and Security Sector Govern-*

rule of law. Christoph Bleiker and Marc Krupanski conclude that "peacebuilding" requires both the rule of law and SSR: "On a conceptual level the two are mutually reinforcing and intertwined, while on a practical level their complementary application is indispensable."[139] The literature also stresses the importance of the respect for human rights and gender.[140]

Much of the SSR literature focuses on political and procedural questions surrounding the organization, training, and oversight of security forces, and the relationship between those forces and the civilian communities they are intended to protect. Relatively little attention has been paid to ministerial reform—and most of what has been written focuses on MoD development.[141]

That said, there is recognition among some leading specialists that the reform of security ministries, and the strengthening of their institutional capacities, should be a central SSR component. Andrew Rathmell highlights the importance of international assistance to security ministries that includes "technical advice *in situ*, support for development of new management systems and procedures, technical

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ance and Reform in South East Europe Self-Assessment Studies: Regional Perspectives. Geneva: Geneva Centre for Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2004.

[139] Christoph Bleiker and Marc Krupanski. *The Rule of Law and Security Sector Reform: Conceptualising a Complex Relationship*. Geneva: Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2012.

[140] See for example Eirin Mobekk. "Gender, Women and Security Sector Reform." *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 17, No. 2: 278-291; and Arnold Luethold. "Security Sector Reform in the Arab Middle East: A Nascent Debate." In Alan Bryden and Heiner Hänggi, eds. *Reform and Reconstruction of the Security Sector*. Piscataway, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2004.

[141] Alison Laporte-Oshiro. "From Militants to Policemen: Three Lessons from U.S. Experience with DDR and SSR." U.S. Institute of Peace, Peace Brief No. 115, Nov. 17, 2011, accessed Aug. 10, 2013, at www.usip.org/sites/default/files/from%20militants%20to%20policemen.pdf.

training for ministry staff, and the creation of an ongoing education process."[142]

As noted above, ministries of defense and interior have much in common functionally and institutionally. However, interior ministry reform presents its own challenges, particularly for the United States. Lacking an MoI counterpart at home, U.S. decision-makers, advisors, and military officers have often failed to appreciate the history, roles, missions, functions, and requirements of interior ministries—as demonstrated in the case of Iraq.[143]

Essential MoD and MoI ministerial capabilities

Institutions as large and complex as the Afghan MoD and MoI face considerable challenges. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Inadequate long-range planning[144]
- High leadership turnover at senior levels[145]
- Lack of staff development and training[146]

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[142] Andrew Rathmell. "Fixing Iraq's Internal Security Forces: Why is the Reform of the Ministry of the Interior so Hard?" Center for Strategic and International Studies Post-Conflict Reconstruction Project Special Briefing, Nov. 2007: 13.

[143] See for example Robert M. Perito and Madeline Kristoff. "Iraq's Interior Ministry: The Key to Police Reform." U.S. Institute of Peace Briefing, Jul. 2009. In addition, interior ministries—in Iraq, Afghanistan, and many other countries—are highly politicized in ways that defense ministries typically are not. For example, the greater degree of police contact with day-to-day life (relative to the army) means that policemen have greater opportunities to enrich themselves through corruption. Moreover, they are often useful to powerful political actors, who can deploy them in pursuit of narrow personal, community, or ethnic purposes. This gives interior ministries a political dynamic that is less likely to exist in defense ministries.

[144] Authors' interview with CSTC-A/Ministerial Advising Groups (MAGs). Afghanistan. Aug. 15, 2013.

[145] Authors' interview with CSTC-A/MAGs. Afghanistan. Aug. 15, 2013.

[146] Authors' interview with ISAF personnel. Afghanistan. Aug. 13, 2013.

- Poor logistics[147]
- Lack of a professional civil service[148]
- Pervasive corruption[149]
- Inadequate budget, accounting, and cost-control systems and low levels of budget execution[150]

In the past, CSTC-A leaders have articulated a daunting number of what it terms "areas of focus," ranging from personnel to gender integration to intelligence.[151] More recently, the command has prioritized these areas and is concentrating on a smaller set of institutional

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[147] Author's interview with senior MoD and MoI officials. Afghanistan. Aug. 18, 2013.

[148] In the case of the MoI, the ministry lacks "merit-based appointments, adequate pay grades, vetting of senior political appointments and monitoring of the reform process." Fatima Ayb, Sari Kouvo and Rachel Wareham. "Security Sector Reform in Afghanistan." International Center for Transitional Justice and The Initiative for Peacebuilding. Apr. 2009, accessed Sep. 7, 2013, at www.initiativeforpeacebuilding.eu/pdf/Security_Sector_Reform_in_Afghanistan.pdf.

[149] Mark Checchia. "Corruption in the Afghan National Security Forces." Civil-Military Fusion Centre. Jan. 2012, accessed Aug. 29, 2013, at www.cimicweb.org/Documents/CFC%20AFG%20Security%20Archive/CFC_Afghanistan_Corruption-in-ANSF_Jan12.pdf.

[150] The Afghan MoD is able to execute only 20 percent of its budget—a by-product of "over-centralization, limited educated human capital, limited experience with program management systems, and natural bureaucratic friction." *Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan.* U.S. DoD. Jul. 2013: 53.

[151] Mike Farrage. "NTM-A/CSTC-A Orientation." NTM-A briefing prepared by Mike Farrage, Commodore CBE RN, Chief of Staff, undated; Alix Julia Boucher. "Defence Sector Reform: A Note on Current Practice." Henry L. Stimson Center. Dec. 12, 2009: 24. The GAO lists 28 areas of focus for the MoD and 26 for the MoI. Many of these areas overlap. *Afghanistan Governance: Performance Data Gaps Hinder Overall Assessment of U.S. Efforts to Build Financial Management Capacity.* United States Government Accountability Office GAO-11-907. Sep. 2011, accessed Sep. 20, 2013, at www.gao.gov/assets/330/323498.pdf.

capabilities—an important development, given the likelihood of reduced levels of advisory support after 2014.[152]

Drawing on the SSR literature, the results of our earlier ANSF capability gap analysis, interviews in theater, and government documents and studies, we identified the key institutional capabilities that Afghanistan's security ministries require. Many capabilities are desirable, but based on these sources our assessment is that the following are those essential for consistent ministerial progress and effective support to the fielded forces:

- Logistics, including warehousing, the management of facilities, and the provision of weapons, uniforms, fuel, and other supplies
- Strategy/policy planning—that is, the processes through which a ministry "can visualize its future and develop the necessary operations to achieve that vision"[153]
- Financial management, such as budgeting, cost accounting, and other controls and planning
- Human resource management, including recruiting, professional development and training

We have also identified a set of what we term "institutional enablers." Although sometimes categorized in U.S., NATO, and Afghan government documents as capabilities, these are better understood as means to an end—namely, the development of more efficient and effective ministries in the post-2014 time period. These enablers are:

- Anti-corruption policies, programs, and structures—that is, limiting the misuse of authority for personal gain[154]

[152] Although the command has narrowed its focus, its capabilities milestone process continues to assess 46 lines of operation in the MoD and 31 lines in the MoI. *Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*. U.S. DoD. Jul. 2013: 54-58.

[153] Robert M. Perito. "The Interior Ministry's Role in Security Sector Reform." U.S. Institute of Peace, Special Report 223. May 2009: 9.

- Gender integration, particularly the recruitment of women into the ANP
- Local ownership, broadly defined as public support for state institutions
- Information technology, at a level of cost and sophistication appropriate for the Afghan context
- Intelligence—that is, the collection, analysis, and dissemination of information on threats to the state and public safety and security
- "Civilianization," defined as an increasing role for non-uniformed personnel in the administration of the ministries

The presence (or absence) of these capabilities and enablers at the ministerial level will have an impact on the performance of the ANSF in the field. The Afghan security system is highly centralized, with most, if not all, important decisions made in Kabul. It is not uncommon for the security ministers to be directly involved in the command and control of operations from Kabul.[155] Everything from policies, equipment, and personnel decisions flow outward and downward from the national level to the regions, provinces, and districts. Inefficiencies, incompetence, and lack of capacity in Kabul have knock-on effects on the deployed ANA and ANP, which rely heavily on the MoD and MoI for direction, resources, and management. Neglecting ministerial-level capabilities—what has been termed the "brains of the system"—can undercut tactical gains and cause long-term system-wide paralysis.[156]

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[154] "What is Corruption?" *www.transparency.am*, *Official Website of Transparency International*, undated, accessed Oct. 1, 2013, at http://transparency.am/corruption.php.

[155] Author interviews with ISAF personnel. Kabul, Afghanistan. Aug. 12–24, 2013.

[156] Andrew Mackay, Mark Sedra, and Geoff Burt. "Security Sector Reform (SSR) in Insecure Environments: Learning from Afghanistan." *Journal of Security Sector Management*, Vol. 8, No. 3. Sep. 2011: p. 8.

Summary of MoD/MoI assessment

Having analyzed the multitude of sources mentioned above, we identified the key capabilities, institutional enablers, and shortfalls for the MoD and MoI as summarized in Table 35 and Table 36. The key shortfalls in the fielded forces came from our ANSF capability gap analysis.

Table 35. Core capabilities and key shortfalls of the MoD, MoI, and fielded forces

Capability	Key Shortfalls (MoD)	Key Shortfalls (MoI)	Key Shortfalls (Fielded Forces)
Logistics	Not fully independent; relies on mix of Afghan, ISAF, and U.S.-funded contractor support	Heavy reliance on U.S.-funded contractor support	Limited abilities to manage inventory and supply distribution
Strategy/policy	Limited planning capabilities; gaps in key enabler areas (e.g., intelligence)	Requires coalition support, but evidence of growing capability	Limited abilities to plan at all levels
Financial management	Major gaps in cost accounting, budgeting, ability to plan and execute a budget	Major gaps in cost accounting, budgeting, ability to plan and execute a budget	Difficulties letting and overseeing contracts
Human resource management	Lack of career civil service; high turnover; lack of staff training and development	Lack of career civil service; high turnover; lack of staff training and development	Difficulty recruiting and training personnel with specialized skills

Table 36. Institutional enablers and key shortfalls in the MoD, MoI, and fielded forces

Institutional Enabler	Key Shortfalls (MoD)	Key Shortfalls (MoI)	Key Shortfalls (Fielded Forces)
Anti-corruption	Some corruption	Endemic corruption at all levels	Lack of inspections and other anti-corruption practices
Gender integration	Very few females working in the ministry	Very few females working in the ministry	Very low female recruitment levels in ANP
Local ownership	N/A (high level of public support exists for ANA)	Little public support for ANP—little or no community policing	Poor relationships with community leaders and the public
Intelligence	Lack of analytical expertise and heavy reliance on international assistance	Lack of analytical expertise and heavy reliance on international assistance	Difficulties with intelligence collection, analysis, and dissemination, particularly with technical intelligence
Civilianization	Posts filled largely by uniformed military	Posts filled largely by uniformed police	Many logistics posts (e.g., at depots) filled by uniformed personnel could be filled by civilians

Key themes from our analysis in Table 35 and Table 36 include the following:

- Afghanistan's security ministries will likely continue to function with at least some degree of competence and professionalism in the post-2014 period. However, we assess that the MoD and MoI will continue to require sustained financial and advisory assistance from international donors. Our own observations, along with our interviews of U.S. and NATO personnel, indicate that ministerial capacity is unlikely to reach that needed for independent, effective support to the fielded forces by 2015. Additionally, we assess it is unlikely to reach adequate administrative and organizational standards prior to 2018.
- Until recently, the focus of the MoD and MoI has been the command and control of fielded forces—as suggested by the heavy presence of uniformed personnel in those institutions. Indeed, a number of our interviewees described these ministries as having acted as "national police and army headquarters" in years past.[157] This emphasis on command and control has justified the presence of a large number of uniformed personnel within the MoD and MoI. As a result, there is a large gap between the MoD and MoI currently and the ministerial ideal types and best practices discussed above.
- In many of the capability and enabler areas, the Afghan ministries are able to perform only key functions (e.g., logistics) with extensive assistance from the international community.
- Financial administration remains rudimentary and will require continued advisory attention and support. Budget execution remains well below target levels, and while the MoD has a relatively robust system of paying soldiers via electronic means, the MoI has resisted implementation of a similar system, at least in part because of its potential to infringe on corrupt practices such as "skimming" the pay of policemen.

[157] Authors' interviews with CSTC-A/MAG and ISAF personnel. Kabul, Afghanistan. Aug. 12–24, 2013.

- Long-range policy planning remains underdeveloped, and should receive continued attention. The MoI's recently issued *Ten-Year Vision for the Afghan National Police*, although probably over-ambitious in its recommendations, nevertheless suggests movement in the right direction.[158]

- An overarching shortfall across the MoD and MoI (and really, across all of Afghanistan's ministries) is a lack of human capital. There simply are not enough educated, literate technocrats in Afghanistan now relative to the number required for the ministries to be independently effective. This is a problem without an easy or quick solution, and it underscores the need for sustained international community support to the ministries going forward.

Clearly, there are a number of significant capability gaps that exist within the MoD and MoI relative to their ability to perform the planning, programming, budgeting, management, oversight, and sustainment functions for their respective forces. Our interviews in theater and review of other sources strongly suggest that, while the capabilities of the ministries are likely to improve between now and 2015, the capability gaps identified above are not likely to be closed by that time. In addition, given how recent the emphasis on ministerial development has been in Afghanistan and the significance of the capability gaps we identify relative to the human capital available, we assess that these gaps are also unlikely to be closed by 2018. As such, *we assess the presence of international advisors within the MoD and MoI will be required during the timeframe of this study (2015–2018).*

The absence of advisors will not likely lead to the collapse of the fielded forces in the short term, but it has the potential to undermine their combat effectiveness over the timeframe of this study. Also, the lack of advisors in the ministries will significantly stymie their development (and the development of better governance in Afghanistan) and increase opportunities for corruption at the national level.

[158] *Ten-Year Vision for the Afghan National Police: 1392–1402*. Afghanistan Ministry of the Interior. Apr. 22, 2013.

With this in mind, we next examine the advantages and disadvantages of various approaches to structuring a ministerial advising program for Afghanistan and characteristics of successful advisors.

Ministerial advisors

Building the institutional capacity of Afghanistan's security ministries has been a relatively recent priority for the country's international partners. The NATO organizations initially responsible for bolstering Afghanistan's security forces focused overwhelmingly on organizing, training, and equipping the ANSF for offensive operations against insurgents. Given the nature of the threat at the time, NTM-A (established in 2009) had to balance immediate operational support with longer-term ministerial reform.[159]

Although a number of countries such as Australia and Germany provide ministerial advisors, as does the European Union Police (EUPOL) and a variety of U.S. government agencies, the precise number of personnel serving in ministerial advisory positions is unknown.[160] Many advisors are contractors and U.S. military personnel, though civilian agencies such as the Department of the Treasury and the Department of Justice also have advisors within the ministries.

Civil servants from the U.S. DoD—roughly 70 at any given time—also serve in an advisory capacity. Under the Ministry of Defense Advisors (MoDA) program, DoD identifies, selects, and trains members of the Pentagon's civil service (typically GS-13s, GS-14s, and GS-15s) for one-

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[159] Although not yet fully approved by NATO, ISAF has divided responsibilities between NTM-A and CSTC-A, with the former responsible for the fielded forces and the latter responsible for ministerial development.

[160] Authors' interview with U.S. DoD policy official. Arlington, Virginia. Sep. 12, 2013. For more on EU police advisors, see *EUPOL–Serving Afghanistan, European Police Mission in Afghanistan Newsletter*. May 2012. The mandate of the International Police Coordination Board (IPCB) is to synchronize international efforts to reform the MoI in areas such as personnel, career development, and finance. Member countries and organizations include Australia, the United Kingdom, Turkey, EUPOL, IJC, and the MoI. See "Membership." *IPCB.Wordpress.com, Website of the International Police Coordination Board – Afghanistan*, accessed Sep. 12, 2013, at http://ipcb.wordpress.com/ipcb-board-meetings/membership.

year assignments in the MoD and MoI.[161] Once in theater, these civilian advisors fall under the authority of CSTC-A, which places them in ministerial advisory positions.[162]

However, CSTC-A has reportedly used some civilian advisors to fill staff jobs within the command.[163] In addition, not all of the DoD civilians in the MoDA program were career civil servants, according to one study.[164] A surge of patriotism initially led to a deluge of highly qualified DoD personnel, but as the war dragged on, the Pentagon reportedly had to recruit short-term hires to generate sufficient personnel.[165]

Within CSTC-A, the Ministerial Advising Groups (MAGs) have had a major role in supporting the MoD and MoI.[166] Until recently, ministerial advising had focused on individual mentoring rather than institutional development. Today, through the MAGs, advisors are increas-increasingly stressing capacity-building in areas such as resource management (e.g., logistics and finance); transparency and accountability; strategic plans and policies; and human resources management. A member of the civilian Senior Executive Service is in charge of each functional area.[167] Although the emphasis may be adjusted in response to changing developments, our assessment of MoD and MoI

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[161] For a description of the MoDA program, see "Ministry of Defense Advisors Training Program." DoD Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness. 2012, accessed Sep. 20, 2013, available at http://modatraining.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/moda-training-booklet-20121.pdf.

[162] Victoria Stattel and Robert M. Perito. "Innovative Transformation: An Evaluation of the Ministry of Defense Advisors Program in Afghanistan." U.S. Institute of Peace. Feb. 2012: 8. MoDA, according to the authors, is the first DoD advisor training program since the Vietnam War. Ibid: 9.

[163] *Performance Framework and Better Management of Resources Needed for the Ministry of Defense Advisors Program*. DoD Inspector General DODIG-2013-005. Oct. 23, 2013.

[164] Stattel and Robert M. Perito. "Innovative Transformation." 8.

[165] Ibid: 8.

[166] Author's interview with senior CSTC-A personnel. Afghanistan. Aug. 15, 2013.

[167] Ibid.

capability gaps above suggests that advisors in the near- and mid-term will need to continue to focus on the lines of effort currently being pursued by the MAGs. That said, we also assess that attention must continue to be paid to the institutional enablers identified above. The level of attention given to the latter can be less than that given to the ministries' capability gaps, but it should not be completely diminished as these enablers are still very important to the ministries' overall development.

Our in-theater research revealed a new effort by U.S. and NATO officials to map the critical ministerial processes that need to exist within these areas for the ministries to support the fielded forces effectively. Given the nascence of that effort, we were unable to conduct an independent assessment of those mappings to determine where exactly advisors would be best placed in the MoD and MoI. Instead, we examined the MoD and MoI organizational structures (see Appendix F) along with our other sources to identify in which offices and at what level advisors could be most helpful in addressing the capability gaps above. As a result, we assess that advisors should focus at the deputy minister level within the MoD and MoI.[168] Within the MoD, these include the offices of the assistant ministers of defense for personnel and education; strategy and policy; and acquisition, technology, and logistics. Deputy minister offices within the MoI that should receive particular attention include strategy and policy; administration; and support.

In addition, we thought critically about the general characteristics of an advising program and advisors themselves to identify pros and cons of various ways of structuring a ministerial advisor program, as summarized in Table 37.

[168] See Appendix F for MoD and MoI organizational diagrams.

Table 37. Comparison of ministerial advising approaches

Advising Approach	Strengths	Weaknesses
Civilian	• More "civilian" skills (e.g., planning and budgeting, law-enforcement) • Would reinforce the need to "civilianize" the MoD and MoI	• Less deployable (e.g., tend to desire shorter tour lengths) • Smaller and less selective personnel pool because of reliance on volunteers • Harder to remove advisors that are underperforming
Military	• More deployable and flexible • Easier to remove advisors that are underperforming	• Undercuts message of requirement to civilianize the ministries • Less expertise in "civilian" skills • Mismatch between military expertise and that needed in the MoI
Contractor	• Easier to find skills otherwise unavailable • Easier to remove advisors that are underperforming	• Financial incentives to prolong assignment and "burrow in" • Increased cost compared to military or civilian
U.S. – Afghanistan Bilateral	• Simplifies relationships and enhances unity of effort • Maintains continuity of advisor priorities and approach	• Limits pool of available personnel • Places cost burden of advising solely on the U.S. • U.S. does not have an MoI equivalent
Multilateral (e.g., EUPOL and NATO)	• Increased size and diversity of personnel pool • Some NATO members have direct MoI analogs • EUPOL has expertise in developing post-conflict civilian policing institutions and strategies beyond that of NATO or its member countries • Spreads cost of advising across the international community	• Likely to decrease unity of effort • Risk of significant discontinuities due to highly varied backgrounds of NATO and EUPOL members, and political goals and systems of NATO and EUPOL member countries • Higher turnover (NATO military members generally serve shorter tours than U.S.)

Key themes that emerged from our analysis and Table 37 include the following:

- Institutional maturation within the security ministries and what is likely to be a reduced advisor presence suggest that U.S. and NATO forces should continue to shift emphasis to functional advising rather than close-in personal mentoring. Doing so would also reduce the risk to ministerial capabilities posed by the likelihood of leadership changes in the wake of next year's Afghan presidential election.
- Advisors with extensive civilian law-enforcement experience should have a more prominent role within the MoI. There are general organizational and managerial skills that military and DoD civilian advisors can impart. But policing policy, programs, and oversight have specialized requirements.[169] International advisors with significant law-enforcement expertise in areas such as personnel management, anti-corruption, and community relations are particularly valuable in the MoI context.
- Turning ministerial advising over to NATO would likely bring with it most of the challenges associated with the current system (e.g., the over-militarization of MoI advising)—and introduce new ones (e.g., the problem of integrating competing NATO member political goals and approaches).

Taken together, the comparisons in Table 37 make clear that there is no obvious "best approach" to ministerial advising in Afghanistan. Rather, whatever approach is chosen will have pros and cons relative to others. It will be important going forward for the U.S. to deliberately choose which approaches it endorses with a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses the approach entails.

Advisor characteristics

Earlier studies looking at advisor recruitment, training and performance stretching back to the Vietnam era have identified key charac-

[169] For more on this point, see David H. Bayley and Robert M. Perito. *The Police in War: Fighting Insurgency, Terrorism, and Violent Crime*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2010: 50-60.

teristics associated with successful advising.[170] These are likely to remain relevant to post-2014 advisory missions in Afghanistan. Key characteristics of successful advisors and advisor programs are described below.

- Selecting the right advisors is critical. In addition to professional expertise, advisors need to bring with them personal qualities such as maturity; empathy for counterparts; and a willingness to work in demanding and sometimes dangerous environments. Such attributes cannot be taught—they must be identified beforehand within the pool of potential advisors.
- Advisor training should emphasize cultural familiarization; building cross-cultural understanding through role-playing and other techniques; and language skills. Such training is expensive, but the evidence from earlier advisor experiences suggests that it is worth the investment.
- Building rapport with counterparts is essential to advisor success. This is true at all levels of advising (national, operational, and tactical). As discussed earlier, U.S. and NATO forces are moving towards functional rather than personal advising. Nevertheless, advising necessarily involves interaction and some measure of reciprocal trust. The ability to establish rapport is to some degree an "un-teachable" personal attribute. However, it can be strengthened through the kinds of training mentioned above.
- A major finding of past CNA work on advising is that, to be effective, advisors generally need to have some form of leverage with their counterparts. Rapport is essential, but often the abil-

[170] See for example William Rosenau et al. *United States Marine Corps Advisors: Past, Present, and Future*. CNA Research Memorandum DRM-2013-U-005404-Final. Aug. 2013; William Rosenau and Carter Malkasian. *Criteria for Measuring U.S. Advisor Success in Afghanistan*. CNA Paper CME D0026827. Feb. 2012; Seth W.B. Folsom. *In the Gray Area: A Marine Advisor Team at War*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2010; Charles T. Williamson. *The U.S. Naval Mission to Haiti, 1959–1963*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1999; and John Grider Miller. *The Co-Vans: U.S. Marine Advisors in Vietnam*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2000.

ity to provide—or withhold—resources plays a critical role as well. In the current and future environment of declining U.S. and NATO resources in Afghanistan, it will be important for advisors to have some form of leverage with their counterparts and to know what resources they can provide or withhold to help generate it.

Finally, it should be noted that advisor recruitment, particularly among the U.S. civil service, is likely to be a significant challenge after 2014. The initial surge of patriotism and desire to serve abroad that followed the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 has waned significantly. As a result, the pool of potential advisors has been shrinking.[171] Ensuring that the correct incentives are in place—including post-deployment support—will be crucial.

Conclusion

Within the past year, U.S. and NATO forces have increasingly focused on developing institutional capacities within the Afghan security ministries. Our assessment is that this emphasis is a positive development. A continued emphasis on capabilities such as logistics, strategy and policy planning, financial management, and human resource management, as well as enablers such as anti-corruption policies, programs, and structures, gender integration, local ownership, information technology, intelligence, and civilianization, are needed to help the MoD and MoI become reasonably self-sufficient and professional institutions capable of supporting the fielded forces.

International advisors working in the MoD and MoI should continue their relatively new emphasis on functional (as opposed to personal) advising. Advisors with extensive civilian law enforcement experience should be used more widely within the MoI. In both the MoI and MoD, U.S. and NATO should work to develop capabilities at the deputy ministerial level, where much of the important day-to-day ministerial work needs to be carried out. We refrain from making a

[171] Author's interview with U.S. DoD policy official. Arlington, Virginia. Sep. 12, 2013; and author's interview with USIP personnel. Alexandria, Virginia. Sep. 20, 2013. Returning civilian advisors face a number of challenges, including the lack of "decompression" support (e.g., for dealing with post-traumatic stress disorder).

specific recommendation as to how best to construct a post-2014 advisor program and instead suggest that the U.S. should make a clear-eyed decision on the structure of such a program based on the pros and cons we have identified. Regardless of which course of action policymakers take, they should remain aware of what Afghanistan and previous conflicts have taught us about what contributes to advisor success. Particularly important are careful selection (for personal as well as professional attributes and experience); and pre-deployment training in areas such as cultural awareness, language skills, and role-playing.

In the next section, we discuss the results of our assessment of legal authorities required for the U.S. assistance mission to Afghanistan in the 2015–2018 timeframe.

Supporting the assistance mission: Assessment of legal authorities required post-2014

We were asked to assess and provide recommendations on legislative authorities that would enable—or hinder—success of the U.S. assistance mission post-2014. We begin with a summary of our findings, followed by the details of our assessment.

Summary

Our assessment identified more than 20 specialized legal authorities and many more standing authorities and international agreements that enable the U.S. military's mission in Afghanistan. The current "authorities regime" is an amalgam of Title 10 and Title 22-type authorities with different managers, accounting rules, and reporting requirements (see Appendix G). This collection of laws allows the U.S. Department of Defense to maintain a presence and engage in combat operations in Afghanistan, transfer goods and services to the ANSF and coalition partner nations, and receive and spend public funds on specified programs. Some of the authorities have "sunset" clauses; others are permanent but require funding re-authorization each year.

Our research suggests that post-2014, the U.S. military will focus on four missions in Afghanistan: counterterrorism operations; training, advising, assisting (and possibly continuing to equip) the ANSF; retrograding personnel and equipment; and, when called upon, protecting U.S. civilians working on the ground.

In terms of authorities for this post-2014 mission set:

We conclude the U.S. Department of Defense will require the same types of authorities that it has today with the possible exception of authorities for counterinsurgency programs which are not part of the envisioned post-2014 mission set for the U.S. military.

These include civil infrastructure development, economic development programs, and combatant reintegration programs. In addition:

We conclude that the decentralized and makeshift nature of the current authorities regime promotes waste and inefficiencies.

Having been developed in piecemeal fashion, the existing regime is cumbersome and difficult to track and manage. Instead of the existing, disjointed assortment of authorities, we recommend they be consolidated into one omnibus authority where possible.

As an illustration of this, we prepared a U.S. assistance mission "model law," which contains all of the authorities we conclude are necessary for the post-2014 mission set (see Appendix H for full text of the model law). It is structured to lower administrative and transactional costs, speed up and simplify transfer processes, and provide the on-scene commander flexibility to adjust programs as needed. Key features of the model law include:

- Centralization of management and oversight with the Secretary of Defense
- Codification and reaffirmation of the right to conduct counter-terrorism operations alongside the train, advise, and assist mission
- Establishment of a single fund to pay for all incremental expenses associated with the training and assistance mission
- The provision of broad transfer authorities to the ANSF (and allies and friends) outside the typical Foreign Military Sales (FMS) program, since Afghanistan can neither afford nor manage participation in this program.

The difficulties of enacting the model law notwithstanding, we assess it can serve as a useful checklist of authorities needed to enable the post-2014 mission in Afghanistan.

Methodology

Our methodology for this assessment consisted of three steps:

1. We constructed a matrix that aligns current assistance missions with mission managers and the legal authorities that allow them to operate. We reviewed U.S. operational plans to identify which missions are currently being conducted. Using open source literature and interviews with DoD, Department of State (DoS), and NATO personnel, we then identified who is con-

ducting these missions and under which legal authorities they operate.[172]

2. We reviewed public statements from U.S. leaders and government officials, and interviewed U.S. and NATO personnel to make informed assumptions about the types of missions the U.S. military will carry out in Afghanistan in the 2015 to 2018 timeframe.

3. In order to identify which legal authorities will need to remain in place, we compared current assistance missions to future planned missions. To present our findings, we prepared a U.S. assistance mission "model law" which clearly details all of the legislative components that will need to be kept in place to allow the U.S. to successfully conduct the post-2014 assistance mission.[173] Through the model law, we also derived recommendations for how to streamline and overcome current inefficiencies in the authorities regime.

Assumptions and caveats

In addition to our overarching assumptions, for this assessment we also assumed that the U.S. will continue to rely on support from allied and friendly countries that are willing to assist but that may require continued U.S. financial and logistical assistance in order to participate.

In our discussions with personnel in the Office of the Under Secretary for Defense (Policy) for this assessment, they defined "assistance mission" as those operations carried out under U.S. Code (USC) Title 10 authority. Thus, our analysis will not consider Title 22 (diplomatic) or Title 50 (intelligence, covert) activities. Moreover, our analysis dealt only with legislative authorities and international

[172] We liaised with lawyers and U.S. government personnel from the DoD Office of General Counsel, U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), and U.S. Forces – Afghanistan (USFOR-A) to ensure our authorities matrix was as complete as possible.

[173] The use of a model law was suggested by several of our interviewees as a helpful construct for compiling and presenting all the various authorities required in the post-2014 timeframe.

agreements, and did not assess operational authorities resulting from executive orders.

Finally, the intent of the model law is to provide a consolidated checklist of legal authorities and a readymade omnibus statute template, in the event our recommendation of a more consolidated and streamlined approach were to be adopted. We make no judgment as to the political modalities of gaining the enactment of successor authorities or the chances of ultimate passage of the model law.

Assessment

Current authorities

The U.S. military is currently conducting or supporting a number of missions in Afghanistan, such as combat operations against insurgents and terrorists, advising and equipping the ANSF, and funding programs geared at building government institutions and capacity. Though the Secretary of Defense has some inherent authorities (e.g., directing military operations to defend the U.S.), in order to commit funds, transfer equipment and property, create certain types of spending or support programs, or assign military personnel to situations in which they are susceptible to hostile fire, a congressional authorization is necessary.

Currently, U.S. military activities in Afghanistan are enabled by a plethora of legal authorities. These authorities can be divided into three broad categories: legislative authorities created specifically for operations in Afghanistan; general and standing authorities (i.e., Title 10 authorities); and international agreements (e.g., the temporary U.S. –Afghanistan Status of Forces Agreement, or SOFA, is based on an exchange of diplomatic notes). These authorities and agreements serve to control the distribution of funds, the transfer of materials, and the deployment of forces in combat roles. They also delineate the jurisdictional status of U.S. military personnel and the legal basis for their presence in Afghanistan.

The major authorities and agreements that are currently in place are listed in Table 38 on the next page (see Appendix G for a full listing). For each, we list the title of the authority and what it allows the U.S. military to do in Afghanistan, along with its expiration date (if appli-

cable) and whether our analysis suggests the authority will be required to enable the post-2014 mission set.

Table 38. Current legal authorities for U.S. military operations in Afghanistan (abbreviated)

Title	Programmatic Objective	Exp. Date	Needed in 2015?
Afghanistan Specific Authorities			
U.S./Afg. Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA)	Provides logistic support, supplies, and services.	Indefinite	Yes
Expanded ACSA	Allows a no-cost loan of "covered equipment," (i.e. vehicles, add-on armored kits, counter-IED) not otherwise eligible for transfer under ACSA.	Possibly expired	Yes
Afghan Infrastructure Fund	For high priority, large scale infrastructure projects to aid the counterinsurgency.	30 Sep 2014	No
Afg. Public Protection Fund	Provides funds for the APPF.	30 Sep 2017	Yes
Afg. Reintegration Program	Provides funds for reintegration of combatants.	31 Dec 2013	No
Afghan Security Forces Fund (ASFF)	Provides funds for the benefit of the ANSF in the form of supplies, services, infrastructure repair, renovation and construction, equipment, etc.	30 Sep 2014	Yes
Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF)	Enables use of force against insurgents/terrorists.	Indefinite	Yes
Coalition Readiness Support Program	Authority given to the Secretary of Defense to provide specialized training, or loan of supplies and equipment on a non-reimbursable basis to coalition forces.	Possibly expired	Yes
Coalition Support Funds (CSF)	Used to reimburse coalition countries for logistical, military, and other expenses.	30 Sep 2014	Yes
Commanders Emergency Response Program (CERP)	Enables commanders to carry out small-scale projects designed to meet urgent humanitarian relief requirements or urgent reconstruction requirements.	30 Sep 2013	Yes
Economic Support Fund (ESF)	Builds capacity of Afghan public and private institutions and entities.	Possibly expired	No
Non-Excess Defense Articles	Authority to transfer defense articles from the stocks of the DoD.	31 Dec 2014	Yes
Lift and Sustain (Afghanistan)	Funds to transport foreign forces to and from Afghanistan and provide sustainment and subsistence while they serve with U.S. forces in Afghanistan.	30 Sep 2013	Yes
Logistical Support for Coalition Forces	Provides supplies, services, transportation (including airlift and sealift), and other logistical support to coalition forces.	30 Sep 2013	Yes

Table 38. Current legal authorities for U.S. military operations in Afghanistan (abbreviated)

Title	Programmatic Objective	Exp. Date	Needed in 2015?
No-Cost Transfer of Defense Articles to Military and Security Forces in Afg.	Allows for the authority to transfer non-excess defense articles from stocks of DoD, without reimbursement from the government of Afghanistan.	31 Dec 2014	Yes
Pakistan Counterinsurgency Fund	Funds to help suppress the development of IEDs and proliferation of precursors.	30 Sep 2013	Yes
Authorization to Procure Supplies and Services along the Afghan Supply Routes	Allows for procurement of equipment and supplies for US and coalition forces.	31 Dec 2014	Yes
Reimbursement of Coalition Nations for Support	Reimburse any key cooperating nation for logistical and military support.	30 Sep 2013	Yes
Task Force for Business and Stability Operations (TFBSO)	First created in 2009. Supports projects to help reduce violence, and enhance stability by identifying areas of the economy viable for investment.	Possibly expired	No
General Authorities			
Combatant Commander's Initiative Fund	Provides urgent and unanticipated humanitarian relief and reconstruction assistance.	Indefinite	Yes
Combating Terrorism Readiness Initiative Fund	Codifies the practice of making funds available for high-priority unforeseen requirements related to combating terrorism.	30 Sep 2014	Yes
DoD Drug Interdiction and Counter-Drug Activities	Supports military operations against drug traffickers; builds Afghan law enforcement capacity in the counter-narcotics area; and provides special equipment, training, and facilities.	Indefinite	No
Authority to Transfer Excess Defense Articles	Defense articles declared as excess by the Military Departments can be offered to foreign governments.	Indefinite	Yes
Foreign Excess Pers. Property	Authorizes transfer of excess personal property as part of base closure.	Indefinite	Yes
Foreign Excess Real Property	Authorizes transfer of excess real property as part of base closure/base transfer.	Indefinite	Yes
Global Lift and Sustain	Authorizes provision of logistics support, supplies, and services to allied forces participating in combined operations with U.S. Armed Forces.	Indefinite	Yes
Global Security Contingency Fund	Supports security, counterterrorism, and rule of law programs.	30 Sep 2015	Yes
Global Train and Equip Fund	Additional authority to train and equip partner nations for counterterrorism operations.	30 Sep 2013	Yes
Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOTFA)	Helps pay police salaries.	Indefinite	NA
Military Operations to Combat Terrorism	Funds for foreign forces, irregulars, or individuals facilitating U.S. SOF counterterrorism ops.	30 Sep 2015	Yes

Table 38. Current legal authorities for U.S. military operations in Afghanistan (abbreviated)

Title	Programmatic Objective	Exp. Date	Needed in 2015?
	International Agreements		
Creation of ISAF	ISAF was created by the Bonn Agreement and U.N. Security Council Resolution 1386.	Oct 2013	Yes
Diplomatic Notes 2003	Diplomatic notes give the U.S. legal jurisdiction over U.S. personnel.	Indefinite	Yes
"Joint Declaration"	Gives U.S. forces access to Afghan military facilities in order to prosecute counterterrorism.	May 2012	NA
ISAF SOFA	Gives coalition nations exclusive jurisdiction over ISAF and supporting personnel.	2015	Yes
Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA)	A framework for the presence and activities of U.S. forces in Afghanistan after 2014. Commits parties to initiate negotiations on a BSA.	2024	NA

Future missions

The authorities that will be needed to successfully complete the post-2014 mission will depend on what the mission actually entails. Activities conducted by the U.S. military will be driven by what is agreed upon with the Afghan government and eventually made explicit in the Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) between the two countries.[174]

Our analysis suggests that the U.S. military will be involved in four missions in Afghanistan come 2015. Statements from U.S. and Afghan officials suggest that U.S. forces will be conducting both counterterrorism and training, advising, and assisting (TAA) missions with the ANSF.[175] In addition, the U.S. military will be responsible for important ancillary missions such as the retrograde of military equip-

[174] President Barack Obama. "Remarks by President Obama in Address to the Nation from Afghanistan." Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan. May 1 2012, accessed Sep. 9, 2013, at www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/05/01/remarks-president-address-nation-afghanistan.

