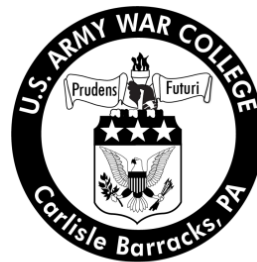


Achieving Peace in Afghanistan: Obstacles and Recommendations

by

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ACHIEVING PEACE IN AFGHANISTAN: OBSTACLES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

by

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In June 2011, President Obama established two policy objectives for the United States in Afghanistan. First, the United States will not allow transnational terrorists to use the territory of Afghanistan. Second, the United States will support an Afghan led reconciliation process. However, the prospects of a negotiated settlement prior to a 2014 transition appear unlikely. Specifically, this paper will identify five significant obstacles to the peace process. To overcome these potential obstacles, the United States Government will need to take a greater role in the Afghan led process. This study proposes three changes to US policy in order to facilitate a lasting transition in 2014.

ACHIEVING PEACE IN AFGHANISTAN: OBSTACLES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

On October 7, 2011 Afghanistan and the international community marked the tenth anniversary of the war in Afghanistan. In the wake of these ten years of conflict, government and military leaders continue to search for an acceptable outcome to the conflict. The United States' objective to deny Al Qaeda the use of Afghanistan has remained consistent since the early days of the conflict. In 2012, the strategy to accomplish this objective changed from defeating the Taliban to political accommodation.¹

The following statements from the President and Vice-President provide insight into how the United States' leadership envisions ending the conflict. In June 2011, President Obama established two policy objectives for the United States in Afghanistan. First, he restated that the United States will not allow "safe haven from which al Qaeda or its affiliates can launch attacks against our homeland or our allies."² Second, the United States intends to support an Afghan led reconciliation with the Taliban to achieve a political settlement. President Obama framed this policy with a date of 2014 for the transition of security to the government of Afghanistan.³

In December 2011, during an interview with *Newsweek*, Vice-President Biden provided additional insight into the administrations' Afghanistan objectives and what might be an acceptable outcome. First, the United States will maintain pressure on al Qaeda. Second, the Government of Afghanistan must be in a strong and secure position to negotiate with the Taliban. Lastly, Biden stated, "we are in a position where if Afghanistan ceased and desisted from being a haven for people who do damage and have as a target the United States of America and their allies, that's good enough."⁴

Neither official described the defeat of the Taliban as an objective of the United States. Both leaders clearly articulated the intent to seek reconciliation with an assurance that Afghanistan will not become a safe haven for transnational terrorists. This paper will argue that a political settlement by 2014 is unlikely because of the inherent political complexity in Afghanistan. Specifically: the current security situation, uncertainty surrounding the future of coalition forces and the Afghan leadership, and the interest of Afghan minorities and regional actors makes a political settlement by 2014 unlikely. This paper will also provide: a historical analysis of how insurgencies end; identify obstacles to negotiation with the Taliban; and, recommend an approach to overcome these obstacles.

Historical Analysis

To understand the probability of a successful peace settlement between the Taliban and the Afghan Government, it is important to first explore some historical analysis concerning how insurgencies end. It is also useful to examine some background on both of the likely parties potentially involved in a settlement agreement. A 2010 RAND study provides a model to consider the historical context.

In a 2010 RAND study, *How Insurgencies End*, Ben Connable and Martin Libicki found that most insurgencies fail to achieve their political aims. The authors analyzed eighty-nine insurgencies with twenty-eight cases of clear government victory. Overtime the strength and available tools of the government weakened the insurgent organization and enabled the government to address the root causes of the conflict.⁵ They also found that negotiated settlements are uncommon and only occurred in nineteen of the eighty nine insurgencies they analyzed, about twenty-one percent.⁶ While they acknowledged

that other studies vary on this percentage, noted scholars estimate a range from twenty to thirty-three percent of all insurgencies end in negotiations. Specifically, William Zartman, a renowned expert on war termination, found that “only a quarter to a third of modern civil wars (including anti-colonial wars) have found their way to negotiations.”⁷ Another noted scholar, Gordon McCormick assessed that only twenty percent of insurgencies end in “substantive” negotiations.⁸ Each of these experts agreed that ending conflict through negotiations is the least likely scenario of war termination.

Many academics and practitioners have searched for a common link between insurgencies that successfully ended with a political settlement. The prevailing theory that answers this question on war termination describes the need for a stalemate. Audrey Cronin, in her book *How Terrorism Ends*, defined a stalemate as the condition where both parties assess the continuation of the conflict to be counter-productive.⁹ William Zartman refers to the most promising period for peace negotiations as a “mutually hurting stalemate”.¹⁰ In his article, “The Timing of Peace Initiatives: Hurting Stalemates and Ripe Moments,” William Zartman further describes the concept of stalemate as a flat, unending plateau.¹¹ William Zartman’s description highlights a sense of permanence to the strategic situation. Furthermore, the description of a mutual stalemate seems to depend upon a rational decision and a strategic choice about current and future conditions. This dependence on rationality of the belligerents could become problematic when honor, enmity, fear, and greed become a part of the decision calculus.

Another aspect of historical analysis examines both of the parties to a potential settlement. One can first consider the relative effectiveness of the insurgents to

threaten government control. Examining this relationship can provide broad indicators of which party is winning or losing the struggle. Particularly, are there indications of a government victory or is the Taliban insurgency in a terminal decline? Ben Connable and Martin Libicki identified three indicators of impending government success: 1) an increased number of insurgent defections, particularly among the leadership; 2) denial of sanctuary; and, 3) an increased volume of intelligence from the local population.¹²

Applying this model to Afghanistan, the Afghan government will probably not defeat the Taliban insurgency in the near term for the following two reasons. First, no key leadership from the Taliban has defected to the Afghan government. In December 2011, British Royal Marine Major General David Hook, Director of the International Security Assistance Force's Reintegration Cell, reported the reintegration of 2,970 former insurgents since the beginning of the Afghan Reconciliation and Reintegration program.¹³ It is important to note that, this program has helped several thousand former insurgents rejoin society, yet these numbers do not include any senior leadership. Also noteworthy is the geographic origins of the transitioned forces. These former insurgents overwhelmingly transitioned from Northern and Western Afghanistan.¹⁴ While this successful reintegration may illustrate the difficulty the Taliban have experienced in expanding beyond the East and South, it also represents that the Reconciliation and Reintegration program has not consistently penetrated the core leadership in the Pashtun populated support areas of the South. Second, the Taliban sanctuary in Pakistan remains pervasive. Taliban leadership continues to conduct planning, recruitment and training across most areas of Baluchistan and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas without significant Pakistani hindrance. Information from

