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**FIFTY-SECOND SESSION**

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European forces in Afghanistan: learning lessons

**REPORT**

submitted on behalf of the Defence Committee  
by Jean-Pierre Kucheida, Rapporteur (France, Socialist Group)  
and Mehmet Tekelioglu, co-Rapporteur (Turkey)

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AMENDMENTS

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<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the Committee on 16 May 2006.

**RECOMMENDATION 780<sup>2</sup>**

***on European forces in Afghanistan: learning lessons***

The Assembly,

- (i) Supporting in full international efforts to rebuild Afghanistan;
- (ii) Considering that strengthening Afghan government structures set up under the political process initiated under the Bonn Agreement of 5 December 2001 and legitimised by the 2004 presidential elections and 2005 parliamentary elections constitutes a key stage in the successful rebuilding of that state;
- (iii) Considering that ensuring the security of Afghanistan and its external borders is a prior condition for initiating and carrying forward the economic and social reconstruction of the country;
- (iv) Noting that the Afghan government authorities have not yet reached the required level, nor have they the capability, fully to assume this responsibility;
- (v) Considering, therefore, that, under present circumstances, the international assistance represented by the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), under NATO command, is essential to help build an autonomous Afghan security and defence capability;
- (vi) Stressing the importance of programmes supporting the training of Afghan executive staff, soldiers and police officers, led and coordinated by the European countries involved in ISAF and the United States within the framework of Operation Enduring Freedom;
- (vii) Noting the key role, within ISAF, of the European forces deployed by NATO and EU member states and accession candidate and partner countries of those two organisations;
- (viii) Aware of the difficulties and challenges faced daily by NATO and national contingents within the framework of the ISAF mission;
- (ix) Considering that the experience thus acquired is also important for the lessons it affords in respect of rectifying shortfalls and building defence capabilities, both at national level and in order to increase the effectiveness of NATO and of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP);
- (x) Noting that rotations in command at intervals of less than a year are insufficient to provide the continuity and coherence needed to ensure the success of the ISAF mission and do not allow for real interaction with the Afghan people as part of humanitarian assistance;
- (xi) Noting the low level of contact, outside military missions, between European forces and the Afghan people, because of language, culture and local traditions, and also because military units remain in the field only for brief periods;
- (xii) Considering that, to be able to carry out their mandate effectively, Provincial Reconstruction Teams need more staff and sufficient budgetary resources to meet the needs of the local population with which they have contact;
- (xiii) Considering that the expansion of ISAF to the whole of Afghanistan is underway, it is necessary to ensure that the international security assistance effort is coherent;
- (xiv) Stressing that such expansion puts the forces in question at greater risk than in the area around the capital Kabul and in the north and west of Afghanistan;
- (xv) Stressing that the European forces to be deployed in the south and east of Afghanistan need to have all the human and material resources, including budgetary resources, that they require to complete their mission, carry out reconstruction-related tasks (Provincial Reconstruction Teams) and for their own security;

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<sup>2</sup> Adopted by the Assembly on 20 June 2006 at the 3<sup>rd</sup> sitting on the basis of the amended draft recommendation.

(xvi) Considering that it is also important to maintain a distinction between humanitarian operations providing assistance to local populations, and military operations involving counter-insurrection action capabilities or active assistance to Afghan government forces involved in this type of action or in combating opium poppy cultivation;

(xvii) Recognising that despite all the international declarations and actions since 2001 opium production in Afghanistan in 2005 reached record levels;

(xviii) Considering, in that connection, that a regular and transparent flow of information is needed to national parliaments and public opinion in European countries concerning the missions being undertaken by national forces in Afghanistan and the way in which these are progressing, if European countries' and NATO's engagement in Afghanistan is to continue over the longer term;

(xix) Stressing that the primary political objective of the presence of European forces in Afghanistan is actively to support and contribute to rebuilding the country, so as to enable Afghanistan regain full sovereignty and command of its destiny, free from the outside interference which has been the principal source of the disasters that have befallen the Afghan people for over a quarter of a century;

(xx) Considering that the international military presence is only a temporary measure to help rebuild Afghanistan and that the political, economic and social commitments made publicly since 2001 must be effectively followed through if the expectations of the Afghan people in terms of the country's economy and of their health, education and social and cultural development are to be met,

RECOMMENDS THAT THE COUNCIL INVITE WEU NATIONS AS EU AND NATO MEMBERS, CANDIDATES AND PARTNERS TO:

1. Fulfil, over the longer term and through the provision of resources, commitments made in the ISAF and NATO frameworks to help strengthen Afghan government structures in the security, administrative and defence fields;
2. Clarify urgently the main objectives of the military mission in Afghanistan; define how it is to be achieved; and ensure that sufficient resources are available to bring the military objective to a successful conclusion within three years;
3. Encourage more countries to participate as members of the NATO/ISAF mission in Afghanistan to facilitate early achievement of the military mission;
4. Provide national military units with the range of military and budgetary resources they need to carry out their missions, including humanitarian tasks;
5. Coordinate their respective objectives and missions more closely in a spirit of complementarity and in line with the various national priorities, so as to give greater coherence to the international security assistance effort in Afghanistan;
6. Ensure that the international military presence is not the only solution put forward for rebuilding Afghanistan and define credible, short-term achievable political, economic and social strategies for assisting the development of Afghanistan;
7. Agree, in NATO, on a strategy for gradually reducing the international military presence in Afghanistan, subject to ISAF's military objectives gradually being accomplished and progress being made in establishing and developing Afghan security and defence capabilities;
8. Establish in any event the principle that the international presence in Afghanistan cannot be of indefinite duration;
9. Intensify efforts to help train up civilian security capabilities in Afghanistan;
10. Accept that the objective of eliminating opium production in Afghanistan cannot be achieved by military means;

11. Assist the Afghan authorities eradicate opium poppy cultivation, by taking part in the training of Afghan executive staff (within the military, the police and the judicial system) involved in this mission and by giving financial support to alternative programmes for Afghan farmers dependent for their livelihood on that crop;
12. Contribute to the effectiveness of this mission by continuing to track down and dismantle European networks of traffickers in the heroin produced from the Afghan poppy crop;
13. Encourage a more visible commitment to Afghanistan on the part of the European Union, backed by sufficient budgetary resources, through coordinated action via the three pillars (intergovernmental, Community and mixed), including, with NATO's agreement, the deployment of a battlegroup in Afghanistan to protect European civilian personnel in the country;
14. Keep the Assembly informed about missions undertaken by the national forces of WEU nations deployed in Afghanistan within the framework of ISAF and Operation Enduring Freedom and on how they are progressing,
15. Call on the United States to enter into dialogue with the Assembly of the Western European Union concerning the future of Afghanistan;
16. Call on the international community to raise such funds as are necessary annually to purchase the entire poppy crop from Afghan farmers and thereafter, through an appropriate organisation to destroy such crop, save for that portion deemed necessary for medical research and use;
17. Report regularly to the WEU Assembly on all actions, progress, successes and failures obtained.

## EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

*submitted by Jean-Pierre Kucheida, Rapporteur (France, Socialist Group) and Mehmet Tekelioglu (Turkey), co-Rapporteur*

### *I. Introduction*

1. Afghanistan, a country with a reputation for being militarily impregnable, came under United States control following a two-month long military campaign (7 October-13 December 2001). This initial battle in the war against international terrorism was won by an assorted coalition led by the United States, assisted by the United Kingdom and a series of armed Afghan militia opposed to the Taliban regime, forming the Northern Alliance. In some cases, Taliban commanders contributed to the swift, successful outcome of this campaign by negotiating piecemeal surrender<sup>3</sup>.

2. Following the initial period of the conflict in Afghanistan, other European countries began dispatching troops to the country in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and actively participated in combat in late 2001 and early 2002. These operations aimed to remove the political and military leadership and fighters belonging to the al-Qa'ida terrorist movement and the Taliban, still active in the east of Afghanistan. This was essentially achieved using special force units, supported in some cases by American and European air forces.

3. At the same time as the military operations, the political process aimed at providing Afghanistan with a new national government was begun and concluded with the Bonn Agreement, signed on 5 December 2001. The new Afghan authorities, despite benefiting from the military support of the Northern Alliance, were still also dependant on American forces and forces from other allied countries present in Afghanistan, an arrangement made necessary to avoid a repetition of the civil war which immediately followed the departure of Soviet occupying forces in 1989 and which led to central power being assumed by the Taliban movement (1996-2001).