[175] There is some debate about what "assisting" the ANSF means. According to current ISAF leadership, this could include combat support—likely in the form of aviation support—but a U.S. policy decision on that aspect has not yet been made. See: Kristina Wong. "Some Troops to Stay in Afghanistan after 2014." *Washington Times*, Sep. 8, 2013.

ment and personnel.[176] Finally, as is the case in all conflict-prone countries in which there is a U.S. embassy or civilian presence, the U.S. military will also be responsible for protecting non-military personnel.[177]

Legislative authorities to enable the post-2014 mission

Our examination of the current authorities regime and the likely post-2014 mission set yielded two key findings.

First, the post-2014 assistance mission set will be significantly reduced from what it is today (e.g., major U.S. led combat operations against insurgents will cease and U.S. military led governance and economics programs will be terminated). But the nature of the new mission set is similar enough that it will require largely the same types of authorities that are currently in place (e.g., distribution of funds, transfer of materials, authority to engage in combat operations). One possible exception might be those authorities for resourcing and managing governance, economic, and other programs specific to U.S. forces actively fighting a counterinsurgency.[178]

Our analysis of the likely post-2014 mission set suggests that the reduction of missions will result in decreased combat activity, but will not eliminate all types of kinetic operations nor eliminate the need to have a broad set of use of force authorities. Moreover, since the changes in the TAA, retrograde, and U.S. government protection missions in the 2015–2018 timeframe will likely be minimal compared to the present, requirements for authorities to enable these activities should also not change.

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[176] "Withdrawing from Afghanistan: The big retrograde," *The Economist*, Apr. 27, 2013.

[177] Gopal Ratnam. "Afghan Counterterror Work Adds to Post-2014 Troops, Dunford Says." *Bloomberg*, Apr. 17, 2013.

[178] This is not to suggest that U.S. investments in governance, economics, and reintegration programs may not be necessary to achieve the desired end states as specified by the 2013 NDAA. Rather, given its reduced mission set, the DoD may not be the best agency to retain legal responsibility for resourcing and managing programs in these areas.

We therefore recommend that in order to enable the post-2014 mission, the DoD should be provided the same *types* of authorities that it enjoys today. We base this recommendation on our evaluation of how closely each authority aligns with and contributes to the success of each of the four predicted post-2014 missions, as shown in Table 38.

Our second finding, based on an analysis of our full authorities matrix (see Appendix G), is that the de-centralized and makeshift nature of the current authorities regime promotes inefficiencies and may potentially hinder the post-2014 mission if it is not streamlined. A common thread in many reports by the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) was inattentive management by a diversity of U.S. program managers. Our discussions with relevant DoD legal personnel and our professional experience in international programs, suggest that simplification, consolidation, and central management could lead to both greater efficiencies and fewer opportunities for fraud, waste, and abuse.

As such, we also recommend that the current authorities regime be streamlined. To do this, we suggest that a new omnibus authority be considered to replace the current patchwork of 20-plus specialized authorities.

Model law: The Defense of Afghanistan Act of 2014

In order to provide a consolidated checklist of legal authorities and a template for an omnibus statute, we drafted a U.S. assistance mission "model law," which is presented in its entirety in Appendix H.[179]

In essence, the model law incorporates all authorities necessary for conducting the presumed post-2014 assistance mission set under one statute and reaffirms our basic finding that on-scene commanders will

[179] While we make no judgment as to the chances of passage of the model law, there is some precedent (e.g., Plan Colombia), for successfully consolidating funding streams for operations. See: Sydney Freedberg, "Special Operations: What New Powers They Need from Congress & Pentagon," BreakingDefense.com, Apr. 15, 2013, accessed Oct. 15, 2013, at www.breakingdefense.com/2013/04/15/special-operations-what-new-powers-they-need-from-congress-and-pe.

require roughly the same types of authorities that currently exist.[180] In addition to reauthorizing much of what is currently in place, we include provisions to centralize and standardize funding, reporting, and oversight in an attempt to reduce opportunities for fraud, waste, and abuse.

In general terms, we designed the model law to:

- Enable the Secretary of Defense, acting through the on-scene commander, to centrally manage activities related to the TAA mission, eliminate opportunities for waste or inefficiency, and gain situational awareness on whether the activities are actually leading to the accomplishment of mission objectives.
- Renew and codify the Afghan specific authorities listed in our authorities matrix (Appendix G) that enable the on-scene commander to provide personnel and material support to both the ANSF and those who are helping the U.S. to train, assist, and advise the ANSF to become self-sufficient.
- Lower transactional costs associated with transferring various types of necessary support to the ANSF and those countries helping the U.S. in Afghanistan.
- Provide the on-scene commander flexibility to adjust programs and spending as needed to address conditions on the ground.
- Free the on-scene commander of legal responsibility for resourcing and managing programs related to social and economic development, such as the Afghan Infrastructure Fund (AIF) and TFBSO.

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[180] Given that most of the current authorities listed in Appendix G are under the oversight jurisdiction of the Defense Authorization Committees in the Senate and House (Title 10), we envision that this model law would ultimately become a Title 10 authority if it were adopted. There is, however, language in the model law to not rescind or abrogate any additional standing Title 10 authorities or other types of assistance authorities implemented by the Department of State or other Agencies, including the Intelligence Community under Title 22, Title 40, or Title 50 of the United States Code.

- Establish transfer authorities (under Title 10) in lieu of using the traditional Foreign Military Sales route since all of the assistance envisioned will be on a grant basis (i.e., Afghanistan cannot afford to purchase equipment via the FMS program), and because Afghanistan lacks the capacity to manage complex FMS transactions. Laying these transfer authorities under Title 10 should also expedite and simplify the transfer process within the U.S. government.

A simplified authorities regime could serve to promote a "unified command" over the four missions in the post-2014 era. Our model law gives the Secretary of Defense, via his on-scene commander, the legal authority to quickly redirect resources within the central fund from one program element to another based on real-time conditions on the ground. A single funding authority should also minimize interagency competition over who is in charge and how assistance monies will be spent.[181] This type of centralized authorities and funds management is in line with congressional intent in the unified command structure of the Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act of 1986.[182] This act was passed to eliminate interagency rivalry and wasteful spending by the individual service branches, and to improve operational effectiveness via the use of the Unified Command Plan structure. This unified command structure has resulted in significant operational improvements.[183]

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[181] Parallels can be drawn to the winding down of U.S. activities in Iraq. There were multiple areas of disagreement between DoD and DoS regarding operation of the Office of Security Cooperation – Iraq (OSC-I) which had primary responsibility for all of the U.S. government security assistance programs in Iraq (conducted under Title 22 authorities). The Inspector General has detailed significant disagreements between DoD and DoS over the OSC-I's base mission; the size, scope, and funding of the OSC-I activity; and its authority over the DoD to conduct military to military activities. See: *Assessment of the Office of Security Cooperation – Iraq Mission Capabilities*. U.S. Department of Defense Inspector General DODIG-2013-136. Sep. 18, 2013.

[182] H.R. 3622; Public Law 99-433, Oct.1, 1986.

[183] Inter-service rivalries were an "appreciable handicap" in the war effort in World War II. Additionally, operational setbacks suffered by the military in the "the seizure of the *USS Pueblo*, the seizure of the Mayaguez, the

The use of the unified funding approach should also enhance the ability of Congress to have visibility over all DoD activities in Afghanistan—in contrast to the current situation wherein activities are conducted pursuant to disparate legal authorities with different types of Congressional and interagency oversight. Such a focusing of oversight should also help to ensure greater accountability of funds.

In addition, we recommend that the current authorities unrelated to the new mission, including the Economic Support Fund, TFBSO, and AIF be reassigned responsibility to the Secretary of State and USAID.[184] Strong consideration should also be given to mandating that a sizable share of the DoD counter-narcotics program be transitioned to a U.S. civil agency like the Department of Justice or Drug Enforcement Agency. While the DoD should not be legislatively precluded from funding select counter-narcotics activities in Afghanistan, we assess that another agency should have the primary responsibility for this mission in the post-2014 timeframe.

Legislation that could hinder the post-2014 mission

There are numerous pieces of legislation that could potentially hinder the DoD's ability to conduct its post-2014 mission set. A comprehensive review of all laws in this regard was not feasible within the scope of this study. A cursory review, however, yielded the following examples of potential legislative "hindrances":

"Leahy Law"

The "Leahy Law" (named for Senator Patrick Leahy of Vermont) restricts the DoD from providing assistance to training programs under the NDAA that involve a unit of foreign security forces or police if the

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failed Iranian rescue mission, the Marine barracks bombing in Beirut, and the Granada incursion….had a number of common denominators – lack of unity of command and inability to operate jointly." See: James Locher. "Has it Worked? The Goldwater Nichols Reorganization Act." *Naval War College Review*, Vol. LIV, No. 4: 95, 97–99.

[184] DoD should be statutory included in the process of reviewing projected activities under the ESP, TFBSO, and AIF programs since the Combatant Commander has an excellent perspective on where stabilization projects will have the greatest impact on the U.S. security mission. We recommend that DoD consultation should be statutorily required.

Secretary of Defense has received credible information from the DoS that such unit has committed gross violations of human rights.[185] The Secretary of Defense can make exceptions if he determines that such a waiver is required by extraordinary circumstances.

As the ANSF assume full responsibility for defending Afghanistan and as U.S. and NATO oversight diminishes, we assess there will be an increased possibility of Afghan units committing human rights abuses. If such violations occur, the "Leahy Law" may hinder the ability of the U.S. to continue funding such units. Of particular concern are the Afghan Local Police, who have previously been accused of committing abuses of the population.[186]

Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction

Congress created the Office of the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction to provide independent and objective oversight of Afghanistan reconstruction projects and activities. Under the authority of Section 1229 of the NDAA for Fiscal Year 2008 (P.L. 110-181), SIGAR conducts audits and investigations to promote efficiency and effectiveness of reconstruction programs, and to detect and prevent waste, fraud, and abuse.

While the SIGAR organization works hard to combat fraud and corruption within Afghanistan and to expose inefficiencies in DoD programs, we assess that the public nature of SIGAR reports might hinder the post-2014 assistance mission by publishing information that could potentially undermine efforts by the Combatant Commander, and other agencies, to help build the stature of the Afghanistan government and the ANSF. For that reason, we have suggested in our model law that oversight activities be consolidated under the direction of the DoD Inspector General.

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[185] Public Law No 113-6, Division C, Dept. of Defense Appropriations Act for 2013, Section 8057.

[186] "Just Don't Call it a Militia: Impunity, Militias and the 'Afghan Local Police.'" Human Rights Watch. Sep. 2011, accessed Sep. 15, 2013, www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/afghanistan0911webwcover.pdf

The Stop Taxing American Assistance to Afghanistan Act (H.R. 936)

Written by Rep. Peter Welch and Rep. Walter Jones, the Stop Taxing American Assistance to Afghanistan Act (H.R. 936) would have barred future assistance to Afghanistan unless U.S. contractors and subcontractors delivering aid were exempted from taxation by the government of Afghanistan. Representative Welch's bill was incorporated into the FY2013 NDAA, but was later removed during conference negotiations with the Senate. In May 2013, Rep. Welch reintroduced legislation that would block all U.S. taxpayer assistance to Afghanistan until the U.S. president reaches a bilateral agreement with the Afghan government that would exempt American contractors from Afghan taxation.[187]

"AUMF Sunset"

We are aware of the existence of efforts by at least one member of the House Intelligence Committee to develop a bill that would undo the basic legislative authorities that permit the U.S. military to conduct the counterterrorism mission in Afghanistan and beyond. If legislation to "sunset" the Authorization for the Use of Military Force law was passed without follow-on legislation permitting a continued counterterrorism mission in Afghanistan, this would severely hinder the U.S. post-2014 mission. A previous effort to re-examine the AUMF failed in 2010.

Conclusion

The success of the post-2014 mission in Afghanistan will depend on the appropriate legal authorities remaining in place. Currently, the U.S. military relies on numerous specialized and standing authorities, some of which will sunset or require reauthorization and funding in the coming years.

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[187] See "Welch bill to prevent Afghanistan from taxing U.S. aid coming to House floor tomorrow." *www.welch.house.gov*, *Official Website of United States Congressman Peter Welch*, accessed Oct. 14, 2013 at www.welch.house.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2027%3Awelch-bill-to-prevent-afghanistan-from-taxing-us-aid-coming-to-house-floor-tomorrow&catid=41%3A2012-press-releases&Itemid=16#sthash.vmOPiKbI.dpuf.

We assess that in order to accomplish its post-2014 mission set; the U.S. military will generally require the same types of specialized authorities that it currently enjoys. If Congress fails to extend these specialized authorities, U.S. forces in Afghanistan could find their legal ability to execute the train, advise, and assist mission compromised. Relevant standing authorities are simply too underfunded and limited in scope to effectively support this mission on their own. The counterterrorism mission is at much less risk. Absent a repeal of the Authorization for Use of Military Force, the U.S. military will retain the domestic legal authority to engage in counterterrorism operations in Afghanistan.

We also assess that the post-2014 mission in Afghanistan would benefit from the creation of a new, streamlined authorities and funding regime. The current patchwork system of authorities creates systemic challenges that could hinder the success of the mission and create opportunities for fraud, waste, and abuse. The political difficulties of enacting a single all-inclusive statute notwithstanding, such an authority might be an appropriate solution to the inefficiencies inherent in the current authorities regime. While it would be possible for Congress to simply pass "extenders" of some of the specialized authorities, we assess that a comprehensive and integrated plan that addresses both the contours of the post-2014 U.S. military mission, and how that mission will be resourced and managed, is a more effective, less costly, and ultimately more sustainable way forward.

In the next section, we discuss the results of our assessment of opportunities for cooperation and prevention of conflict between the ANSF and the Pakistani military.

Supporting regional stability: Assessment of the ANSF – PAKMIL relationship

We were asked to conduct an assessment of the opportunities for cooperation—or prevention of conflict—between the ANSF and the Pakistani military (PAKMIL), especially along the Afghanistan–Pakistan border. We begin with a summary of our findings, followed by the details of our assessment.

Summary

Relations between Afghan and Pakistani forces are often strained and prone to escalation, yet tensions between the ANSF and PAKMIL have yet to lead to open warfare. There is considerable demand among officers on both sides for a more stable relationship. We assess that there will be continuing opportunities for cooperation between the two forces post-2014, especially at the tactical and operational levels, as well as a reduction in tensions along the border. At the same time, there will be areas of enduring conflict that will require constant attention—some of which may worsen in the coming years.

Having conducted numerous interviews with Afghan, Pakistani, U.S., and NATO forces at multiple levels on both sides of the border:

We conclude that a significant reduction in the U.S. and NATO commitment to Afghanistan or Pakistan will destabilize the border region, exacerbate existing tensions between the two countries, and jeopardize fragile mechanisms for cross-border cooperation and de-escalation that have been built in recent years.

Many in the Pakistani military do not believe that the international community will provide sufficient resources for the ANSF to survive past 2014 or that the U.S. will continue to resource Pakistani military operations in the border areas. Uncertainty about the future is forcing the two militaries to plan for worst case scenarios.

We conclude that there will be continual conflict on a number of issues in the foreseeable future. These include Afghanistan's reluctance to recognize the border, difficulties associated with demarcating the border line, the tendency of some Afghan leaders to exploit anti-Pakistan sentiment among the Afghan population, Paki-

stan's continued relationship with elements of the Taliban, insurgent sanctuaries inside Pakistan (and increasingly in parts of Afghanistan as coalition forces withdraw), and Afghanistan's growing security relationship with India.

Despite the likelihood of conflict over these issues, there are areas of common interest as well as potentially enduring mechanisms for communication and cooperation that could help reduce conflict and stabilize the relationship over time. Some of these include: expanding road networks and cross-border trade, repatriation and resettlement of Afghan refugees living in Pakistan, continued counterterrorism and counterinsurgency operations on both sides of the border, expansion of border coordination mechanisms at the tactical and operational levels, bilateral meetings between the two forces at all levels, and, finally, cooperation on countering IEDs, which officers on both sides see as a major future threat to their forces.

Methodology

Our methodology for this assessment consisted of two steps:

1. We documented the past and current dynamics of the relationship between the ANSF and the Pakistani military. To do so, we first consulted secondary sources in the literature. We then conducted interviews in eastern Afghanistan and Kabul with Afghan army, border police, SOF, intelligence personnel, and uniformed police at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels—including on the border itself. We also spoke with U.S. and NATO personnel involved in Pakistan border issues. We conducted interviews in Islamabad, Pakistan with members of the Office of the Defense Representative – Pakistan (ODR-P), U.S. embassy personnel, the director general of the Pakistani military joint staff, and the director general of military operations for Afghanistan in the Pakistan army.
2. We then used this understanding of the past and present to elicit areas of likely enduring conflict, as well as areas where the two countries may increase cooperation or, at the very least, reduce tensions in the future.

Assessment

Dynamics of the relationship

The relationship between Afghanistan and Pakistan is complex and varies considerably at every level of command, from the national level down to tactical units manning border posts. Dynamics at each level are constantly affected by those at other levels. For example, tactical incidents often escalate to become national issues, and conflict at the national level inhibits efforts to cooperate at lower echelons. In order to understand these dynamics, it is necessary to lay out the issues at each level of command, including national political issues between the two governments, and to describe how they interact.

The national level: Areas of persistent conflict

The fundamental bone of contention between the two countries is their dispute over the border, known as the Durand Line. The line was drawn in 1893 as part of an accord between the British Indian government and the ruler of Afghanistan, Amir Abdul Rahman Khan. Successive Afghan leaders have repudiated the agreement for a variety of reasons—arguing that the Amir signed it under duress, that it was never meant to be permanent, and that when British suzerainty ended, the agreement became null and void. Pakistan, which was carved out of British India in 1947, insists that it inherited the agreement intact, and has repeatedly insisted that Afghanistan recognize the line as a permanent international boundary.[188]

As recently as May 2013, Afghan president Hamid Karzai stated that he would never recognize the Durand Line. Afghan politicians, particularly Pashtun leaders, have periodically asserted that all Pashtun majority areas in southwest Asia should be part of Afghanistan—in effect, claiming all lands to the Indus River in Pakistan, which includes nearly half of Pakistan's total land mass. Afghan leaders have periodically raised the so-called "Pashtunistan" issue over the decades, causing considerable concern among Pakistan's security establishment.

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[188] Bijan Omrani. "The Durand Line: History and Problems of the Afghan-Pakistan Border." *Asian Affairs*, Jul. 2009.

According to some scholars, the Durand Line agreement was not meant to delineate an actual line, but rather spheres of influence separated by a frontier region or buffer zone between the settled areas of British India (and later Pakistan) and Afghanistan. The British at the time were concerned about the expansion of the Russian empire from Central Asia and sought to create a buffer zone between British imperial domains and expanding Russian influence. When the agreement was signed in 1893, British and Afghan officials apparently understood that the geography and demographics on both sides of the line were such that demarcating and enforcing an actual international border was not possible. Instead, they agreed on a general area where both governments agreed to limit their influence.[189] Despite this understanding in the original agreement, successive Afghan, British and (later) Pakistani governments built border posts where they believed the line to be.

Various Pashtun and other tribes straddle the border. Most of those living in the border regions treat the line as if it did not exist. Tens of thousands of people cross it every day, many of them informally in sectors where no official border posts exist. There is no agreed upon mechanism between the two governments for regulating this movement. Many of the tribes in the border region refuse to accept the authority of either government. There is a vast expanse of ungoverned space on both sides where each state has little or no authority. The tribes in these areas largely run their own affairs and people move back and forth without regard to the actual line.

The Pakistani military and intelligence services have effectively violated the border by supporting various insurgents fighting Afghan government forces from bases inside Pakistan since the 1980s. Karzai has repeatedly accused Pakistan of supporting the Taliban. The Haqqani network has carried out numerous high profile attacks against national-level leaders and institutions in Kabul. Afghan leaders believe that the group, which operates from bases in Pakistan's North Waziristan tribal agency, acts at the bidding of Pakistan's intelligence services. Attacks against Indian embassies and consulates have been

[189] Bijan Omrani and Frank Ledwidge. "Rethinking the Durand Line: The Legality of the Afghan-Pakistani Frontier." *The RUSI Journal*, Oct. 2009.

traced to the Haqqani network, indicating that it remains, at least in part, a tool of Pakistani intelligence.[190]

Anti-Pakistan sentiment is pervasive in many parts of Afghanistan, especially among the non-Pashtun minorities, but among sections of the Pashtuns as well. Karzai, a Pashtun from Kandahar, has consistently sought to stoke and exploit this sentiment for domestic political gain, taking a strident line against Pakistan in public forums and intentionally escalating clashes at the tactical level along the border into international incidents. The rhetoric of asserting Afghan sovereignty against Pakistan has proven a powerful political tool. There are few issues that unite Afghans more than this particular issue.[191]

The national level: Areas of cooperation

Despite serious differences, the two countries have never fought a war or engaged in any large-scale military clash over their common border. By comparison, Pakistan has fought four wars with India over the Line of Control in Kashmir, which is the second most militarized border in the world (behind that between North and South Korea). Pakistani civilian and military leaders have consistently called for peace with Afghanistan, despite occasionally hostile rhetoric from Kabul. The Pakistani military has indicated that it would prefer a stable border to the west, especially if tensions with India were to escalate. During the last few years in particular, the Pakistani military has indicated that it seeks a friendly relationship with Kabul and greater cooperation with the ANSF.[192] Since Karzai's visit to Islamabad in Sep-

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[190] Authors' interviews with Afghan security officials. Afghanistan. Aug. 12–24, 2013.

[191] This was demonstrated most clearly during a conflict over a border post in May 2013 at a place known as Goshta. Our interviews with Afghan security officials suggested widespread belief that the Karzai government intervened and intentionally escalated the incident.

[192] Authors' interviews with the Pakistani military. Islamabad, Pakistan. Sep. 23–27, 2013. Pakistani officers repeatedly pointed out that their relationship with Afghanistan to the west, though considerably strained, is far more peaceful than their relationship with India to the east.

tember 2013, there has been some reciprocal movement in this regard on the Afghan side, as well as at the national level.

Trade and the safe movement of goods is one issue the two governments have effectively cooperated on over the years. Other things being equal, Pakistan seeks a stable Afghanistan with which to trade and through which to export goods to Central Asia. Afghanistan is a landlocked country that depends heavily on routes through Pakistan to the sea. Pakistan allows Afghan goods to pass through its territory free of duty (since it is also Afghanistan's largest trading partner). The two governments have worked together to improve road links. One of the largest and most successful initiatives of USAID is to construct roads in both countries that connect at the border and to link these roads to national highways on both sides. As these road networks have expanded and trade has grown, there has been greater realization on both sides of the need to secure these routes from attacks by insurgents and criminals.[193]

Another issue on which the two countries share common interests is repatriating and resettling Afghan refugees currently living in Pakistan—most of whom have been living in Afghanistan since the 1980s and 1990s. There are approximately 1.6 million registered Afghan refugees living in Pakistan, the largest population of long-term refugees in the world. Since March 2002, an estimated 3.8 million have returned to Afghanistan with the help of the United Nations. In a July 2013 tripartite meeting with Afghan and UN officials, Pakistan announced that it would extend refugee cards for Afghans living in Pakistan.[194]

Most recently, Pakistan has made tentative steps towards cooperation with the Karzai government over reconciliation with the Taliban. The Pakistani military promised to release Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, a high-level Taliban leader believed to be a deputy to Mullah Mohammed Omar and integral to eventual negotiations. Baradar's release

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[193] Authors' interviews with USAID officials. Islamabad, Pakistan. Sep. 23–27, 2013.

[194] "United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Global Report 2012: Pakistan." *UNHCR.org, Official Website of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees,* at www.unhcr.org/51b1d63f0.html.

was a key demand from the Afghan side during Karzai's September 2013 visit to Islamabad. Karzai's visit is believed to have opened some political space for greater cooperation on other issues as well, but the full effect of his visit remains to be seen.

The strategic level: Areas of persistent conflict

Though the two militaries have never clashed directly, there is considerable tension at the strategic level between the commanders of both countries' armies. At least overtly, the Afghan side has shown the greatest degree of bellicosity. Pakistani generals have been careful to demonstrate restraint in response to what they believe to be potentially escalatory provocations on the part of Afghan military leaders.

Afghan generals have issued orders to mobilize conventional forces along the border, ostensibly against Pakistan. Following a recent clash at a border post in Nangarhar province in May 2013, the ANA sent a number of tanks to the border as a signal to Pakistan that it intended to defend the country's sovereignty. Many of these moves were publicly announced and likely were done for political effect. They suggest that political leaders in Kabul are prepared to use the Afghan military in order to posture against Pakistan, and that the military is comfortable with the idea of posturing against Pakistan as a means of conventional force, as opposed to merely fighting insurgents.

The Karzai government has repeatedly demanded the international community provide Afghanistan conventional weapons such as tanks and fighter jets. The ANA as well has asked for more heavy weapons in order to protect the country against regional powers. Afghan officers consistently point to Pakistan as the primary threat to their country. Though they recognize that this threat is mainly unconventional in nature (i.e., insurgents fighting in Afghanistan from sanctuaries in Pakistan), they insist on heavy weapons in order to deter Pakistan from supporting the insurgency.[195] The Indian military has followed a similar strategy against Pakistan over apparent covert support to insurgents in Kashmir and terrorists elsewhere in India—that is, mobi-

[195] ANSF at all levels raised the issue of sanctuaries and the threat from Pakistan during authors' interviews in Afghanistan. Aug. 12–24, 2013.

lizing for conventional war in response to evidence of Pakistani support for insurgent attacks in India.

Uncertainty about what will happen in the years following 2014 breeds mistrust between the two militaries and forces both sides to plan for worst case scenarios. Many in the Pakistani military leadership believe that the ANSF are likely to fail in the coming years, leading to a disintegration of the force—similar to what happened after the Soviet withdrawal in 1989. They are especially concerned about this likelihood if the U.S. does not provide sufficient resources after 2014. Pakistani military leaders have raised this possibility with their U.S. counterparts and warned them of the fallout it would have inside Pakistan—hundreds of thousands of men next door with military training and weapons but no salary or leadership, not to mention millions of potential refugees flooding over the border and further destabilizing Pakistan.[196] ANSF leaders appear to be aware of this belief on the part of Pakistan's security establishment. The view among some is that Pakistan plans to allow and perhaps even enable the disintegration of the ANSF, despite attempts by Pakistan to reassure them otherwise.

Finally, Afghanistan's security agreements with India are a cause of great concern among Pakistani military leaders. The Afghan army sends officers to India for training and education, but refuses to send any to Pakistan. Afghanistan has also reportedly asked India for military aid, particularly sophisticated weapons in the event of a precipitous loss of U.S. support. The Pakistani military has interpreted this as an indication of India's growing influence inside Afghanistan's security establishment, fueling fears of encirclement in Pakistan and breeding distrust of the ANA.

The strategic level: Areas of cooperation

U.S. forces have encouraged several initiatives to help stabilize the relationship between the two countries at the strategic level. Both sides have responded positively to these initiatives, some of which promise to become part of an enduring bilateral strategic relationship. Paki-

[196] Authors' interviews with Pakistani military officers. Islamabad, Pakistan. Sep. 23–27, 2013.

stani military leaders have also taken steps to reassure their Afghan counterparts and appear to have altered their long standing policy of looking at Afghanistan as a potential source of "strategic depth" in the event of a war with India.[197]

Pakistan has deployed an estimated 158,000 soldiers (including Frontier Corps forces and army) to the tribal areas near the border with Afghanistan. The army has conducted large-scale counterinsurgency operations in the region since 2009, with smaller operations dating back to 2002. Before 2002, the Pakistani army had never deployed forces to the tribal areas. According to the Pakistani military, more than 5,000 soldiers have died in these operations and many more have been wounded. Most of these operations have focused on insurgents fighting the Pakistani state, not those targeting Afghan forces, yet both countries' armies recognize that Pakistani military operations in the tribal areas have weakened the Taliban as a whole and helped to stabilize Afghanistan.

There is now a strategic hotline connecting the Pakistani army headquarters to the ANA general staff, allowing the two army chiefs to speak directly in the event of a crisis (such as escalation along the border). The two sides recently agreed to have weekly phone conversations. This initiative was based on a similar phone line between the Pakistani and Indian army chiefs on each side of the Line of Control in Kashmir. The India–Pakistan hotline is viewed as a success, as a facilitator of regular conversation and rapport between the two army chiefs, and as a tool for preventing unwanted escalation in the event of a crisis. The idea is that if such a hotline can work between two hostile powers such as India and Pakistan, it will work between Afghan and Pakistani forces as well.[198]

The two militaries participate in periodic tripartite meetings involving U.S. forces, depending on the current climate of relations at the national level. Many of these meetings have been in Afghanistan, usually on U.S. bases in Kabul. Yet, Afghan army leaders have also vis-

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[197] Ibid.

[198] Authors' interviews with Pakistani military officials, and U.S. officials at ODR-P. Sep. 23–27, 2013; and with U.S. and Afghan officials responsible for border coordination. Afghanistan. Aug. 12–24, 2013.

ited Pakistan as part of larger delegations. In June, the Afghan Chief of the Army General Staff traveled with the Commander of ISAF to Rawalpindi to meet with the chief of the Pakistan army to discuss cooperation over the border.

The Pakistani military maintains liaisons at key U.S. headquarters in Afghanistan. There are Pakistani military liaisons at ISAF and RC – East at Bagram Air Field. These officers are reportedly of high caliber. Most receive promotions upon their return to Pakistan, indicating the importance of these positions to the Pakistani military. All are on U.S. or NATO bases; the Pakistani military refuses to leave any officers under the protection of Afghan forces. There are no Afghan liaisons in Pakistan, despite offers from the U.S. and Pakistan to host them.

The operational level: Areas of persistent conflict

Afghanistan and Pakistan share one of the most difficult borders in the world. It passes through high mountains at elevations over 14,000 feet where there are few natural boundaries that might enable demarcation or regulation of movement. The operational challenges associated with manning outposts along this border and interdicting illegal activity are extreme. The tribes living on both sides—mostly Pashtun, but some Nuristani and other ethno-linguistic groups as well—have a long history of violent resistance to all outside authority.

The region spanning the border on both sides is affected by insurgent violence, with various local, regional, and international militant groups carrying out attacks on forces in both countries and seeking control over transit routes and populations. In reality, there is a vast belt of militancy that spans both sides of the border and it has become increasingly interconnected over the last decade of counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations in the two countries. In Afghanistan, this problem is often treated as an insurgency being supported by sanctuaries in Pakistan or vice versa (depending on whether one talks to Afghan or Pakistani officers). Since the 1980s, when the Afghan Mujahideen fought the Soviet army from bases in Pakistan, the problem of sanctuaries has been mainly on the Pakistani side. Yet, as U.S. forces have pulled back from northeast Afghanistan, insurgents have taken refuge there and use these areas to target Pakistani military and border forces.

The lack of trust, confidence, and perceived common interests between the two countries' military forces has prevented coordinated action against this problem. Afghan officers do not trust their Pakistani counterparts with advance information about future operations, fearing that Pakistani forces will compromise these operations by providing advance warning to insurgents. There is little substantive intelligence sharing between the two militaries. Pakistani officers have little faith in the capabilities of the ANSF, and are rarely willing to participate in complementary cross-border operations. From Pakistan's perspective, counterinsurgency operations in Afghanistan pushed insurgents into Pakistan, leading to further radicalization and militarization of the tribes on the Pakistani side.[199]

Numerous large- and small-scale operations have been conducted on both sides of the Durand Line by ISAF, Afghan, and Pakistani military forces. Some of these have been coordinated, with forces operating on both sides of the line simultaneously to prevent insurgents from fleeing over the border, but most have not been—often because neither military trusts the other. As a result, there is continual risk of unwanted escalation and fratricidal incidents, an example being the U.S. airstrikes in November 2011 that killed 24 Pakistani soldiers operating near the border.

Afghan and Pakistani forces each man hundreds of posts spread across more than 1,500 miles of border, many of them in remote and isolated locations in the mountains. Simply manning, protecting, and resupplying these positions puts an enormous burden on both security forces. Pakistan's Frontier Corps depends heavily on the Pakistan army for logistics and quick reaction forces, especially in the northernmost sectors of the border, where massed attacks on border posts are relatively common. The Afghan Border Police depend heavily on ANA combat power as well (particularly in the northern parts of the border), but receive much of their logistical support through the MoI.

Interdiction on the border itself is rarely effective on either side, though the presence of border forces does disrupt and slow move-

[199] Authors' interviews with Pakistani military officials. Islamabad, Pakistan. Sep. 23–27, 2013; and with Afghan military officials. Aug. 12–24, 2013.

ment over the border. Most illicit men and material are interdicted far from the border on their way to central locations. Pakistan's Frontier Corps conducts some mobile operations close to the border, yet forces on both sides remain fixed largely in static positions. Most of these posts lie along recognized crossing points, yet there are hundreds of other small roads and donkey trails that bypass these positions. When passing within the line of sight of border posts, especially on the Afghan side, it is common for insurgents and smugglers to put harassing fire on these positions in order to fix border forces in their positions. Intimidation and bribery are also common methods for limiting interdiction.[200]

Agreements between Afghan and Pakistani forces at the operational level have been impeded by different command structures on each side. On the Afghan side, each force has a separate reporting chain all the way back to Kabul, with no unity of command at the operational level capable of enforcing agreements with Pakistani forces or ensuring coordination. The ANA falls under the MoD, and the ABP under the MoI; Afghanistan's intelligence service, the NDS, reports to the Office of the President. On the Pakistani side, all forces (border units, military forces, and intelligence personnel) fall under the operational command of the all-powerful army.

The operational level: Areas of cooperation

Over time, there has been growing realization among the two militaries that they face some common operational challenges along the border. U.S. forces in Afghanistan have worked with the Office of the Defense Representative in Pakistan (ODR-P) to raise awareness of these common challenges among officers on both sides, bring them into regular contact in a variety of different venues, and create sustainable mechanisms for cooperation at the operational level.

U.S. forces operate Joint Border Coordination Centers (JBCCs) in Afghanistan at the two main border crossings—Torkham Gate on the Khyber Pass between Peshawar and Jalalabad and Spin Boldak on the

[200] Authors' interviews with Afghan and U.S. officials in eastern Afghanistan at the strategic and operational levels, and with forces on the border in the southeast. Aug. 12–24, 2013.

Chaman Pass between Quetta and Kandahar. The JBCCs are U.S. bases commanded by a colonel and linked to ISAF and ODR-P. The JBCC at Torkham Gate houses liaisons from Afghan and Pakistani military and border forces representing the commands responsible for the northern sector of the border. Liaisons from commands responsible for the southern sector are stationed at the Spin Boldak JBCC. Because they are U.S. bases, the JBCCs are considered safe and neutral ground by Afghan and Pakistani forces.

The two JBCCs are the only location where Afghan and Pakistani forces interact regularly. Officers stationed there have helped de-escalate numerous incidents along the border and resolve operational issues before they have had a chance to impact the relationship at the national and strategic levels. The fact that the JBCCs are located on the border and far from the capital allows them to deal with issues pragmatically without undue political interference. Information sharing between the two forces about upcoming operations and the movement of forces near the border is usually handled at the JBCCs.[201]

As U.S. and NATO forces have drawn down in Afghanistan, there has been an increase in bilateral meetings between Afghan and Pakistani officers at the one-star level and below. Afghan officers do not require political approval for meetings below the two-star level. Many of these meetings have occurred without U.S. officers present. Some of these meetings reportedly occurred on the Pakistani side of the border, indicating a higher level of trust among the ANSF than in the past. It is widely believed that the interactions facilitated by U.S. forces at the JBCCs were integral to making these bilateral meetings possible.[202]

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[201] Authors' interviews with Pakistani, Afghan, and U.S. forces. Aug. 12–24 and Sep. 23–27, 2013. There is considerable agreement that the JBCCs have been effective and that such mechanisms should continue in some form.

[202] Afghan and Pakistani officials mentioned such meetings, indicating that they were more frequent than in the past and that most were quite effective at building rapport and reducing border firings. Authors' interviews with Afghan (Aug. 12–24, 2013) and Pakistani (Sep. 23–27, 2013) military officials.