Brookings Institute reported a significant increase in cross border attacks during the first nine months of 2011.¹⁵ This supports the pervasive nature of the Taliban in the southern and western Pakistan. Lastly, the amount of intelligence provided by the population may provide an indication of the populations support to the government; however, unclassified data is not available to examine this support. Recent polling data from the Asia Foundation does provide some insight into the attitudes of the population. Polling data, from The Asia Foundation's 2011 brief, states that only twenty-nine percent of the population was sympathetic to the Taliban.¹⁶ Additionally, this polling information presents a twenty-seven percent decline in the last thirty-six months.¹⁷

Turning now to a historical analysis of the Taliban requires the identification of potential structural characteristics that may prevent the belligerents from entering into negotiations. Ben Connable and Martin Libicki described three societal and conflict characteristics that could prolong conflict. They argued: 1) a political settlement is difficult where there is a long history of using violence to solve political disputes; 2) the perception of a zero sum conflict deters the settlement process; and, 3) the opportunity for some to profit from the conflict increases the unwillingness to negotiate. Their study concludes that when these three characteristics are present, belligerents are less likely to make a rational decision and enter into a settlement process, which prolongs the conflict.¹⁸

Applying this model to Afghanistan, this paper argues that these structural factors could prevent the belligerents from making a rational decision to negotiate. First, the historical trend for the last thirty years has been for Afghan political problems to be disputed on the battlefield rather than through a legitimate political process. While

Afghan consensus building and jirga processes demonstrate a sense of representative governance, these characteristics operate within a strategic culture accustomed to achieving political ends through internal conflict. The coup against the Soviet supported government, the mujahedeen insurgency of the 1980s, the civil war of the 1990s, the war between the Taliban and the Northern Alliance, and the Taliban insurgency exemplify the underlying difficulty of resolving Afghan conflicts. Second, the Taliban could perceive the conflict as a zero sum situation where any gains made by one side come at the expense of the other. The Taliban represents not just an insurgency desiring power, but the former government of Afghanistan. This fact could make negotiating a limited role in governance difficult to attain. Their goals may be for a much broader restoration of their former level of government control. Third, both parties have factions that have profited from the war economy. An end to the conflict will result in a contraction of Afghanistan's economy and a possible reduction in illicit profits to corrupt officials. According to the World Bank, foreign military and development spending in Afghanistan constitutes ninety-seven percent of Afghanistan's gross domestic product.¹⁹ Even with the Bonn II obligations beyond 2014, the international funding will only equate to fifty percent of Afghanistan's gross domestic product.²⁰ Corruption and predatory governance often depends on this type of war economy and its lack of transparency. The illicit money resulting from corruption around international donor funds equates to influence. Many spoilers, as well as those in power, stand to lose economically and politically if the war ends as they lose their ability to redistribute wealth within their established patronage networks. Hence, all of these factors are likely to discourage factions in both parties from accepting a negotiated settlement.

Audrey Cronin, in her book *How Terrorism Ends*, explored other characteristics that make entering negotiations more difficult. She examined the nature of the armed conflict to determine if there was an impact upon negotiated settlements. As violence escalates it has many repercussions within the society that may make each side less likely to negotiate. Specifically, she found that the presence of a suicide campaign can prevent reaching a rational decision to negotiate. Suicide campaigns can fundamentally change the balance between the value of the object and its corresponding sacrifice. The psychological and physical sunk costs, “sacrifice investment,” in this tactic may lead a belligerent to believe there has been too much sacrifice to concede to a political accommodation. Also, the use of suicide bombers can impact the society, crossing a previous boundary for appropriate tactics against the adversary.²¹ Brian Williams, a Professor of Islamic History at the University of Massachusetts, in his article “Suicide Bombings in Afghanistan,” discovered that Afghan Mujahedeen did not employ suicide bombers against the Russians or prior to the current international intervention.²² Yochi Dreazen, a *National Journal* national security author, reported that since the first Pashtun suicide bombing, the tactic has become widespread with the use of women and children in several instances.²³ The impact of this tactic upon the Pashtun society and how it will affect the peace settlement remains unclear. However, it is apparent the tactic represents a radicalization within the Taliban and a segment of the Pashtun society that did not exist in prior conflicts. Based on Cronin’s research, one would expect the tactic to make settlement less likely.

Audrey Cronin also argued that belligerents often retain their objectives as they enter a negotiations process. One or both of the belligerents might use the negotiations

process only to delay or improve their situation for further conflict. In these cases the negotiation process becomes a way or a means to achieve their objectives, rather than an attempt to end the conflict.²⁴ Negotiations may become a method to delay, marginalize a group, isolate factions, or encourage members to leave the other side. The process can also become an intelligence gathering opportunity to learn more about ones' adversary.²⁵

Despite these obstacles associated with bringing belligerents to the peace table, there are two recent indications that the Afghan people are willing to support their government in a peace process. First, the Afghan population overwhelmingly supports a reconciliation and reintegration effort with the Taliban. The Asia Foundation's 2011 survey found that eighty-two percent of the Afghan population supported negotiation with the Taliban.²⁶ Second, nearly fifty percent of the Afghan people believe the country is headed in the right direction.²⁷ These two indicators might suggest the presence of sufficient political influence and legitimacy required to make concessions possible.

There are four important points that arise from this historical analysis. First, governments have the upper hand when fighting insurgencies. Second, a negotiated peace settlement is the least likely end to an insurgency. Where negotiations have been successful, a mutual stalemate existed prior to the negotiations. Third, even when a rational decision to negotiate seems apparent, structural characteristics and emotions can prevent belligerents from entering the settlement process. Finally, the Afghan people are overwhelmingly tired of this conflict and may support a negotiation with the Taliban. These points demonstrate that entering a negotiated settlement is exceedingly difficult. Applying this theoretical foundation to the conditions in Afghanistan, this paper

will consider five critical obstacles that could prevent a negotiated peace prior to 2014. These obstacles include: 1) the Taliban's capability for continued resistance; 2), the lack of unity within the Taliban and the Government of Afghanistan; 3), the concerns of the Northern Alliance; 4) Pakistan's interests; and, 5) pressure from international organizations.

Obstacles to Negotiation

The first obstacle to a negotiated settlement is the Taliban's capability for continued resistance. Central to this assessment is whether or not the Taliban perceives they are winning the conflict. As described during the previous portion of this paper, William Zartman argued the need for a "mutually hurting stalemate" to convince belligerents to negotiate.²⁸ William Zartman further described this concept of a mutually hurting stalemate as the "ripeness" of a conflict.²⁹ While President Obama's public statements communicate the intent to support an Afghan negotiation process, it is not clear that the Taliban have made a similar decision. To say it another way, the Afghan conflict might not be in a stalemate or ripe for negotiations.