Despite tensions at the national level, there are pragmatic professional officers on both sides who see common ground in the operational challenges along the border. This has come about over time as officers on both sides have discussed operational issues face to face and have built rapport. Officers on both sides recognize that they have mutual interests in coming to an agreement over demarcation of the Durand Line, including recognition at the national level. Despite political resistance in Kabul, many Afghan officers treat the boundary as a de facto border in discussions with their Pakistani counterparts and complain about their government's refusal to recognize the Durand Line.

With the help of ISAF and ODR-P, officers at the operational level agreed to a set of standard operating procedures for operations near the border, as well as rules for cross-border communications. The agreement does not require Afghanistan to sign off on the Durand Line, but only to follow certain procedures when conducting operations near the line. The purpose of the accord was to prevent the two forces from accidentally firing on each other during near-border operations or mistaking accidental border crossings or airspace violations for intentional incursions. The agreement arose out of a November 2011 incident in which U.S. aircraft mistook Pakistani forces conducting an operation near an un-demarcated portion of the border for insurgents and fired on them, killing an estimated 24 Pakistani soldiers. A key finding from the investigation into the "Salala incident," as it is known, was that the two sides had failed to share information on the locations of their forces.[203]

In the past year, the two forces have begun to cooperate on countering IEDs. Both forces have lost numerous soldiers and paramilitaries to IED explosions and recognize that IEDs pose a common threat. For example, a three-star Pakistani general was recently killed in an IED blast in northwest Pakistan. In September 2013, Pakistani officers attended an IED conference in Kabul, and Pakistan has taken steps to regulate access to commercially available chemicals, such as ammonium nitrate (present in fertilizer), that are found in IEDs in Afghanistan.

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[203] Authors' interviews with U.S. forces responsible for managing border issues. Afghanistan and Pakistan. Aug. 12–24 and Sep. 23–27, 2013.

The tactical level: Areas of persistent conflict

There are a number of issues at the tactical level that are distinct from those at the higher echelons. It is important to understand these tactical issues, as they have considerable impact on the overall relationship between the two countries. It is not uncommon for incidents at the tactical level to escalate and become strategic or national crises, or for localized events along the border to become major political issues between the two countries.

Pakistani, and especially Afghan, forces take fire regularly from insurgents just across the border. It is common for insurgents to fire on the ABP from unmanned Pakistani border posts, and in many cases from near these positions, forcing Afghan units to fire across the border onto areas very close to Pakistani posts. In those cases in which insurgent fire has come from the vicinity of Pakistani border posts manned by Frontier Corps personnel—causing Afghan forces to fire on manned Pakistani positions—Pakistani forces have returned fire, causing tit-for-tat exchanges that have escalated into major skirmishes resulting in casualties on both sides (more so on the Afghan side given the higher level of training among Pakistani forces). Many of these incidents, which occur in remote locales, are difficult to substantiate; the two sides often provide widely divergent accounts of what happened.

There have been many incidents in which insurgents have massed against Afghan or Pakistani border posts or patrols and then fled across the border. Neither government accepts the right of the other's forces to pursue insurgents over the border, even though the original Durand Line agreement makes provisions for these kinds of "hot pursuit" events. Nonetheless, because the border is not demarcated in many places, it is not uncommon for Afghan or Pakistani forces to pursue insurgents over the border where they run the risk of being fired upon by the other's forces. The recent agreement on standard operating procedures for near-border operations requires each side to inform the other of such movements. In practice, there is not always enough time or adequate communications to ensure that this occurs.

In the past few years, as insurgents targeting Pakistani forces have taken refuge in parts of northeast Afghanistan, Pakistani forces have

fired thousands of artillery rounds across the border, resulting in civilian casualties and damage to homes and livestock. These incidents have become a major political issue in Afghanistan. President Karzai has described them as deliberate and unprovoked violations of Afghanistan's sovereignty and has come under pressure from influential politicians in the northeast to take action on the issue. There have also been protests against the firings in populated areas in the northeast that have been covered by the national media.

Along some sections of the border, especially in the mountainous northern areas, there is considerable uncertainty over where the border actually lies. The original Durand Line agreement was unclear on the exact location of the border in places. By and large, the line is not demarcated; Afghan and Pakistani forces use tactical maps with conflicting delineations of the border. There are numerous Pakistani border posts on what Afghanistan claims is its side of the line. In some places, this is because of terrain advantages—for example, areas where Pakistani forces have occupied the high ground usually happen to be on what Afghans believe is their side of the line. In other locations, Pakistani forces appear to have occupied posts left empty during the Taliban era and during Afghanistan's long civil war. Afghan officers also claim that Pakistan has occupied a number of outposts vacated by U.S. forces.[204]

There has been little movement in regard to de-conflicting tactical maps, coming to an agreement over the locations of individual border posts, or demarcating the line. As a result, there are constant firings between border posts and other tactical incidents that cause instability in the overall relationship between the two countries. For example, in May 2013, Pakistani forces began refurbishing a border post on what Afghanistan believed to be its side of the line, at a place known as Goshta in Nangarhar province. Afghan border police attempted to destroy the structure, causing Pakistani forces to retaliate, resulting in casualties on the Afghan side. The ABP also attempted to

[204] ANSF at the tactical and operational levels repeatedly raised this issue. The ANA and border police on the ground were concerned more about demarcating the line and reducing conflict with Pakistani forces than challenging the legitimacy of the border. Authors' interviews with Afghan security officials. Aug. 12–24, 2013.

take five Pakistani posts elsewhere along the border they believed to be inside Afghan territory. President Karzai intervened personally, turning the Goshta incident into a national issue, and ordered the ANA to send forces to the border. The issue has since been resolved with the help of U.S. forces.

The tactical level: Areas of cooperation

Despite frequent skirmishes on the border and disagreements at the tactical level over the location of the line, most sectors of the border are stable. Border post commanders do not intentionally provoke one another, as is often the case along the India–Pakistan border. There appears to be a mutual understanding among tactical units on both sides that there is little to be gained from escalation. To this end, there have been several successful initiatives aimed at creating sustainable mechanisms for cross-border cooperation at the tactical level.

There is now a phone line connecting the Afghan border post at Schkin in Paktika province in southeast Afghanistan with the Pakistani position at Angor Adda—where cross-border firings have been a frequent occurrence. According to the Pakistani Army, the phone line has led to a considerable reduction in such incidents. As a result, both sides have agreed to construct phone lines between six more positions and are in discussions about an additional three. Given that there are hundreds of posts along the border, there is clearly a long way to go, yet the precedent has been set.

In the past year, there have been reports of bilateral meetings between border post commanders—sometimes on the Afghan side, other times on the Pakistani side. U.S. forces are not present at these meetings and have little information about them. Forces on both sides, however, have reported increased rapport between border post commanders in some areas and modest improvement in cooperation on tactical issues.

Enduring issues in the relationship

The military-to-military relationship between Afghanistan and Pakistan, unstable even in the best of times, is entering a period of considerable uncertainty and transition as the U.S. and NATO pull back from Afghanistan and re-evaluate their policies towards the region.

Some of the dynamics of the current relationship that we discussed previously are likely to endure, while others are likely to change. This section identifies areas where conflict is likely to remain and perhaps worsen, and areas where there may be opportunities to maintain or increase cooperation in the future.

Areas of enduring conflict

It is unlikely that Afghanistan will set aside its irredentist claims to Pakistani territory and recognize the Durand Line, at least not in the foreseeable future. Afghan leaders are likely to raise "the Pashtunistan issue" from time to time for domestic political reasons, causing tensions with Islamabad. The issue will continue to prevent full normalization of relations between the two countries. Lack of resolution of the issue at the national level will inhibit proper demarcation of the line, as well as efforts to resolve the issue of Pakistani posts on what the Afghans believe to be their side of the border. Incidents such as the one over the gate at Goshta are likely to recur periodically.

Anti-Pakistan sentiment among sections of the Afghan population is likely to remain a recurring problem. Various Afghan leaders will seek to exploit these sentiments in an effort to rally the population against outside powers and to paint the Taliban insurgency as a tool of external aggression rather than as an internal problem. Afghan leaders may intentionally escalate incidents along the border and make threatening military maneuvers for political effect. As a result, there will be continual risk of border incidents becoming national issues that might otherwise be resolved at the tactical level. If Islamabad genuinely assists with Taliban reconciliation, Pakistan's reputation among Afghans could improve, but popular distrust of Pakistan's military and intelligence establishment, based on many years of covert activities inside Afghanistan, will remain for quite some time.

The Pakistani military will hedge and prepare for the worst until the ANSF have been tested following the drawdown of coalition forces, causing Afghan leaders to distrust Pakistan's ultimate intentions. Pakistan's military leaders are concerned that the ANSF may not survive much past 2014, leaving them with hundreds of thousands of trained, armed, and unpaid soldiers and millions of Afghan refugees. There

appears to be genuine interest among Pakistani military leaders in seeing the ANSF succeed and ensure long-term stability in Afghanistan, but many do not believe this will happen. If the ANSF falter, it is possible that Pakistan, concerned about its own stability and survival, could revert back to earlier policies aimed at assisting pro-Pakistan elements of the insurgency and pushing as much of it as possible into Afghanistan, further destabilizing the country and harming relations between the two nations. If Coalition Support Funds and other U.S. support to Pakistan were cut—leaving the military without sufficient resources to conduct operations in the tribal areas—such an outcome would become all the more likely.[205]

The issue of insurgent sanctuaries will remain a major source of tension on both sides, particularly for the Afghans. The Pakistani military may conduct additional operations in the tribal areas, but is not likely to take action against the Haqqani network in North Waziristan. No matter how much relations improve between the two countries, a series of terrorist attacks in Kabul traced to the group could quickly spoil the relationship. For the Pakistani military, the problem of Pakistani militants taking refuge inside Afghanistan is likely to become worse in the coming years as U.S. and NATO forces withdraw. With few forces in southeast Afghanistan, it will be then become even less likely that Pakistan would act against the Haqqani network, for fear of making an enemy of a group that could easily flee into Afghanistan and wage war against the Pakistani state. The issue of sanctuaries could diminish if the Taliban reconcile, but the problem is likely to remain significant, with various local factions continuing to fight both governments from bases on the opposite side of the border.

Afghanistan is likely to seek closer relations with India in the coming years, heightening fears of encirclement among Pakistani military leaders. As U.S. and NATO support declines, leaders in Kabul will look to New Delhi for military equipment, financial aid, and training and education for their officers. India may seek to expand intelligence activities inside Afghanistan if the Taliban grow in power. Indian officials are concerned that Afghanistan could once again become a safe haven for terrorists targeting India if the Taliban take over

[205] Coalition Support Funds are used to reimburse Pakistan for operations conducted against the Taliban and al Qaeda.

parts of the country. Pakistan's intelligence services are likely to respond with extreme measures—including terrorist attacks on Indian embassies and consulates—against any reported Indian intelligence activities in the border areas, no matter their aim or how small.

Opportunities for future cooperation

Afghanistan and Pakistan are unlikely to ever become close allies; there will always be tensions in the relationship. The two countries, however, are bound together by a porous border and a large Pashtun population that straddles both sides of it. Both countries share a common interest in stabilizing the Pashtun Belt and ensuring the success of each other's border forces. Violence and instability in Afghanistan have a major effect on Pakistan and vice versa—a fact that is widely recognized on both sides.

Whatever happens politically and militarily, cross-border trade will continue. Forces on both sides of the border will have an enduring interest in securing this trade and expanding road networks on both sides, including through the most violence-afflicted areas. Increasing economic interdependence is likely to improve ties between the two nations over time, even if there are tensions in other aspects of the relationship. Road networks can be expanded on a bilateral basis between the two governments with assistance from USAID and other international donors.

It will be necessary for the two governments to cooperate over the repatriation and resettlement of Afghan refugees in Pakistan. If violence increases in Afghanistan in the near term, there could be another flood of refugees into Pakistan, which would put a heavy burden on the Pakistani government. Agencies such as the UN will continue to play a vital role in providing assistance to Afghan refugees in Pakistan and in helping the two governments come to mutual agreements on the refugee issue.

There is potential in the future for the two forces to cooperate in a variety of ways against insurgents operating on either side of the border. If Pakistan pulls back from counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations in the tribal areas, the result will be greater instability in Afghanistan. The same is true on the other side of the border. It will be necessary going forward to continue Coalition Sup-

port Funds and other support to the Pakistani military, so that it has the resources required to continue these operations. So far, complementary operations have proven elusive, yet awareness has grown over time that the Afghan and Pakistani Taliban are interconnected and pose a common threat to both forces.

Despite tensions at the national level, there is likely to be continued interest in maintaining and further expanding mechanisms for cooperation between forces on both sides of the border. It may be possible to expand many of these mechanisms (described in detail in previous sections) and to further institutionalize them. Cross-border communications in particular, such as phone lines between border posts, could be expanded across the board. Continued U.S. funding could be used to incentivize expansion of these mechanisms. Over time, these mechanisms are likely to further stabilize the situation at the tactical and operational levels, allowing for agreements over demarcation of the border in various sectors and perhaps eventually a permanent agreement over the Durand Line that puts Pakistan's concerns to rest.

There is likely to be continued demand for a border coordination element in Kabul, as long as U.S. forces remain to provide safe and neutral ground for Pakistani military liaisons. It may not be possible to maintain the JBCCs on the border itself, due to U.S. force protection and medical evacuation requirements.[206] If these centers are closed, it is likely that Pakistan will remove its liaisons from these positions, making the coordination element at ISAF in Kabul all the more important. It may be advisable to maintain a small coordination element at ODR-P as well, one capable of interfacing directly with the Pakistani military leadership over larger strategic issues or in the event of a major crisis over the border.

There is likely to be continued demand among officers at the tactical and operational levels for bilateral meetings at border posts and operational headquarters. It will be important to maintain the tempo of

[206] After 2014, when there will be fewer U.S. and NATO bases, the JBCCs may be too far away for wounded U.S. personnel to be evacuated within the required "golden hour"—the period of most effective medical treatment, immediately following a casualty event.

these meetings, regardless of the ups and downs in the relationship at the national level, and to clearly separate the operational and tactical issues discussed at these meetings from potentially divisive political disagreements. U.S. personnel may play a constructive role in facilitating interactions that might not otherwise occur, through coordination elements and trilateral meetings—with the ultimate aim of transitioning them to regular bilateral interactions in which U.S. presence is not required.

There are likely to be many escalatory incidents between forces on both sides that will require U.S. involvement to help reduce tensions. Over time, as mechanisms for military to military communication and cooperation improve, the requirement for U.S. involvement may diminish. Until the standard operating procedure for near-border operations becomes fully institutionalized on both sides, it will be necessary for U.S. personnel to work with officers on both sides to ensure they are aware of the rules and follow them carefully.

Finally, there is considerable potential for cooperation on countering IEDs, an area where the two forces have only begun to work together. It is highly likely that the IED threat against both forces will increase in the coming years as the Taliban test the ANSF and attempt to put pressure on the Pakistani military in the tribal areas. The drawdown of U.S. and NATO forces will enable IED networks to move more freely over the border. There is potential for both sides to treat the IED threat holistically as a problem spanning the border, and to cooperate on restricting material used for trigger devices and precursor chemicals, and perhaps to share specific intelligence on IED networks and facilitators. U.S. forces could play a key role in this regard by offering consistent and standardized counter-IED equipment and training to both forces, working with both sides to restrict IED-making material, and to facilitate information sharing.

Conclusion

In our discussions on both sides of the border, we identified many areas of enduring conflict between the Afghan and Pakistani militaries, such as recognition and demarcation of the border, insurgent sanctuaries, and Afghanistan's relationship with India. Some of these will worsen in the coming years as U.S. and NATO forces pull back from Afghanistan. However, there are also many areas of potential cooper-

ation that have a proven track record of success over the past several years, and that have counteracted many of the tensions in the relationship.

There appears to be considerable demand among officers on both sides to continue, and in some areas expand, cooperative initiatives. The primary concern on both sides is continued U.S. and NATO commitment to the region—whether international personnel will remain in Afghanistan and Pakistan to help facilitate relations, and whether there will be enough funding from the international donor community (especially the U.S.) to maintain mechanisms for cross-border cooperation.

If the U.S. and NATO continue their commitment to the region, we assess it will help mitigate some, though certainly not all, of the areas of enduring conflict between the two countries, and will bolster the opportunities for cooperation. If the U.S. and NATO significantly decrease their commitment to Afghanistan and Pakistan, we assess many areas of enduring conflict are likely to be exacerbated, and areas of potential cooperation are unlikely to reach their full potential of helping to stabilize the region.

In the next section, we discuss the results of our assessment of likely ANSF responses to various political scenarios.

Testing our assumptions: Assessment of likely ANSF responses to political scenarios

We were asked to assess difficulties the ANSF may face—and likely responses and directions they could go—under several potential political situations or scenarios. We begin with a summary of our findings, followed by the details of our assessment.

Summary

We created three scenarios to identify possible ANSF reactions to events that might impact political stability in Afghanistan, from which we draw some limited conclusions. These scenarios are:

- Reconciliation happens (either as a grand bargain or via a splintering of the Taliban)
- A "bad" 2014 Afghan Presidential election (resulting in a non-consensus candidate or unstable transfer of power)
- The loss of international community support (in the form of advisors or financial assistance)

These scenarios were chosen to test aspects of four of our overarching assumptions.

While it is impossible to remove all nature of speculation from future assessments of this type, we structured our thinking about these scenarios via a combination of interviews and literature study to derive most likely responses for the ANSF, looking at both leadership and rank-and-file reactions. We also considered what events might have to occur to cause a negative reaction (e.g., fragmentation, desertion, military coup) by the ANSF.

For the first scenario (reconciliation happens), we examined a wide body of literature and interviewed subject matter experts to identify likely ANSF responses to Taliban reconciliation. Having reviewed these sources:

We conclude that so long as the Afghan president adequately consults, listens to, and addresses the concerns of ANSF leaders as part of the reconciliation process, and during the implementation of a settlement, the ANSF are likely to accept the settlement's terms.

Given Afghan culture and the current Afghan president's precedent for calling *Loya Jirgas* prior to making significant national decisions, it seems likely there would be considerable behind-the-scenes consensus building before the president agreed to any terms or conditions of a settlement. That said, we also conclude that there is a low probability of Taliban reconciliation by 2018, either in whole or in part.

For the second scenario (a "bad" election):

We conclude that as long as the winning presidential ticket maintains the current ethnic balance of power, the ANSF will largely accept the results of the election.

That said, it is possible that in a Pashtun versus Pashtun runoff some rank-and-file ANSF members loyal to the losing ticket could desert or defect to the insurgency. If a non-Pashtun were to win the election, it could lead to more widespread desertion or defection on the part of rank-and-file ANSF (especially within the police), along with increased violence in the south and the east of the country and protests within the major cities. We assess that these possibilities are of low-to-moderate likelihood.

For the third scenario (loss of international community support):

We conclude that if the United States and NATO do not maintain a training and advisory mission in Afghanistan, the absence of advisors in 2015 is likely to result in a downward spiral of ANSF capabilities—along with security in Afghanistan—unless the ANSF can find other patrons to fill the resulting "enabler vacuum."

We assess that the speed of this downward spiral would likely be most strongly dependent on the level of continued international community financial aid. If the U.S. and NATO discontinue training and advising the ANSF, we assess that many ANSF leaders would likely soldier on, since they are well-invested in the future of Afghanistan and its security forces. At the rank-and-file level of the ANSF, however, the loss of U.S. and NATO enablers could have a more dramatic effect—to include increased desertion and defection rates and the possibility of unit fragmentation or dissolution. We find this excursion to be of moderate likelihood, with moderate-to-high likelihood of these negative ANSF responses as a result.

With respect to the loss of international community financial support, this was the one point on which every one of our interviewees agreed: The loss of funding, or even a too-rapid decline in funding, to the ANSF would carry with it a high likelihood of increased desertion rates, fragmentation or splintering of ANSF units, or defection of units to the insurgency.

We conclude that the absence of international community funds for the ANSF and Afghanistan's government is likely to result in another civil war in Afghanistan.

In the absence of such funding, the centripetal forces of Afghanistan's various power centers are likely to pull the country apart once again.

We summarize the results of our assessment in Table 39.

Table 39. Summary of likely ANSF responses to several political scenarios

Scenario	Excursion	Likely ANSF Response	Likelihood of Excursion Coming to Pass by 2018	Likelihood of Negative ANSF Response
Reconciliation Happens	Full reconciliation (a "grand bargain")	Acceptance—as long as the president of Afghanistan adequately considers views and concerns of senior ANSF leaders and terms of agreement do not cross ANSF "redlines"	Low	Low
	Partial reconciliation (splinter faction)	Acceptance—as long as the above conditions were met and the ANSF were not pressured to try and stop Taliban infighting	Low	Low
"Bad" Election	Non-consensus victor	Possible fragmentation of ANSF leadership and units. If non-Pashtun wins, possible desertion or defection by rank-and-file ANSF (especially police) and increased violence in the east and south	Low to moderate	Moderate
	"Bad" transfer of power (e.g., sweeping changes in ANSF leadership)	Possible fragmentation of ANSF leadership and units. If non-Pashtun wins, possible desertion or defection by rank-and-file ANSF (especially police) and increased violence in the east and south	Low to moderate	Low to moderate

Table 39. Summary of likely ANSF responses to several political scenarios

Scenario	Excursion	Likely ANSF Response	Likelihood of Excursion Coming to Pass by 2018	Likelihood of Negative ANSF Response
Loss of International Community Support	No training and advisory mission	Pleas to other countries for resources to fill the "enabler vacuum." Increased desertion and defection rates	Moderate	Moderate to high
	Loss of international financial aid	Sharp increases in rank-and-file desertion and defection. Fragmentation of ANA units. Alliances with former Mujahideen leaders and other powerbrokers. Pleas to other countries for support	Low to moderate	High

Methodology

Our methodology for this assessment consisted of four steps:

1. We used our set of overarching assumptions to craft a set of political scenarios in which some of those assumptions could be tested. In particular, we chose to individually test assumptions pertaining to Taliban reconciliation, a peaceful and acceptable transfer of political power in 2014, and the continuance of U.S, NATO, and international community support.

2. We conducted background literature research to understand which aspects of our scenarios have been studied and analyzed previously and what conclusions were drawn by others.

3. We interviewed subject matter experts at a wide variety of organizations—including a significant number of Afghans—to gather their views on how the ANSF might respond under these scenarios.

4. We consolidated these views to derive what we assess to be most likely responses for the ANSF to the scenarios, looking at both leadership and rank-and-file reactions. We also considered what events might have to occur to cause a negative reaction (e.g., fragmentation, desertion, military coup) on the part of these aspects of the ANSF.

Caveats

Attempting to predict the future is always difficult, though there are methodologies (e.g., alternative futures methods) that exist to assist in approaching this challenge in a systematic way. However, such methodologies were beyond the scope of this task. While we have attempted to keep our thinking structured using the above methodology, we acknowledge the necessarily speculative nature of the discussion that follows. Also, we have not developed these scenarios to address all possible levels of analysis. For example, in thinking about likely ANSF reactions to the 2014 Afghan presidential election, it is clear that such reactions would vary by the specific individual elected. However, analysis to that level of detail was unfeasible within the confines of this assessment. As such, we suggest this section be considered a departure point for further discussion and study, rather than a comprehensive political analysis.

Assessment

Political scenarios

We used four of our overarching assumptions (those pertaining to Taliban reconciliation; a peaceful transfer of political power in 2014; and continued U.S., NATO, and international community support in the form of advisors and financial assistance) to generate three political scenarios for examination. Note that each scenario tests one, and only one, of these assumptions.

- **Reconciliation happens**: In this scenario, a negotiated settlement is reached between the Taliban, the government of Afghanistan, the U.S., and Pakistan. We consider two possibilities: that the Taliban reconciles as a movement—or in other words, that there is a "grand bargain" struck between stakeholders that leads to most, if not all, Taliban leaders reconciling with the Afghan government; and that a faction of Taliban leaders splinter off from the main group and reconcile with the government, leaving the others to continue the insurgency.
- **"Bad" election/transfer of power**: In this scenario, the presidential election of 2014 or the subsequent transition of political power goes badly. We consider two possibilities: that the

winner of the election is a non-consensus candidate, and that the transfer of power does not go smoothly.[207]

- **Loss of international community support**: In this scenario, the international community significantly or completely reduces its support to the Afghan government. We consider two possibilities: that the U.S. and NATO discontinue their training and advising mission to the ANSF; and that the international community significantly curtails, or even ceases, its financial assistance to the government of Afghanistan (e.g., as a result of the latter failing to perform satisfactorily against the Tokyo Conference benchmarks).

We will explore each of these scenarios in more detail below.

Reconciliation happens

A grand bargain

With the opening of a Taliban office in Doha on 20 June this year, talk of reconciliation as a means of ending the war in Afghanistan once again came to the fore, only to diminish when the office was closed shortly thereafter. This repeated an increasingly familiar pattern—in which reconciliation talks briefly become more tangible, only to fade once again to the ethereal—highlighting how unclear the pathway to reconciliation really is.[208] That said, our task here is to analyze likely ANSF reactions to a reconciliation scenario, so the specifics

[207] We considered including the possibility that the election gets significantly postponed or cancelled, but our discussions with subject matter experts indicated that this was unlikely to happen, given the importance the international community has placed on the election and the articulation of that importance to the government of Afghanistan. In addition, we considered the possibility that the election would be fraudulent—but the 2009 Afghan presidential election was widely considered to suffer from significant irregularities, yet the outcome was generally endorsed by the international community and by Afghans. If the election was so fraudulent as to exceed the international community's "redlines," it likely would result in cessation or sharp curtailment of financial support to Afghanistan, which is addressed in our third scenario.

[208] "Q&A: Afghan Taliban Open Doha Office." *BBC News*, Jun. 20, 2013, accessed Sep. 2013, at http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-22957827.

of that pathway are less important for our purposes than who the parties to the reconciliation deal are and what conditions they might agree to as part of a settlement. We will therefore focus our discussion on these latter aspects.[209]

To be credible, a formal reconciliation deal would have to include (at a minimum) the government of Afghanistan, the Taliban, the U.S., and Pakistan.[210] Some have said that India should also be a signatory (which implies its participation in the negotiations), while others have suggested Iran, China, and the Central Asian states as well.[211] For this assessment, we examine what we consider to be the most likely scenario, in which the signatories are the principal four mentioned above.

Through our interviews and literature search, we identified likely demands that each party would bring to the negotiating table. We used these sources to categorize demands as essential versus desired. While there was not perfect agreement among our sources regarding this categorization, we generally took the majority view in compiling the following:[212]

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[209] This is not to suggest that the pathway is unimportant; indeed, it is critical. However, it is also so uncertain as to necessitate its being outside the scope of what we can address in this task. For a good overview of the difficulties associated with the pathway to reconciliation, see: *Talking About Talks: Toward a Political Settlement in Afghanistan.* International Crisis Group, Asia Report No. 221. Mar. 26, 2012.

[210] We refer to the government of Afghanistan in this scenario as including the three branches of government (and to include political opposition members, women, and minorities) and not simply as the Karzai executive branch.

[211] See, for example: Olsson. "Afghanistan After 2014." 65.

[212] In this list we do not include items that might be addressed as part of confidence-building measures—for example, the release of Taliban prisoners or return of U.S. and NATO prisoners of war, or the de-listing of Taliban members from UN sanctions. Rather, we focus on items that are more strategic and enduring. Ibid., 65–70; Stephen Biddle. "Ending the War in Afghanistan: How to Avoid Failure on the Installment Plan." *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 2013, accessed Sep. 2013, at http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/139644/stephen-biddle/ending-

Afghanistan demands:

- Cessation of insurgent violence, attacks against government personnel and facilities, and attacks against civilians (essential)
- Dismantling of Taliban shadow governance structures and cessation of shadow (*sharia*) courts (essential)
- Taliban acceptance of the "Islamic Republic of Afghanistan" (essential)
- Taliban acceptance of the current Afghan constitution and its protections for minorities and women (desired)

Taliban demands:

- Complete departure of all foreign forces from Afghanistan (essential)

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the-war-in-afghanistan; Michael Semple. "Talking to the Taliban." *Foreign Policy*, Jan. 10, 2013, accessed Sep. 2013, at http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2013/01/10/talking_to_the_taliban; Michael Semple, Theo Farrell, Anatol Lieven, and Rudra Chaudhuri. "Taliban Perspectives on Reconciliation." Royal United Services Institute, Briefing Paper, Sep. 2012, accessed Sep. 2013, at http://www.rusi.org/downloads/assets/Taliban_Perspectives_on_Reconciliation.pdf; "Enduring Strategic Partnership Agreement Between the United States of America and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan." May 2, 2012, accessed Sep. 2013, at http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/2012.06.01u.s-afghanistanspasignedtext.pdf; Caroline Wadhams, Colin Cookman, and Brian Katulis. "Afghanistan Transition: Elevating the Diplomatic Components of the Transition Strategy at the Chicago NATO Summit and Beyond." Center for American Progress, White Paper, May 2012; "Talking About Talks." 24; Secretary Hillary Clinton. "Remarks at the Launch of the Asia Society's Series of Richard C. Holbrooke Memorial Addresses." Feb. 18, 2011, accessed Sep. 2013, available at www.state.gov; Azeem Ibrahim. "Afghanistan 2012: The Beginning of the End Game." Institute for Social Policy and Understanding, Policy Brief #52, Jan. 2012. Authors' interviews with personnel at ISAF, IJC, DoS, Office of the NATO Senior Civilian Representative, and U.S. CENTCOM, Aug. 12–24, 2013 and Aug. 29, 2013; and personal communication with Dr. Theo Farrell, King's College of London, Aug. 9, 2013.

- Revision of Afghanistan's Constitution to more strongly reflect the principles of Islamic justice (essential)
- Restoration of the "Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan" (desired)
- Control of several government ministries (most likely the Ministries of Justice and Education, possibly also the Ministry of Public Health) and/or provincial- and district-level leadership positions in the south and east (desired)
- Integration of low- and mid-level fighters into the ANSF (desired)

U.S. demands:

- Taliban sever any association with al Qaeda and renounce international terrorism (essential)
- Means of verifying that al Qaeda does not return to Afghanistan (essential)
- Taliban accept Afghanistan's current Constitution and its protections for minorities and women (desired)

Pakistan demands:

- The government of Afghanistan will act to deny safe haven for insurgent groups oriented against Pakistan (essential)
- The government of Afghanistan will not allow other countries to use Afghanistan as a staging ground for attacks into Pakistan (essential)

Clearly there are conflicts across these demands that would have to be worked out via negotiation to reach an agreement. While difficult to predict what concessions the various stakeholders would be willing to make, we presume a deal would have to include the essential items for each actor as described above. Taking these as baseline conditions, we then used the desired conditions for each actor as "trade space" to achieve a balanced agreement. In doing so, we arrived at the following minimum conditions for an agreement:

- The Taliban sever ties with al Qaeda and renounce the latter's use of Afghanistan as a base for international terrorism

- The Taliban cease attacks against the Afghan government and dismantle their shadow government structures (to include shadow courts)
- The Afghan Constitution is modified to more strongly reflect the principles of Islamic justice (i.e., *sharia*), and more evenly distribute power across the branches of government and between national and local levels, but retains protections for the rights of women and minorities; and the country retains the name "Islamic Republic of Afghanistan"
- The Taliban are given several non-security ministerial (cabinet) positions and a number of provincial- and district-level leadership positions in the south and east
- A number of Taliban fighters are to be integrated into the ANA
- U.S. and NATO combat forces withdraw from the country, but a Joint Monitoring Commission remains (for a minimum of five years) to verify that the tenets of the deal are upheld by all parties

Given reconciliation under these conditions, what is the likely reaction on the part of the ANA and ANP?

For both forces (and for most Afghans), there likely would be relief at the signing of a grand bargain, since it would hold the promise of significantly reducing the amount of fighting and violence in the country. There would also likely be trepidation as to whether the deal would hold, and skepticism as to the Taliban's intentions. In addition, there may also be disappointment at the withdrawal of U.S. and NATO advisors, and fear that such an agreement would lead to expectations of a "peace dividend," resulting in reduced international financial assistance to the ANSF, with likely end-strength reductions as well.

That said, if the above conditions (or something approaching them) constituted the reconciliation agreement, our interviews and research suggest that the ANA and ANP would generally accept them. Discontent with, and possible negative reactions to, a "grand bargain"-type agreement would likely stem from several possibilities:

First, failure of the Afghan president to adequately build a platform of consensus within the leadership of the ANA and ANP prior to agreeing to a reconciliation deal would be problematic. The leadership of the ANA, and to a lesser extent the ANP, is largely Tajik and contains many former members of the Northern Alliance. Ensuring these leaders were adequately engaged and supportive of the conditions of a peace deal would be essential to them accepting it.

If the Afghan president were to make concessions (as part of the agreement) that cross certain "redlines" of ANA or ANP leaders, the latter likely would react negatively. Specific redlines might include giving too many ANSF or other leadership posts to Taliban members (e.g., heads of ministries, or provincial and district governorships); integration of Taliban fighters into the ANSF wholesale via the creation of autonomous Taliban units (as opposed to distributing them among existing units); or other items that significantly infringe upon the patronage networks or personal interests of current ANSF leaders.[213]

Second, if the international community too rapidly reduced its financial assistance to the ANSF in the wake of a settlement, it likely would translate into a too-rapid drawdown of ANSF end-strength. This would cause the loss of a significant number of jobs for young Afghan men and a loss of patronage at more senior levels. Similarly, even if end-strength were kept constant, but significant numbers of current ANA soldiers (and possibly police) were displaced to enable integration of Taliban fighters, it could lead to significant discontent within the ANSF.

Whether or not the level of discontent would rise to cause non-support of the agreement by ANSF leadership, fragmentation of the ANSF, or action against the Afghan government (e.g., deposing the president or a military coup), would strongly depend on how far out in front of ANSF leadership the president got in negotiating—and agreeing to terms of—a peace settlement.[214]

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[213] Author interviews with ISAF, IJC, and CENTCOM personnel. Aug. 12–24, and Aug. 29, 2013.

[214] Ibid.

In terms of the likelihood of these negative outcomes, given the Afghan culture of consensus and President Karzai's precedent for convening *Loya Jirgas* prior to moving forward with high-level political decisions,[215] it seems unlikely that he (or his successor) would act unilaterally or agree to terms that were so far removed from what ANSF leaders would accept as to cause a negative reaction. More likely is that unacceptable terms would be informally rejected, debated, and new terms would be identified in a repeated process of internal negotiation (within Afghan political circles) until acceptable terms were identified and agreed upon by the most critical stakeholders. Of course, it is very difficult to predict how long that process could take, or whether it would even reach the required degree of consensus.

A fragmented agreement

In the absence of a grand bargain, there remains the possibility that a faction of Taliban (or other insurgent group) leaders could be induced to rejoin the Afghan government. While there is no precedent of Taliban factions reconciling in this way, individual Taliban members have left the group and rejoined the government in the past.[216]

If this were to happen, our research suggests two possibilities. The first is that the splinter group is relatively small or not significantly powerful, with a resultant slight to moderate net impact on the insurgency's overall strength. In this case, splinter reconciliation might lead to the cessation of fighting by some fighters who are loyal to the leaders of the splinter group; those that remained would be the hardliners with every intention of continuing to fight.[217] A second possibility envisions a more significant splintering in which a group of senior

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[215] As this report was being finalized, President Karzai convened a *Loya Jirga* to discuss a Bilateral Security Agreement with the U.S. He did the same in November 2011, to approve a Strategic Partnership Agreement with the U.S. See "*Loya Jirga* Approves Afghan-U.S. Partnership." *Tolo News*, Nov. 19, 2011, accessed Sep. 25, 2012, at http://tolonews.com/en/afghanistan/4456-loya-jirga-backs-afghan-us-partnership.

[216] "Talking about Talks." 23.

[217] Ibid: 4; also, author interviews with ISAF, IJC, and CENTCOM intelligence personnel. Aug. 12–24, 2013 and Aug. 29, 2013.

Taliban members decide to reconcile and take fighters from whole areas of southern or eastern Afghanistan with them. In this case, attacks against government forces in these areas might decrease, but overall security could still decline as a result of an internal struggle for control within the Taliban.[218]

The impact on the ANSF of the first possibility is likely to be minimal. Given that a relatively small or insignificant splinter faction would have less bargaining power than the whole of Taliban leadership, it seems unlikely that such a scenario would result in concessions exceeding what ANSF leaders would accept. In addition, while such reconciliation might require the integration of some number of fighters into the ranks of the ANSF, the relatively small size of such a contingent should admit that possibility without significant issue.

In the second possibility, the more significant nature of the reconciliation deal could invoke a negative response by the ANSF, if any of the "redlines" identified above for a full reconciliation were crossed. In addition, if security in Pashtun areas deteriorated too much as a result of Taliban infighting, the ANSF (particularly the ANA) could be directed by the Afghan president to intervene, which could put them in the crossfire of a limited Pashtun civil conflict. Given that much of the ANA's leadership is non-Pashtun, and that most of its rank-and-file come from areas other than those likely to be involved in such a conflict, there could be significant reluctance on the part of the ANA to follow such direction—especially if the violence escalated significantly. The president of Afghanistan would have to walk a fine line between ordering the ANSF to get involved and the political blowback that might accompany such an order. If he proved unable to successfully walk that line, a negative response from the ANSF could result—ranging from ignoring his order to intervene (thereby undermining his power and civilian control of the ANSF) up to and possibility including actions to depose him. The actual course of events would be strongly dependent on how vociferously the Afghan president tried to press the ANSF to act against their will.