The Taliban's recent actions do not indicate a state of stalemate. An analysis of the Taliban's actions in 2010 and 2011 indicate that they remain a capable and adaptive insurgent force. During the period of the Afghan surge, January 2010 – July 2011, Taliban forces continued to operate throughout Afghanistan. The United Nations reported a thirty-nine percent increase in attacks during the first eight months of 2011.³⁰ However, Coalition sources question the accuracy of the United Nations' information.³¹ An assessment of Coalition, United Nations, and Brookings Institute data provides three conclusions.³² First, the combined Afghan and coalition forces had significant tactical

success in the area of Regional Command-Southwest. This area of key terrain in the Helmand River Valley saw a twenty-seven percent reduction in Taliban initiated attacks from the same period in 2010.³³ Second, the Taliban effectively changed their operational focus to Regional Command-East. The area along the border and south of Kabul witnessed a sixteen percent increase in Taliban attacks with significant increases in the critical provinces of Ghazni, Logar, and Wardak.³⁴ Additionally, the Haquanni network increased cross border attacks proving their ability to operate in eastern Afghanistan and the capital city of Kabul.³⁵ Lastly, the Taliban maintained the ability to launch suicide attacks and increased the frequency of spectacular attacks and assassinations. The Taliban maintained their tempo of suicide attacks averaging twelve a month including several successful complex attacks within Kabul. The 2011 assassinations of Mohammed Daoud Daoud and Burhanuddin Rabanni demonstrate the Taliban's ability to target Afghan elites.³⁶ All of these actions demonstrate a remaining capacity for continued resistance and suggest that the Taliban may not be at a stalemate.

A second obstacle to negotiations is the lack of unity within the Taliban and the Government of Afghanistan. William Zartman argued that achieving a settlement to a conflict requires more than a rational decision by both belligerents. He described maintaining unity as the key element of a negotiation once a stalemate exists.³⁷ Negotiation requires each side to preserve their unity so they might establish a valid spokesperson and deliver on military and diplomatic promises.³⁸ Unity provides each belligerent a sense of legitimacy, and organizational coherency results in power at the bargaining table. Audrey Cronin, in her book *How Terrorism Ends*, describes the impact

of splintering as a key factor in the failure of negotiations.³⁹ No party is a monolith and the internal plurality of belligerents provides risks and opportunity for each side. Either side can begin to splinter and thereby weaken the belligerent's position to force concessions. Governments might resist negotiations if they are comprised of a fragile coalition that will degrade through the process of negotiations. Insurgencies can risk their very identity by agreeing to accommodation.⁴⁰ This paper argues that the Taliban and the Government of Afghanistan are not homogenous organizations and face a significant threat of splintering during negotiations which further decreases the prospects of achieving a negotiated settlement by 2014.

Insurgencies are rarely, if ever, fought by monolithic organizations.⁴¹ Insurgent leaders must manage the internal pluralism of the organization to conduct effective operations. Imtiaz Bokhari, in his article "Internal Negotiations among Many Actors," discovered that the Afghan Mujahedeen found themselves in two distinct processes during negotiations with the Soviet supported Afghan Government.⁴² The Afghan Mujahedeen were simultaneously involved in an intra-insurgency consensus building stage, as well as engaged in negotiations with their adversary. The intra-insurgency consensus building was required to address internal asymmetry of interests prior to making any accommodations with the Soviet supported Afghan Government.⁴³ Though this historical example differs from the current situation, the leadership structure of the Taliban could face similar difficulties. It is unclear whether the Taliban has a center of influence that can negotiate and honor a settlement agreement. The decentralized nature of the Taliban's strategic leadership structure and the divergent interests between insurgent factions could pose significant obstacles to negotiations. This

challenge to the organizations' unity could become more apparent as the Taliban selects a valid spokesperson and attempts to enforce security and diplomatic agreements.

Antonio Giustozzi, a noted expert on the Taliban insurgency, describes the decentralized nature of the Taliban's command and control structure in his book *Koran, Kalashnikov and Laptop: The Neo-Taliban Insurgency in Afghanistan*. He describes the Taliban's strategic leadership organization as a trifurcated structure; consisting of the Quetta and Peshawar shuras and the Haquanni network. He argued, the Quetta shura is the senior shura and the one most representative of the Taliban political movement.⁴⁴ Each shura or network maintains its own tribal and business connections resulting in a divergence or asymmetry of interests. The shuras are also representative of the Pashtun ethnic divisions. These divisions primarily fall along the Durrani and Ghilzai tribal groups. The Ghilzai tribal group originally dominated the Taliban structure, but over the years of the insurgency Durrani Pashtuns have become more prevalent within the Taliban strategic leadership.⁴⁵ These divisions might become more apparent during any negotiations. This diversification within the Taliban leadership could further complicate the ability of the Taliban to identify a valid spokesperson and comply with any political or security negotiated agreements.⁴⁶

The lack of a legitimate spokesperson for the Taliban remains one of the greatest obstacles to entering negotiations for a peace settlement. The Taliban have not identified a legitimate representative. The decentralized, non-state character of the insurgency makes identifying an authorized representative difficult. In the past, individuals claiming to represent the Taliban duped United States and British officials.⁴⁷

Reports in early 2012 of a Taliban office scheduled to open in Qatar provide an opportunity to better understand Taliban unity.⁴⁸ Even if a tactical stalemate develops and the Taliban can provide a legitimate representative, it is unclear whether the Taliban can uphold security agreements.

The adaptability of the Taliban command structure significantly increases organizational survivability as key leaders are killed, but the inherent lack of centralized control could lessen the ability of the Taliban to comply with any security concessions. Negotiation requires both parties be capable of controlling their organizations.⁴⁹ Mullah Omar, as its leader, has the most legitimacy within the Quetta shura. However, the shura only directs operations in approximately thirty to fifty percent of the country.⁵⁰ The Peshawar shura and the Haquanni network direct operations throughout the remainder of Afghanistan. The experience of the Pakistani Army represents the difficulty forging a security agreement with a decentralized insurgency. Pakistan reached peace deals with the Pakistani Taliban in April 2004, February 2005, September 2006, February 2008, and February 2009. Each time the agreements were violated within months. In each case the insurgent groups failed to maintain control over their subordinates.⁵¹

The Afghan Government faces a similar challenge: maintaining their political unity. The peaceful transition of power to an acceptable candidate and incorporating the Taliban into the government are the two greatest government challenges. First, in 2014 Afghanistan will face its greatest political challenge since the formation of a democratic government because President Karzai is not currently eligible for another term. President Karzai announced in August 2011 that he will not attempt to amend the constitution to allow a third term in office. There is no apparent Pashtun political

successor.⁵² It is probable that the Pashtuns, making up forty-three percent of the population, will not accept a non-Pashtun candidate as legitimate.⁵³ Second, the ability to maintain political unity during negotiations and to enforce an agreement requires significant political acumen. Currently, two methods exist to codify accommodations with the Taliban. The President can call for a jirga or constitutional council to amend the constitution, or he can propose legislation through the Wolesi Jirga. Both of these political vehicles require significant unity since a plurality of minority groups could oppose agreements made by a Pashtun President.⁵⁴

A third obstacle to successful negotiations centers on the concerns of the Northern Alliance. The former Northern Alliance factions, made up of Tajiks, Uzbeks, Hazaras, and moderate Pashtuns, remain essential to political unity. The Northern Alliance maintains significant influence in the security services as well as Western and Northern Afghanistan.⁵⁵ Tajiks, Uzbeks, and Hazaras will demand participation in the process and could request a veto power over any power sharing agreement.⁵⁶ President Karzai's selection of Rabanni to chair the Afghanistan High Peace Council symbolizes the importance of the non-Pashtun population. The Taliban's decision to target Burhanuddin Rabanni for assassination probably demonstrates an attempt to splinter the government. Following Burhanuddin Rabanni's death, former Northern Alliance leaders, such as Balkh's Governor Noor Atta, demanded revenge and renounced discussions on any future political settlement.⁵⁷ Neshat Messeih, a national security journalist, reported that Northern Alliance senior leaders' statements in early 2012 suggest an interest to participate in an open process, but that they are reluctant to bargain away any progress achieved in the last ten years.⁵⁸

A fourth obstacle to a settlement process involves Pakistan's national interests. Historically, Pakistan sees Afghanistan as an integral part of its security against external threats. Because of this view, Pakistan consistently involves itself in Afghanistan's internal conflicts and politics. Specifically, Pakistan participated in the Afghan Mujahedeen's negotiations with the Soviet supported Afghan Government and the Pakistanis controlled the Taliban as a proxy force to stop the Civil War in the 1990s.⁵⁹ As Pakistan looks to maintain its influence in the region it may rely on its relationship with the Taliban as a means to enforce or violate any settlement agreements that may occur. This historical relationship with the Afghans makes successful negotiations unlikely without direct Pakistani involvement and support.

Specifically, Pakistan has three primary interests in the conflict. First, Pakistan has received over twenty billion dollars of foreign aid from the United States since 2001.⁶⁰ Pakistan is projected to receive up to three billion dollars in aid in fiscal year 2012.⁶¹ Approximately fifty percent of this funding supports security sector development.⁶² As previously addressed, this aid benefits the existing power structure and there is little incentive for Pakistan to support a political settlement that risks losing foreign aid. Second, a stronger Afghanistan may align with India. This is a basic balance of power concern for Pakistan. President Karzai conducted two visits to India in 2011 and on October 4, 2011 he reached a strategic partnership agreement with India.⁶³ Pakistan likely viewed these visits as a loss of influence and a reinforcement of their fear of a strategic encirclement. Third, Pakistan cannot afford an increase in Pashtun nationalism. Worldwide there are approximately fifty million Pashtun people, representing one of the world's largest ethnic groups without a country.⁶⁴ Pashtun tribal

affiliations are transnational, and Pakistan does not want to see a strong Pashtun leader in Afghanistan that could influence Pashtuns in Pakistan. Pashtun nationalism could threaten the authority of the Pakistani and Afghan governments.⁶⁵ These concerns are linked to Pakistani existential threats. Therefore, it is unlikely that Pakistan will support any process that could jeopardize their national existence.

A fifth obstacle to a negotiated peace settlement is pressure from international organizations. International human rights organizations are very concerned with the future of Afghanistan and could find peace negotiations unacceptable without guarantees for women's rights.⁶⁶ In February 2011, Secretary Clinton in a speech to the Asia Society declared that abiding by the constitution was one of three red lines in negotiations with the Taliban.⁶⁷ Some observers believe the Afghan government would be willing to bargain with the constitutional protections provided to Afghan women.⁶⁸ Under Taliban rule, females were shut out of public life in the name of strict sharia law. The current Afghan constitution goes as far as to reserve sixty-four seats in the Afghan parliament for female representatives.⁶⁹ International human rights organizations consider a Woman's rights to hold office, vote, and attend school to be non-negotiable. The international community could wield significant influence by tying post 2014 aid, which is critical to the viability of the Afghan government, to human rights compliance.

These five obstacles: 1) the Taliban's capability for continued resistance; 2), the lack of unity within the Taliban and the Government of Afghanistan; 3), the concerns of the Northern Alliance; 4) Pakistan's interests; and, 5) pressure from international organizations, combined make finding bargaining space monumentally difficult and unlikely prior to 2014. Each of these interested parties has negotiation red lines and

areas where they are willing to accommodate within a complex network of variables. Increasing certainty, building confidence between the parties, and including key stakeholders is critical to finding such a bargaining space.

Recommendations to Mitigate Obstacles

This paper will now consider some means to mitigate the aforementioned five obstacles to the peace process. These recommendations can be summarized along three themes: 1) increase certainty in Afghan political unity and future security capability; 2) build confidence between belligerents and minority groups; and 3) seek a regional solution to include Pakistan. The United States plays a significant role in each of these areas. The following analysis will address these themes as a means to successfully negotiate a peace settlement.

First, the United States and the international coalition should endeavor to increase certainty in Afghan political unity and future security capability. The international coalition should encourage President Karzai to endorse a reform minded successor who would be acceptable to non-Pashtun Afghans. This action should also reassure President Karzai's political opponents that the President would not look for a way to amend the constitution. In order to preserve the viability of the government, any process to identify a political successor should not circumvent the democratic nature of the country. Actions to reduce the political uncertainty following the 2014 presidential elections would strengthen the chances for a lasting political settlement by encouraging the legitimacy of the government.

Additionally, the United States should increase the certainty in the future Afghan security capability. The United States must increase transparency about the presence of

international forces beyond 2014. The completion of the Loya Jirga approving a strategic partnership with the United States makes identification of a long term strategy possible. In December 2011 General Allen, the International Security Assistance Force Commander, referred to the continued presence of advisors and trainers beyond 2014. His concept of trainers, advisors, and intelligence analysts should provide a roadmap to define future security assistance.⁷⁰ Allen's statements may change the psychology of negotiations and decrease Afghan uncertainty about future United States security presence.

Second, the international community and the Afghan Government should build confidence with the Taliban and Afghan minorities. To build confidence with the Taliban and their supporters, the international community and Afghan government must include them in the international forums focused on Afghanistan's future. Bonn II, the conference held in 2011 that outlined international support beyond 2014, excluded the Taliban. Additionally, Pakistan boycotted the Bonn II conference in retaliation for the accidental death of twenty-four Pakistani Soldiers. The absence of Taliban and Pakistani representatives meant two of the most influential parties had no input into describing a vision of Afghanistan post 2014. These absences will likely result in these critical stakeholders placing little importance in any associated resolutions.