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[218] Personal communication with Dr. Theo Farrell, King's College of London. Aug. 9, 2013.

In sum, for the "Reconciliation Happens" scenario, we conclude that as long as the Afghan president adequately consults, listens to, and addresses the concerns of ANA and ANP leaders as part of a reconciliation process and during the implementation of its terms, there is a low likelihood of a negative reaction on the part of the ANSF. Given Afghan culture and the current Afghan president's precedent for calling *Loya Jirgas* prior to making significant national decisions, it seems likely that there would be considerable behind-the-scenes consensus building before the president agreed to any terms or conditions of a settlement. Perhaps more dangerous is the period immediately following the announcement of such an agreement, during which its implementation will result in the shifting of power and influence among various political centers. If the Afghan president is not able to successfully manage this delicate transition phase, it could lead to negative responses on the part of the ANSF.

"Bad" election/transfer of power

Non-consensus candidate

The next Afghan presidential election is currently scheduled for April 2014. Per Afghanistan's Constitution, President Karzai is prohibited from seeking a third term, and to date he has assured the international community that he intends to step down when his second term expires. If he holds to that promise, the election would mark the first democratic transfer of power in Afghanistan's history and would create additional momentum toward long-term political stability in the country. As such, the international community has placed a high degree of emphasis on the election as a bellwether for the future of Afghanistan.

The Afghan electoral process requires a candidate's ticket (the presidential candidate, plus candidates for the first and second vice presidencies) to obtain a majority of the popular vote in order to be elected. If no candidate does so in the first round of polling, the top two vote-getting candidates run against each other in a second, runoff round. Such was the case in Afghanistan's 2009 election, in which President Karzai was unable to secure a first-round majority—though in that election, his opponent in the second round, Abdullah Abdullah, decided to "not participate" in the runoff election due to a number of grievances with the Karzai administration and Afghanistan's

electoral process. As a result, Afghanistan's Independent Election Commission subsequently declared Karzai the winner.[219]

This electoral system is designed to ensure the elected President is a consensus candidate and can enter office with a political mandate based on majority popular support. That said, looking ahead to the next election, there are several ways in which a candidate could win without necessarily being a consensus candidate.[220]

First, given the precedent of a runoff and the likely large number of candidates in the 2014 election, it is entirely possible that the first round of elections could fail to produce a majority victor. The second round would then amount to one of three possibilities: two Pashtun candidates running against each other (i.e., a split Pashtun vote), a Pashtun and a non-Pashtun, or two non-Pashtuns. All three cases have the possibility of leading to disenfranchisement of some segment of the Afghan population.[221]

Second, the possibility of widespread insecurity on the day of the elections cannot be ruled out. In 2009, Election Day proved to be the most violent day in the history of the war to that point. If this happens again, it could lead to a large swath of Pashtuns across the south and east of the country being unable to exercise their voting rights, with a non-Pashtun winning as a result.

How would the ANA and ANP respond to these situations?

In the first instance, the current balance of political power within the government of Afghanistan's executive branch is a Pashtun president

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[219] "The 2009 Presidential and Provincial Council Elections in Afghanistan." National Democratic Institute. 2010, accessed Sep. 25, 2013, at www.ndi.org/files/Elections_in_Afghanistan_2009.

[220] It is worth noting that these scenarios could occur even in the event of a completely non-fraudulent and technically perfect election.

[221] According to the *CIA's World Factbook 2013*, Afghanistan's ethnic distribution is as follows: Pashtun (42%), Tajik (27%), Hazara (9%), Uzbek (9%), Aimak (4%), Turkmen (3%), Baloch (2%), other (4%). As of July 2013, the ethnic breakdown of the ANA was: Pashtun (46%), Tajik (33%), Hazara (10%), Uzbek (6%), other (6%). *Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*. U.S. DoD. Jul. 2013: 65.

(Karzai), a Tajik first vice-president (Mohammed Fahim), and a Hazaran second vice-president (Karim Khalili). As long as the winning ticket from the runoff election maintained that balance of power, the ANSF likely would accept the results of the election—though it is possible that in a Pashtun-versus-Pashtun runoff some rank-and-file members loyal to the losing ticket could decide to desert the ANSF, leading to low-scale fragmentation of some ANA units or possibly low-level defections of police to the insurgency. The risk of fragmentation also exists, though more within the officer corps, in a non-Pashtun–versus–non-Pashtun runoff.

If the winner is a non-Pashtun, it could lead to more widespread desertion or defection on the part of rank-and-file ANSF (especially within the police), along with increased violence in the south and the east of the country and protests within the major cities. If the remaining ANSF were to react violently to such provocations—actions for which there is precedent[222]—it could lead to an escalation of negative events, with consequences up to and including widespread instability and a popular boost to the insurgency as part of its theme of opposing an illegitimate and unpopular government.

We conclude that these events are of low-to-moderate likelihood. It is clear to many observers that Afghan political elites understand the critical importance of this election to both the future stability of Afghanistan and continued international community support—with the result being significant efforts on their part to generate a consensus

[222] See, for example: "Afghan Troops Kill Protester Near Iran Consulate." Associated Press, Sep. 7, 2013, accessed Sep. 27, 2013, at www.news.yahoo.com/afghan-troops-kill-protester-near-iran-consulate-095356342; "Afghan Police Fire on Student Protesters, Killing at Least Four and Wounding 30." Associated Press, Nov. 12, 2012, accessed Sep. 27, 2013, at www.news.google.com; and "Afghanistan Security Forces Open Fire on Anti-U.S. Protesters, 7 Killed." Associated Press, Feb. 22, 2012, accessed Sep. 27, 2013, at www.nydailynews.com/news/world/anti-american-demonstrations-erupt-outskirts-kabul-consecutive-day-article-1.1026684.

platform prior to the elections.[223] As Andrew Wilder of the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) recently stated:

> A strategy being pursued by some political actors is to try to generate a consensus prior to the elections among key political elites around a post-election national agenda and power-sharing arrangement. If successful, this elite consensus-building effort would be followed by a national campaign to endorse this effort, with the hope that the 2014 elections would ultimately serve more as a referendum on this national agenda and power-sharing arrangement rather than a highly contentious and divisive electoral contest.[224]

While the success of these efforts is far from guaranteed, their existence reinforces the seriousness with which Afghan political elites are approaching the election, and their desire for it to conclude in the first round with a consensus candidate as the victor.

"Bad" transfer of power

In the event the election proceeds relatively smoothly and a candidate is chosen without causing widespread instability, there are still two major avenues for issues to arise. The first is if major powerbrokers in the current administration are not brought into the next administration in a way that is satisfactory to them. Some of these powerbrokers—for example, Mohammed Fahim (the current first vice president) and Ismael Khan (the current Minister of Water and Energy)—have patronage networks that extend into the ANSF. As such, they have the potential to stoke negative actions on the part of ANSF leaders if they are not sufficiently appeased by the next administration—and have at times publicly stated their willingness to do so.[225]

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[223] Author interviews with ISAF, IJC, NATO Senior Civilian Representative, and CENTCOM personnel, Aug. 12–24, 2013, and Aug. 29, 2013.

[224] Andrew Wilder. "Testimony before the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Subcommittee on Near Eastern and South and Central Asian Affairs." Washington, DC. May 21, 2013.

[225] Author interview with IJC personnel. Kabul, Afghanistan. Aug. 16, 2013; and Christian Neef. "Return of the Lion: Former Warlord Preps for Western Withdrawal." *Spiegel Online International*, Sep. 23, 2013, ac-

A second, related possibility is that of missteps on the part of the new administration with respect to political appointees. Most significant for the ANSF is the fact that Afghanistan's president currently appoints not only the heads of the security ministries, but also the provincial and district chiefs of police and ANA general officers (e.g., the ANA corps commanders). If the new president made changes in these leadership positions that were too quick, too sweeping, or that otherwise significantly infringed on the interests (e.g., patronage networks) of current ANSF leaders, it could result in the fragmentation of ANSF units or invite a backlash from ANA and ANP leadership, up to and possibly including attempts at a military coup or dedeposing the president. However, based on our discussions with a range of subject matter experts, we judge these latter events as unlikely. More likely is that smaller numbers of individuals will be initially replaced, and President Karzai's pattern of fairly routine movements and replacements of mid-level ANSF leaders (especially within the police) will continue under the new president's direction. This has the potential to cause friction within some circles of political elites and at local levels, but will probably not rise to the level of widespread dissatisfaction within the ANSF.

In sum, for the "Bad Election" scenario we conclude that as long as the current balance of power within the Afghan government's Executive Office is maintained and the new Afghan president is politically savvy enough to placate significant Afghan powerbrokers and not make overly-sweeping changes to ANSF leadership in the wake of taking power, both ANSF leaders and its rank-and-file are likely to accept the results of the election. If there was a split in the Pashtun vote, a non-Pashtun winner (e.g., due to widespread violence in the south and east that prevented large numbers of Pashtuns from voting), or if the new President made sweeping changes to ANSF leadership, it could inspire a violent response on the part of some members (and possibility units) within the ANSF. It could also lead to fragmentation of some units, desertion, and possibly defection of low-level fighters to the Taliban. We assess these scenarios to be of moderate likelihood.

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cessed Sep. 27, 2013, at www.spiegel.de/international/world/afghan-warlords-like-ismail-khan-prepare-for-western-withdrawal-a-924019.html.

Loss of international community support

No training and advising mission for the ANSF

In the months leading up to the drafting of this report, there was significant discussion as to whether the U.S. and Afghanistan would be able to complete a Bilateral Security Agreement to enable a U.S. training, advising, and counterterrorism mission in Afghanistan post-2014, whether NATO and Afghanistan could come to terms on a Status of Forces Agreement to enable a NATO training and advising mission, or whether a so-called "zero option" might come into play in which the U.S. military and NATO completely depart Afghanistan. Given this discussion, it is worth considering:

How would the ANA and ANP react if the U.S. and NATO discontinued their ANSF training and advising missions in 2015?

To answer this question, it is worth considering what the likely impact on the ANSF of the loss of U.S. and NATO enablers (to include advisors) would be. To do this, we compiled observations from our trip to theater to generate Table 40, which shows which aspects of the ANSF we assess might endure and which would not if the U.S. and NATO withdraw all of their enablers in 2015. The table is not meant to be comprehensive in terms of every aspect of the ANSF; rather it is illustrative of some of the more critical aspects. This table presents a synthesis of observations from visits to each of the units it addresses, along with our in-theater interviews.

Table 40. Likely enduring, non-enduring, and questionable aspects of the ANSF in 2015, absent U.S. and NATO enablers

Entity	Enduring Aspects	Non-Enduring Aspects	Questionable Aspects
Ministry of Defense	• ANA force generation (recruiting, training) • Payment of salaries	• Financial management (e.g., the Programming, Planning, Budgeting, and Execution process) • Evolving the force to a focus on "national defense" vice counterinsurgency	• Strategy and policy
Ministry of Interior	• ANP force size • Payment of salaries	• Financial management (e.g., the Programming, Planning, Budgeting, and Execution process) • Attempts to reduce corruption and political interference in the police • Professionalization of the force (e.g., moving toward community policing or having a 100% trained force)	• Strategy and policy
ANA	• Human intelligence • Tactical operations • Some level of deliberate planning • Supply of food, water, and fuel • Some level of cross-security pillar coordination and synchronization	• Technical intelligence (e.g., signals intelligence) • Supply of spare parts • Maintenance • AAF (to include air CASEVAC, MEDEVAC, and CAS) • Counter-IED • Brigade or higher operations	• Officer education • Non-Commissioned Officer corps • Presence in OCCs
ANP	• Ability to stand tactical checkpoints • Maintenance (via contract) • Supply of food, water, and fuel • Some level of cross-pillar coordination and synchronization	• Afghan Local Police • Civilian policing activities • Coordination with the Ministry of Justice	• Border and Point of Entry Security • Presence in OCCs
SOF and Special Units	• Police Special Units	• Special Mission Wing • *Ktah Khas*	• Afghan Commandos and Special Forces

In looking at Table 40 it is clear the withdrawal of U.S. and NATO enablers in 2015 would likely result in the inability of the MoD and MoI to do many of the higher-order functions required of a security

ministry to support the fielded forces. While it is likely they would find a way to ensure that the ANSF continue to receive their salaries,[226] functions like financial management, budget execution, and the ability to tie long-term procurement to requirements derived from strategy and policy would likely not endure. In short, the MoD and MoI would likely revert to acting as high-level army and police headquarters, vice civilian entities providing oversight of, and support to, the fielded forces.

For the ANA, the withdrawal of U.S. and NATO advisors and other enablers in 2015 would likely lead to significant reductions in the Army's ability to generate actionable intelligence via technical means, maintain its vehicles, or counter IEDs. In addition, the AAF would not likely endure very long on its own. Taken together, these developments would result in a standing Army with decreasing flexibility, declining ability to maneuver, and a diminishing capacity for deliberate operations over time.

For the ANP, the loss of U.S., NATO, and international (e.g., EUPOL) advisors and other enablers would likely result in the degradation of attempts to professionalize the police force, move it toward a civilian policing (vice paramilitary) model, and coordinate with the Ministry of Justice in support of the rule of law. Additionally, it would likely result in an increasingly corrupt and predatory police force. Finally, the Afghan Local Police are not likely to endure once U.S. SOF are no longer present to provide support and over-watch to them.

When it comes to Afghanistan's SOF and police special units, the latter have achieved a level of capability that will likely allow them to endure; though their mobility would be sharply curtailed and their operational tempo and reach would be reduced (they rely heavily on ISAF air transportation). The Special Mission Wing and *Ktah Khas* (Afghan counterterrorism unit) are not likely to endure in the absence of U.S. and NATO enablers. An open question is what would become of the Afghan Commandos and Special Forces—at a minimum, their operational effectiveness would be reduced by the loss of

[226] Recall we are assuming here that international community financial assistance continues even in the absence of U.S. and NATO advisors.

ISAF intelligence and air mobility assets. All of this would likely result in significant reductions in the ANSF's ability to conduct counterterrorism operations and in the operational reserve for the ANA and ANP.

Taking all of the above into consideration, we assess that the loss of U.S. and NATO enablers (to include advisors) is likely to result in an overall downward spiral of ANSF capabilities and security in Afghanistan, though it is unclear just how quickly that spiral would occur.[227]

Our discussions with ANSF leaders in theater made it clear that they understand this quite well.[228] They are acutely aware of the ANSF's reliance on ISAF for the vast majority of combat support and combat service support functions (e.g., intelligence, fire support/close air support, logistics, and medical and casualty evacuation (MEDEVAC/CASEVAC)). They are also cognizant of the fact that, while the ANSF are likely to continue to grow in their ability to perform these functions in the coming year, they are unlikely to be independently capable in many of these areas by 2015. As such, while our interviews suggest that many ANSF leaders would soldier on in the absence of U.S. and NATO advisors, it is likely that they would also look to other countries for assistance. These countries might include Russia, India, China, and those of the Persian Gulf (e.g., Saudi Arabia) and Eastern Europe (former Soviet bloc countries). In addition, they may appeal to the U.S. and NATO to continue providing training for specialty capabilities (e.g., pilots, SOF) and officer education outside of Afghanistan.[229]

At the rank-and-file level of the ANSF, the loss of U.S. and NATO enablers could have a more dramatic effect. Our interviews in theater

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[227] Several of the subject matter experts with whom we spoke felt that the speed of this downward spiral would be mostly dependent on the level of financial aid provided by the international community. Author interviews with ISAF and IJC personnel. Afghanistan. August 12–24, 2013.

[228] Author interviews with Afghan personnel in the MoD and MoI as well as numerous ANSF personnel (see Appendix C). Afghanistan. Aug. 12–24, 2013.

[229] Author interviews with ISAF, IJC, NSOCC-A, and ANSF personnel. Afghanistan. Aug. 12–25, 2013.

suggested that the decrease in MEDEVAC/CASEVAC capabilities provided by ISAF this year is already affecting morale in some units.[230] The full loss of this capability, along with intelligence, logistics, close air, and other support might be beyond what many rank-and-file soldiers and police are willing to accept to stay in the ANSF. As such, it seems likely that desertion rates would increase (perhaps significantly), and the possibility that some units might suffer casualties to the point of fragmenting or breaking will increase. Also, without U.S. SOF to provide them support, it is likely that some (if not many) ALP units will dissolve or defect to the Taliban.[231] It is also possible that some Afghan SOF units, such as *Ktah Khas*, could cease to perform their current missions and instead be used by various powerbrokers to further their own interests.

The bottom line is that the discontinuance of the U.S. and NATO training and advising missions in 2015 will likely not lead to the wholesale dissolution or failure of the ANSF (at least not in the near term). But it will result in an "enabler vacuum" that ANSF leaders will look to have filled by other providers. If they are unable to find such providers, it is likely that ANSF capabilities will begin to spiral downward; issues with desertion, defection, and fragmentation will increase; and the insurgency will be emboldened to eschew reconciliation and go on the offensive to test the "enabler-less" ANSF in the 2015–2018 timeframe. In other words, all of the issues that are currently of concern to those watching the ANSF are likely to be exacerbated in the absence of a continued U.S. and NATO training and advising mission.

Loss of international donor contributions

At the July 2012 Tokyo Conference, the U.S. and other international partners committed to continue providing development assistance to Afghanistan through the so-called "Decade of Transformation" (2014–2024). Through the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework (TMAF), international donors committed to providing Afghanistan

[230] Ibid.

[231] Author interview with American Academy of Diplomacy personnel. Aug. 1, 2013. The historical analysis in our threat assessment also suggests the likelihood of this occurring.

$16 billion in aid through 2015 and continuing assistance at levels commensurate with the last decade through 2017. In turn, Afghanistan committed to strengthening governance, building a legislative framework to ensure a credible, transparent, and inclusive transfer of power; and making structural changes to ensure the government remains solvent and Afghan citizens can participate in a growing economy.[232]

Since that time, the international community came together on 3 July 2013 to review progress, key policy issues, and the way forward under the TMAF. As the conference statement suggests, the report card for Afghanistan in meeting its obligations under the TMAF was decidedly mixed.[233] While the outcome of the meeting will not result in reductions to international community assistance to Afghanistan in the near term as a result of lack of progress against the TMAF benchmarks, a number of our interviewees noted that several nations were unsatisfied with progress made by Afghanistan's government since last year's Tokyo Conference.[234] These nations pushed for reductions in funding to Afghanistan to demonstrate the conviction of the international community to the TMAF benchmarks. While these nations' arguments did not carry the day, it is entirely possible that the government of Afghanistan will continue to lag expectations of progress, increasing the risk of the international community changing its position and significantly reducing, or even eliminating, its financial contributions to Afghanistan.[235]

Throughout our interviews in and out of theater, we paid close attention to points of convergence and divergence among our interviewees on various topics. As might be expected, on most topics we

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[232] "U.S. Bilateral Relations Fact Sheet: Afghanistan." U.S. DoS, Sep. 25, 2013, accessed Sep. 2013, at http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5380.htm.

[233] "Joint Statement" TMAF Senior Officials Meeting. Kabul, Afghanistan. Jul. 3, 2013, accessed Sep. 2013, at www.afghanistan-un.org.

[234] Author interviews with ISAF and IJC personnel. Afghanistan. August 12–24, 2013.

[235] Of the TMAF's benchmarks, those pertaining to a credible, transparent, and inclusive transfer of power are the most likely to upset the international community if they are not met.

recorded divergences of varying degrees. The only topic on which we observed universal convergence was this particular issue—loss of international community financial support. Everyone we spoke with during the course of this study agreed that the loss of funding, or even a too-rapid decline in funding, to the ANSF would carry with it the strong possibility of the following:[236]

- Sharp increases in rank-and-file desertion from the ANA and ANP if salaries are not able to be paid. Interviewees added a caveat by saying that in units that had good, effective leaders, individual soldiers and policemen might be willing to stay on for a period of months without pay, but would eventually desert once it became clear that pay was not forthcoming. In units with poor leadership, desertion would likely occur much more rapidly.
- Fragmentation or fracture of the ANA, with units (or groups within units) breaking off to follow various powerbrokers—in particular, former Northern Alliance leaders and others who commanded large groups of men during the civil war of the 1990s (e.g., Mohammed Fahim, Ishmael Khan, and Abdul Rashid Dostum).
- Defection of units (or groups within units) to the insurgency, especially within the police in the south and east.

To justify these conclusions, most simply point to the historical record of what happened once the Soviet Union abruptly ceased its line of funding to the Najibullah regime in 1992. Some interviewees did allow for the fact that the situation in Afghanistan is not exactly the same as it was then, but nonetheless, Afghanistan's political system is still largely one of patronage. So long as there is money available to support those patronage networks, some degree of stability may remain. Once that is no longer the case, the centripetal forces of Af-

[236] Author interviews with personnel from organizations listed in Appendix C. July–September 2013.

ghanistan's various power centers will begin to pull the country apart, and history may well repeat itself.[237]

It is clear that the international community appreciates this aspect of Afghanistan's history and understands the likely repercussions of curtailing aid to Afghanistan too rapidly. But at the same time, events such as the Kabul bank scandal[238] and the high level of corruption in Afghanistan (and the Afghan president's refusal to take strong action against corruption) are increasingly frustrating the international community and testing the patience and generosity of some donor countries. As such, we deem this scenario of low to moderate likelihood.

In sum for this scenario, our interviews with U.S., NATO, and Afghan personnel strongly suggest that the inability to conclude a BSA between the U.S. and Afghanistan (with the resulting departure of all U.S. and NATO forces by 2015), is likely to result in a downward spiral of capability for the ANSF and the security situation in Afghanistan—unless the ANSF are able to find other countries to backfill the resultant "enabler vacuum." If they are unable to do so, we assess that the likelihood of a negative ANSF response is moderate to high. In addition, the speed of that downward spiral is likely to be most heavily dependent on the level of international community financial support to Afghanistan and the ANSF. If this is also lost, the country is highly likely to pull apart, fragment, and eventually return back to a

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[237] A recent report by the World Bank takes a more nuanced view in saying that the vast amounts of aid to Afghanistan have:

> become a source of rents, patronage, and political power, sometimes inadvertently exacerbating conflicts and grievances among different groups. So a decline in aid and international military spending…may benefit the longer term political economy. But in the short term, the dislocations and adaptations of different interest groups could be disruptive.

Afghanistan in Transition: Looking Beyond 2014 (Volume 1: Overview). The World Bank. May 2012: 3.

[238] Matthew Rosenberg. "Trail of Fraud and Vengeance Leads to Kabul Bank Convictions." *New York Times*, Mar. 5, 2013.

civil war between the Taliban and its associated groups, and armed groups following other powerbrokers in the west and north of the country.

Conclusion

In this section, we considered difficulties the ANSF may face—and likely responses and directions they could go—under several potential political situations or scenarios. We chose to analyze three scenarios: Taliban reconciliation, a "bad" Afghan presidential election in 2014, and the loss of international community support.

All three of these scenarios carry with them the possibility of negative reactions on the part of various aspects of the ANSF—from low-level desertion or defection to the insurgency up to deposing the Afghan president. For the first scenario, very few of our interviewees believed the Taliban would reconcile during the timeframe of our study (i.e., before 2018), if at all. But even if they did, our results suggest that so long as certain ANSF "redlines" were not crossed, the likelihood of a negative ANSF reaction would be low.

For the second scenario, most of the subject matter experts with whom we spoke indicated that the international community has effectively communicated the seriousness of this election to Afghan political leaders, and that as a result there is significant consensus building taking place ahead of the elections to ensure that a viable ticket—one that can win a majority in the first round—is fielded. As such, we assess the overall likelihood of this scenario coming to pass is low-to-moderate; though we assess the likelihood of a negative ANSF response if it does to be moderate.

In the third scenario, the discontinuance of a U.S. and NATO training and advising mission seemed to be a moderate probability event in the eyes of our interviewees—and we assess a negative ANSF reaction to this event would be of moderate-to-high likelihood. Also, a number of the U.S. and NATO personnel with whom we spoke were concerned about the government of Afghanistan's lack of progress against the TMAF benchmarks and the negative future implications of a trend along those lines to the international donor community's willingness to underwrite the Afghan government for the foreseeable future. That said, the international community also understands that a sharp decline in funding to Afghanistan carries with it a strong risk

of negative consequences, so we assess this to be of low-to-moderate likelihood—though we also assess that if this were to happen, it would carry with it a high likelihood of a negative ANSF response.

Conclusion of additional assessments

Taking into consideration all of our additional assessments, we conclude that the security ministries that support the ANSF will require international enabling assistance—including advisors—through at least 2018, and this assistance mission will need similar authorities to the mission in Afghanistan today. We also conclude that sustained commitment of the international community in Afghanistan is likely to mitigate tensions in the region and increase prospects for regional cooperation, but withdrawal of international community support is likely to have consequences up to and including a renewed civil war in Afghanistan and increased instability in the region.

Appendix A: Biographies of the authors

Dr. Jonathan J. Schroden
Director, CNA's Center for Stability and Development

Jonathan's research interests include security force assistance, stability operations, counterinsurgency, counterterrorism, operations assessment, Marine Corps and special operations, Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African studies, and humanitarian assistance/disaster relief operations. Requested by name by two Commanders of ISAF, Dr. Schroden has deployed or traveled seven times to Afghanistan over the past six years to support a variety of analytic initiatives. He has previously deployed twice to Iraq, traveled throughout the Middle East, gotten underway with numerous Navy ships, and supported disaster relief operations in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. Prior to his current position, Dr. Schroden served as the CNA field representative to ISAF, U.S. CENTCOM, Multi-National Forces–West in Iraq, and the 2nd Marine Expeditionary Force. He holds Ph.D. and M.S. degrees in Physical Chemistry from Cornell University and B.S. degrees in Chemistry and Physics from the University of Minnesota–Duluth.

Dr. Catherine E. Norman
Senior Research Scientist

Catherine's recent research efforts include service delivery in Helmand province and force structure requirements for the U.S. Marine Corps post Afghanistan. From 2010 to 2012, she served as the CNA representative to the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF). Dr. Norman twice deployed with I MEF (Forward) to Afghanistan, where she worked with the Regional Command–Southwest Assessments Group to assess progress across the security, governance, and development lines of operation. In addition, she supported ANP advisor teams by examining what the Afghans want from their police, to ensure coalition police advising efforts were in line with Afghan expectations. Dr. Norman also compared advisor training programs with the role of ANSF advisors in theater, and recommended additions to advisor training. Prior to reporting to I MEF, she focused on counter-

IED analysis and spent two years as CNA's scientific analyst to the Joint IED Defeat Organization (JIEDDO). Dr. Norman holds an undergraduate degree in International Relations from Georgetown University and a Ph.D. in Applied Mathematics from Northwestern University.

Dr. Gerald M. (Jerry) Meyerle
Senior Research Scientist

Jerry's current research focuses on the future of irregular warfare for the U.S. Marine Corps, analysis of governance in Afghanistan, and Pakistan's continuing war against the Taliban. He has served on Afghanistan and Pakistan policy reviews and as an advisor to the commander of the Kunar Provincial Reconstruction Team in eastern Afghanistan. From 2011 to 2012, he served as an advisor to the commanding general of the 2nd Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward) in southern Afghanistan. He is the lead author of the book *On the Ground in Afghanistan: Counterinsurgency in Practice* (Marine Corps University Press, 2012), as well as numerous articles and studies on the insurgency in Afghanistan, the ANSF, militancy in Pakistan, and regional security issues in South Asia. He speaks Urdu and has a Ph.D. in Political Science and South Asian Studies from the University of Virginia.

Mr. Patricio A. Asfura-Heim, J.D.
Senior Research Scientist

Patricio's research focuses on the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia. His areas of expertise include partner capacity building, rule of law in stability operations, conflict analysis, and non-state actors in war, revolution, and peacemaking. Mr. Asfura-Heim has spent significant time supporting U.S. Marine and Department of State governance operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. From 2006 through 2008, he advised coalition forces in determining capability requirements for the Iraqi Security Forces and worked alongside U.S. Marines to develop the rule of law in Al Anbar Province. From 2009 to 2010, he worked with the Provincial Reconstruction Team in Helmand Province, Afghanistan to promote dialogue between influential community leaders and local government officials. Of particular interest, he conducted a study looking at the future feasibility of the Afghan Local Police. Mr. Asfura-Heim is a trained attorney and a

member of the Washington, D.C. Bar. He holds a J.D. and M.A. in world politics from Catholic University of America.

Dr. William G. (Bill) Rosenau
Senior Research Scientist

Bill's research focuses on security force assistance, non-state armed groups, and intelligence policy and history. His recent publications include *United States Marine Corps Advisors: Past, Present, and Future* (CNA, 2013); *Governance in Helmand Province* (CNA, 2012); and *Acknowledging Limits: Police Advisors and Counterinsurgency in Afghanistan* (Marine Corps University Press, 2010). Before joining CNA, he spent ten years in the International Security Program at the RAND Corporation, where he chaired the RAND Insurgency Board. Dr. Rosenau also served as an adjunct professor in the Security Studies Program, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University. His previous positions include: Senior Policy Adviser, Office of the Coordinator for Counter-Terrorism, U.S. Department of State; Senior Analyst, Strategy and Policy Analysis Department, SAIC; Legislative Assistant for Defense and Foreign Policy, U.S. Senate; Professional Staff Member, U.S. DoD Commission on Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces; and Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict, U.S. DoD. He holds an A.B. in political science (Columbia); an M.A. in History (Cambridge); and a Ph.D. in War Studies (King's College, London).

Dr. Delwyn L. Gilmore
Principal Research Scientist

Del has worked on a variety of issues such as Navy force structure requirements, anti-access/area-denial threats, naval mine warfare, and Marine Corps systems. In addition to projects at CNA headquarters, he has had on-site assignments at the Pentagon providing analytic support to OSD's Capabilities Assessment and Program Evaluation directorate, the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Navy Quadrennial Defense Review. He has also done overseas assignments with the U.S. Fifth Fleet in Bahrain and embarked with the George Washington Carrier Battle Group staff for Operation Southern Watch and Operation Enduring Freedom. Dr. Gilmore earned his Ph.D. in Materials Science and Engineering from the University of Virginia and his B.S. from the California Institute of Technology. Be-

fore joining CNA in 2000, he completed post-doctoral research fellowships at Oxford University and the U.S. Department of Energy's Sandia National Laboratories.

CAPT (ret.) Mark Rosen, J.D.
Vice President and Deputy General Counsel

Mark is an international and national security lawyer providing corporate law support to CNA on a variety of ethics, government contracts, intellectual property, and regulatory matters, including human subjects research and export compliance. Mr. Rosen also provides support to the research staff on international and national security law matters and has authored numerous international and operational law studies in such areas as maritime disputes, law of the sea, law of armed conflict, international agreements, and arms control. Prior to joining CNA, Mr. Rosen served as the Associate General Counsel for Science and Technology Directorate of the Department of Homeland Security and was the Department's Regulatory Compliance Officer for all Department of Homeland Security-sponsored research. He also worked in the Small Business Administration's Office of International Trade, serving as the point person for all trade-policy matters and negotiating market-access agreements with various foreign governments. Mr. Rosen is a retired Navy Captain and served in various international law positions in the Pentagon. He holds A.B. and J.D. degrees from the University of Georgia and an LLM from the University of Virginia, and is a member of the State Bars of Georgia and Virginia (Corporate Counsel Designation) and various federal courts.

Ms. Daniella Mak
Associate Research Analyst

Daniella's research focuses primarily on Africa political-military affairs. Prior to joining CNA, Ms. Mak worked at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) Africa Program and the CSIS Turkey Project. She previously served as an Annenberg Fellow with the U.S. Department of State, where her portfolio included Somali piracy, sanctions, and threat finance issues. Ms. Mak is the recipient of a U.S. Fulbright Fellowship, Princeton American Research Institute in Turkey Language Fellowship, and Andrew W. Mellon Research Fellowship. She holds a B.A. degree in Diplomatic History,

African Studies, and Modern Middle Eastern Studies from the University of Pennsylvania and an M.A. in History and International Relations from the ISCTE–Lisbon University Institute.

ENS Nicholas A. Hutchinson
U.S. Naval Academy Fellow

Nick, a 2013 graduate of the United States Naval Academy, served as a USNA Fellow in CNA's Center for Strategic Studies prior to commencing Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL training in Coronado, California. ENS Hutchinson did most of his undergraduate research with the Naval Research Laboratory working on compounds that neutralize nerve agents. While at the Academy, he also developed a strong interest in political science and did extensive research on U.N. interventions in Bosnia and Rwanda.

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Appendix B: Biographies of Senior Review Panel members

Convener

The Honorable Robert J. Murray
President and Chief Executive Officer, CNA

Robert J. Murray is President and Chief Executive Officer of CNA, a non-profit research and analysis organization devoted to independent and objective analysis of public issues. Prior to CNA, Murray was a teacher, first at the Naval War College in Newport, RI, where he was Dean and Director of the College's Advanced Research Center and creator/director of the Strategic Studies Group; and from 1983–1990, a faculty member at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University and director of the School's national security program. He served in government in various capacities before his stint at teaching. He was appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate as Under Secretary of the Navy in President Jimmy Carter's Administration, where he had previously held an appointment as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (International Security Affairs). Earlier, Murray was the Special Assistant to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense, and then became Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Manpower and Reserve Affairs.

Mr. Murray is a graduate of Suffolk College and Harvard University. He served in the U.S. Marine Corps before entering civilian government service.

Members

Mr. Thomas A. Betro
Former Director, Naval Criminal Investigative Service

Thomas Betro was appointed in January 2006 to be the third civilian director of the Naval Criminal Investigative Service, a position he held until his retirement in 2009. Mr. Betro joined Naval Criminal Investigative Service in 1982 and served in a variety of organizational as-

signments and mission areas both within the United States and abroad. As Deputy Assistant Director for Counterintelligence, investigations and operations, Thomas Betro oversaw the organization's response to the USS Cole bombing which led to significant increase in Naval Criminal Investigative Service force protection support to naval expeditionary forces. In 2001, he was selected to serve as a Deputy to the National Counterintelligence Executive and later became the Acting National Counterintelligence Executive, the President's principal advisor on counterintelligence. As Director, Betro led the expansion of the Law Enforcement Information Exchange system to more than 30,000 law enforcement professionals across 800 federal, state, and local public safety agencies. Under his leadership, the Naval Criminal Investigative Service filled every validated Combatant Commander request for forces for Iraq, Afghanistan and the Horn of Africa on a volunteer basis. Hundreds of special agents were deployed to those locations during his tenure.

Thomas Betro holds a B.A. degree in Government from Colby College and a M.A. in National Security and Strategic Studies from the Naval War College. He is currently Vice President of NTT DATA Federal Services, a global information technology services firm.

Dr. Stephen Biddle
Professor of Political Science and Former Strategic Assessment Advisor to Generals McChrystal and Petraeus

Stephen Biddle joined the faculty of the Elliott School of International Affairs at The George Washington University in 2012 where he is Professor of Political Science and International Affairs. Dr. Biddle is the author of *Military Power: Explaining Victory and Defeat in Modern Battle* (Princeton U. Press, 2004). His research seeks to use the methods of modern social science to explain underlying causal relationships on which defense policy positions rest. In 2012, Stephen Biddle was the Roger Hertog Senior Fellow for Defense Policy at the Council on Foreign Relations and earlier held the Elihu Root chair in Military Studies at the U.S. Army War College as well as teaching and research positions at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the Institute for Defense Analyses, and Harvard's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs. He served on General David Petraeus' Joint Strategic Assessment Team in Baghdad in 2007, on General Stanley McChrystal's Initial Strategic Assessment Team in in Kabul in 2009,

and as a Senior Advisor to General Petraeus' Central Command Assessment Team in Washington from 2008 to 2009.

Stephen Biddle holds A.B., M.P.P. and Ph.D. (Public Policy) degrees all from Harvard University.

General James T. Conway, USMC (Ret.)
Former 34th Commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps

As Commandant of the Marine Corps from November, 2006 to October, 2010, General Conway served as the senior uniformed Marine responsible for the organization, training, and equipping of over 250,000 active duty, reserve, and civilian personnel serving in the United States and overseas. He managed an annual budget on the order of $40 billion. As a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, he was a military advisor to the Secretary of Defense, the National Security Council, and the President. Previous high level assignments included President of the Marine Corps University, command of the 1st Marine Division and commander of the 1 Marine Expeditionary Force during two combat tours in Iraq . In 2004, he was reassigned as the Director of Operations, J-3, Joint Staff in Washington, DC where he oversaw the war efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

General Conway is a graduate of Southeast Missouri State College and attended the Seminar XXI M.I.T. Fellowship Program and the Harvard University JFK School of Government Seminar in International Relations.