Additionally, the United States and Afghan government should build confidence with Afghan minority groups by enhancing strategic communications to emphasize the importance of their political liberties and security. In the wake of Burhanuddin Rabanni's assassination, former Northern Alliance factions remain the greatest intra-Afghan

obstacle to negotiations. Opponents to any peace settlement will probably target this ethnic tension attempting to splinter any unity within a potential bargaining space.

The international coalition should further build the confidence of minority groups by encouraging a regionalization of political authority in Afghanistan. The current executive power to select Provincial Governors limits the decentralization required to balance the influence of the different ethnicities. Amending the constitution to allow direct election of Provincial Governors could provide more unity with the Northern Alliance factions and accommodation with moderate Taliban.

Lastly, the United States should seek a regional solution that includes Pakistan. The current Afghan led policy will probably not bring Pakistan to the negotiations. Only the United States can provide the assurance of Pakistan's interests in continuing foreign aid and limiting the perception of a strategic Indian encirclement.

These recommendations require significant influence and engagement from the United States and the international community. It is not clear that the international community has the political will to achieve a political settlement. The international community is also a non-homogeneous grouping of often conflicting agendas relating to Afghanistan. These organizations and nations face related strategic choices to determine their actions. These choices are not as simple as a decision between good and bad. These are complex problems with many uncertainties. However, failure to build a viable peace could severely impact the region. In several instances, such as the loss of Pakistani control of nuclear weapons and increased safe haven for transnational terrorists, these impacts are tied to United States' vital national interests. The following are some potential negative outcomes and their consequences.

Potential Failed Outcomes

First, the withdrawal of coalition forces without a negotiated peace settlement increases the risk of a renewed Afghan Civil War. This potential outcome resembles the withdrawal of Soviet Forces from Afghanistan. The United States and international community should not withdraw from Afghanistan leaving a weak central government and an insurgency waiting for international forces to leave. If the Afghan government is unable to provide security then the country could break down into ethnic warring factions. Ethnic identities, like tribal affiliations, are transnational and the conflict has the potential to become a regional conflict. Areas without compliance to international norms of conduct and rule of law are also susceptible to becoming a sanctuary for transnational terrorists.⁷¹

Second, the permanent state of conflict in the area risks the further radicalization of a next generation of transnational terrorists. This potential outcome resembles the environment that resulted in the rise of Al Qaeda during the Afghan Mujahedeen's war. The ten years of conflict in Pakistan and Afghanistan has influenced a generation of Pashtun youth who have grown up in an environment of persistent conflict. A return to civil war could further ignite the radicalization process and potentially increase the transnational terrorism the Afghan intervention was meant to prevent. The introduction of suicide bombings within the Pashtun population represents one example of radicalization. In Pakistan, there were two suicide attacks in 2003 and seventy-six attacks in 2009.⁷² In Afghanistan, attacks increased from zero in 2002 to approximately one-hundred eighty in 2009.⁷³ Many policy makers believe that Pashtun radicals only represent a threat to the Governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan, but there are

indications the Taliban threat is looking beyond regional operations. In May 2010, a Pashtun terrorist attempted a car bomb attack in New York City as retaliation for drone attacks within Pakistan.⁷⁴

Lastly, religious extremism and militancy are the greatest internal threat to the state of Pakistan. The renewed Afghan Civil War and increased radicalization of Pashtuns may cause a significant increase in lawlessness along the border regions. The province of Baluchistan, the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, and the North West Frontier Provinces could become loosely governed spaces with significant safe haven for transnational terrorists. The violence and loss of state control outside of urban areas could also begin to threaten the control of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal. Additionally, a spillover of violence into India could threaten a regional conflict.⁷⁵

Conclusion

President Obama's two stated policy objectives provide important insight into how American strategic leaders envision the future of Afghanistan.⁷⁶ First, the United States will not allow transnational terrorists to use the territory of Afghanistan to plan and conduct attacks. Second, the United States will support an Afghan led reconciliation process. The aforementioned discussion of the uncertainty in the political and security situation, concerns of Afghan minorities, and the involvement of external actors makes achieving reconciliation prior to 2014 unlikely.

This analysis has identified five significant obstacles for peace negotiations. First, the Taliban could perceive an advantage as coalition forces leave Afghanistan. Second, the Government of Afghanistan and the Taliban have major challenges maintaining their unity during negotiations. Third, the Northern Alliance factions are a significant

challenge to negotiations and could cause a splintering within the government. Fourth, Pakistan might not see peace negotiations as serving their national interests. Fifth, international human rights organizations could cause significant challenges during negotiations over the role of women in Afghan society.

To overcome these potential obstacles, the United States Government will need to take a greater role in the Afghan led reconciliation process. First, the United States must work to increase the certainty in the Afghan political process and future security force capabilities. Second, the United States must increase confidence between the belligerents by involving the Taliban in defining Afghanistan's future and assuring Afghan minorities of their freedom. Lastly, the United States must build a regional process that allows Pakistan to exercise a constructive role.

These recommendations will require significant United States and international involvement in a period in which fiscal constraints motivate participants to disengage. France's early 2012 announcement that the country will withdrawal forces a year early exemplifies some coalition members' moves to quicken their withdrawal.⁷⁷ Failure to engage in processes that increase certainty, build confidence, and seek a regional solution could result in a renewed Civil War, further radicalization of a generation of Pashtun youth, and the fracture of Pakistan. None of these possible outcomes would serve the United States' long term interests. While the assessment of a successful termination of the conflict through negotiations is pessimistic, the potential strategic costs in these negative outcomes make the effort to overcome these obstacles of vital importance.

Endnotes

¹ United States Government. The White House President Obama. "Foreign Policy." Accessed from: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/issues/foreign-policy> Accessed on: January 24, 2012. The document references the 2010 National Security Strategy and recent accomplishments of President Obama's administration. The document reinforces the three key objectives in Afghanistan and Pakistan: 1) deny Al Qaeda the use of Afghanistan as safehaven, 2) reversing the Taliban's momentum, and 3) strengthen the capacity of the Afghan security forces and Government to take the lead in Afghanistan's future. Nowhere in this document, President Obama's June 2011 speech or in recent interviews with senior administration officials, is there a reference of an objective to defeat the Taliban.

² Barack Obama, "On the Way Forward in Afghanistan," West Point Address, June 22 2011, National Review Online. Available from: <http://www.nationalreview.com/corner/270303/text-obamas-afghanistan-speech-nro-staff>. Accessed on: November 25, 2011.

³ Ibid. President Obama announced the date of 2014 as the final security transition period to the Government of Afghanistan. Security sector support post 2014 is still under development.

⁴ Leslie Gelb. "Joe Biden On Iraq, Iran, China and the Taliban," *Newsweek*, December 19, 2011, Available from: <http://magazine-directory.com/Newsweek.htm>, Accessed on: December 20, 2011.

⁵ Ben Connable and Martin Libicki. *How Insurgencies End*. National Defense Research Institute, RAND Corporation: 2010, 5. The authors analyzed 89 insurgencies. Their qualitative analysis assigned four outcomes: 1) government wins, 2) insurgents win, 3) mixed, and 4) still ongoing. In 28 cases, the government clearly defeated the insurgency.

⁶ Ibid., 18. The authors' analysis identified 19 of 89 internal conflicts ended with a mixed outcome where neither side achieved all of their political aims.

⁷ William Zartman. *Elusive Peace: Negotiating an End to Civil Wars*. The Brookings Institute, Washington D.C. 1995, 3.

⁸ Gordon McCormick, Steven B. Horton, and Lauren A. Harrison. "Things Fall Apart: The 'End Game' Dynamics of Internal Wars." Accessed from: <http://www.math.usma.edu/people/horton/EndGame.pdf> Accessed on: January 24, 2012, 5.

⁹ Audrey Cronin. *How Terrorism Ends*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009, 63. Cronin describes the factors related to whether or not negotiations will succeed. Her factors include stalemate, strong leadership, sponsors, suicide campaigns, splintering, and spoilers.

¹⁰ William Zartman. "The Timing of Peace Initiative: Hurting Stalemates and Ripe Moments." *The Global Review of Ethnopolitics*, Vol. 1 No. 1 Sept 2001, 8-18. Zartman defines the requirement for the ripeness of a conflict situation before negotiation is feasible. The ideal period for negotiation is when both parties assess themselves in a hurting stalemate where continued conflict is counter-productive. Ben Connable and Martin Libicki. *How Insurgencies End*. National Defense Research Institute, RAND Corporation: 2010. The requirement for a rational calculus is problematic during long-term conflict. Ben Connable and Martin Libicki's found that structural factors such as long histories of using violence to resolve political

grievances, a perceived zero-sum nature of internal conflict, and an unwillingness to forgo opportunities for lucrative plunder complicate the cost benefit calculation. Clausewitz might opine that the factor of enmity could outweigh the primacy of the political objective.

¹¹ Ibid., 8-18.

¹² Ben Connable and Martin Libicki. *How Insurgencies End*. National Defense Research Institute, RAND Corporation: 2010, 18. Additional peripheral indicators include market metrics suggesting insurgents must pay an increasing amount for key resources and a significant drop in international assistance.

¹³ Karen Parrish. "General: Afghan Reintegration Program Will Take Time" American Forces Press Service, 8 December 2011, Available from: <http://www.defense.gov/News/NewsArticle.aspx?ID=66398> Accessed on 10 December 2011. British Royal Marine Maj. Gen. David Hook, director of ISAF's Force Reintegration cell highlights as a success the low recidivism rate of five of nearly 3,000 reintegrees. He also estimates that 80 percent of the fighters in the South and East are not ideologically driven. If this number is true, the recognition and resolution of grievances should enable continued success of the program. The lack of senior leadership involved in this process is probably due to the ideological nature of their cause. This ideology is a key factor in preventing effective negotiations. Nonetheless, the low rate of recidivism is a strong indicator of the reintegration of nearly 3000 former fighters.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Michael O'Hanlon and Ian Livingston. "Afghanistan Index: Tracking Variables of Reconstruction and Security in post 9/11 Afghanistan." Brookings Institute, October 2011, 10. The Haquanni network was primarily responsible for the increase in cross border attacks. Brookings reports a 500 percent increase in cross border attacks and a 20 percent increase in improvised explosive devices.

¹⁶ Michael Fassbender. "Poll: Afghan Support for Taliban Declining" The New York Times, November 15, 2011. The primary source is the annual Asia Foundation polling data. While any opinion poll in Afghanistan is highly susceptible to social desirability bias the availability of data over several years' increases confidence in the change in the Afghan population's attitudes towards the government, the Taliban, and the Coalition.

¹⁷ Ibid. The 2011 report found a significant reduction in the support for the Taliban. Numbers were 2009 fifty-six percent, 2010 forty percent, and 2011 twenty-nine percent.

¹⁸ Ben Connable and Martin Libicki. *How Insurgencies End*. National Defense Research Institute, RAND Corporation: 2010, 19. The authors use historical analysis and their own findings to identify several structural characteristics that make belligerents unwilling or unable to end a conflict.

¹⁹ "Evaluating United States' Foreign Assistance to Afghanistan," Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, June 8 2011, 2. Available from: <http://www.foreign.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/SPRT%20112-21.pdf> Accessed on 30 January 2012.

²⁰ Anne Gearan and Juergen Baetz. "World pledges long-term help to Afghanistan." Associated Press, December 5, 2011. Available from: <http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/2011/dec/05/world-pledges-long-term-help-to-afghanistan/> Accessed on: December 17, 2011.

²¹ Audrey Cronin. *How Terrorism Ends*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009, 66.

²² Brian Glyn Williams. "Suicide Bombings in Afghanistan." Jane's Islamic Affairs Analyst September 2007. Accessed from: <http://jiaa.janes.com/public/jiaa/index.shtml> Accessed on: 17 December 2011.

²³ Yochi Dreazen. "Allyn: Use of Children in Suicide Attacks Part of 'Ruthless' Escalation for Taliban." *National Journal*, June 20 2011, Accessed from: <http://www.nationaljournal.com/nationalsecurity/> Accessed on: December 17, 2011. The author reports suicide attacks involving children as young as 12 years old. As of June 2011 the Afghan government reported holding more than two dozen would be child suicide bombers.

²⁴ Audrey Cronin. *How Terrorism Ends*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009, 37-38.

²⁵ Ibid., 37-38.

²⁶ Michael Fassbender. "Poll: Afghan Support for Taliban Declining" The New York Times, November 15, 2011. The primary source is the annual Asia Foundation polling data. This statistic predates the assassination of Burhanuddin Rabbani so it is unclear the impact of this incident on the attitudes of the Tajik population in Northern Afghanistan.

²⁷ Ibid. This statistic is problematic based on the reasoning behind the right direction response. Poll participants stated a high approval for the economic improvements in the country. Other traditional areas such as security did not score as well. These economic improvements are directly tied to the artificial war economy representing ninety-seven percent of Afghanistan's GDP. That means this area could see a potential decline as international security and development funds are reduced.

²⁸ William Zartman. "The timing of Peace Initiative: Hurting Stalemates and Ripe Moments." *The Global Review of Ethnopolitics*, Vol. 1 No. 1 Sept 2001, 8-18.

²⁹ Ibid., 8-18.