Lieutenant General Lawrence P. Farrell Jr., USAF (Ret.)
Former Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans and Programs, Headquarters United States Air Force

Lieutenant General Lawrence Farrell became President and Chief Executive Officer of the National Defense Industrial Association in 2001. Prior to his retirement from the Air Force in 1998, General Farrell served as the Deputy Chief of Staff of Plans and Programs, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, where he was responsible for integrating the Air Force's future plans and requirements to support national security objectives and military strategy. Previous positions included Vice Commander, Air Force Material Command and Deputy Director, Defense Logistics Agency. A command pilot with more than 3,000 flying hours, he flew 196 combat missions in Southeast Asia.

General Farrell is a graduate of the Air Force Academy and holds an MBA from Auburn University. He is also a graduate of the National War College and the Harvard JFK School Program for Executives in National Security. He has served on a number of study groups supporting The United States Air Force as well as on corporate and non-profit advisory boards.

The Honorable Nelson M. Ford
Former Under Secretary of the Army

Nelson Ford has been chief executive of LMI, a government consulting firm since January 2009. He is also Chairman of the Board of the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Analysis. Before leaving government, Ford served as Under Secretary of the Army from 2007 to 2009. Prior to that, he served as Assistant Secretary of the Army for Financial Management and Comptroller from 2006 to 2007 and Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Financial Management and Comptroller from 2005 to 2006. From 2002 to 2004, he was Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health Budgets and Financial Policy in the Department of Defense. Previously, Nelson Ford was Chief Executive Officer of a medical manufacturing company and of the Georgetown University Medical Center. He managed the health care consulting practice for Coopers & Lybrand and has extensive experience in financial management, health care management and resource management.

Nelson Ford holds a B.A. in History from Duke University and an M.A. in Education from the University of Delaware and has completed additional professional training at the University of Pennsylvania.

Mr. Bart R. Johnson
Executive Director, International Association of Chiefs of Police and former Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis, Department of Homeland Security

Bart Johnson, who has more than 31 years of law enforcement experience, currently serves as the Executive Director for the International Association of Chiefs of Police, an organization with members from over 100 countries around the world. Prior to his appointment in November 2011, Johnson was the Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis at the Department of Homeland Security where he was responsible for integrating the Department's intelli-

gence efforts. He also oversaw the Department's programs to evaluate and improve state and local fusion center capabilities and establish a nationwide, integrated information sharing fabric. Prior to this assignment, Bart Johnson was Director of Homeland Security and Law Enforcement in the Office of the Director of National Intelligence. He previously served for 24 years in the New York State Police.

Mr. Johnson holds a B.S. degree in Business Management and Economics from Empire State College in New York.

Lieutenant General Francis H. (Frank) Kearney III, USA (Ret.)
Former Deputy Combatant Commander, United States Special Operations Command

Lieutenant General Frank Kearney retired from the United States Army in 2012 following more than 35 years of service. His final active duty assignment was as Deputy Director for Strategic Operational Planning at the National Counter-Terrorism Center in Washington, DC. He is now president of his own consulting company, Inside-Solutions-LLC, which focuses on leader development in organizations. General Kearney planned and participated in the opening campaigns of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and Operation Iraqi Freedom in Iraq and commanded all Theater Special Operations forces in the Middle East from March 2005 to June 2007. Subsequently, he served as Deputy Combatant Commander for the United States Special Operations Command from 2007 to 2010.

General Kearney is a 1976 graduate of the United States Military Academy and holds a MEd from the University of South Carolina. He serves as a member of the Secretary of Defense's Threat Reduction Advisory Committee and on the advisory boards of a number of companies.

Dr. Katherine A. McGrady
CNA Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer

Appointed CNA's first Chief Operating Officer in June 2009, Dr. Katherine McGrady is responsible for the execution of CNA's strategy and business processes, assuring consistency of policy and approach across the organization, and maintaining an environment of accountability and high performance. She began her career at CNA as analyst in 1988. As the field representative to the Commander of Ma-

rine Forces Central Command and Commander, I Marine Expeditionary Force, she served in the Persian Gulf during the first Iraq war (Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm). Later she deployed in support of the Commander, Unified Task Force, Mogadishu, Somalia. Subsequently as a vice president at CNA Headquarters, she led a team of analysts focused on analysis of expeditionary systems, logistics, operations and tactics, and training for expeditionary operations. She directed the Marine Corps Program, where she developed the annual research program and was the primary interface between CNA and the senior Marine Corps leadership. In 2004, Dr. McGrady became CNA's Senior Vice President for Research, and in 2006, she was promoted to Executive Vice President.

Dr. McGrady holds an A.B. degree in Chemistry from Smith College and M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Macromolecular Science and Engineering from the University of Michigan.

Mr. Dean G. Popps
Former Acting Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology

A former Army Acquisition Executive, Dean Popps currently serves Of Counsel to the law firm of Fluet Huber+Hoang and is a senior advisor to clients in the defense industry. From 2004 to 2010, during two administrations, Popps served as both the Acting Assistant Secretary for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology and the Principal Deputy. He was the Service Acquisition Executive and Science Advisor to the Secretary of the Army. His responsibilities included providing oversight for the management and sustainment of Army weapons systems and equipment from research and development, through acquisition, logistics, fielding and disposition. In 2008, he served on the independent, bipartisan Commission on Wartime Contracting to study wartime contracting in Iraq and Afghanistan. From 2004 to 2007, while serving as the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for ALT, he also served as Director of Iraq Reconstruction and Program Management. In 2003, he was recruited from a successful career in the private sector to join the Department of Defense's Coalition Provisional Authority in Baghdad where he served as Director of Industrial Conversion.

Dean Popps holds a B.A. in Political Science from Marquette University and a J.D. from the Potomac School of Law. He is admitted to the District of Columbia bar.

General Peter J. Schoomaker, USA (Ret.)
Former Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army and former Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command

General Peter Schoomaker retired from active service in December 2000 as the Commander-in-Chief, United States Special Operations Command and was recalled to active duty on 1 August 2003 to serve as the 35th Chief of Staff of the United States Army and member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He returned to retired status on 10 April 2007 after more than 35 years of service in a variety of command and staff assignments with both conventional and special operations forces. During this time, he participated in practically every major joint contingency operation conducted from Operation Eagle Claw in Iran to the current Global War on Terror. In January 1978, he was one of the first operational officers during the formative days of 1st Special Forces Operational Detachment – Delta and continued operational assignments there through command of Delta Force as a colonel from 1989 to 1992. Among his general officer assignments, Schoomaker was Commanding General, Joint Special Operations Command from July 1994 to July 1996 and then Commanding General, U.S. Army Special Operations Command until October 1997 when he was promoted to four star general and assumed command of U.S. Special Operations Command.

General Schoomaker was commissioned as a Distinguished Military Graduate through Army ROTC at the University of Wyoming with a B.S. in Education. He holds a M.A degree in Management from Central Michigan University and is a graduate of the USMC Amphibious Warfare School, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and the National War College and attended the Harvard JFK School Program for Executives in National Security. He is a consultant on defence matters, serves on several public and private company boards, and is a director on the board of the Special Operations Warrior Foundation which provides college education and support to the children and spouses of fallen special operators of all services.

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Appendix C: Organizations contacted during the study

As part of the study's data collection and analysis, the CNA study team interviewed or discussed our analysis with individuals from the organizations listed in Table 41.

Table 41. Organizations contacted during the study

Organization Type	Organization (in alphabetical order)
U.S. organizations	• The American Academy for Diplomacy • Center for Army Analysis • Central Intelligence Agency • Combined Joint Intelligence Operations Center – Afghanistan • Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force – Afghanistan • Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan • COMISAF Advise and Assist Team • Defense Intelligence Agency • Department of Defense Inspector General • Department of Defense Office of General Counsel • Department of State • Government Accountability Office • Human Terrain Teams • Joint Staff Pakistan – Afghanistan Coordination Cell • National Security Staff • Office of the Defense Representative – Pakistan • Office of the Under Secretary for Defense – Policy • Regional Platform South • Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction • Special Operations Joint Task Force – Afghanistan • Special Operations Task Force – East • Special Operations Task Force – West • Train, Advise, Assist Command – Northeast • Train, Advise, Assist Command – Southeast • U.S. Counterterrorism Task Force • U.S. Embassy Islamabad • U.S. Forces Afghanistan

Table 41. Organizations contacted during the study

Organization Type	Organization (in alphabetical order)
International Organizations	• 205th Corps Advisors • 207th Corps Advisors • 209th Corps Advisors • 215th Corps Advisors • Afghan Border Police Advisors • Afghan National Civil Order Police Advisors • Afghan Uniform Police Advisors • Combined Task Force Dragoon • Combined Task Force Uruzgan • European Union Police Helmand • Helmand Provincial Chief of Police Advisors • Helmand Provincial Reconstruction Team • International Security Assistance Force • ISAF Joint Command • Kandahar Provincial Chief of Police Advisors • Ministerial Advising Groups • NATO Air Training Command – Afghanistan • NATO Special Operations Component Command – Afghanistan • NATO Transition Mission – Afghanistan • Operational Coordination Center – Regional (North) Advisors • Regional Command – East • Regional Command – North • Regional Command – South • Regional Command – Southwest • Regional Command – West • Regional Military Training Center Advisors • Regional Support Command – South • Task Force Helmand
Afghan Organizations	• Afghan National Army 201st Corps Headquarters • Afghan National Army 203rd Corps Headquarters • Afghan National Army 205th Corps Headquarters • Afghan National Army 207th Corps Headquarters • Afghan National Army 215th Corps Headquarters • Afghan Air Force • Afghan Border Police • Afghan National Army General Staff

Table 41. Organizations contacted during the study

Organization Type	Organization (in alphabetical order)
	• Afghan National Army Special Operations Command • *Ktah Khas* • Laghman Provincial Chief of Police • Ministry of Defense • Ministry of Interior • National Directorate of Security • Nangarhar Deputy Provincial Chief of Police • Operational Coordination Center – Regional (East) • Operational Coordination Center – Provincial (Laghman) • Paktiya Provincial Chief of Police • Paktiya Regional Medical Center • Regional Logistics Support Center • Regional Military Training Center • Special Mission Wing
Pakistani Organizations	• Pakistan Army Joint Staff

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Appendix D: Threat assessment case studies

The case studies that follow are not intended to be comprehensive. Our analysis of these cases is empirical and entirely dependent on the availability of reliable historical information. Compared to what is available on government forces, there is little accurate historical information on insurgents in Afghanistan; as a result, there are gaps in the historical analyses. We have therefore focused on documenting clearly what historical facts were available, as well as where we had to make our own assessments to address these gaps.

1987–1992: Soviet withdrawal, Mujahideen offensive, collapse of the government

The Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in 1979 and spent the next 10 years battling a variety of Afghan insurgent groups known collectively as the Mujahideen. During this time, Soviet forces rebuilt the Afghan army and police, as well as the country's security ministries. They also raised irregular forces, then known as militias, to supplement the regular army and police and to secure more remote areas. The Mujahideen employed guerrilla tactics against Afghan and Soviet forces, targeting patrols, bases, and lines of communication. They intimidated pro-government populations, targeted officials, and built parallel governments.

In January 1987, the Soviet Union announced the end of major combat operations and the transition of security responsibility to Afghan forces, and began a long withdrawal that lasted until February 1989. Following the Soviet withdrawal, the Mujahideen launched a series of major offensives, culminating in the eventual collapse of the Kabul government in 1992 and the disintegration of the Afghan army. The purpose of this case study is to detail the dynamics of these offensives and the impact they had on Afghan forces, in order to make predictions about what the Taliban might do once U.S. and NATO forces have drawn down—that is, after 2014.

Threats to the national government

The Mujahideen sought to overthrow the regime in Kabul through force and to cause the disintegration of the Soviet-backed Afghan army and police.[239] The Mujahideen built parallel government structures in liberated areas, including security forces to provide law and order. The insurgents sought to supplant the government's security forces with their own through a combination of attack and cooptation.[240]

There was considerable debate within the Mujahideen as to which areas of Afghanistan were of greatest strategic importance, and therefore where and when forces should be massed for a final assault on the Soviet-backed government. A handful of Mujahideen factions—mainly those based in Peshawar with close links to Pakistani intelligence—argued that Kabul should be the primary target and that once the capital had fallen government forces elsewhere would follow in short order. The majority view among the Mujahideen was that the regional capitals and certain key provinces were most vital, and that once those had fallen Kabul would as well.[241]

Those factions focused on Kabul—among them Jalaluddin Haqqani and Gulbuddin Hekmatyar—established bases in the rural areas around the capital, cut lines of communication along the outskirts, and infiltrated small teams into the city to conduct terrorist attacks, assassinations, and other high-profile operations. The aim was to threaten individual members of the regime and cause the disintegra-

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[239] Stephen Tanner. *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban*. Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2002: 248.

[240] Tanner. *Afghanistan*: 248. As the Soviets withdrew, entire units defected with their weapons and joined the Mujahideen. Including the militias, the total number of government security forces in 1988 was an estimated 300,000. Rodric Braithwaite. *Afghantsy: The Russians in Afghanistan 1979–1989*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011: 298.

[241] Brigadier Mohammad Yousaf and Major Mark Adkin. *The Bear Trap: Afghanistan's Untold Story*. Lahore: Jang Publishers, 1992: 224; Neamatollah Nojumi. *The Rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan: Mass Mobilization, Civil War, and the Future of the Region*. New York: Palgrave, 2002: 106–109.

tion of national-level institutions. At the same time, these Mujahideen factions sought to maintain pressure on major garrisons in the provinces to keep them fixed and tied down—especially bases at Bagram, Jalalabad, Kandahar, Ghazni, Gardez, Shindand, Herat, Mazar-e-Sharif, and Kunduz. In 1990, one of the militarily most effective of the Mujahideen factions led a major assault on Kabul but was forced back by Afghan forces.[242]

The majority of the Mujahideen, based in different areas of the country and focused on the provinces and regional capitals, agreed to divide Afghanistan into nine zones where each commander would establish his own administration after the capture of each province.[243] Only then did they plan to march on Kabul. These factions sought to stop the others from targeting Kabul. The government in Kabul survived into 1992. Ultimately, it was the provinces and outlying areas that fell first. Kabul fell only after the insurgents overran the regional capitals and coopted large parts of the Afghan army. After Mazar-e-Sharif in the north fell to the insurgents, the security forces crumbled in Herat and Kandahar. The insurgents then surrounded and descended on Kabul.[244]

There was a relative lull in hostilities as Soviet units retrograded in 1988 and 1989, followed by an escalation of violence in 1990 once the Soviet withdrawal was complete. The Mujahideen harassed departing convoys but generally refrained from major offensives during the period of withdrawal and transition. Available evidence indicates that the insurgents preferred not to confront Soviet forces as they withdrew and sought to conserve resources for later offensives once the government could no longer count on direct Soviet military support.

The withdrawal of Soviet forces initially galvanized an otherwise fragmented resistance as they mobilized additional men and material to overthrow the government in the capital and the provinces. But as the government held against various offensives through 1990 and 1991, proving stronger than many had anticipated, and the Mujahi-

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[242] Yousaf. *The Bear Trap*: 224.

[243] Nojumi. *The Rise of the Taliban*: 106–07.

[244] Tanner. *Afghanistan*: 276.

deen suffered heavy casualties, fractures reemerged, and infighting resumed.[245]

The Mujahideen debated how and when to take the offensive and seek victory (i.e., when to shift from hit-and-run guerrilla tactics to direct assaults on major cities and military garrisons).[246] The mix of direct and indirect assaults varied by region according to calculations on the part of various Mujahideen factions as to the strength of their forces relative to regional Afghan units. Insurgents massed against Jalalabad in 1989 and took heavy casualties, forcing the Mujahideen to revert back towards indirect tactics for a period of time.

Threats in Afghanistan's geographic regions

During the first year following the Soviet withdrawal, the Mujahideen launched significant attacks on Khost, Herat, Kandahar, and Kabul. They also overran numerous isolated garrisons in the northeast at Barikot, Azmar, and Asadabad in Kunar and Nuristan provinces—areas that the Soviet military and Afghan forces had barely penetrated despite numerous attempts to do so.[247] More remote areas were the first to fall, particularly in the mountains near the border with Pakistan. Afghan forces retreated from many smaller bases and ceded large areas to the insurgents.[248] Despite the appearance of a nationwide offensive, most of these insurgent operations were uncoordinated actions by local or regional commanders.

Jalaluddin Haqqani's faction in Khost first isolated the city by cutting the Khost–Gardez highway. His forces infiltrated Khost city and declared the province an independent zone.[249] His men then moved up

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[245] For example, as the Afghan army held against a major assault on the city of Jalalabad in the spring of 1989 and the Mujahideen took heavy casualties, divisions emerged and command and control broke down.

[246] Yousaf. *The Bear Trap*: 224.

[247] Ibid: 227.

[248] Larry P. Goodson. *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001: 72.

[249] Mark Urban. *War in Afghanistan*. London: MacMillan, 1988: 180; Nojumi. *The Rise of the Taliban*: 108.

the highway to Gardez in an effort to overrun the garrison there and take the city, putting Haqqani's forces along the southern approach to Kabul.[250]

In Mazar-e-Sharif, the main city in the north, there were growing terrorist attacks, including major bomb blasts on residential buildings housing pro-government political leaders.[251] There were large-scale attacks in Kunduz, which has a large Pashtun population.[252] In the west, there were assaults on the airfield at Shindand in which many aircraft were destroyed.[253] In the Panjshir Valley north of Kabul, insurgents massed in large numbers and overran garrisons, taking several hundred prisoners.[254]

In March 1989, one month after the completion of the Soviet withdrawal, several thousand insurgents attacked Jalalabad, a major city 70 miles east of Kabul.[255] They attacked directly from the east and seized the airfield.[256] The city was well-defended with layered security perimeters reaching far beyond the city limits. The Afghan army held against the assault and more than 3,000 Mujahideen were killed.[257] During four months of fighting, the Mujahideen ran low on ammunition, command and control broke down, and factionalism broke out in the ranks. The insurgents were tactically proficient but lacked the command structure to effectively wage such a large battle involving multiple contingents of fighters.[258] Splinters emerged among the Mujahideen in the east following their defeat at Jalalabad and confidence was restored in parts of the ANSF.

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[250] Tanner. *Afghanistan*: 268.

[251] Urban. *War in Afghanistan*: 171.

[252] Tanner. *Afghanistan*: 269.

[253] Urban. *War in Afghanistan*: 172.

[254] Gregory Feifer. *The Great Gamble: The Soviet War in Afghanistan*. New York: Harper, 2009: 220. The Afghan army responded by closing a 500-man garrison at Peshgar.

[255] Tanner. *Afghanistan*: 271.

[256] Yousaf. *The Bear Trap*: 228.

[257] Tanner. *Afghanistan*: 271.

[258] Yousaf. *The Bear Trap*: 228.

The Mujahideen were locally based, and concerned mainly with fighting in their areas. They were not capable of large-scale coordinated actions, especially across large areas of the country. What limited cooperation they did engage in quickly broke down under pressure or a lack of unifying goal. They tended to resist the idea of discipline or strategy.[259] They were unable to translate momentum into strategic victory, owing to their lack of cohesion and operational coordination and inability to seize and hold the initiative in a disciplined enough manner to secure victory.[260]

Some commanders, especially among the non-Pashtun minorities in the north, were more organized, but this was less true among the Pashtun groups.[261] At one point, there were 16 or 17 different organizations. Some reported to Pakistan, others to Iran.[262] The 7 main Peshawar-based parties took their aid from Pakistan and operated mainly in the Pashtun areas. Among them there was considerable disunity as well. Levels of organization and of command and control varied among the different outfits. In some groups, field commanders were given considerable autonomy, while others were more centralized and directed by leaders based in Pakistan.[263]

Tactics

Roadside bombs, direct fire, and anti-air attacks

The Mujahideen used IEDs, though the term did not exist at that time. Most IEDs were anti-tank or anti-personnel mines detonated by command wire or remote control. The main target of IEDs was large Afghan and Soviet army convoys, and to a lesser extent, foot patrols (most Afghan and Soviet patrols were mounted). The Mujahideen relied mainly on direct fire tactics, particularly hit-and-run ambushes

[259] Urban. *War in Afghanistan*: 216.

[260] Ibid: 216.

[261] Ibid.

[262] Antonio Giustozzi. *Empires of Mud: Wars and Warlords in Afghanistan*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2009: 44.

[263] Ibid: 48.

on large convoys. The Mujahideen were particularly adept at flanking and encirclement, and the use of the L-shaped ambush.[264]

The Mujahideen relentlessly targeted the long, vulnerable supply lines of the Soviet-backed Afghan army—particularly along isolated mountain roads. Garrisons became isolated and starved of ammunition and food. The insurgents also targeted isolated bases, many of which were overrun. Before the collapse of the central government in 1992, the majority of Afghan army forces were tied down protecting bases and lines of communication and resupplying forward positions.

The insurgents focused on controlling rural areas, while ceding most urban areas to government forces until after the Soviet army withdrew. In some cases, the Mujahideen laid siege to such cities as Jalalabad. In others—for example, Kandahar and Kabul—they took control over rural areas on the outskirts of the city and used them as bases from which to infiltrate urban areas, making it relatively easy to take them over when the time came.

In the late 1980s, surface-to-air threats emerged, with the introduction of heat-seeking Stinger missiles. The Mujahideen began targeting aircraft, helicopters in particular, to a degree unseen before in the conflict. The denial of Soviet air superiority shifted the balance of power to the Mujahideen and left many Afghan army outposts vulnerable to massed attacks and impossible to resupply.

Political tactics and local ceasefires

Many smaller, more localized insurgent factions negotiated separate deals with the government, though the larger and militarily stronger factions refused to engage in talks. Many of these agreements took the form of tactical ceasefires between local insurgent groups and nearby Afghan forces.[265] In places where government forces were stronger, these agreements took the form of reconciliation on the part of the insurgents.

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[264] Ali Ahmad Jalali and Lester Grau. *The Other Side of the Mountain: Mujahideen Tactics in the Soviet-Afghan War*, Quantico, VA: United States Marine Corps Studies and Analysis Division, 1995: xii–xxii.

[265] Antonio Giustozzi. *War, Politics, and Society in Afghanistan: 1978–1992*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2000: 179.

In other areas where the insurgents were in a stronger position and Afghan forces under considerable pressure, the terms of these agreements often favored the guerrillas – and could not, therefore, be considered a form of insurgent reconciliation. In many areas, these local agreements amounted to de facto defection on the part of government forces. In places where the army pulled back, it was common for local police and irregular forces to defect, especially during the winter when quick reaction forces had greater difficulty reinforcing besieged positions. Many local Mujahideen groups encouraged government forces to defect, offering amnesty if they did so.[266]

External threats and the influence of regional powers

Pakistan

Pakistan's strategy during the 1980s rested on covert support to the Afghan resistance. The idea was to raise the costs of the Soviet occupation, but without forcing a war with the Soviet Union that Pakistan would most certainly lose.[267] Soviet presence in Afghanistan threatened to squeeze Pakistan between two hostile powers to the east and west, each capable of defeating Pakistan in a conventional war.[268] The Soviet presence also threatened the ability of the Pakistani army to retreat into Afghanistan in the event of a major war with India.

By the late 1980s, Pakistani intelligence had built an extensive insurgent infrastructure near the border with Afghanistan. Some 16,000 to 18,000 recruits passed through Pakistani training camps every year. Pakistani military and intelligence personnel also set up camps to facilitate guerrilla operations not directly sanctioned by higher authorities. These alternative camps trained around 6,000 to 8,000 recruits each year, many of them from Arab countries.[269]

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[266] Ibid: 218.

[267] Yousaf. *The Bear Trap:* 20.

[268] Frédéric Grare. *Pakistan: In the Face of the Afghan Conflict 1979–1985.* New Delhi: India Research Press, 2003: 46.

[269] Yousaf. *The Bear Trap*: 20.

When the Soviet military withdrew from Afghanistan, the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) attempted to forge greater unity among the disparate Mujahideen factions and to prevent infighting among them – in order to put up a united front to topple the government in Kabul. The idea was that if Kabul fell, the rest of the provinces would do so as well in short order. This plan conflicted with those of various Mujahideen factions, which preferred to take over the provinces and key regional cities first. Working mainly through its favored proxies, including the followers of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and Jalaluddin Haqqani, the ISI attempted to persuade the Mujahideen to focus on Kabul first – to surround and squeeze the capital and infiltrate into the city to conduct attacks – with the ultimate aim of targeting the regime itself in Kabul. The ISI pushed weapons and other material to those factions that agreed to follow this plan.[270]

Iran

During the late 1980s and early 1990s, Iran backed various Shia Mujahideen factions, as well as regional warlords in the west and north. The Shia Mujahideen groups were quite separate from the mainly Sunni groups based in Pakistan and supported by the Pakistani military, the United States, and Saudi Arabia.[271] Iran deepened its involvement with Hazara and other pro-Iran Shia guerrillas near the end of war, seeking to influence the makeup of the post-Soviet regime.[272] When Tajik leader Barhanuddin Rabbani became president of Afghanistan in 1992, Iran backed his government and sought to play a stabilizing role.[273]

India

India had little influence in Afghanistan during the late 1980s and early 1990s. New Delhi does not appear to have supported any of the Mujahideen groups, nor did it have close relations with Soviet-backed

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[270] Ibid: 142–157.

[271] Tanner. *Afghanistan*: 251.

[272] Urban. *War in Afghanistan*: 171.

[273] "Iran and Afghanistan." *www.understandingwar.org*, *website for The Institute for the Study of War*, accessed Oct. 2013, at www.understandingwar.org/iran-and-afghanistan.

governments in Kabul. The Indian government did not condemn the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and was on good terms with Moscow through much of the 1980s.

India's role, if any, was indirect, through its hostile relationship with Pakistan. Pakistan's effort to control Afghanistan following the Soviet invasion was motivated in large part by Pakistan's ongoing military competition with India. The Pakistani military sought a friendly government in Kabul that would ensure a secure western front and possibly allow the movement of Pakistani military assets into Afghanistan in the event of a war with India.

Vulnerabilities within the Afghan Security Forces

Dependence on foreign aid

The government in Kabul was heavily dependent on military aid and financial support from Moscow. The continued flow of resources from the Soviet Union allowed the regime to survive for several years, despite the fall of towns and major cities in the provinces.[274] The Afghan military was heavily dependent on supplies from the Soviet Union and the airlifting of these supplies given the growing insecurity along the roads. In January 1992, Moscow abruptly stopped all aid to the Kabul government, including money and military hardware. This change greatly weakened the army and police. Unable to pay salaries to its soldiers, command and control in the army broke down and entire units defected.

The sudden stoppage of funds caused a breakdown in patronage networks essential for the survival of the regime, causing pro-government militia commanders to defect once the flow of goods ceased to reach their units. Abdul Rashid Dostum, the strongest pro-government militia commander in the north and a key ally of the regime in Kabul, turned on the government in February 1992 following the stoppage of funding and joined the Mujahideen.[275] His forces

[274] Goodson. *Afghanistan's Endless War*: 72. The Soviet Union sent an estimated $300 million in military supplies every month after February 1989 until the supply line was cut in January 1992. Also, Braithwaite. *Afghansty*: 296.

[275] Tanner, *Afghanistan*: 276.

then overran Mazar-e-Sharif. Soon after the fall of Mazar-e-Sharif, the army began to crumble in Herat.[276] The same happened in Kandahar. The central government quickly collapsed. In April 1992, the Mujahideen overran the garrisons at Kabul, and the capital fell under insurgent control.

Reliance on Soviet air support and air lift

Afghan forces were heavily dependent on Soviet air support and air lift. With the withdrawal of Soviet aircraft, Afghan ground forces could no longer count on close air support. With many roads and mountain passes cut, large areas of the country became unreachable by government forces. It became impossible to provide reinforcements to isolated checkpoints or garrisons under assault, or to evacuate wounded soldiers and police. As a result, many isolated areas that had been dependent on air support and/or aerial transport and resupply fell to the Mujahideen. This trend increased with the withdrawal of most Soviet aircraft and pilots and the eventual cutting of military aid to the fledgling Afghan air force.

The lack of air support reportedly demoralized troops in some areas of the country where air support was integral to the defense of patrols and garrisons. In the Arghandab valley north of Kandahar city, mass defections from the army were attributed to lack of air support. The Mujahideen secured an important victory there before the Soviet withdrawal and took control of the valley, putting Kandahar city at risk.[277]

Irregular forces and pro-government militias

The Soviet military raised irregular forces across the country, especially during the later years of the war, to reduce the burden on regular forces and to control local areas and lines of communication. These militias emerged as a potent threat to the regime in their own right following the withdrawal of the Soviet army, the reduction in funding to irregular units, and weakening oversight and resupply

[276] Ibid.

[277] Diego Cordovez and Selig Harrison. *Out of Afghanistan: The Inside Story of the Soviet Withdrawal*. London: Oxford University Press, 1995: 257.

from the MoI and the Army.[278] Militias took over local areas they had been entrusted with securing, expanded their control, began targeting police and other government officials who opposed them, and to varying degrees preyed on the population. Many defected to the Mujahideen after 1989.[279] After the fall of the government in 1992, most of the country fell under the control of various militia commanders who fought among themselves during the years of civil war in the 1990s.[280]

Desertions in the Army

Attrition due to desertion, which plagued the enlisted ranks of the army throughout the 1980s, remained constant through 1989 and increased thereafter. Desertions were most common among border troops and others in highly contested areas, as soldiers deployed far away from their native ethnic group. Numbers spiked before major operations, in the middle of winter, and during the harvest. In an effort to stem desertions, the Soviet command lowered the operational tempo of Afghan units. As Soviet forces withdrew, mass desertions of entire units became more common, causing severe disruptions in the Army.[281]

1994–2000: The Taliban's conquest of Afghanistan

Years of civil war followed the collapse of the central government in 1992.[282] Rival warlords fought over control of towns and cities and preyed on the population. In the absence of law and order, indiscriminate violence and extortion became the norm. The Taliban

[278] An elaborate framework was put in place to ensure that militias did not go rogue. Commanders were chosen by the MoI from a list given by tribal leaders. The militias fell under the command of regular army units.

[279] Giustozzi. *Empires of Mud*: 66–67.

[280] Ibid: 54–55 and 66–67.

[281] Giustozzi. *War, Politics, and Society in Afghanistan*: 84–86.

[282] Tanner. *Afghanistan*: 277.

surged into Afghanistan in 1994 under the banner of: "Restore peace, disarm the population, and enforce Sharia Law."[283]

The Taliban were largely welcomed by the population, first in the Pashtun south and later in the east, but met resistance in the north and west. By 1996 the group controlled 22 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces, including Kabul. By 2000, the Taliban controlled over 90 percent of the country. The purpose of this case study is to describe the Taliban's campaign to conquer Afghanistan in the late 1990s—the group's overall strategy, which areas were targeted when, and the tactics employed.[284]

Threats to the national government

The strategy of the Taliban during this period evolved as the group became stronger and attracted new allies. The Taliban struck first in Kandahar, then Helmand, before moving into Farah province and north to Herat. As the group conquered new areas and its ranks swelled, its goals became increasingly ambitious and national in character. Throughout its military campaign, the Taliban focused its efforts on major towns and cities—as opposed to rural areas—and fought large-scale battles around large population centers and garrisons controlled by regional warlords.

In its early stages, the Taliban offered an attractive alternative to the corrupt and predatory rule of local and regional warlords. They took advantage of this situation in the south and used the area as a launching point to build a movement that would soon snowball across almost the entire country.[285] As time went on, the Taliban emerged as a national force capable of putting an end to the civil war and brokering peace between warring factions.[286] They took the Pashtun areas of the south and east quickly, but faced intense resistance from the non-Pashtun militias in the north and west.

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[283] Ahmed Rashid. *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010: 22.

[284] Rashid. *Taliban*: 54; Tanner. *Afghanistan*: 285.

[285] Rashid. *Taliban*: 97.

[286] Ibid: 95.

Unlike the Mujahideen, the Taliban were not regionally based or partitioned in overall leadership. Though the Taliban would stand up governing bodies composed of Taliban leaders in the cities and regions they would overtake, these bodies were still very much connected to the strategic-level leadership. Especially in the early years, all decisions, whether military or otherwise, were directed by Mullah Omar.

Threats in Afghanistan's geographic regions

The Taliban's first major battle was at Spin Boldak on the border with Pakistan in Kandahar province.[287] The force then moved down the Quetta-Kandahar road and took Kandahar City in November 1994. Within three months, the group had established control over the main population centers of southern Afghanistan with relatively little fighting. Thousands of southern Pashtuns joined the Taliban's ranks.[288]

In early 1995, the Taliban pushed north. They took Ghazni and pushed farther into the mountains of the east. The Taliban then moved against former Mujahideen commander Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, the strongest of the Pashtun militia commanders, based at Charasyab south of Kabul. The Taliban first cut the road to Jalalabad and overran Charasyab during several days of intense fighting.[289]

The Taliban then focused their efforts on capturing Kabul, then largely under the control of Tajik militia commander Ahmed Shah Massoud. Fighters attacked the city from three different directions. Massoud's forces drove the Taliban back, all the way to Ghazni. Following this defeat, the Taliban relieved pressure on Kabul and focused its forces—by late 1995 numbering at least 20,000—on Herat and other parts of the west. Forces loyal to Ishmael Khan pushed the Taliban back in a major battle south of Shindand in southern Herat, and forced the group back to Delaram on the border between Hel-

[287] Tanner. *Afghanistan*: 279.

[288] Ibid: 280.

[289] Tanner. *Afghanistan*: 281.

mand and Farah in the southwest. The Taliban regrouped and counter-attacked, eventually taking the city of Herat in September 1995.[290]

The Taliban focused again on taking Kabul, this time from a stronger position and with a larger number of forces.[291] The group launched a relentless barrage of assaults on the garrisons of various militia commanders in and around the capital in late 1995 and early 1996. Rival commanders joined forces for the first time to push the Taliban away from Kabul. The Taliban responded by moving against Jalalabad east of Kabul and cutting the capital off from the passes into Pakistan. From there they pushed toward Bagram, cutting off supply routes north of the capital as well. Massoud and others pulled back from Kabul and the capital fell to the Taliban in September 1996[292]

Taliban leaders established the rudiments of a national government in Kabul and sent the bulk of its forces north.[293] Taliban fighters pushed north out of Herat, taking areas along the northwest corridor, in the provinces of Baghdis and Faryab. Fighters also pushed in from the northeastern mountains, over much of Takhar province and parts of Kunduz. In 1997, the Taliban attacked areas around Mazar-e-Sharif but were forced back. The remaining non-Pashtun militia commanders banded together under the Northern Alliance and held against the Taliban, leading to a military stalemate in key areas of the north.[294]

Tactics

Due to the frontal, siege-like nature of many battles, the Taliban employed rockets and artillery to wear down such cities as Kabul and Herat. In April 1996, the Taliban reportedly fired 866 rockets on Kabul.[295] In addition to indirect fire, the Taliban employed mobile

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[290] Ibid: 282.

[291] Nojumi. *The Rise of the Taliban*: 148.

[292] Tanner. *Afghanistan*: 283.

[293] Nojumi. *The Rise of the Taliban*: 137.

[294] Tanner. *Afghanistan*: 284–85.

[295] Rashid. *Taliban*: 47.

ground assaults using tanks and pickup trucks.[296] Taliban forces attacked in mobile columns involving a line of small pick-up trucks moving directly against enemy lines.[297] Despite poor coordination among units, these ground assaults proved effective.

The Taliban had very little in the way of aircraft. Their use of airpower was limited to poorly-maintained stolen aircraft and dependent on temporary alliances with rival militia commanders. For example, Uzbek militia commander Abdul Rashid Dostum bombed positions around Herat in support of the Taliban before turning against the group when it attacked Mazar-e-Sharif.[298] Though the Taliban captured 52 MiG-21 and other helicopters at Shindand airbase, these aircraft were useless without pilots and technicians provided by Dostum in a deal brokered by Pakistani intelligence.[299]

The Taliban was also limited by their poor logistical support and a weak command structure. As a byproduct of these deficiencies, they had almost no capacity for medicine or medical facilities, and Taliban fighters were unlikely to be treated if wounded in battle.[300]

The Taliban bought the support of many local militias, allowing them to take many areas without a fight and incorporate additional forces into their ranks. The group often mixed the threat of military defeat and subsequent slaughter with the promise of generous payments for a peaceful surrender. The funds generated for these payments came from a variety of sources, including cash from the drug trade, transport security, and external aid from Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.[301] Kandahar was largely taken in this manner, as was Jalalabad.[302]

The Taliban immediately built rudimentary, but relatively effective, interim administrations in the areas that fell under their control.

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[296] Ibid.

[297] Ibid: 39.

[298] Ibid: 36.

[299] Tanner. *Afghanistan*: 282; Rashid. *Taliban*: 64.

[300] Rashid. *Taliban*: 36.

[301] Ibid: 40.

[302] Ibid: 28–29.

They established makeshift courts and clamped down on lawlessness and predation. They dismantled illegal checkpoints on roads, allowing the free movement of goods and people for the first time in years.[303]

External threats and the influence of regional powers

Pakistan

The Afghan Pashtuns who led and initiated the Taliban were trained in Deobandi madrassas in Pakistan.[304] The bond between the Taliban and Pakistan traces its roots to a symbiotic relationship of support and cash flow in exchange for security and political stability in Afghanistan. This in turn enabled Pakistani trade, which depended on transit routes through the war-torn country.[305] Pakistani backing for the movement increased as it became clear that the movement was capable of defeating the warlords and potentially ending the country's civil war.