³⁰ Maria Abi-Habib. "Afghan Violence Is Rising, U.N. Says; Coalition Differs" September 29, 2011, Wall Street Journal Available from: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204226204576598740809018806.html> Accessed on: December 15, 2011.

³¹ Ibid.

³² During 2006 – 2007, the author conducted direct coordination with the United Nations' Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) security officer to identify security incident metrics. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan oftentimes assesses security incidents as insurgent related when the Coalition will term the incident as criminally related. Additionally, coalition data focuses on Taliban initiated attacks rather than incidents that are initiated by the coalition such as a raid.

³³ Anthony Cordesman and Arleigh Burke. "Afghanistan: Violence, Casualties, and Tactical Progress: 2011." Center for Strategic and International Studies, November 10, 2011, 12. Accessed from: http://csis.org/files/publication/111110_AfghanViolence_n_CivCas.pdf Accessed on: December 15 2011.

³⁴ Ibid., 12.

³⁵ Michael O'Hanlon and Ian Livingston. "Afghanistan Index: Tracking Variables of Reconstruction and Security in post 9/11 Afghanistan." Brookings Institute, October 2011, 10. The Haquanni network was primarily responsible for the increase in cross border attacks. Brookings reports a 500 percent increase in cross border attacks and a 20 percent increase in improvised explosive devices. The Haquanni is a Pashtun organization organized around the Haquanni family. They maintain connections with the Quetta Shura but it is unclear how much direction they take from Mullah Omar's council. The traditional area of operations for the Haquanni network is Northern Waziristan, headquartered from Miram Shah, and the Greater Paktya area of Afghanistan – Paktia, Paktika, Ghazni, and Khowst. Recent years the network has demonstrated the ability to consistently operate in the provinces around Kabul.

³⁶ Bashir Ahmad Gwakh, "If not the Taliban, then who killed Rabbani?" Asia Times, September 24, 2011. Accessed from: http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/MI24Df01.html Accessed on: January 27, 2011.

³⁷ William Zartman. *Elusive Peace: Negotiating an End to Civil Wars*. The Brookings Institute, Washington D.C. 1995. The author describes three key elements beyond stalemate that are essential to negotiations: unity, valid spokesperson, and the ability to deliver on military and diplomatic promises.

³⁸ William Zartman. *Elusive Peace: Negotiating an End to Civil Wars*. The Brookings Institute, Washington D.C. 1995.

³⁹ Audrey Cronin. *How Terrorism Ends*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009, 67. Cronin describes the factors related to whether or not negotiations will succeed. Her factors include stalemate, strong leadership, sponsors, suicide campaigns, splintering, and spoilers.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 67.

⁴¹ Stanley McChrystal. "ISAF, GEN McChrystal, and Eight Imperatives of Counter-Insurgency," Strategic Discourse Online, April 24, 2010. Accessed from: <http://strategic-discourse.com/2010/04/isaf-gen-mcchrystal-and-8-imperatives-of-counter-insurgency/> Accessed on: January 27, 2011.

⁴² Imtiaz H. Bokhari. "Internal Negotiations Among Many Actors: Afghanistan." *Elusive Peace: Negotiating an End to Civil Wars*, The Brookings Institute, Washington DC. 1995, 233.

⁴³ Ibid., 233.

⁴⁴ Antonio Giustozzi. *Koran, Kalashnikov and Laptop: The Neo-Taliban Insurgency in Afghanistan*, Columbia University Press, New York 2008, 81-95.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 46-48. Giustozzi describes the plurality of the shuras consisting of Ghilzais and Durrani as strength to support recruiting. While this division provides opportunities to mobilization across tribal lines it could also create a tension as parts of the Taliban leadership integrate into the government. The historical leadership role of the Durrani might not be acceptable to the Ghilzais.

⁴⁶ William Zartman. *Elusive Peace: Negotiating an End to Civil Wars*. The Brookings Institute, Washington D.C. 1995.

⁴⁷ Naveed Hussain. "Reconciliation Talks: United States duped by fake interlocutor in talks, says Taliban." *International Herald Tribune*, August 21, 2011. Available from: <http://tribune.com.pk/story/236229/reconciliation-talks-us-duped-by-fake-interlocutor-in-talks-says-taliban/> Accessed on 25 November 2011.

⁴⁸ Sonia Verma, "Taliban pledge to open Qatar peace office" *The Globe and Mail*, January 3, 2012. Accessed from: <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/taliban-pledge-to-open-qatar-peace-office/article2289627/> Accessed on: January 27, 2012.

⁴⁹ European Security Forum, "The Political Future of Afghanistan." *ESF Working Paper number 34*, October 2010, 9. Available from: <http://aei.pitt.edu/15137/>. Accessed on 23 November 2011. Discusses three aspects of political settlement: 1) security guarantees, 2) power sharing, and 3) institutional arrangements.

⁵⁰ Antonio Giustozzi. "Negotiating with the Taliban: Issues and Prospects," A Century Foundation Report, 2010, 13-15. The interworking of the Taliban's shura system and how the Taliban leadership conducts direct tactical and operational control is unclear. The consensus opinion is that the Quetta shura is the senior leadership organization but also plays a direct leadership role in the Southern Provinces. The Quetta shura provides strategic direction to the Peshawar shura and the Haquanni network and through these organizations effects tactical operations in the East, capital and Northern regions of Afghanistan. This indirect control of operations in much of Afghanistan complicates identifying an effective center for the insurgency.

⁵¹ Graeme Smith. "Pakistan Taliban's latest ceasefire? Not so fast." *The Globe and Mail*. November 22, 2011. Available from: <http://m.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/worldview/pakistan-talibans-latest-ceasefire-not-so-fast/article2244593/?service=mobile> Accessed on: December 17, 2011.

⁵² Ben Farmer. "Hamid Karzai says he will not seek a third term." *Telegraph*, August 11 2011. Available from: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/afghanistan/8695924/Hamid-Karzai-says-he-will-not-seek-third-term.html>. Accessed on: November 20 2011. On 11 August 2011, President Karzai made an announcement that he would not seek to amend the constitution to allow him to run for a third term in office. He stated that he was seeking a reform minded successor.

⁵³ Ludwig W. Adamec and Frank A. Clements. *Conflict in Afghanistan*. ABC-CLIO, Inc. Santa Barbara, 2003, xiv. Traditionally Afghanistan has been ruled by Pashtuns. Rabanni, a well known Tajik, ruled the country until the Taliban seized Kabul. His rule was an exception to the trend of Pashtun rule and was probably tolerated due to his exceptional military prowess in the war against Russia. The author of this research paper argues that the Pashtun people consisting of 43 percent of the population, see themselves as the rightly rulers of Afghanistan. A

non-Pashtun Afghan President could be a significant catalyst for Taliban mobilization in the South and East.