Pakistani intelligence provided assistance in the form of cash funding, arms, vehicles, bribe money, a steady supply of Afghan refugee recruits coming from Pakistani madrassas, military advisors, and Pakistani fighters. In 1998, the Pakistani government provided more than $6 million in direct contribution to the Taliban.[306] With time, the number of Pakistani agencies providing manpower also increased. At the forefront of this was the Pakistani ISI, which had officers deployed in cities across Afghanistan as advisors during the Taliban's conquest of the country. The ISI played a key role in directing Taliban leadership as well as facilitating the flow of goods and other aid being shipped to the Taliban. Other advising and support was reported to have come from the Pakistani army and air force. There were even reports of direct fighting by both immigrating Pakistani nation-

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[303] Ibid: 35.

[304] Thomas Barfield. *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, reprinted 2012: 255.

[305] Tanner. *Afghanistan*: 279.

[306] Barfield. *A Cultural and Political History*: 258; Seth Jones. *In the Graveyard of Empires: America's War in Afghanistan*. Washington, D.C.: W.W. Norton and Co., 2010: 63.

als and the Pakistani Frontier Corps, a federal paramilitary force largely made up of Pashtun fighters.[307]

Iran

Iran largely opposed the Taliban, which was in great measure a Sunni Pashtun movement supported by Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. The group was responsible for many attacks on Afghanistan's Shiite minority.[308] During the siege of Kabul, Iran provided supplies, training, and anti-aircraft missiles to militias opposing the Taliban.[309] Iran later emerged as a major backer of the Northern Alliance. Iran increased its support following mass killings of Afghan Shias in the north in 1998. When the Taliban executed Iranian diplomats in Mazar-e-Sharif, Iran mobilized troops along its border with Afghanistan.

Vulnerabilities within the Afghan Security Forces

Opposition to the Taliban was extremely divided. The remnants of the post-1992 national government and security forces were marred by infighting. Various regional warlords were unable to resolve their disputes for control, leading to a breakdown in negotiations, the fracturing of the security forces, and the onset of civil war. [310] Rival militia commanders fought for control over different parts of Afghanistan for the remainder of the decade.

Local and regional militias fought for personal gain and were easily bribed. Many had difficulties generating reliable sources of revenue and paying their fighters on a regular basis.[311] During the battle for Kandahar in 1994, it is believed that the militias and security forces guarding the city were paid to stand down, allowing the Taliban to take the city with little fighting.[312] In the taking of Jalalabad, the city's

[307] Jones. *Graveyard*: 63–65.

[308] Rashid. *Taliban*: 35.

[309] Ibid: 44.

[310] Ibid.

[311] Giustozzi. *Empires of Mud*: 74–75.

[312] Rashid. *Taliban*: 28–29.

leader, Haji Abdul Qadeer, was given a substantial bribe, rumored to be in the magnitude of $10 million, to leave the city.

The self-interested rivalry found in the upper echelons translated into poor discipline, lack of cohesion in the rank-and-file, and difficulties recruiting and retaining skilled fighters. The warlords lacked the ideological glue necessary to forge unity and act towards strategic aims. Looting and rape by militiamen became common place partly because military leaders could not control it but also because its allowance was used as an incentive in the absence of pay.[313]

2006–2009: Taliban offensive in the south and east

The Taliban, having been strategically defeated in 2001 and 2002, attempted to make a comeback in 2006 inside Afghanistan, launching attacks across the southern provinces and to a lesser extent in the east. The organization reestablished its networks, recruited new fighters, and reconstituted itself militarily to fight a guerrilla war against coalition and Afghan government forces. The Taliban infiltrated rural areas, assassinated and intimidated local leaders, overran smaller towns in Kandahar and Helmand provinces, surrounded garrisons, and threatened Kandahar city and Helmand's provincial capital at Lashkar Gah. In the eastern provinces as well, where the insurgency was more fragmented, there was considerable growth in violence.

Additional U.S. and NATO forces managed to blunt the Taliban's offensive, regain control over many areas that had fallen under insurgent control, and increase the capability and capacity of the ANSF. As thousands of additional ISAF forces were deployed to Afghanistan in 2009, it became clear that the Taliban would not be able to force the collapse of the Afghan government or the immediate withdrawal of coalition forces. This case study, which focuses on Taliban activities from the initial months of their resurgence in 2006 to the deployment of additional U.S. forces in 2009, illustrates how the Taliban might target Afghan forces in the event of a renewed insurgent offensive after 2014.

[313] Ibid.

Threats to the national government

The strategic goal of the Taliban during this period was to seek a military victory and to force the withdrawal of all coalition forces. The insurgent leadership's stated goals were fairly consistent on this point.[314] The Taliban leadership apparently believed that the handover of responsibility for southern Afghanistan from U.S. to British and Canadian forces in late 2005 and early 2006 signaled that the United States was preparing to withdraw from Afghanistan, and that a large-scale insurgent offensive would, therefore, hasten this withdrawal and give the appearance of a Taliban victory. The insurgents did not appear interested in negotiations, but instead sought an outright military victory. It was clear at the time that the Taliban rejected the Afghan government and its constitution and sought its overthrow, as well as the dissolution of its security forces.

At the national level, the Taliban's strategy appeared to be to take over outlying rural areas and from there put pressure on larger towns and provincial centers. They carried out acts of terrorism and targeted assassination in urban areas from bases in outlying villages. Insurgents infiltrated the suburbs around several key cities, especially Kabul and Kandahar, and fought pitched battles to control some of these areas. The Taliban launched direct assaults at some towns in outlying areas, especially in northern Helmand, but relied mainly on infiltration and terrorist methods to undermine security in major cities. Over the course of the Taliban's many offensives in 2006 through 2008, there was considerable disagreement within the leadership over the appropriate use of terrorism and assassination, especially suicide attacks and bombings involving civilian casualties.

Beginning in 2006, insurgents infiltrated into the rural areas around Kabul, especially in Logar, Wardak, and Kapisa provinces. By 2008, many areas around Kabul had fallen under the insurgents' control.[315]

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[314] Alex Strick van Linschoten and Felix Kuehn. *Lessons Learnt: "Islamic, Independent, Perfect and Strong": Parsing the Taliban's Strategic Intentions, 2001–2011*. Wiltshire, UK: Arts and Humanities Research Council, 2012: 12.

[315] Mohammed Osman Tariq Elias. "The Resurgence of the Taliban in Kabul: Logar and Wardak." In Antonio Giustozzi, ed. *Decoding the New Tali-*

From there, they targeted convoys entering and exiting the city and infiltrated the city itself.[316]

Bombings and suicide attacks emerged as a threat in Kabul beginning in the latter half of 2007 and grew steadily thereafter. In 2008, there were a number of commando-style *fidayeen* attacks involving considerable planning and executed by well-trained operatives—characteristic of attacks conducted by militants trained by Pakistan's intelligence services. These attacks involved a mix of suicide bombings, car bombings, and direct fire. Many of these attacks targeted high-security installations, including Afghan ministries.[317] Attacks in Kabul had strategic effects, as they were widely reported in the news and for the first time in the war threatened the security of national leaders and institutions.

Many of these attacks were attributed to the Haqqani network based in Pakistan's North Waziristan tribal agency, as were many insurgent operations in the southeast and along the southern approaches to Kabul. Though this network often used more sophisticated tactics, strategically and politically the group remained allied with the Taliban writ large and its leadership in Quetta, Pakistan. The Haqqani network leadership openly accepted the leadership of the Quetta Shura Taliban and espoused the same goals at the national level.[318]

The Taliban targeted food and oil tankers across the Pashtun belt. In Helmand, in particular, constant ambushes nearly cut British supply lines and left many bases isolated and dependent on aerial resupply. Insurgents on the Pakistani side of the border targeted convoys of U.S. supplies and equipment moving through Pakistan. Most of these

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ban: Insights from the Afghan Field. New York: Columbia University Press, 2009: 54.

[316] *The Insurgency in Afghanistan's Heartland*. Brussels: International Crisis Group, 2011: 7; Antonio Giustozzi. *Koran, Kalashnikov, and Laptop: The Neo-Taliban Insurgency in Afghanistan*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2008: 128–29.

[317] Thomas Ruttig. "Loya Paktiya's Insurgency," In Giustozzi, ed. *Decoding the New Taliban*: 59.

[318] Gilles Dorronsoro. *The Taliban's Winning Strategy in Afghanistan*. Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2009: 10.

attacks were against Pakistani and Afghan truck drivers. These operations put pressure on U.S. supply lines and cast uncertainty on the security of the ground lines of communication through Pakistan.[319]

Threats in Afghanistan's geographic regions

The Taliban's resurgence in the southern provinces of Kandahar and Helmand was large in scale and coordinated across time and space. Many of the fighters were local, as were many field commanders, but the intensity of the violence across so many towns and districts indicated substantial planning and organization by leaders based in Quetta. There was a marked rise in violence across the eastern provinces as well beginning in 2006, but this activity was more scattered and appeared to be the work of separate commanders acting relatively independently. Beginning in early 2008, the Taliban carried out a series of smaller offensives in the northern provinces of Kunduz and Baghlan where there is a small Pashtun population. The Taliban also expanded into Baghdis province northeast of Herat in the west. Generally speaking however, the Taliban's post 2005 offensives were limited to the Pashtun belt in the south and east.

The southern provinces

Before 2006, the insurgents focused on reconstituting their political organization and military capabilities across the south, and engaged in relatively low-key activities; for the most part, they refrained from large-scale attacks that might attract the attention of coalition forces and invite retaliation. During 2004 and 2005, the Taliban cadres in southern Afghanistan carried out targeted assassinations, quietly cemented alliances with sympathetic tribes and powerbrokers, and recruited fighters and mid-level commanders from local tribes and militias that had become alienated from the government—laying the groundwork for the offensive that would follow.[320]

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[319] Christopher Reuter and Borhan Younus. "The Return of the Taliban." In Giustozzi, ed. *Decoding the New Taliban*: 114.

[320] An unknown number of militiamen and their commanders who had previously worked with the government switched sides and joined the Taliban, especially in Helmand where a number of militias were disbanded

They infiltrated the rural areas around Kandahar City and from there established operational networks inside the city itself. In a number of outlying areas of Helmand province where NATO and Afghan forces were few in number, Taliban cadres quietly assumed control and began putting pressure on vulnerable district centers.[321]

In early 2006, the Taliban came out into the open and launched a series of direct and simultaneous military offensives that immediately put coalition and Afghan forces on the defensive across the southern provinces and threatened to cut the region off from the rest of the country. The scope and intensity of these attacks sent the message that U.S. and NATO efforts in Afghanistan were faltering and that the Taliban had recovered from their defeat in 2001 and 2002.[322] The relative lull in activities before 2006 followed by a massive surge in attacks appeared to be part of a larger strategy to fundamentally alter the strategic situation—an effect that would not have been achievable through more gradual measures.[323]

In 2007 and 2008, the insurgents maintained a high operational tempo against Afghan and NATO forces, even after it became apparent that coalition forces were not about to withdraw. The Taliban lost thousands of fighters between early 2006 and late 2008, most of them in direct assaults on NATO and ANSF outposts. Heavy attrition caused the Taliban to alter its tactics and organization, but not its

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and politically isolated but not demobilized or incorporated into the government's security forces.

[321] Theo Farrell and Antonio Giustozzi. "The Taliban at War: Inside the Helmand Insurgency, 2004–2012." *International Affairs* 89: 4, 2013: 850.

[322] There were few police to secure the population, and only a battalion plus of British forces in Helmand and similar numbers of Canadian forces in Kandahar. Carter Malkasian, Jerry Meyerle, and Megan Katt. *The War in Southern Afghanistan: 2001–2008*. Alexandria, VA: CNA, 2009: 11. The militia forces that had worked with U.S. troops to expel the Taliban in Kandahar had been demobilized and only partly incorporated into the army. The same was true of many pro-government militias in Helmand. Sean Maloney. "A Violent Impediment: The Evolution of Insurgent Operations in Kandahar Province, 2003–07." *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 19:2, 2008: 211.

[323] Maloney. "A Violent Impediment." 209–210.

overall strategy and aims. The Quetta-based leadership directed its field commanders to cease large-scale direct assaults and to operate in smaller formations and utilize IEDs against convoys and patrols.[324]

Kandahar

In Kandahar province, the Taliban targeted 11 of 13 districts beginning in January 2006 and escalating into the warmer months. The police were the main target of these operations, especially checkpoints and headquarters. From 2006 to 2008, the Taliban consolidated their control over many rural areas, recruiting new fighters and in some places building fortified camps. As Canadian forces attempted to regain the initiative through a series of major clearing operations, large formations of insurgents fought open pitched battles, making use of bunkers and other semi-conventional techniques.

Local insurgent commanders kept the pressure on Canadian and Afghan government forces across the province and expanded their attacks into more remote areas, causing Canadian forces as well as Afghan army units to spread out and become tied down fighting in remote areas. The insurgents frequently withdrew under pressure from clearing operations and infiltrated back again to target forces left behind to hold and build. The result was that fewer forces were available to secure Kandahar city and its surrounds.[325]

While targeting vulnerable rural areas, the Taliban carried out suicide attacks and car bombings in Kandahar city aimed at police commanders and other heavily guarded officials, including a Canadian ambassador. The Taliban expanded into Zharey and Panjwai districts along the western approaches to Kandahar city. They attempted to capture the Arghandab valley just north of Kandahar city, known as the "gateway to Kandahar," but were pushed back by a tribal powerbroker and militia commander close to the government.[326] Compared to many rural areas, Kandahar city remained relatively safe

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[324] Farrell and Giustozzi. "The Taliban at War." 864–65.

[325] Malkasian et al. *The War in Southern Afghanistan*: 29; Maloney. "A Violent Impediment." 211.

[326] Maloney. "A Violent Impediment." 210. Malkasian et al. *The War in Southern Afghanistan*: 17.

until 2008 when the Taliban managed to divide and intimidate the tribes of the Arghandab, from where they moved into Kandahar city and carried out a series of sophisticated suicide bombings and commando-style *fidayeen* attacks that caused security in the city to deteriorate sharply.[327]

Helmand

In Helmand province, there were simultaneous massed attacks on government centers across the northern part of the province. Large formations of insurgents attacked police posts in the towns of Sangin, Musa Qala, and Now Zad and succeeded in overrunning a number of garrisons and killing several district governors and chiefs of police, as well as numerous rank-and-file ANP.[328] Musa Qala, the northernmost town in Helmand, was completely overrun and turned into a Taliban sanctuary soon after British forces pulled back from their base there.[329]

As British forces moved to prevent towns of northern Helmand from being completely overrun, insurgents targeted government positions in central Helmand, the heart of the province, and overran positions farther south toward the border with Pakistan. Insurgents surrounded British and Afghan police positions in northern Helmand, keeping them under constant pressure and nearly overrunning them on many occasions. At the same time, they ambushed convoys and cut many ground lines of communication, nearly shutting down British and Afghan logistics, forcing the Afghan and coalition forces to rely heavily on aerial resupply and cutting them off from the population.

The Taliban made repeated attempts to assassinate the Helmand provincial chief of police and other officials and allies of the governor. Several district governors from outlying areas were evacuated from their districts because of threats of assassination. After gaining control over the district of Nad Ali west of the provincial capital at

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[327] Malkasian et al. *The War in Southern Afghanistan*: 48.

[328] Fifty-two policemen were killed in Sangin alone during the first half of 2006. Ibid: 22.

[329] Musa Qala was retaken in 2007 in a major joint operation by U.S., British, and Afghan forces.

Lashkar Gah, some 200 insurgents massed on the outskirts of the city in preparation for an attack on the governor's house and the headquarters of the NDS, Afghanistan's intelligence service. The attack was repulsed after 10 days of heavy fighting.[330]

As thousands of insurgent fighters were killed in massed assaults in 2006 and 2007, the Taliban in Helmand shifted towards smaller formations and greater use of IEDs. They ceased attempting to overrun district centers and never again attempted to mass against the provincial capital.[331] Compared with Kandahar, there were few suicide attacks and car bombings in Lashkar Gah, a city of relatively little political significance. The Taliban in Helmand focused mainly on strategically important rural areas and key district centers. As British and Afghan forces regained lost ground in 2007 and 2008, the Taliban pushed into more outlying areas. At the same time, they left behind underground networks in cleared areas and retained a significant presence across the province.

The eastern provinces

Insurgent commanders in the eastern provinces launched their own series of military offensives from 2006 on, though these activities were more disparate and variable—a product of the relatively fragmented and difficult terrain. There was less coordination among various field commanders in the east and less central direction from Pakistan-based Taliban leaders. The eastern insurgency was relatively disjointed and localized, involving a diverse array of insurgent factions operating independently but espousing loyalty to the Taliban movement writ large.

There were pockets of intense fighting—as intense as the most violent parts of Kandahar and Helmand during the height of the Taliban offensive there—while nearby areas remained calm. Overall, the locus of fighting was in outlying areas, less so in cities and large towns. Yet, as the insurgency spread in 2007 and 2008, the more am-

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[330] Malkasian et al. *The War in Southern Afghanistan*: 49; Tom Coghlan. "The Taliban in Helmand." In Giustozzi, ed. *Decoding the New Taliban*: 145.

[331] Farrell and Giustozzi. "The Taliban at War." 865.

bitious eastern commanders—the Haqqani network in particular—crept toward Kabul, infiltrating key areas around the capital from secure bases farther east, and emerged as a serious threat to the regime itself. Pakistani militants and Pakistani intelligence played a greater role in the east because of the proximity of Pakistan's lawless tribal areas and the porous and mountainous border (see sub-section below on Pakistan).

The northeast (Kunar and Nuristan)

Some of the heaviest fighting in Afghanistan in 2007 and 2008 was in the isolated mountain valleys of central Kunar and parts of Nuristan along the northern border with Pakistan.[332] The areas of greatest contention were the Korengal valley in central Kunar, Kamdesh in eastern Nuristan, and the major passes through the mountains into Pakistan. The insurgency in Kunar and Nuristan is highly dispersed and fragmented – a consequence of the difficult terrain, which is characterized by narrow valleys through the mountains.[333]

There was a diverse mix of Pakistani and Afghan groups operating in the region, as well as foreign fighters, with different and at times conflicting tactical goals and areas of influence. Many of these groups were focused on fighting ISAF forces, yet there were factions of the Pakistani Taliban engaged in open warfare with the Pakistani state, state-sponsored Pakistani militants focused on India, and members of al Qaeda. There was considerable in-fighting among these groups. The overall Taliban commander for Kunar in 2008 claimed to be fighting a war on multiple fronts against coalition forces, the Afghan government, and the Pakistani military.[334]

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[332] In 2009, U.S. forces pulled back from the more heavily contested areas in the two provinces.

[333] Jerry Meyerle, Megan Katt, and Jim Gavrilis. *On the Ground in Afghanistan: Counterinsurgency in Practice*. Quantico, VA: Marine Corps University Press, 2010: 61–72 and 105–112.

[334] Michael Moore and James Fussell. "Kunar and Nuristan: Rethinking U.S. Counterinsurgency Operations." *Institute for the Study of War*, July 2009: 11–15. His name was Qari Ziaur Rahman; he was reportedly killed in 2013.

Insurgent activity in Kunar and Nuristan was initially quite isolated from developments farther south and was, for the most part, sparked by early U.S. operations targeting fleeing al Qaeda fighters. Much of the heaviest fighting was in areas with ethnic Nuristani (i.e., non-Pashtun) populations known more for their militant resistance to all outside forces than for loyalty to the Taliban. Over time, local insurgents developed connections with the Afghan Taliban leadership and with various Pakistani Taliban factions. In 2007 and 2008, the area emerged as a key base for insurgents infiltrating districts north and west of Kabul through mountain passes running through western Nuristan. These routes also connected the northern districts of Kabul to insurgent bases in northwest Pakistan.[335]

As a result of U.S. drone strikes into Pakistan's tribal areas, a number of al Qaeda cadres took refuge in Kunar. A number of al Qaeda leaders, including Osama bin Laden, had connections to Kunar dating back to the 1980s. In some places, they became integrated with local fighters; in others, they were rejected. Al Qaeda operatives kept a low profile, preferring to remain behind the scenes working as facilitators among different groups on both sides of the border and facilitating the ingress of Arab, Chechen, and Uzbek fighters.[336] The extent of its influence and presence was a matter of some debate (see sub-section below on al Qaeda in Afghanistan).

Fighters in Kunar and Nuristan demonstrated considerable proficiency in direct fire tactics. They nearly overran several U.S. bases in sophisticated large-scale assaults that took U.S. forces by surprise. Unlike in the south, where attacks on fixed positions tended to take the form of simple human wave assaults, attacks on bases in the northeast exploited the element of surprise (demonstrating an ability to plan complex operations and move undetected in large numbers), made effective use of terrain, and exploited vulnerabilities in U.S. defenses

[335] Moore and Fussell. "Kunar and Nuristan." 7–9.

[336] Ibid: 11–12.

(indicating effective intelligence collection and careful study of U.S. and Afghan forces).[337]

The insurgents operated a sophisticated logistical network stretching into Pakistan. Training camps and arms bazaars across the nearby border with Pakistan fed into the groups fighting in Kunar and Nuristan. Local militants tended to remain in their valleys, but more sophisticated outfits with broader aims (often made up of Pakistani or other out-of-area fighters) moved on foot from valley to valley, targeting government forces, recruiting fighters, providing training and expertise to local militants, and building an organization. Many of these fighters appear to have received formal military training, likely in camps in Pakistan. Before large operations, mid-level commanders and out-of-area fighters moved into an area, activated a network of local fighters, and coordinated their actions against U.S. or Afghan forces.[338]

Insurgents in Kunar and Nuristan also conducted a number of successful ambushes on U.S. and Afghan convoys involving large numbers of enemy fighters in channelized mountain terrain. These insurgents have repeatedly targeted road movements, seeking to cut routes through the mountains, forcing U.S. and Afghan forces to rely on aerial resupply and air support to protect large convoys. There was an increase in IED attacks in 2007 and 2008, most detonated by remote control—though direct fire ambushes remained the tactic of choice. Against the police, they have focused on large-scale attacks, many of which involved overrunning isolated posts and kidnapping large groups of police for psychological effect.

The southeast (Khost, Paktika, Paktiya, Ghazni)

Farther south, in the provinces of Khost, Paktika, Paktiya, and Ghazni—another quasi-autonomous region with its own complex dynamic—the insurgency had a different character. The Quetta Shura

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[337] Randal Steeb, et al. *Perspectives on the Battle of Wanat: Challenges Facing Small Unit Operations in Afghanistan*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2011.

[338] David Kilcullen. "Taliban and Counterinsurgency in Kunar." In Giustozzi. *Decoding the New Taliban*: 239–240.

Taliban operated in parts of the southeast where it sought to overrun and control district centers and coordinate its activities with the larger offensive occurring in the south. Yet the brunt of the insurgent offensive in the southeast was spearheaded by the Pakistan-based Haqqani network, a largely family-run tribally based organization with ambitious aims. Its leadership was based in Pakistan's North Waziristan tribal agency and enjoyed the support of the Pakistani military. Haqqani network leaders accepted the overall leadership of the Quetta Shura and were represented on its councils, yet they operated independently and pursued their own aims at the tactical and operational levels.

The Haqqani network's influence spanned both sides of the border with Pakistan. The Haqqanis were from Khost province in eastern Afghanistan, but they had resided for years in neighboring North Waziristan and formed close working relationships with Pakistani tribal and militant leaders there. The network also had close ties with Pakistani intelligence dating back to the 1980s.[339] Despite these ties to Pakistan, the Haqqani Network largely maintained its independence, ever more so as its reach inside Afghanistan expanded. The Pakistani military claimed that it could not shut down the Haqqani network's sanctuaries in North Waziristan for fear the group would target the Pakistani military from Afghanistan, and U.S. and NATO forces could not shut down the organization in large part due to its sanctuaries inside Pakistan.[340]

Before 2006, there were sporadic attacks on outlying bases and assassinations of district officials and other pro-government leaders in the southeast, but the area was believed to be relatively stable. In 2006, the Haqqani network carried out its first suicide attack against an Afghan army checkpoint in the Barmal district of Paktika. Later that year, a suicide bomber traced to the Haqqanis killed the governor of Paktiya province. The group then detonated a bomb at the governor's funeral. Many targeted assassinations occurred in areas where there was a substantial government presence and officials and infor-

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[339] Ruttig. "Loya Paktiya's Insurgency." in Giustozzi, ed. *Decoding the New Taliban*: 62.

[340] Meyerle. *Unconventional Warfare and Counterinsurgency in Pakistan*.

mal powerbrokers had some reason to feel safe enough to resist. In addition to district officials, the Taliban targeted doctors, teachers, NGO workers, and intelligence personnel.[341]

In 2007, the security situation deteriorated drastically, because the Haqqani network expanded beyond its traditional base areas in Khost. Numerous attacks on the Khost–Gardez road threatened the vital line of communication in the southeast. Insurgents conducted direct assaults on district centers and police posts, several of which were overrun. A number of district governors, fearing assassination, moved to urban areas. Large groups of fighters engaged in prolonged firefights with U.S. and Afghan forces in western and northern Paktiya.[342] Andar district in Ghazni saw similar developments.[343] The Haqqanis also expanded into Logar and Wardak along the southern approach to Kabul and targeted outlying ANSF posts in those two provinces.[344]

Attacks continued to grow through 2008 in both number and reach. Fighting was particularly intense in Khost and Paktiya and along the Khost–Gardez road. In the spring of that year, as many as 4,000 Pakistani Taliban from Pakistan's North and South Waziristan tribal agencies entered the fray. District centers came under greater pressure. Later that year, insurgents attempted to storm the Paktika provincial center at Sharana.

In 2008, the group leveraged newly acquired bases along the southern approaches to Kabul to infiltrate into the city and execute a number of high-profile suicide bombings on heavily guarded targets. They also conducted commando-style *fidayeen* operations that had

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[341] Giustozzi. *Koran Kalashnikov and Laptop*: 102.

[342] Ruttig. "Loya Paktiya's Insurgency." In Guistozzi, ed. *Decoding the New Taliban*: 70.

[343] Christopher Reuter and Borhan Younus. "The Return of the Taliban in Andar District, Ghazni." In Guistozzi, ed. *Decoding the New Taliban*: 106–111.

[344] Ruttig. "Loya Paktiya's Insurgency." In Guistozzi, ed. *Decoding the New Taliban*: 70.

considerable impact at the strategic level, despite the relatively small number of insurgents involved.[345]

The Haqqani network relied more on terrorist methods to achieve its aims than did insurgents in Kunar and Nuristan or those fighting for control over the south. The group showed relatively little interest in controlling populations or holding ground. It operated like a tightly-run family syndicate—highly disciplined, secretive, and less prone to infighting than other groups. It sought to expand its operational reach—the ultimate goal being to threaten Kabul itself through a disciplined underground network—not to control towns and villages and set up shadow governments and military commissions. Despite numerous attacks on outlying district centers by Pakistani and other Taliban forces working with the Haqqani network, the group tended to avoid open confrontations with Afghan or U.S. forces.

The northern and western provinces

The Taliban's focus has clearly been on the south and to a lesser extent on the east. Yet, the group has also sought to make its presence known in parts of the north and west where there are some Pashtun-majority areas. This appears to have been part of a loose strategy to expand their geographic reach, even if only slightly, following many of the same routes as during their conquest of Afghanistan in the late 1990s.

The Taliban reactivated old networks in pockets of Kunduz, Takhar, and Baghlan beginning in 2006. Local factions affiliated with the Taliban had considerable influence in some areas but maintained a relatively low profile until 2008 when they began targeting NATO and Afghan government forces.[346] Many of these attacks were against key highways passing north into central Asia, disrupting ISAF's northern distribution network. Several analysts have attributed these developments to an effort to open up another front, however small, among isolated Pashtun populations in the north. The insurgency in the

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[345] Ibid: 70–74.

[346] Sippi Azarbaijani-Moghaddam. "Northern Exposure for the Taliban." In Giustozzi, ed. *Decoding the New Taliban*: 257–58; Giustozzi. *Koran, Kalashnikov, and Laptop*: 130.

north is disparate and fragmented, and does not appear to be tightly controlled or coordinated. Some groups are little more than local criminal organizations seeking to control the smuggling trade. By 2010, many of these groups had diminished in strength as a result of ISAF and ANSF operations.[347]

The Taliban also expanded into the western provinces. Insurgents fled into the southwestern province of Farah beginning in 2006, to escape British offensives in nearby Helmand. They found sanctuary among disaffected Pashtun populations in the eastern part of the province and overran isolated district centers at Bakwa, Bala Baluk and Gulistan. They massed in large numbers to attack small U.S. and Afghan patrols, resulting in a number of near catastrophic ambushes – including some of the largest firefights in Afghanistan. They largely failed to expand into the Tajik areas farther west toward the Iranian border.

From Farah, Taliban members infiltrated into Herat province further north and carried out a handful of terrorist attacks in Herat city and engaged in skirmishes with Tajik militias. In 2007, large numbers of Taliban confronted U.S. and Afghan forces in the Zerikoh valley near Shindand in southern Herat, leading to a major military confrontation that resulted in U.S. airstrikes and the alleged death of numerous civilians, an incident that attracted international attention and led President Karzai for the first time to call for restrictions on U.S. airpower. During this period, the Taliban to a lesser degree infiltrated parts of Ghor and Baghdis where they engaged with former allies from the late 1990s and formed alliances with local criminal groups in remote areas.[348]

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[347] Anthony Bell, David Witter, and Michael Whittaker. "Reversing the Northeastern Insurgency." Institute for the Study of War, Apr. 2011: 9–10.

[348] Meyerle et al. *Insurgent Tactics in Southern Afghanistan;* Antonio Giustozzi. "The Taliban's Marches: Herat, Farah, Bagdhis, and Ghor." In Giustozzi, ed. *Decoding the New Taliban*: 213–228.

Tactics

In remote rural areas, the Taliban first entered villages in small groups, usually at night, and engaged with local leaders and threatened local security forces and pro-government elders. Most of these small-scale operations were uncoordinated, and carried out mainly by local Taliban factions operating under general guidance from higher-level commanders. After gaining control over areas, they built shadow governments, recruited fighters, and communicated directly with regional Taliban commanders. Over time, the Taliban began operating overtly during the day and establishing permanent Sharia courts.[349] This appeared to be part of an overall strategy to build Taliban control in outlying areas and gradually move towards more populated towns and urban centers.

The Taliban built defensive positions to blunt the advantages of U.S. and NATO airpower. These included underground bunkers, particularly in the heavily cultivated rural areas south and west of Kandahar city where insurgents resisted major offensives by Canadian forces. They also made use of caves and rock fortifications in the mountains. The heavily forested valleys in the mountains of the east proved effective against airpower. The Taliban targeted remote outposts difficult to reach by air and fought constantly to cut ground lines of communication, especially in mountainous and hilly terrain. During the height of the Taliban offensive in Helmand in 2006 through 2008, insurgents relentlessly targeted British helicopters, most often as they attempted to land and takeoff, severely disrupting rotary wing airlift.

External threats and the influence of regional powers

Pakistan

Since the fall of the Taliban regime, the group's leadership has taken refuge in the city of Quetta in Pakistan's Baluchistan province, as well as a number of smaller towns closer to the border with Afghanistan. The Pakistani military carried out very few operations in this area of the country, and few Taliban leaders were arrested. The Taliban leadership in Baluchistan maintained a low profile and refrained from violence and other destabilizing activities inside Afghanistan. It is

[349] Elias. "The Resurgence of the Taliban in Kabul." 51.

widely believed that the Pakistani government in turn allowed the group to operate unmolested.

It is believed that the Taliban were able to reconstitute their networks and organization, rebuild their military capabilities, and plan a resurgence from sanctuaries inside Pakistan between 2002 and 2006. During the height of the Taliban offensives in the south from 2006 to 2009, the group's senior leadership remained relatively secure in Quetta and other parts of Baluchistan. Whether or to what degree Pakistani intelligence provided active support to the Taliban is unclear. There is some evidence, however, that Pakistani intelligence provided advice to the Quetta-based Taliban leadership and helped forge unity among its factions.[350]

Before 2009, the United States and NATO were largely focused on eliminating the threat from al Qaeda, which had taken refuge in Pakistan's FATA along the border with Afghanistan to the north. The Pakistani military carried out a number of limited operations in the FATA against al Qaeda and associated groups, but did not take concerted action against insurgents focused on fighting inside Afghanistan. The Haqqani network in particular retained its safe haven in North Waziristan, as did a number of smaller and lesser known insurgent groups operating from South Waziristan.[351]

Iran

During this period, Iran pursued a dual-track strategy of backing the central government while simultaneously providing limited military support to certain factions of the Taliban with the apparent aim of tying down U.S. forces. Iran's initial response to the NATO intervention in Afghanistan had been favorable. Iran reportedly even offered to help train the ANSF. Iran also continued to channel significant aid to the Afghan government through development work, particularly in the Shia region of Hazarajat in central Afghanistan.

However, the subsequent invasion of Iraq, escalating tensions over Iran's nuclear program, and concerns about the lingering U.S. mili-

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[350] Giustozzi. *Koran Kalashnikov and Laptop*: 97.

[351] Meyerle. *Unconventional Warfare and Counterinsurgency in Pakistan*: 18–38.

tary presence on its eastern borders prompted Tehran to establish links with the Taliban. Iran reportedly provided training to the Taliban on small unit tactics, small arms, explosives, and indirect weapons fire, and shipped them a variety of small arms and explosives.[352]

Although the support that Iran provided to the Taliban remained limited, Tehran had evidently calculated that its long-term objective of expanding its influence on the ground in Afghanistan at the expense of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia would have to be subordinated to the near term expedient of undermining coalition efforts and opposing the international military presence in Afghanistan.[353] Iran may have also calculated that it could gain broader leverage against the United States by demonstrating that Iran was in a position to cause U.S. combat deaths in Afghanistan.

Vulnerabilities within the Afghan Security Forces

In 2006, the ANSF were still in the nascent stages of development, after being raised almost from scratch following the fall of the Taliban in 2001 and 2002. Many districts had functioning police forces but they were minimally trained and only lightly armed. The police and army reported through separate chains of command to different ministries at the national level; provincial and district governors had little authority. There was little or no coordination among the different forces.

There were no ANA battalions capable of independent operations. The army was not capable of planning operations, analyzing intelligence, or sustaining itself logistically. It had no capability for air lift and little artillery. At the tactical level, ANA battalions occasionally performed well, but only when U.S. and NATO forces were present.

In Helmand, security was mainly provided by a cabal of former warlords led by the provincial governor. Many of these militias were dismantled in 2004 and 2005 but were not replaced with capable police

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[352] *Fact Sheet: U.S. Treasury Department Targets Iran's Support for Terrorism*. U.S. Treasury Department, Aug. 3, 2010: 61; Maria Abi-Habib. "Iranians Build Up Afghan Clout." *Wall Street Journal*, Oct. 26, 2012.

[353] *Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*. U.S. DoD. July 2013: 179–180.

or army forces. Hundreds of former militia fighters were cut loose from the government and later joined the Taliban. Local powerbrokers were essential to security in Kandahar and parts of the east as well where capable ANSF had not yet formed.

Today: Assessment of current threats

Since 2009, additional ISAF forces have pushed the Taliban back from many areas in the south and east, and they have killed and captured thousands of fighters. The group's earlier offensives were blunted, and it was forced to settle into a long war of attrition that has become increasingly difficult to sustain. The last few years of intensified counterinsurgency operations have forced the group deeper underground, disrupted its communications, and put strains on both its organization and command and control.

Vastly expanded targeting operations by U.S., NATO, and Afghan special operations forces have eliminated many insurgent leaders at different levels and degraded their networks. Drone strikes into Pakistan's tribal areas have eliminated higher level commanders, removed some of the security provided by sanctuaries in Pakistan, and disrupted the insurgency's ability to communicate and plan. The insurgents are no longer as militarily capable as they were in 2006 through 2008.

At the same time, the U.S. and NATO built up the ANSF—raising new units, such as the 215th Corps in Helmand, and expanding training, education, and combat advising. As a result, the ANSF now have the capability to provide for security in many areas. The ANA have the capability to operate in difficult areas such as Kunar and Nuristan in the northeast and in northern Helmand. These areas have been difficult even for U.S. and NATO forces. The capabilities of Afghan SOF, including highly trained raiding units, have been raised and expanded. Compared with the period of 2006 to 2008, when the ANSF were clearly overmatched in many key areas, the balance of power has shifted toward the ANSF.

Threats nonetheless remain to the capital and key areas in the provinces. The Taliban has not been strategically defeated and remains a viable force capable of targeting national leaders and institutions in Kabul and overrunning government positions in the south and east. Insurgents have retained their base areas in some rural areas around

Kabul, and there continue to be attacks in the cities of Kandahar and Jalalabad. The insurgents have largely retained key sanctuaries in Pakistan—the Haqqani network in particular—and continue to move men and material across the porous Afghanistan–Pakistan border.

Threats to the national government

Despite efforts at negotiations, it does not appear that the Taliban has fundamentally altered its strategic aims in regard to toppling the government in Kabul and targeting the ANSF in the provinces. There does not appear to be significant disagreement between insurgent commanders focused on fighting in the provinces and those focused on Kabul, as was the case during and after the Soviet withdrawal in 1989. Over the last few years, the Haqqani network leadership has repeatedly pledged allegiance to the Quetta Shura—indicating a greater level of unity at the strategic level than was the case in the past.

Today, the Taliban's primary strategic objective appears to be high profile attacks in Kabul and other cities that threaten the government at the national level. Terrorist attacks in Kabul continued over the course of the surge from 2009 to the present, and in some respects they escalated. In 2012, in particular, there were growing attacks (in terms of number, scale, and sophistication) against heavily guarded U.S., NATO, and ANSF targets in the capital, most of them attributed to the Haqqani network. The total number of security incidents in the capital was lower in 2013, yet the incidence of high profile attacks against strategic targets increased. Some of these attacks were successful; most, however, were not. A substantial number have been foiled; a number of others failed to reach their intended targets or unintentionally killed large numbers of civilians.

In support of attacks in Kabul, the Haqqani network has continued to retain bases and sources of support in the districts around Kabul, particularly areas to the south in Logar and Wardak. Insurgents continue to move through areas north and west of the capital—transiting to and from the northeast and the northern reaches of Pakistan—but their presence is not nearly as strong as it was before 2009.

Threats in Afghanistan's geographic regions

During the last few years of counterinsurgency operations, U.S. and NATO forces pushed the insurgency back from many areas taken in

2006 through 2008 and built up the ANSF to hold these locations. The Taliban were largely forced into peripheral areas and no longer control key districts. The Haqqani network's ability to move men and material from Pakistan has been greatly disrupted due to counterinsurgency operations, SOF targeting, and the deployment of ALP and conventional police and army forces.

Insurgents have inflicted several recent tactical defeats on ANSF in remote areas, yet these appear to have been isolated events. The Taliban have yet to achieve any successes at the operational level involving multiple coordinated tactical actions. As of late summer 2013, the Taliban had not retaken any district centers. Some ALP checkpoints have been overrun and a substantial number of local police killed, particularly those that threaten freedom of movement in key insurgent transit areas in the southeast. Yet most of these checkpoints were later retaken, indicating that the Taliban are either unable or unwilling to hold new ground. There have been terrorist attacks in cities in the south and east, but no major offensives against large population centers.

The Taliban have maintained pressure on key lines of communication, particularly the Kabul–Kandahar highway and parts of the Ring Road in the southwest between Helmand and Herat. Insurgents have also targeted the Kandahar–Spin Boldak and Torkham–Kabul highways, the two key routes to and from Pakistan. The cutting of the Kabul–Kandahar road would sever a key link between Kabul and the southern provinces, while loss of control over the Torkham–Kabul highway between Jalalabad and Kabul could cut off much of the east and the most important crossing point into Pakistan. The Taliban in the past has threatened both roads as a means of starving Kabul of supplies and isolating it from the Pashtun belt.

The southern provinces

The Taliban has been forced back from much of Kandahar and Helmand provinces where the majority of U.S. surge forces were deployed, cutting it off from populations from which to recruit fighters and consolidate popular support. Key areas in central Helmand and around Kandahar city were retaken and remain under government control, though the Taliban have retained an underground presence in many cleared areas. Kandahar city in particular has remained relatively calm over the last year and there appears to be no immediate

threat to Helmand's central districts or the provincial capital, though there have been some terrorist attacks in Lashkar Gah. Most reports indicate that the Taliban in the south are tired from years of fighting and are struggling to maintain control over a number of field commanders.

At the same time, the Taliban in the south have adapted in response to several years of intense counterinsurgency operations. Despite the loss of thousands of fighters and many mid-level commanders, the group has largely retained its organization and ability to pursue military objectives at the strategic and operational levels. Several years of counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations have greatly attenuated the group's command and control, yet the leadership has also taken numerous measures to counteract these effects. The Taliban reduced factionalism in their ranks and developed a more centralized command structure stretching back to the leadership in Quetta, Pakistan. They instituted policies to rotate field commanders and to require their regular travel to Pakistan in order to reorient them to the strategic objectives of the movement. Finally, the southern Taliban clamped down on some of the most egregious attacks on civilians, especially indiscriminate suicide bombings in Kandahar that were common in 2006 and 2007.[354]

Kandahar

Counterinsurgency operations since 2009 in the rural areas around Kandahar – especially in insurgent strongholds in Panjwai, Zharey, and the Arghandab – pushed the Taliban back from the outskirts of Kandahar city, resulting in a gradual improvement in security there. Kandahar city is no longer surrounded and under threat as it was in 2006 through 2008, largely because of a strong provincial police chief. In recent months, the security situation in and around Kandahar city has remained relatively stable. The relative stability in and around Kandahar, the main population center in the south and a traditional stronghold of the Taliban, indicates that the southern insurgency has been substantially weakened, or at the very least is in a period of retrenchment.

[354] On evolutions of the Taliban since 2009, see Farrell and Giustozzi. "The Taliban at War." 845–871.

Some outlying areas have seen steady and occasionally increasing levels of violence. Taliban activity in Maiwand, a district northwest of the provincial capital and a key transit zone between Kandahar and Helmand provinces, has remained high. Insurgents have overrun a number of ALP checkpoints in remote areas, but they fled in the face of ANSF quick reaction forces and have been unable to hold these positions, most of which were re-occupied by ALP. There have been few reports of massed attacks; the Taliban in Kandahar move in groups of 8 to 15 men, enough to overrun a small checkpoint but not to hold ground or overwhelm an important ANSF position.

Helmand

Counterinsurgency operations in Helmand since 2009 have largely pushed the Taliban out of central Helmand, though the group retains underground networks there. U.S. and NATO forces regained control over towns that were overrun in 2006 in the northern and southern reaches of the province. A new ANA Corps (215th Corps) was raised and dedicated to security in Helmand. Police were stood up in central Helmand, where they have succeeded in holding with the help of the ANA and U.S. and NATO forces, and later in the north. ALP were also raised and remain a relatively effective force in several key districts in central Helmand, though their record is more mixed in outlying areas to the north. The ANSF in central Helmand have proved effective, allowing governance to be consolidated. Farther north, the ANSF have come under greater pressure and have struggled to hold ground taken by U.S. and NATO forces.

No district centers have fallen to the Taliban since ISAF forces began their drawdown. However, insurgents have launched significant attacks on vulnerable towns in the northern part of the province. Musa Qala, the northernmost district, has come under particularly heavy pressure and appears in danger of falling to the Taliban. In Sangin, insurgents launched simultaneous attacks on a number of police outposts, though these attacks were eventually repulsed with the help of U.S. and NATO forces. The Taliban have targeted the ALP, particularly in villages north of the provincial center. Local powerbrokers have stepped in to hold the Taliban at bay in parts of the north, yet they also appear to be fighting among themselves, a development that presents new dangers.

The eastern provinces

The state of the insurgency in eastern Afghanistan is more difficult to gauge, given the difficult terrain and fragmented and more localized nature of many groups fighting in the east. Kunar and Nuristan remain a threat, according to senior ANSF commanders, and the Haqqani network continues to transit through and control parts of the southeast. Terrorist attacks and assassinations in the city of Jalalabad have emerged as a serious concern for the police, as have Taliban operations in rural areas south of the city where ANSF quick reaction forces have run into massed ambushes that inflicted heavy casualties. Insurgents have put considerable pressure on parts of the Torkham–Kabul highway that runs through Jalalabad. There continues to be considerable insurgent movement over the border in all sectors and harassing attacks against border forces as insurgents seek to move around border posts.

The northeast (Kunar and Nuristan)

As U.S. forces pulled back from Kunar and Nuristan beginning in 2009, the Taliban quickly filled the vacuum. By the summer of 2010, the insurgents were openly governing large parts of Nuristan and some parts of Kunar and operating training camps.[355] In September 2011, the governor of Nuristan claimed that six of the province's eight districts were under Taliban control.[356] The region became a sanctuary for Afghan and Pakistani militants from a variety of organizations, as well as members of al Qaeda. Fighters from across the spectrum appeared to be working together throughout the mountainous border region spanning northeast Afghanistan and northwest Pakistan. Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, which had become increasingly involved in the insurgency in northeast Afghanistan, was well entrenched in parts of Kunar. Several senior Lashkar-e-Tayyiba operatives were killed in raids, indicating that the group had become a priority target for U.S. special operations forces.[357]

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[355] Syed Saleem Shahzad. "Taliban Take Over Afghan Province." *Asia Times*, Oct. 29, 2009.

[356] "Taliban Govern Openly in Nuristan." *Long War Journal*, Apr. 6, 2011.

[357] Meyerle. *Unconventional Warfare and Counterinsurgency in Pakistan.*

A number of al Qaeda fighters have also taken refuge in Kunar after being instructed to do so by Osama bin Laden. In 2011, there were reports of multiple al Qaeda-run camps training Afghan and Pakistani militants in Kunar. Dozens of Arab militants, as well as Pakistani fighters affiliated with al Qaeda, were killed in U.S. airstrikes on these camps.[358] In Kunar, al Qaeda and Lashkar-e-Tayyiba operatives appeared to be working and training together. Members of both organizations have been killed in airstrikes there.[359] The extent to which Taliban insurgents are tied into these networks and train in these camps is unclear. There is little doubt, however, that the region had become a hub for a variety of different militant organizations involved in attacks on U.S., Afghan, and Pakistani forces.[360]

As of August 2013, there were less than 100 al Qaeda members taking refuge in parts of Kunar and Nuristan. They have integrated with certain factions of the insurgency and local tribal leadership. Many have married into local clans and developed close local ties. Despite these ties, al Qaeda and associated groups continue to transit to and from Pakistan, particularly in the hard-to-reach northern sectors of the border. There have also been reports of renewed al Qaeda presence in the mountains of Ghazni in the southeast and of al Qaeda cadres being involved in attacks on U.S. forces.

The southeast (Khost, Ghazni, Paktiya, Paktika)

In the southeast, additional U.S. forces cleared a number of Haqqani network base areas, and bolstered border forces and police and army units farther inland, greatly disrupting the flow of men and material from Pakistan. U.S. and Afghan SOF carried out numerous raids on Haqqani network leaders and facilitators. Drone strikes into North Waziristan eliminated a number of senior leaders in Pakistan.

The Haqqani network, though weaker than in 2006, has remained entrenched in the southeastern provinces and from there has ex-

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[358] "Al Qaeda Makes Afghan Comeback; ISAF captures al Qaeda's top Kunar commander." *Long War Journal,* Apr. 6, 2011.

[359] "Al Qaeda emir for Kunar, deputy, and facilitator killed in airstrikes." *Long War Journal,* Aug. 5, 2012.

[360] Meyerle. *Unconventional Warfare and Counterinsurgency in Pakistan.*

panded its reach into the rural areas south of Kabul. The Pakistani military has largely refrained from acting against the group, despite heavy U.S. pressure. Infiltration over the border between North and South Waziristan and Afghanistan's southeastern provinces continues to be a serious problem. SOF have hit many targets in the southeastern border areas, yet insurgents have largely maintained freedom of movement along key lines of communication.

In Ghazni province and parts of Paktiya, insurgents have relentlessly targeted local anti-Taliban movements and ALP. Insurgents, possibly belonging to the Haqqani network, have assassinated a number of anti-Taliban movement leaders and massed against ALP checkpoints, killing substantial numbers of local police (17 in one particularly large attack). Yet, like in the south, insurgents have fled ANSF quick reaction forces, and ALP have retaken most of these positions. There has been a growth in attacks along parts of the Kabul–Kandahar road that runs through Ghazni.

The north and west

Compared with the south and east, the threat to the ANSF in the north and west is minimal. The Taliban's current strategy in these areas appears limited to undermining security in some pockets with large Pashtun populations. Few of these areas are strategically significant. Even in Pashtun dominated areas, no district centers have fallen to the Taliban. Much violence attributed to the insurgency is actually criminal in nature and is not part of any overall battle plan.

The insurgency in the north is struggling to survive in a handful of isolated pockets with large Pashtun populations in Kunduz, Faryab, and Baghlan provinces. Limited offensives by Taliban insurgents were largely blunted in 2010 and violence was brought down to manageable levels, though the Taliban maintained a small presence. There does not appear to be a concerted push by the Taliban to expand their influence in the north. Non-Pashtun powerbrokers have kept the insurgency contained to these areas. The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, a group with links to al Qaeda, has helped the Taliban in some areas. It is small in number and focused on fighting in neighboring Uzbekistan. Links to the Taliban senior leadership in Quetta are weak. Much of the violence attributed to the Taliban is localized and criminal in nature.

The main areas of insurgent activity in the west are in Farah province, especially the relatively remote, Pashtun-majority districts of Gulistan and Bala Baluk, which are largely under the control of the Taliban. There is also a significant insurgent presence in pockets of southern Herat not far from Shindand Airbase and in parts of Baghdis and Ghor provinces. The insurgency in these areas are known to be highly fragmented, plagued by bad leadership, and heavily involved in extortion and other criminal activities. The Taliban leadership in Quetta has attempted to replace some field commanders in these areas and reduce infighting between them.

There have been a number of high-profile massed ambushes on convoys traveling on Highway One between Helmand and Herat that attracted attention at the national level. It appears, however, that many of these attacks were related to extortion rather than a campaign to control the area. The Taliban have also assassinated a number of low-level ANSF, often on their way home on leave from remote outposts. Some ANSF checkpoint commanders in particularly remote and vulnerable locations have agreed to local ceasefires and, in some places, have cooperated with the insurgency. Most cases have been ALP checkpoints, but some ANP and ANA officers have cut deals with local insurgents as well.

There is little substantial threat to the populated areas in and around Herat. ANSF assisted by non-Pashtun powerbrokers with their own militias have kept the region relatively secure. The Taliban have attempted to assassinate key powerbrokers and stoke and exploit rivalries among them, as the group did in the late 1990s when it captured Herat, but they have met with little success.

External threats and the influence of regional powers

Pakistan

The Haqqani network leadership remains based in Pakistan's North Waziristan tribal agency. U.S. drone strikes have targeted a number of Haqqani network leaders in North Waziristan, yet the Pakistani military has not moved to shut down the group's sanctuaries there. Haqqani and his followers have strong alliances with Pakistani tribesmen and militant groups operating in the area, and they may receive some support—active or passive—from Pakistani intelligence, though the Pakistani government has repeatedly denied this. Sanctu-

ary in North Waziristan is essential for the group's operations, which involve considerable planning, coordination, and training. Given that the Haqqani network is the main entity threatening Kabul, the continued sanctuary in North Waziristan poses a strategic threat to Afghanistan.

Since 2009, Pakistan has conducted a number of operations against Taliban militants. These operations, however, were focused on insurgents fighting the Pakistani state; those focused on Afghanistan were largely left alone. The Pakistani government sought agreements with Taliban commanders focused on Afghanistan and largely left these commanders alone as long as they refrained from attacks inside Pakistan. The military then focused its efforts on those groups that insisted on fighting the Pakistani state. As a result, the Taliban's sanctuaries remain.

There have been several confrontations between Pakistani and Afghan border forces along poorly demarcated portions of the border. Some of these altercations resulted in exchanges of fire. Pakistan has also fired artillery into Kunar province, apparently in response to attacks by Pakistani Taliban based on the Afghan side of the border. There is little evidence to indicate that the Pakistani military intends to launch conventional attacks against ANSF positions. Despite exchanges of fire along the border, the threat from Pakistan remains largely unconventional in nature (i.e., from the Taliban and its supporting infrastructure on the Pakistani side of the border).

Iran

Since 2009, Iran has continued to pursue a hedging strategy in Afghanistan. Iran continues to provide aid to the Afghan government, including cash payments to the president and key parliamentarians. Tehran also continues to pursue development and aid projects at the provincial level—mainly through quasi-governmental charities, such as the Imam Khomeini Relief Committee. Iran has opened health clinics, invested in trucking companies, and expanded its consulate in Herat. At the same time, Iran has continued to provide limited military aid to the Taliban in the southwest, including explosively

formed projectiles and possibly anti-aircraft munitions.[361] Iranian intelligence and paramilitary personnel are active along the border and have significant influence with the ABP deployed on the Afghan side.

India

India has stepped up its commitments to Afghanistan over the past four years, mainly in the civilian sector. This increase may be part of a larger Indian policy in Central Asia, but it is also linked to enduring Indian concerns about the Taliban once again taking power in Afghanistan. Each year, a contingent of Afghan officers study at Indian military colleges. Mid-level officers, including company and platoon commanders receive training in counterinsurgency and counterterrorism at specialized Indian training academies.[362] India has offered to provide light military equipment as part of recent agreements with Kabul. A debate has begun within the Indian government over whether to deepen its military cooperation, such as by training ANSF in Afghanistan and providing such hardware as attack helicopters, fighter aircraft, armored vehicles, and artillery and communication gear. India continues to operate consulates in Kabul and the regional capitals. Pakistani authorities have claimed that India is carrying out covert intelligence activities from these locations, though the actual extent of these activities is a matter of some debate.

Vulnerabilities within the ANSF

Infighting and lack of coordination among different elements of the ANSF remain a critical vulnerability. The force has come a long way since 2006 in this regard, though coordination among ANSF units remains intermittent. Coalition forces stood up coordination centers in district and provincial centers and at the regional level that are equipped with communications equipment and staffed by representatives of relevant services. Relationships have developed among commanders at the tactical and operational levels, and there have

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[361] Robert M. Shelala II, Nori Kasting, and Anthony H. Cordesman. *U.S. and Iranian Strategic Competition: Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Central Asia* (Washington, DC: CSIS), Jun. 2, 2012, accessed Oct. 11, 2013 at http://csis.org/files/publication/130602_AfPak_Cent_Asia.pdf.

[362] Naveed Ahmad. "Pakistan Concerned Over Afghanistan-India Relationship." Central Asia Caucasus Institute, Jun. 14, 2013.

been many joint operations. Yet the police, army, and NDS still report through separate chains of command and suffer from varying degrees of coordination and mutual support.

The ANSF depend on local powerbrokers and their militias to provide security in a number of outlying areas. This practice appears to be particularly salient in the north and west where the warlords were strongest during the civil war in the 1990s. The ANSF have also relied on local powerbrokers in parts of northern Helmand and Farah. In these places, local militias have helped contain the Taliban, yet there has been considerable infighting among these militias that threatens to spill into other areas.

Appendix E: Afghanistan's districts by security tier

Table 42 lists Afghanistan's districts, categorized by province and security tier.

Table 42. Afghanistan's districts by province and security tier

District	Province	Security tier	District	Province	Security tier
Ab Band	Ghazni	4	Koh-i-Safi	Parwan	2
Ab Kamari	Baghdis	5	Kohistan	Badakhshan	5
Ab Shar	Panjshir	4	Kohistan	Faryab	5
Achin	Nangarhar	3	Kohistanat	Sar-e-Pul	5
Adraskan	Herat	5	Kohsan	Herat	5
Ahmadaba	Paktiya	3	Kot	Nangarhar	3
Ajristan	Ghazni	4	Kufab	Badakhshan	5
Alasai	Kapisa	3	Kunduz	Kunduz	3
Ali Abad	Kunduz	5	Kushk (Rubat-i-Sangi)	Herat	5
Alingar	Laghman	3	Kushk-i-Kuhna	Herat	5
Alishing	Laghman	3	Kuzkunar	Nangarhar	2
Almar	Faryab	5	Laja Ahmad Khel	Paktiya	3
Anar Dara	Farah	5	Laja Mangel	Paktiya	3
Andar	Ghazni	2	Lal Wa SarJangal	Ghor	5
Andarab	Baghlan	5	Lalpoor	Nangarhar	3
Andkhoy	Faryab	5	Lash-i-Juwayn	Farah	5
Aqchah	Jowzjan	5	Lashkargah	Helmand	1
Arghandab	Kandahar	2	Mahmood Raqi	Kapisa	3
Arghandab	Zabul	4	Maidan Shahr	Wardak	2
Arghanj Khwah	Badakhshan	5	Maimana	Faryab	5
Arghistan	Kandahar	3	Maiwand	Kandahar	3
Argo	Badakhshan	5	Malistan	Ghazni	4
Asad Abad	Kunarha	3	Mandol	Nuristan	4
Asl-i-Chakhansur	Nimruz	5	Manduzay (Esmayel Khil)	Khost	3
Atghar	Zabul	4	Mara Wara	Kunarha	3
Aybak	Samangan	5	Mardyan	Jowzjan	5
Azra	Logar	3	Marjeh	Helmand	3
Baak	Khost	3	Markaz-i-Behsud	Wardak	4
Bad Pash	Laghman	3	Marmul	Balkh	5

Table 42. Afghanistan's districts by province and security tier

District	Province	Security tier	District	Province	Security tier
Baghlan-i-Jadeed	Baghlan	5	Maruf	Kandahar	4
Baghran (Bughran)	Helmand	4	Mata Khan	Paktika	3
Bagram	Parwan	2	Mazar-i-Sharif	Balkh	1
Bagrami	Kabul	1	Mehterlam	Laghman	3
Baharak	Badakhshan	5	Mingajik	Jowzjan	5
Baharak	Takhar	5	Mir Bacha Kot	Kabul	1
Bakwa	Farah	4	Miramor	Daykundi	5
Bala Buluk	Farah	4	Mirzaka	Paktiya	3
Balkh	Balkh	5	Miyanishin	Kandahar	4
Balkhab	Sar-e-Pul	5	Mizan	Zabul	3
Bamyan	Bamyan	5	Mohammad Agha	Logar	2
Bangi	Takhar	5	Muhmand ۹۹Dara	Nangarhar	3
Bar Kunar	Kunarha	3	Muqur	Ghazni	4
Baraki Barak	Logar	2	Muqur	Baghdis	5
Bargi Matal	Nuristan	3	Murghab (Bala Murghab)	Baghdis	5
Barmal	Paktika	4	Musa Khel	Khost	3
Bati Kot	Nangarhar	2	Musa Qala	Helmand	3
Bazarak	Panjshir	3	Musahi	Kabul	1
Behsud	Nangarhar	2	Nad Ali	Helmand	3
Bilchiragh	Faryab	5	Nadir Shah Kot	Khost	3
Burka	Baghlan	5	Nahreen	Baghlan	5
Chahab	Takhar	5	Nahr-i-Saraj	Helmand	2
Chahar Asyab	Kabul	1	Nahri Shahi	Balkh	5
Chahar Darah	Kunduz	5	Namak Ab	Takhar	5
Chak-i-Wardak	Wardak	3	Narang Wa Badil	Kunarha	3
Chal	Takhar	5	Nari	Kunarha	3
Chapa Dara	Kunarha	4	Naw Bahar	Zabul	4
Chapar har	Nangarhar	2	Nawa	Ghazni	4
Char Bolak	Balkh	5	Nawa-i-Barikzayi	Helmand	2
Char Burjak	Nimruz	5	Nawur	Ghazni	4
Char Kent	Balkh	5	Nawzad	Helmand	3
Char Sada	Ghor	5	Nazyan	Nangarhar	3
Charikar	Parwan	2	Nerkh	Wardak	2
Charkh	Logar	3	Nesh	Kandahar	3
Chighcheran	Ghor	5	Nijrab	Kapisa	3
Chimtal	Balkh	5	Nika	Paktika	4
Chinarto	Uruzgan	4	Nili	Daykundi	5
Chishti Sharif	Herat	5	Noor Gram	Nuristan	4
Chora	Uruzgan	4	Noorgal	Kunarha	3
Dahana-i-Ghuri	Baghlan	5	Obe	Herat	5

Table 42. Afghanistan's districts by province and security tier

District	Province	Security tier	District	Province	Security tier
Daichopan	Zabul	4	Omna	Paktika	4
Daimir Dad	Wardak	3	Pachir Wagam	Nangarhar	3
Daman	Kandahar	2	Paghman	Kabul	1
Dand	Kandahar	2	Panjab	Bamyan	5
Dand Patan	Paktiya	3	Panjwayee	Kandahar	3
Dangam	Kunarha	3	Paroon	Nuristan	4
Darah	Panjshir	4	Paryan	Panjshir	5
Darah-i-Noor	Nangarhar	3	Pasaband	Ghor	5
Dara-i-Pech	Kunarha	4	Pashtun Kot	Faryab	5
Dara-i-soof-i-Bala	Samangan	5	Pashtun Zarghun	Herat	5
Dara-i-soof-i-Payin	Samangan	5	Puli Alam	Logar	2
Darayim	Badakhshan	5	Pul-i-Hisar	Baghlan	5
Darqad	Takhar	5	Pul-i-Khumri	Baghlan	5
Darwaz-i-Bala (Nesay)	Badakhshan	5	Pur Chaman	Farah	5
Darwaz-i-Payin (Ma-may)	Badakhshan	5	Pushtrud	Farah	5
Darzab	Jowzjan	5	Qadis	Baghdis	5
Dashti Qala	Takhar	5	Qaisar	Faryab	5
Dasht-i-Archi	Kunduz	5	Qala-i-Kah	Farah	5
Dawlat Abad	Balkh	5	Qala-i-Now	Baghdis	5
Dawlat Abad	Faryab	5	Qala-i-Zal	Kunduz	5
Dawlat Shah	Laghman	4	Qalandar	Khost	3
Dawlatyar	Ghor	5	Qalat	Zabul	4
Deh Salah	Baghlan	5	Qara Bagh	Ghazni	4
Deh Bala	Nangarhar	3	Qara Bagh	Kabul	1
Deh Yak	Ghazni	2	Qaram Qul	Faryab	5
Dehdadi	Balkh	5	Qarghayee	Laghman	3
Dehraoud	Uruzgan	4	Qarqin	Jowzjan	5
DehSabz	Kabul	1	Qurghan	Faryab	5
DilaWa Khushamand	Paktika	4	Qush Tepa	Jowzjan	5
Dishu	Helmand	5	Raghistan	Badakhshan	5
Duab	Nuristan	4	Rashidan	Ghazni	4
Dularam	Nimruz	4	Reg	Kandahar	4
Duleena	Ghor	5	Reg-i-Khan Nishin	Helmand	4
Dur Baba	Nangarhar	3	Rodat	Nangarhar	2
Dushi	Baghlan	5	Rui-Do-Ab	Samangan	5
Enjil	Herat	5	Rukha	Panjshir	3
Eshkamesh	Takhar	5	Rustaq	Takhar	5
Eshkashim	Badakhshan	5	Sabari (Yaqubi)	Khost	3
Estalef	Kabul	1	Saghar	Ghor	5
Faiz Abad	Badakhshan	5	Saighan	Bamyan	5

Table 42. Afghanistan's districts by province and security tier

District	Province	Security tier	District	Province	Security tier
Faizabad	Jowzjan	5	Salang	Parwan	3
Farah	Farah	5	Samkani	Paktiya	3
Farkhar	Takhar	5	Sancharak	Sar-e-Pul	5
Farza	Kabul	1	Sangin (Sangin Qala)	Helmand	3
Feroz Nakhcheer	Samangan	5	Sang-i-Takht	Daykundi	5
Fersi	Herat	5	Sar Kani	Kunarha	3
Firing Wa Gharu	Baghlan	5	Sar Rawza	Paktika	4
Gardez	Paktiya	2	Sar-e-Pul	Sar-e-Pul	5
Garm Ser	Helmand	3	Sawkai	Kunarha	3
Gelan	Ghazni	4	Sayyad	Sar-e-Pul	5
Ghazi Abad	Kunarha	3	Sayyid Abad	Wardak	3
Ghazni	Ghazni	2	Sayyid Karam	Paktiya	3
Ghorak	Kandahar	3	Sayyid Khel	Parwan	3
Ghormach	Baghdis	5	Shah Joi	Zabul	4
Ghoryan	Herat	5	Shah Wali Kot	Kandahar	3
Giro	Ghazni	3	Shahidhassas	Uruzgan	4
Giti (Kiti)	Daykundi	5	Shahrak	Ghor	5
Giyan	Paktika	4	Shahri Buzurg	Badakhshan	5
Gizab	Daykundi	5	Shahristan	Daykundi	5
Gomal	Paktika	4	Shakar Dara	Kabul	1
Gosfandi	Sar-e-Pul	5	Shamul	Khost	3
Goshta	Nangarhar	3	Sharan	Paktika	3
Gozargah-i-Noor	Baghlan	5	Shaykh Ali	Parwan	3
Guldara	Kabul	1	Shebar	Bamyan	5
Gulistan	Farah	4	Sheberghan	Jowzjan	5
Gulran	Herat	5	Shemel Zayi	Zabul	4
Gurbuz	Khost	3	Sher Zad	Nangarhar	3
Gurziwan	Faryab	5	Shibkoh	Farah	5
Guzera (Nizam-i-Shahid)	Herat	5	Shigal Wa Sheltan	Kunarha	3
Hazar Sumuch	Takhar	5	Shighnan	Badakhshan	5
Hazrati Imam Sahib	Kunduz	5	Shiki	Badakhshan	5
Hazrat-i-Sultan	Samangan	5	Shindand	Herat	4
Herat	Herat	1	Shinkai	Zabul	4
Hesarak	Nangarhar	2	Shinwar	Nangarhar	2
Hissa-i-Awal (Khing)	Panjshir	5	Shinwari	Parwan	3
Hissa-i-awali Behsud	Wardak	4	Shirin Tagab	Faryab	5
Hissa-i-Awali Kohistan	Kapisa	3	Sholgara	Balkh	5
Hissa-i-Duwumi Kohistan	Kapisa	3	Shorabak	Kandahar	4
Ishterlai	Daykundi	5	Shortepa	Balkh	5

Table 42. Afghanistan's districts by province and security tier

District	Province	Security tier	District	Province	Security tier
Jabulussaraj	Parwan	3	Shuhada	Badakhshan	5
Jaghatu	Wardak	3	Shutul	Panjshir	3
Jaghatu	Ghazni	4	Shwak	Paktiya	3
Jaghuri	Ghazni	4	Sozma Qala	Sar-e-Pul	5
Jaji	Paktiya	3	Spera	Khost	3
Jaji Maidan	Khost	3	Spin Boldak	Kandahar	3
Jalalabad	Nangarhar	1	Surkh Rud	Nangarhar	2
Jalrez	Wardak	3	Surkhi Parsa	Parwan	3
Jani Khel	Paktiya	3	Surubi	Kabul	1
Jani Khel	Paktika	4	Surubi	Paktika	4
Jawand	Baghdis	5	Syahgird (Ghurband)	Parwan	3
Jurm	Badakhshan	5	Tagab	Kapisa	3
Kabul	Kabul	1	Tagab	Badakhshan	5
Kahmard	Bamyan	5	Takhrta Pul	Kandahar	2
Kajaki	Helmand	3	Tala Wa Barfak	Baghlan	5
Kakar	Zabul	4	Taluqan	Takhar	5
Kalafgan	Takhar	5	Tanay	Khost	3
Kalakan	Kabul	1	TarangWa Jaldak	Zabul	3
Kaldar	Balkh	5	Tashkan	Badakhshan	5
Kama	Nangarhar	2	Taywara	Ghor	5
Kamdesh	Nuristan	3	Tirinkot	Uruzgan	4
Kandahar	Kandahar	1	Trayzayee (Ali Sher)	Khost	3
Kang	Nimruz	5	Tulak	Ghor	5
Karrukh	Herat	5	Turwo	Paktika	4
Kejran	Daykundi	5	Unaba	Panjshir	3
Khak-i-Jabar	Kabul	1	Urgoon	Paktika	4
Khak-i-safed	Farah	4	Waghaz	Ghazni	2
Khakrez	Kandahar	3	Wakhan	Badakhshan	5
Khamyab	Jowzjan	5	Wali M Shahid (Khugyani)	Ghazni	2
Khan Abad	Kunduz	5	Wama	Nuristan	4
Khanaqa	Jowzjan	5	Waras	Bamyan	5
Khani Charbagh	Faryab	5	Wardooj	Badakhshan	5
Khar War	Logar	3	Warsaj	Takhar	5
Khas Kunar	Kunarha	3	Washer	Helmand	3
Khas Uruzgan	Uruzgan	4	Watapoor	Kunarha	3
Khash	Badakhshan	5	Waygal	Nuristan	4
Khashrod	Nimruz	5	Wazakhwah	Paktika	4
Khedir	Daykundi	5	Wormamay	Paktika	4
Khinjan	Baghlan	5	Wuza Jadran	Paktiya	3
Khost	Khost	2	Yaftal-i-Sufla	Badakhshan	5

Table 42. Afghanistan's districts by province and security tier

District	Province	Security tier	District	Province	Security tier
Khost Wa Firing	Baghlan	5	Yahya Khel	Paktika	4
Khugyani	Nangarhar	3	Yakawlang	Bamyan	5
Khulm	Balkh	5	Yamgan	Badakhshan	5
Khuram Wa Sarbagh	Samangan	5	Yangi Qala	Takhar	5
Khushi	Logar	2	Yawan	Badakhshan	5
Khwahan	Badakhshan	5	Yosuf Khel	Paktika	3
Khwaja Bahawuddin	Takhar	5	Zanakhan	Ghazni	2
Khwaja Dukoh	Jowzjan	5	Zaranj	Nimruz	5
Khwaja Ghar	Takhar	5	Zarghun Shahr	Paktika	4
Khwaja Hejran (Jalga)	Baghlan	5	Zari	Balkh	5
Khwaja Omari	Ghazni	3	Zebak	Badakhshan	5
Khwaja Sabz Posh i Wali	Faryab	5	Zendahjan	Herat	5
Kiran Wa Menjan	Badakhshan	5	Zhire	Kandahar	2
Kishindeh	Balkh	5	Ziruk	Paktika	4
Kishm	Badakhshan	5	Zurmat	Paktiya	3
Koh Band	Kapisa	3			

Appendix F: Ministry of Defense and Interior organizational charts

As of August 2013, Afghanistan's MoD and MoI had the organizational structures shown in Figure 4 and Figure 5, respectively.

Figure 4. Afghanistan Ministry of Defense organizational chart

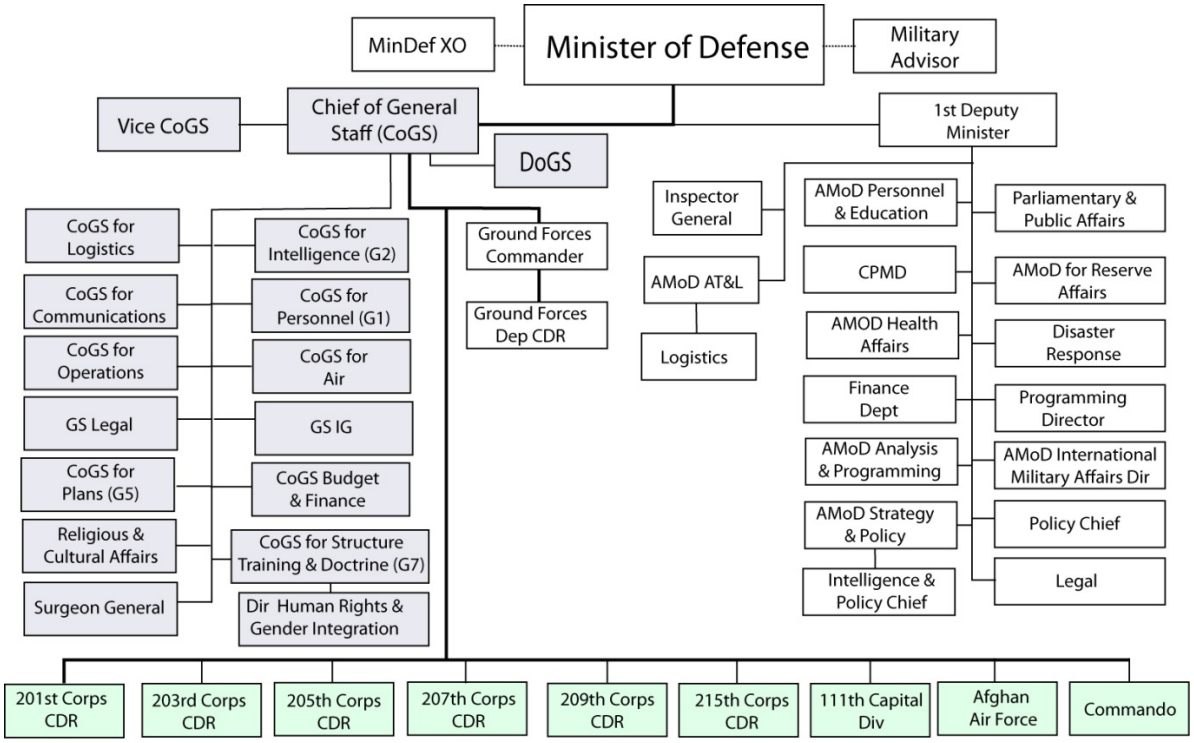
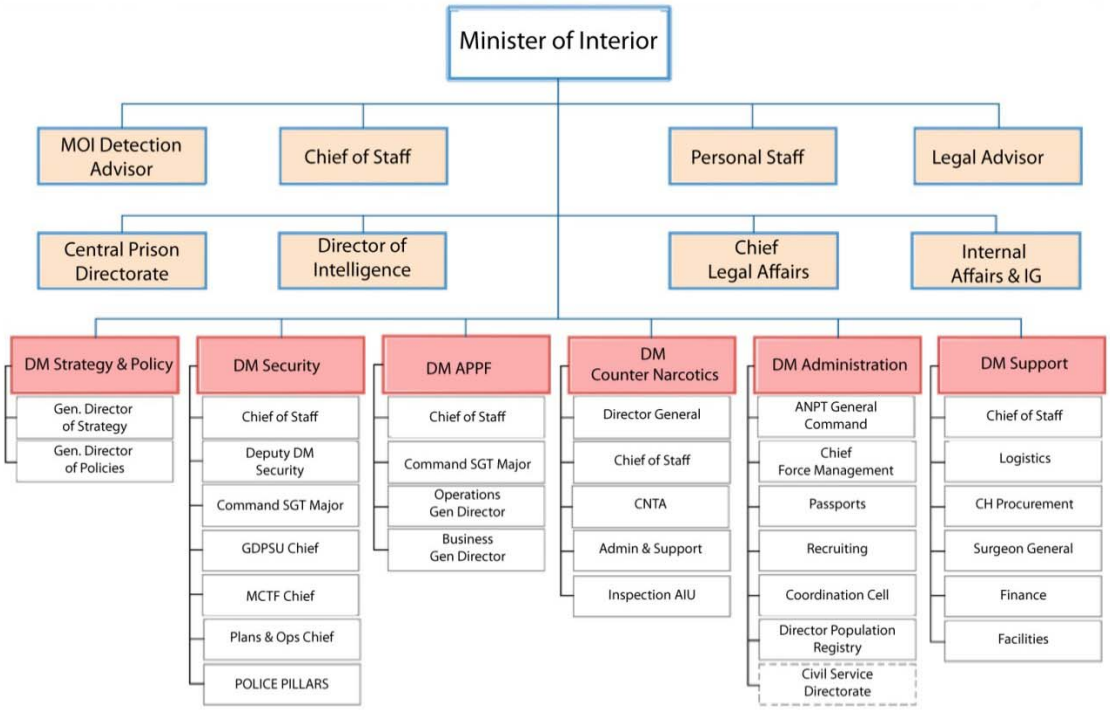


Figure 5. Afghanistan Ministry of Interior organizational chart



Appendix G: Matrix of authorities

Table 43 (next page) shows the full list of current authorities we identified as part of our assessment of legal authorities.