⁵⁴ Alissa J. Rubin. "Karzai Call for Meeting of Elders Questioned," *The New York Times*, November 14, 2011. There are historically three types of jirgas. A constitutional council carries the authority to make law. The consultative jirga such as the one used during the 2010 Peace jirga provides a forum for the President to build consensus before executive action or to pressure the Wolesi Jirga. Lastly, an emergency jirga can be used in cases such as the 2002 forum to declare the ouster of the Taliban and set up an interim governing body.

⁵⁵ Michael O'Hanlon and Ian Livingston. "Afghanistan Index: Tracking Variables of Reconstruction and Security in post 9/11 Afghanistan." Brookings Institute, October 2011, 8. The officer corps of the Afghan National Army (ANA) and the Afghan National Police (ANP) is overrepresented by Tajiks. As of early 2011, forty-one percent of the ANA officer corps and forty-seven of the ANP officer corps were Tajik.

⁵⁶ Massieh Neshat. Afghanistan: "Peace Talks Supported by Minorities," The Huffington Post, January 13, 2012. Accessed from: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/01/13/afghanistan-taliban-peace-talks_n_1204099.html Accessed on: January 27, 2012.

⁵⁷ Patrick Quinn. "Rabbani Assassination: Death Of Former Afghan President Mourned." Associated Press, September 21, 2011. Available from: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/09/21/rabbani-assassination-president-afghanistan_n_973275.html Accessed on: December 18, 2011.

⁵⁸ Massieh Neshat. Afghanistan: "Peace Talks Supported by Minorities," The Huffington Post, January 13, 2012. Accessed from: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/01/13/afghanistan-taliban-peace-talks_n_1204099.html Accessed on: January 27, 2012.

⁵⁹ Imtiaz H. Bokhari. "Internal Negotiations Among Many Actors: Afghanistan." *Elusive Peace: Negotiating an End to Civil Wars*, The Brookings Institute, Washington DC. 1995, 235.

⁶⁰ Fox News Online. Available from: <http://www.foxnews.com/static/managed/html/calculator-pakistan.html> Accessed on November 24 2011. Primary source is the United States Foreign Assistance.gov website tool. This is a projected amount for 2012. The 2012 Defense Authorization Act signed on December 31, 2011 had a conditionality clause requiring the Pakistani government to prove they were not supporting the development of improvised explosive devices. The impact of this conditionality waiver on the actual amount of aid provided in 2012 is unclear.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Atreyee Mitra. "The Indo-Afghanistan Strategic Partnership Agreement- Karzai Strengthens Ties with India." South Asia Monitor Available from: <http://southasiamonitor.org/detail.php?type=n&nid=1220>. Accessed on November 20, 2012.

⁶⁴ Lewis, M. Paul (ed.), 2009. *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*, Sixteenth edition. Dallas, Tex.: SIL International. Accessed from: <http://www.ethnologue.com/> Accessed on: February 18, 2012.

⁶⁵ Institute for the Study of War. "Pakistan and Afghanistan: Ethnic Nationalism and Separatism," Washington, D.C. Accessed from: <http://www.understandingwar.org/pakistan-and-afghanistan> Accessed on: January 28, 2012.

⁶⁶ Anne Gearan and Juergen Baetz. "World pledges long-term help to Afghanistan." *Associated Press*, December 5, 2011. Available from: <http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/2011/dec/05/world-pledges-long-term-help-to-afghanistan/> Accessed on: December 17, 2011.

⁶⁷ Anatol Lieven and Malee Ha Lodhi. "Bring in the Taliban" *New York Times*, April 22, 2011. Accessed from: <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/23/opinion/23iht-edlieven23.html> Accessed on: January 27, 2012.

⁶⁸ Aryn Baker. "Afghan Women and the Return of the Taliban" *Time Magazine*, July 29, 2010. Accessed from: <http://msbarnes.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/Time-Magazine-Afghan-women-and-return-of-taliban.pdf> Accessed on: January 20, 2012.

⁶⁹ Pippa Norris. "Implementing Women's Representation in Afghanistan's Electoral Law" Center on International Cooperation, Harvard University, 2. Accessed from: <http://www.hks.harvard.edu/fs/pnorris/Acrobat/Afghanistan%20electoral%20law%20Norris.pdf> Accessed on: January 27, 2012.

⁷⁰ Alissa J. Rubin. "U.S. General in Afghanistan Says Troops May Stay Past 2014" *New York Times*, December 20, 2011. Available from: <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/21/world/asia/american-commander-in-afghanistan-john-allen-hints-at-post-2014-military-presence.html> Accessed on: December 27, 2011. General Allen stated that he was in conversations with President Karzai about the composition of a post 2014 force. He stated that any force would probably consist of advisers, trainers, and intelligence specialists. A noticeable capability not mentioned is the presence of aviation assets capable of providing effective close air support.

⁷¹ Naveed Mukhtar. "Afghanistan: Alternative Futures and their Implications." *Parameters*. Summer 2011, 62-75. The author describes four potential futures for Afghanistan. The four outcomes include 1) Afghan decentralized, 2) Moderate Taliban takeover, 3) Afghan Civil War, and 4) a failing state.

⁷² Jayshree Bajoria. "Pakistan's New Generation of Terrorists." *Council on Foreign Relations*, December 9, 2011. Available from: <http://www.cfr.org/pakistan/pakistans-new-generation-terrorists/p15422> Accessed on: December 17, 2011.

⁷³ Michael O'Hanlon and Ian Livingston. "Afghanistan Index: Tracking Variables of Reconstruction and Security in post 9/11 Afghanistan." Brookings Institute, October 2011, 18.

⁷⁴ Jayshree Bajoria. "Pakistan's New Generation of Terrorists." *Council on Foreign Relations*, December 9, 2011. Available from: <http://www.cfr.org/pakistan/pakistans-new-generation-terrorists/p15422> Accessed on: December 17, 2011.

⁷⁵ Stephen P. Cohen. "Pakistan's Future: The Bellagio Papers" The Brookings Institute, 2010. Accessed from: http://www.humansecuritygateway.com/documents/BROOKINGS_PakistansFutureTheBellagioPapers.pdf Accessed on: January 17, 2012.

⁷⁶ Barack Obama, "On the Way Forward in Afghanistan," West Point Address, June 22 2011, National Review Online. Available from: <http://www.nationalreview.com/corner/270303/text-obamas-afghanistan-speech-nro-staff>. Accessed on: November 25, 2011. United States Government. The White House President Obama. "Foreign Policy." Accessed from: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/issues/foreign-policy> Accessed on: January 24, 2012.

⁷⁷ John Irish and Yann Le Guernigou. "France to cut Afghan Combat Role, leave 2013" Reuters, January 27, 2012. Accessed from: <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/01/27/us-france-afghanistan-idUSTRE80Q1L320120127> Accessed on: February 18, 2012.