Table 43. List of authorities currently enabling the U.S. mission in Afghanistan

Title	Citation	Programmatic Objective	Discussion	Exp. Date	Sourced	Req. for 2015?
			Afghanistan Specific Authorities			
U.S./Afghanistan Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA)	ACSAs are permitted in accordance with Title 10 of the USC, sections 2341-2350	An ACSA is an agreement providing logistic support, supplies, and services to foreign militaries on a cash-reimbursement, replacement-in-kind, or exchange of equal value basis.	After consultation with the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense is authorized to enter into an ACSA with a NATO country. The Secretary of Defense may enter into an ACSA with a Non-NATO country, if, after consultation with the Secretary of State, a determination is made that it is in the best interests of the national security of the United States.	Indefinite authority. Expiry as per agreement.	U.S.C. Title 10	Yes
Expanded ACSA	NDAA 2007, Section 1202, NDAA 2011, Section 1203 extended this authority through fiscal year 2012.	Enhanced ACSA authority allows no-cost loans for "covered equipment," (i.e. vehicles, add-on armored kits, CIED) not otherwise eligible for transfer under an ACSA, to the forces of a country participating in combined operations with the U.S. in Iraq or Afghanistan.	Executive agent is Secretary of Defense, in consultation with Secretary of State. Equipment provided under this authority may be used only to aid in the personnel survivability of forces. Equipment loaned under this authority may only be used by partner nation no longer than one year.	May have expired	NDAA	Yes
Afghanistan Infrastructure Fund (AIF)	FY2013; Sec 1219; P.L. 112-239	For high priority, large scale infrastructure projects to aid the counterinsurgency strategy, including, but not limited to, water, power, and transportation projects and related maintenance and sustainment costs.	Executive agent is Secretary of Defense, in consultation with Secretary of State.	30 Sept. 2014	NDAA	No – collateral to new DoD mission-set.
Afghanistan Public Protection Fund (APPF)	FY2013; Sec 1531c; within the ASFF language	Provides funds for the APPF, a state owned enterprise designed to contract with both domestic and international customers to protect people, infrastructure, facilities and construction projects.		30 Sept. 2017	NDAA	Yes
Afghanistan Reintegration Program (ARP)	FY2013; Sec 1218; P.L. 112-239	Provides funds for reintegration of combatants, anti-government elements and political leaders who renounce violence and terrorism.		31 Dec. 2013	NDAA	No – collateral to new DoD mission-set.

Table 43. List of authorities currently enabling the U.S. mission in Afghanistan

Title	Citation	Programmatic Objective	Discussion	Exp. Date	Sourced	Req. for 2015?
Afghan Security Forces Fund (ASFF)	P.L. 111-32 Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2009	Provides funds for the benefit of the ANSF in the form of supplies, services, infrastructure repair, renovation and construction, and equipment, etc. Monies from this fund are used to fund ANA and ANP and related activities (i.e. detainee ops). Was also used to fund the purchase of SMW aircraft (FY 2012 funding).	Executive agent is DoD. Secretary of State concurrence is required for disbursements. NTM-A/CSTC-A has primary responsibility for its implementation. The fund can also receive foreign contributions.	30 Sept. 2014	NDAA	Yes
Authorization of Use of Military Force (AUMF)	Sept 14, 2001 Joint Resolution Authorizing Use of Force, P.L. 107-40	Enables use of force against insurgents/terrorists.	The authorization granted the President the authority to use all "necessary and appropriate force" against those whom he determined "planned, authorized, committed or aided" the September 11th attacks, or who harbored said persons or groups	Indefinite		Yes
Coalition Readiness Support Program	FY2011 NDAA; PL 111-65; A subset of Coalition Support Funds.	Authority given to the Secretary of Defense to provide specialized training, or loan of supplies and equipment on a non-reimbursable basis to coalition forces supporting U.S. military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. The U.S. government will retain title to the equipment and transfer custody to coalition forces as necessary.	Executive agent is DoD The criteria for eligibility are: The country could not provide the support without specialized training, supplies, and/or equipment; and the country's participation is essential to the success of U.S. military operations.	May have expired	NDAA	Yes
Coalition Support Funds (CSF)	FY2013; Section 1227; P.L. 112-239	CSF are used to reimburse coalition countries for logistical, military, and other expenses incurred in supporting U.S. military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.		30 Sept. 2014	NDAA	Yes
Commanders Emergency Response Program (CERP)	FY2013; Section 1221; P.L. 112-239	Enables commanders to carry out small-scale projects designed to meet urgent humanitarian relief requirements or urgent reconstruction requirements which benefits the people of Afghanistan.	Executive agent is DoD (via Combatant Commands). Renewed each year for one year.	30 Sept. 2013	NDAA	Yes

Table 43. List of authorities currently enabling the U.S. mission in Afghanistan

Title	Citation	Programmatic Objective	Discussion	Exp. Date	Sourced	Req. for 2015?
Economic Support Funds (ESF)	P. L. No. 112-10, Section 2122, Apr. 15, 2011 After 2011 see also P.L. 111-117	Funds are used to support and strengthen the capacity of Afghan public and private institutions and entities to reduce corruption and to improve transparency and accountability of national, provincial, and local governments; emphasizes the protection of women's rights.	Executive agent is USAID.	May have expired. No extender found.	Defense Appropriation	No – collateral to new DoD mission-set.
Non-Excess Defense Articles	FY2013, Section 1222;P.L 112-239	Authority to transfer defense articles from the stocks of the DoD and to provide services in connection with the transfer of such defense articles to the military and security forces of Iraq and Afghanistan.	Joint Staff must submit to NDAA.	31 Dec. 2014	NDAA	Yes
Lift and Sustain (Afghanistan)	FY05 P.L. 108-287; Temporary Authority	Funds to transport eligible foreign forces from approximately 25 countries to and from Afghanistan and provide sustainment and subsistence while they serve with U.S. forces in Afghanistan.	OSD Comptroller must submit for NDAA.	30 Sept. 2013	NDAA	Yes
Logistical Support for Coalition Forces	Section 1216 of the NDAA of 2012. Reauthorization of Section 1234 of NDAA for 2008 (P.L. 110-181)	Subject to available funds, DoD may provide supplies, services, transportation (including airlift and sealift), and other logistical support to coalition forces supporting United States military and stabilization operations in Iraq and Afghanistan,	Executive agent is DoD. Covers logistical support versus transfers of lethal military assistance regulated by the AECA.	30 Sept. 2013	NDAA	Yes
No-Cost Transfer of Defense Articles to Military and Security Forces in Afghanistan	FY2013, Sec 1222; P.L. 112-239	Authorization to transfer non-excess defense articles from DoD stocks, without reimbursement from the government of Afghanistan, and provide defense articles to the military and security forces to support peace and security efforts.	Executive agent is Secretary of Defense, in consultation with Secretary of State. This authority supplements basic authority in in Section 516 of the FAA to transfer EDA.	31 Dec. 2014	NDAA	Yes

Table 43. List of authorities currently enabling the U.S. mission in Afghanistan

Title	Citation	Programmatic Objective	Discussion	Exp. Date	Sourced	Req. for 2015?
Pakistan Counter Insurgency Fund	Section 1228 of the NDAA for 2013 extends Section 1224(h) of the FY2010 NDAA, PL 111-2647. Originally created in PL 111-32 (Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2009).	Funds to help suppress the development of IEDs and the dissemination of explosive raw materials in Pakistani economy. Allows for the provision of equipment, supplies, services, training, and funds; and facility and infrastructure repair, renovation, and construction to build the counterinsurgency capability of Pakistan's military and Frontier Corps	Limits in PL 112-705 (NDAA of 2013), Sec. 1228, predicated on a Secretary of Defense/ Secretary of State certification that the Pakistani armed forces are working to suppress IED development/dissemination.	30 Sept. 2013	NDAA	Yes
Authority to Procure Supplies and Services Along the Afghan Supply Routes	Section 841 of the 2013 NDAA. , PL. 112-705.	Allows for procurement of personnel, equipment and supplies for U.S. forces and "coalition forces"	DoD can use this authority to provide direct assistance to coalition participants from Pakistan and others.	Dec. 31, 2014	NDAA	Yes
Reimbursement of Coalition Nations for Support	Subsection (a) of 1233 of the NDAA for Fiscal Year 2008 (P.L. 110–181) Reauthorization in Section 1227 of the NDAA of 2013, PL 112-705.	DoD may reimburse any key cooperating nation for logistical and military support provided by that nation to or in connection with United States military operations in Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom.	DoD may not enter into an advance agreement (contracts) to provide support – intent is to reimburse a foreign government for its support.	30 Sept. 2013	NDAA	Yes
Task Force for Business and Stability Operations (TFBSO)	P. L. No. 111-383, Section 1535, as amended by P.L. No. 112-81, § 1534, Dec. 31, 2011; P. L. No. 112-10, § 9012, Apr. 15, 2011	First created in 2009. Supports projects to help reduce violence, enhance stability by identifying areas of the economy viable for investment.	Projects are discussed and formulated by the U.S. Embassy in Kabul on quarterly basis. The source of the funds is U.S. Army operations and maintenance funds and special funding under the NDAA. Will transition to USAID in 2014.	May have expired	NDAA	No – collateral to new DoD mission-set.

Table 43. List of authorities currently enabling the U.S. mission in Afghanistan

Title	Citation	Programmatic Objective	Discussion	Exp. Date	Sourced	Req. for 2015?
			General Authorities			
Combatant Commander's Initiative Fund	Uses existing authorities under Title 10 USC 166(a)	Established to provide urgent and unanticipated humanitarian relief and reconstruction assistance. Projects must qualify in one of seven categories: 1. Joint Exercises and Force Training, 2. Contingencies and Selected Operations, 3. Humanitarian and Civic Assistance, 4. Command and Control, 5. Military Education and Training of Foreign Countries, 6. Personnel Expenses of Defense Personnel for Bilateral or Regional Cooperation Programs, 7. Force Protection.	Funds cannot be used to support initiatives that have other funding sources (cannot fund budget shortfalls) One time funding source that must be fully obligated in the fiscal year that it is received (one year appropriation)	Indefinite – Subject to annual appropriations	U.S.C. Title 10	Yes
Combating Terrorism Readiness Initiative Fund	Title 10, U.S.C. Section 166(b)	Funds available for high-priority unforeseen requirements related to combating terrorism.		30 Sept. 2014	U.S.C. Title 10	Yes
Contingency Construction Authority (CCA)	Section 2808, Division B of P.L. 108-136; 117 Statute 1723	Authority to obligate appropriated O&M funds to carry out construction projects outside the United States.	Project must meet the following the criteria: 1) necessary to meet urgent military operational requirements of a temporary nature; 2) not carried out at a military installation where the U.S. is expected to have a long-term presence, unless the installation is located in Afghanistan;3) U.S. has no intention of using the construction after the operational requirements have been met; 3) minimum necessary to meet the temporary operational requirements; and 4) the project is in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility or the area of responsibility and area of interest of the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa.	30 Sept. 2013	NDAA	Yes
DoD Drug Interdiction and Counter-Drug Activities	DoD-counter-narcotics funds are not specially appropriated; they are reprogrammed from funds generally appropriated to DOD for all CN purposes.	Funds to support military operations against drug traffickers, building Afghan law enforcement capacity in the counter-narcotics area and provide special equipment, training and facilities.	Executive agent is DoD	Indefinite – subject to annual appropriations	NDAA	No – collateral to new DoD mission-set.

Table 43. List of authorities currently enabling the U.S. mission in Afghanistan

Title	Citation	Programmatic Objective	Discussion	Exp. Date	Sourced	Req. for 2015?
Authority to transfer Excess Defense Articles (EDA)	22 USC Section 2321(j) Foreign Assistance Act, Section 516 and FY2013 NDAA; Sec 1222 (i); P.L. 112-239	Working under authorities established in the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 and the Arms Export Control Act, defense articles declared as excess by the Military Departments can be offered to foreign governments or international organizations in support of U. S. national security and foreign policy objectives.	The Defense Security Cooperation Agency is responsible for administering the EDA program. This excess equipment may be offered at reduced or no cost to eligible foreign recipients.	Indefinite	U.S.C. Title 22	Yes
Foreign Excess Personal Property	Title 40 U.S.C. Section 704	Authorization to transfer of excess personal property without reimbursement as part of base closure/base transfer.		Indefinite	U.S.C. Title 40	Yes
Foreign Excess Real Property	Title 40 U.S.C.	Authorization to transfer of excess real property without reimbursement as part of base closure/base transfer.		Indefinite	U.S.C. Title 40	Yes
Global Lift and Sustain	Title 10, U.S.C. Section 127d	Authority to provide logistics support, supplies, and services to allied forces participating in combined operations with US Armed Forces.	Executive agent is the Secretary of Defense in consultation with the Secretary of State	Indefinite – subject to annual cap.	U.S.C. Title 10	Yes
Global Security Contingency Fund	FY2012; Section 1207	Fund is to carry out security and counterterrorism training, and rule of law programs such as border and maritime security, internal defense, peace support operations consistent with US foreign policy and national security interest.	OSD must submit for NDAA.	30 Sept. 2015	NDAA	Yes
Global Train and Equip Fund	FY2012; Section 1206; P.L. 109-163	Additional authority (uses Pseudo FMS procedures) to train and equip partner nations for counterterrorism operations. Assistance goes to forces under MoD control	Combatant Commands develop annual plan which is coordinated with DoS. Secretary of State concurrence is required. Has been used to assist the Republic of Georgia to conduct operations in Afghanistan.	30 Sept. 2013.	NDAA	Yes
Law and Order Trust Fund (UN Development Program)	Annual DoS appropriations	Targets the MoI to pay police salaries.	$2.7 Billion paid into the LOTFA. The U.S. contributed 1.0B to the fund.	Indefinite – subject to annual appropriations	U.S.C. Title 22	NA

Table 43. List of authorities currently enabling the U.S. mission in Afghanistan

Title	Citation	Programmatic Objective	Discussion	Exp. Date	Sourced	Req. for 2015?
Military Operations to Combat Terrorism	FY2012; Section 1203; P.L. 112-81	Funds for support to foreign forces, irregular forces, groups, or individuals assisting ongoing military operations by U.S. special operations forces to combat terrorism.		30 Sept. 2015	NDAA	Yes
NATO funding of ISAF	Annual DoD appropriations	Build capacity of the ANSF. Build and maintain infrastructure.	Executive agent is NTM-A	Indefinite – subject to annual appropriations		Yes
International Agreements						
Creation of ISAF	U.N. Security Council Resolution 1386 - December 20, 2001.	ISAF was created by the Bonn Agreement and U.N. Security Council Resolution 1386 In August 2003, NATO took over command of ISAF—previously the ISAF command rotated among donor forces including Turkey and Britain.	Resolution 2069 of October 10, 2012, renewed the mandate for another full year (until October 11, 2013). ISAF was initially authorized by UN Security Council Resolution 1386 as a Chapter VII action and periodically reauthorized by the UN Security Council. On Oct. 14, 2013 activities in Afghanistan go from ISAF under Chapter VII, to presence by agreement/consent by host nation.	Oct. 2013		Yes
Diplomatic Notes (US/Afghanistan SOFA)	T.I.A.S. Exchange of notes September 26 and December 12, 2002 and May 28, 2003.	U.S. forces currently operate in Afghanistan under "diplomatic notes" between the United States and the interim government of Afghanistan. The notes give the United States legal jurisdiction over U.S. personnel serving in Afghanistan. The agreement does not provide immunity for contract personnel. The agreement with Afghanistan does not expressly authorize the United States to carry out military operations within Afghanistan, but it recognizes that such operations are "ongoing."	Although the agreement was signed by the ITGA, the subsequently elected government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan assumed responsibility for ITGA's legal obligations and the agreement remains in force.	Indefinite		Yes

Table 43. List of authorities currently enabling the U.S. mission in Afghanistan

Title	Citation	Programmatic Objective	Discussion	Exp. Date	Sourced	Req. for 2015?
"Joint Declaration"	Made in May 23, 2005	Limited strategic partnership agreement established on May 23, 2005, when Karzai and President Bush issued a "joint declaration." The declaration provided for U.S. forces to have access to Afghan military facilities, in order to prosecute "the war against international terror and the struggle against violent extremism."	Karzai's signing of the declaration was approved by a consultative *Jirga*. That *Jirga* supported an indefinite presence of international forces to maintain security. The "Joint Declaration was replaced by the SPA in 2012.	May 2012		NA
ISAF SOFA	Annex to the Military Technical Agreement entitled "Arrangements Regarding the Status of the International Security Assistance Force."	The agreement provides that all ISAF and supporting personnel are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of their respective national elements for criminal or disciplinary matters, and that such personnel are immune from arrest or detention by Afghan authorities and may not be turned over to any international tribunal or any other entity or State without the express consent of the contributing nation.				Yes
Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA)	Signed May 2012	The SPA provides a framework for the presence and activities of U.S. forces in Afghanistan after 2014,; specifically for the purposes of training Afghan Forces and targeting the remnants of al-Qaeda and its associated forces, and commits the United States and Afghanistan to initiate negotiations on a BSA to supersede current agreement. As provided for in the Agreement, the United States designated Afghanistan as a Major Non-NATO Ally.	There is a risk that if the BSA negotiations fail, the Afghans could take the position that the SPA is evidence that the parties did not intend the May 2003 diplomatic notes to extend indefinitely and refuse to be bound by them.	2024		NA

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Appendix H: Model law for Afghanistan authorities post-2014

What follows is the full text of the model law we developed as part of our analysis of legal authorities.

THE DEFENSE OF AFGHANISTAN ACT OF 2014[363]

A. GENERAL. Commencing with cessation from combat operations and the withdrawal of most U.S. combat forces from Afghanistan at the end of 2014, the Secretary of Defense, shall assume responsibility for U.S. Government activities in the territory of Afghanistan to supply and support the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), organizing and directing counter-terrorism operations by the United States, and protecting U.S. government and allied personnel.

B. MISSION AND AUTHORIZATION. Notwithstanding any other laws, The Secretary of Defense, acting through the relevant Combatant Commanders, is authorized to train, advise, assist, and equip the ANSF so they are able to adequately provide for the internal and external security of Afghanistan. Such assistance and equipping activities will be conducted taking into account the Secretary's responsibilities to retrograde U.S. military equipment. The Secretary of Defense, acting though the relevant Combatant Commander, retains authority to conduct counterterrorism operations consistent with Public Law 107-40 of September 14, 2001 authorizing the use of military force against those responsible for the attack on September 11, 2001 and to prevent any future acts of international terrorism. The Secretary may also authorize such military operations as necessary to protect and support U.S. personnel, and personnel of allied and friendly nations who

[363] U.S. Special Operations Command and all Title 50 related activities are unaddressed in this legislative construct. Our intent is that those authorities, and their reporting requirements, are unaffected by this enactment. Also unaffected (and not merged into this draft statute) are authorities which relate to the economic development of Afghanistan.

are present in Afghanistan to assist the ANSF assume responsibility for its own defense and internal security.

C. BENCHMARKS REQUIRED. The President shall establish, and update from time to time, a comprehensive set of benchmarks to evaluate progress being made toward the ANSF having the independent capacity to defend Afghanistan from internal and external threats. The Secretary of Defense, acting through the relevant Combatant Commanders, will produce a single report for delivery to the defense committees. The first such report will be issued not later than June 1, 2014 and updated bi-annually.

D. OVERSIGHT. The Secretary of Defense will make full use of his Inspector General to ensure that funds authorized and appropriated pursuant to this Act are used in an appropriate manner and that there is no fraud, waste, or abuse in the award of contracts to implement the Secretary's responsibilities under this Act. It is the Sense of Congress that the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction appointed pursuant to Section 1225 of Public Law 111-2647 has made excellent strides in identifying issue areas for investigating and monitoring by the Inspector General for the Department of Defense. However, to eliminate duplication of effort and to control the public dissemination of information that can adversely affect the Secretary's ability to build capacity with officials and institutions in the Government of Afghanistan, the Inspector General of the Department of Defense will have sole oversight jurisdiction over matters relating to the lawful and efficient implementation of this Act.

E. CONSULTATION AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS. The Secretary of Defense may, as delineated below, provide training, military equipment, assistance, Logistic Support, Supplies, and Services, intelligence support and excess military property to the ANSF and to allied and friendly countries, including NATO, that are assisting U.S. forces to train and equip the ANSF to assume responsibility for the internal and external security of Afghanistan. Funding for such activities shall be drawn from the Afghan National Security Forces Transition Fund established herein. The Secretary of Defense shall regularly consult with the Secretary of State concerning proposed activities, obligations, and expenditures in support of this Act. The Secretary of Defense will report at least quarterly to the Chair of Committees of Armed Services in the Senate and House on activities conducted pursuant to this

Act, planned obligations, and on progress towards realization of the benchmarks established by the President pursuant to paragraph C above. The Secretary of Defense will also report annually, on a fiscal year basis, to all Appropriate Committees of Congress on past and planned obligations, and on progress towards realization of the benchmarks established by the President pursuant to paragraph C. The Secretary of State may file a separate report to the Chair of the Appropriate Committees of Congress if he or she disagrees with the Secretary of Defense's assessment of progress and any other relevant matters relating to the purpose of this Act.

F. TRANSFER, ADVISING, AND MILITARY AND LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSISTANCE AUTHORITIES. The Secretary of Defense is authorized to draw and obligate funds from the Afghan National Security Forces Transition Fund (ANSFT) established herein to acquire and transfer property, equipment, and services and to make transfers from existing stock to complete the mission described in Paragraph B of this Act. Subject to the availability of funds in the ANSFT, The Secretary may:

(1) Provide equipment, Logistic Support, Supplies, and Services, ANSF facility and infrastructure repair, renovation and construction, and funding without reimbursement to the ANSF in such amounts that the Secretary determines necessary to enable that force to be combat capable of autonomously operating to provide for the internal and external security of Afghanistan; provided however, that funds for infrastructure repair, renovation or construction shall only be available for the facilities to be used by ANSF forces;

(2) Provide surplus real property, including improvements, from the accounts of the U.S. Department of Defense to the ANSF for use by the ANSF without reimbursement or a requirement to make improvements to such property to make it suitable for transfer;

(3) Provide equipment, Logistic Support, Supplies, and Services to the ANSF without reimbursement to both enable and to build their capacity to conduct military and law enforcement operations against drug traffickers;

(4) Provide assistance to the Pakistan Security Forces including the provision of equipment, Logistic Support, Supplies, and Services without reimbursement to help build the counterinsurgency capacity of Pakistan's military and Frontier Corps, of which up to $2,000,000 per fiscal year shall be available to provide urgent humanitarian assistance to the people of Pakistan in conjunction with civil-military training exercises in which the U.S. and Pakistan forces are participating;

(5) Loan or transfer military equipment, subject to subparagraph (6) below, currently in the land territory of Afghanistan to the ANSF without reimbursement. This includes used U.S. military equipment which does not meet the criteria for being "excess," that which is "excess" to U.S. government needs, as well as associated U.S. training services; provided that the Secretary may draw from the Afghan National Security Forces Transition Fund to pay the costs associated with making any such equipment serviceable for transfer, the costs of Logistic Support, Supplies, and Services to support the equipment's ongoing operations, and any incremental costs incurred in providing training associated with the operation of the equipment so provided;

(6) Loan or transfer of significant military equipment currently in the land territory of Afghanistan to the ANSF without reimbursement with the concurrence of the Secretary of State and fifteen days advance notice to All Appropriate Committees of Congress. This includes used U.S. military equipment which does not meet the criteria for being "excess" as well as associated U.S. training services; provided that the Secretary may draw from the Afghan National Security Forces Transition Fund to pay the costs associated with making any such equipment serviceable for transfer, the costs of Logistic Support, Supplies, and Services to support the equipment's ongoing operations, and any incremental costs incurred in providing training associated with the operation of the equipment so provided;

(7) Acquire and transfer foreign made equipment, including Significant Military Equipment, to the ANSF without reimbursement if required because particular items are currently in the ANSF inventory; subject to the concurrence of the Secretary State and fifteen days' advance notice to All Appropriate Committees of Congress if the items to be acquired and transferred constitute Significant Military Equipment;

(8) Loan or transfer of Logistic Support, Supplies, and Services including air and sea lift with or without reimbursement to the armed forces of allied and friendly nations to enable such armed forces, as coalition members, to assist U.S. forces conduct the mission described in Paragraph B of this Act;

(9) Transfer funds to any key Coalition Partner Nation as reimbursement for Logistic Support, Supplies, and Services, including sea and air lift provided by that nation to or in connection with support to United States military operations in fulfilling mission requirements of this Act as set forth in Paragraph B above;

(10) Provide specialized training, loans of equipment, air or sealift, and Logistic Support, Supplies, and Services to any Coalition Partner Nation, wherever such forces are situated, to enable those forces to be ready and present to assist U.S. forces to carry out the missions described in Paragraph B of this Act; and

(11) Carry out small-scale construction projects designed to meet the urgent humanitarian relief requirements or reconstruction requirements which benefit the People of Afghanistan in amounts not to exceed $_____ per fiscal year. Funding for such projects shall be drawn from the Afghan National Security Forces Transition Fund established herein.

G. AFGHAN NATIONAL SECURITY FORCES TRANSITION FUND.

(1) ESTABLISHMENT. There is established on the Books of the Treasury of the United States an account to be known as the Afghan National Security Forces Transition Fund (ANSFTF)." For Fiscal Year 2015, $_____ is authorized to be appropriated into

the fund for the purposes set forth in this Act. The unobligated balances of funds separately appropriated as part of the Afghan Security Forces Fund (ASFF), DOD Interdiction and Counter Drug Activities Fund (DOD CN), The Afghan Infrastructure Fund (AIF), the Pakistan Counter Insurgency Fund, and the Coalition Support Fund (CSF) shall be merged in the ANSFTF and remain available to the Secretary of Defense until expended.

(2) AUTHORITY TO ACCEPT GIFTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS. The Secretary of Defense may accept and use money, funds, Logistic Support, Supplies, and Services, property and services from foreign governments, international organizations, and public and private sources, as applicable, and such funds and contributions merged into the ANSFT and be available for the purposes set forth in this Act.

(3) LIMITATION. The total amount of funds authorized for obligation in fiscal year 2015, including those unobligated balances merged from prior years, may not exceed $_____

(H) ADDITIONAL AUTHORITIES. The transfer and assistance authorities established in this Act are in addition to any standing transfer and assistance authorities available to the Department of State or the Department of Defense or other agencies under Title 22, Title 40, or Title 50 of the United States Code.[364]

(I) DEFINITIONS. In this Act, the following definitions will apply:

1. Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) means the Afghan national armies, border security forces, civil defense forces, infrastructure protection forces, and police. [has the same meaning as given in Section 1202 of the National De-

[364] There are general transfer and assistance authorities which DoD could use in the post-2014 environment. They include inter alia: Exercise Related Construction (10 USC 2805), CINC initiative (10 USC 166a), Acquisition and Cross Servicing Authority (10 USC 2341 et seq); Humanitarian and Civic Action (10 USC 401), Training and Exchange Programs (general operating authorities), and Cooperative Airlift (10 USC 2350C). These authorities are general in nature and are "additive" to the authorities noted above. Because they are of general applicability, they are not included in the legislative recommendations.

fense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2005, Public Law 108-375[365]].

2. The Term "Allied and Friendly Countries" shall have the same meaning as that given in section 2350a of title 10, United States Code.

3. "All Appropriate Committees of Congress" means:
   (A) The Committee on Armed Services, the Committee on Foreign Relations, and the Committee on Appropriations in the Senate; and

   (B) The Committee on Armed Services, the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

4. The term "Coalition Partner Nation" refers to any nation that has provided material, logistics, financial, or military personnel in support of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) that was established by United Nations Security Council Resolution of December 2001.

5. The term "Logistic Support, Supplies, and Services" has the meaning given that term in section 2350(1) of title 10, United States Code.

6. The term "significant military equipment" shall have the same meaning as that given in 22 CDR 120.7 and the U.S. Munitions List.

7. The term "United States Personnel" means active duty military personnel, civilian employees of the U.S. government, and contractors present and operating in Afghanistan in support of U.S. operations.

[365] Section 1202 established the Afghan Security Forces Fund.

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Acronyms

AACP	Afghan Anti-Crime Police
AAF	Afghan Air Force
ABP	Afghan Border Police
ACP	Afghan Customs Police
ACSA	Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement
AIF	Afghan Infrastructure Fund
ALP	Afghan Local Police
ANA	Afghan National Army
ANA SOF	Afghan National Army Special Operations Forces
ANASF	Afghan National Army Special Forces
ANCOP	Afghan National Civil Order Police
ANP	Afghan National Police
ANSF	Afghan National Security Forces
ANSFTF	Afghan National Security Forces Transition Fund
APoR	Afghan National Security Forces Plan of Record
APPF	Afghan Public Protection Force
ARP	Afghan Reintegration Program
ASFF	Afghan Security Forces Fund
AUMF	Authorization for Use of Military Force
AUP	Afghan Uniform Police

BSA	Bilateral Security Agreement
CAS	Close Air Support
CASEVAC	Casualty Evacuation
CENTCOM	Central Command (U.S.)
CERP	Commanders Emergency Response Program
CSF	Coalition Support Funds
CSTC-A	Combined Security Transition Command–Afghanistan
DoD	Department of Defense (U.S.)
DoS	Department of State (U.S.)
DOTMLPF	Doctrine, Organization, Training, Leadership, Materiel, Personnel, and Facilities
EDA	Excess Defense Articles
ESF	Economic Support Fund
EUPOL	European Union Police
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas
FFRDC	Federally Funded Research and Development Center
FMS	Foreign Military Sales
FY	Fiscal Year
GAO	Government Accountability Office (U.S.)
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IJC	ISAF Joint Command
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
ISI	Inter-Services Intelligence (Pakistan)

ISR	Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance
JBCC	Joint Border Coordination Center
JCA	Joint Capability Area
km	Kilometer
LOTFA	Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan
MAG	Ministerial Advising Group
MEDEVAC	Medical Evacuation
MoD	Ministry of Defense (Afghan)
MoDA	Ministry of Defense Advisors
MoI	Ministry of Interior (Afghan)
MSF	Mobile Strike Force
NATC-A	NATO Air Training Command–Afghanistan
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDAA	National Defense Authorization Act
NDS	National Directorate of Security (Afghan)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NTM-A	NATO Training Mission–Afghanistan
OCC	Operational Coordination Center
ODR-P	Office of the Defense Representative–Pakistan
OSC-I	Office of Security Cooperation–Iraq
OSD	Office of the Secretary of Defense
OSD-CAPE	Office of the Secretary of Defense–Capabilities Assessment and Program Evaluation
PAKMIL	Pakistani Military

RC	Regional Command
SIGAR	Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction
SMW	Special Mission Wing
SOF	Special Operations Forces
SOFA	Status of Forces Agreement
SPA	Strategic Partnership Agreement
sq. km	Square Kilometer
SSR	Security Sector Reform
TAA	Train, Advise, and Assist
TFBSO	Task Force for Business and Stability Operations
TMAF	Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
UN	United Nations
U.S.	United States
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
USC	U.S. Code
USFOR-A	U.S. Forces–Afghanistan
USIP	U.S. Institute of Peace
VSO	Village Stability Operations

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List of figures

Figure 1. Afghanistan and Pakistan administrative divisions. 10

Figure 2. Map of Afghanistan by security tier 23

Figure 3. Map of Afghanistan by security tier 73

Figure 4. Afghanistan Ministry of Defense organizational chart ... 325

Figure 5. Afghanistan Ministry of Interior organizational chart ... 326

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List of tables

Table 1. Summary of ANSF troop-to-task analysis planning factors 25

Table 2. Summary of calculated ANSF force levels in the 2015 to 2018 timeframe 26

Table 3. Key force size and structure takeaways, by ANSF force type 27

Table 4. Difference between current and calculated ANSF force levels by region 30

Table 5. Summary of findings and implications of the "Soviet withdrawal, Mujahideen offensive, collapse of the government" case study 47

Table 6. Summary of findings and implications of "The Taliban's conquest of Afghanistan" case study 51

Table 7. Summary of findings and implications of "Taliban offensive in the south and east" case study 54

Table 8. Summary of findings from current threat assessment 60

Table 9. Summary of assessments for the future threat: 2015–2018 74

Table 10. Summary of assessments for the future threat: 2019–2023 78

Table 11. Force sizing framework (ANSF missions by force type and security tiers) 82

Table 12. Police per 1,000 inhabitants 5 years after an international intervention began 88

Table 13. Police per 1,000 inhabitants in Central Asia 89

Table 14. Current police-to-population ratios by region 90

Table 15. Summary of calculated police force sizes, by security tier 91

Table 16. Sensitivity analysis of police-to-population ratios (police per 1,000 inhabitants) 98

Table 17. Current ANSF border and customs security forces, by type 100

Table 18. Afghan Border Police, by adjacent country..... 102

Table 19. Summary of calculated Afghan Border Police forces, by tier 103

Table 20. Current Afghan Border Police on the border with Pakistan, by province 105

Table 21. ANA battalions by region, per population, and per area..... 110

Table 22. Summary of recommendations for ANA infantry battalions, by tier..... 110

Table 23. Calculation of infantry battalions to augment security on Tier 2 major roads..... 119

Table 24. ANA infantry battalions calculated for the protection of Tier 1 cities..... 120

Table 25. Calculated combat support battalions, by region 124

Table 26. Types of forces in the current ANA force structure, compared to historical U.S. Army forces.. 126

Table 27. Summary of calculated conventional ANA forces 127

Table 28. Sensitivity analysis for ANA planning factors 128

Table 29. AAF and SMW inventory, October 2013 and projected 2018..... 132

Table 30. Difference in calculated force levels and current force levels, by region 144

Table 31. Summary of ANSF capability gaps, by Joint Capability Area 149

Table 32. Capability gaps that could prevent the ANSF from conducting critical missions in the 2015–2018 timeframe 157

Table 33. Rough estimates of annual ANSF sustainment costs 160

Table 34. Comparison of enhancements above the APoR to critical ANSF capability gaps 161

Table 35. Core capabilities and key shortfalls of the MoD, MoI, and fielded forces 175

Table 36. Institutional enablers and key shortfalls in the MoD, MoI, and fielded forces 175

Table 37. Comparison of ministerial advising approaches 181

Table 38. Current legal authorities for U.S. military operations in Afghanistan (abbreviated) 190

Table 39. Summary of likely ANSF responses to several political scenarios 226

Table 40. Likely enduring, non-enduring, and questionable aspects of the ANSF in 2015, absent U.S. and NATO enablers 243

Table 41. Organizations contacted during the study 267

Table 42. Afghanistan's districts by province and security tier 319

Table 43. List of authorities currently enabling the U.S. mission in Afghanistan 328

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