4. Domestic instability and the continued threat posed by the Taliban, other armed Afghan groups, fighters with links to al-Qa'ida, bandits, particularly those involved in the cultivation of opium poppy and drug trafficking (heroin) are the main reasons justifying the presence of foreign troops in Afghanistan. Bringing security and stability to the country are essential conditions ensuring that the process of political, economic and social restructuring and reconstruction can commence. The precedents set by Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo have provided a model for this international action, based primarily on the principle of a coalition of United Nations volunteers: the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF).

5. This is *de facto* a European force, able to draw, where necessary, on the assistance of American troops and those from other allied countries present in Afghanistan, as part of Operation Enduring Freedom. The establishment of ISAF, as provided for in the Bonn Agreement, was endorsed in United Nations Security Council Resolution 1386 of 20 December 2001. Under British control, ISAF began operating on the same day and a total of some 5 000 soldiers and officers from 18 States were involved in this initial phase. ISAF, for political reasons and for the purposes of forces' security, was initially operational only in the town of Kabul, the capital, and the surrounding area. Since 2003, for practical and political reasons, ISAF has been placed, with the agreement of the United Nations, under NATO command, using as a model the Alliance's forces deployed in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo (IFOR/SFOR and KFOR).

6. ISAF is merely the most visible part of the military presence and European security in Afghanistan. National units have been involved in fighting which has continued unabated since the

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<sup>3</sup> The first surrenders occurred in the early days of the operation of the coalition led by the United States against the Taliban regime. On 14 October 2001, 4 000 Taliban fighters and their leader joined the forces of the Northern Alliance in the Mazar-le-Sharif area. According to another Taliban leader, quoted in an article published by the Associated Press agency, this reversal was "a normal thing in Afghanistan, because everyone loves their lives and wants to stay alive. We switch sides all the time"; "Taliban troops switch sides as rebels advance", *The Observer* (United Kingdom), 14 October 2002, <http://observer.guardian.co.uk>; "Ex-Taliban commander switches sides", 14 January 2002, [www.afgha.com](http://www.afgha.com).

country was invaded in October 2001. Special forces and also more traditional units from Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, the United Kingdom and other countries within the Alliance, and from Australia, Canada and New Zealand have been involved in and, in some cases, continue to be involved in making eastern and south-eastern Afghanistan secure, these being areas where Taliban militia and some groups with links to al-Qa'ida are highly active.

7. On 8 December 2005, foreign ministers from Alliance member countries decided to double ISAF manpower to ensure that the whole country was secure. This decision was not without political risk, since the mission, perceived today by public opinion in NATO member states as being a peacekeeping mission, is in the process of shifting to one of war. Furthermore, despite the reservations of certain European countries, the bringing together or merger even, of ISAF and Operation Enduring Freedom is in progress. These two decisions are worthy of considerable public debate, along the lines of those conducted recently in the Dutch and United Kingdom parliaments. It is not merely a matter of the Alliance's credibility, but also of European involvement in future NATO missions or coalitions of the willing within (or outside of) NATO that is at stake, with consequences for the relationship between the United States and Europe.

## ***II. European involvement in Afghanistan: Enduring Freedom and ISAF***

8. Following the attacks on 11 September 2001 in New York and Washington, al-Qa'ida and international terrorism became the primary threat to the United States, which was joined in its counter-offensive action by the majority of its European allies, friends and partners. For the first time since it was set up in 1949, NATO invoked the collective defence clause in Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. European forces and units were placed on alert, in readiness for action in the "global war on terror" declared by the Bush Administration<sup>4</sup>.

9. Nevertheless, remembering the "war by committee" at the time of the NATO air offensive against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, in 1999, the United States decided, for both political and operational reasons, to organise its response outside the framework of the Alliance, on the basis of the principle of a "coalition of the willing" where each participant is integrated into a predetermined forces' structure, of which only the United States has a global view.

10. External contributions may take several forms: political support, the opening of air and land corridors to send forces, logistics support and, for some countries, direct military support depending on resources available. Operation Enduring Freedom is therefore to be organised as a vast global network, bringing together dozens of countries, but where the monopoly of force is exercised by and under the guidance of the "hyperpower" in its combat against "hyperterrorism".

11. In this, European nations are in the front line as the United States' primary allies, having entered into cooperation and assistance obligations under the Washington Treaty or through decisions taken nationally. What is more, their solidarity with the United States makes them terrorist targets. This was the horrific position in which Turkey, Spain and the United Kingdom found themselves in 2003, 2004 and 2005 respectively, in an environment made more complicated by the unilateral decision taken by the United States to extend the "War on Terror" to Iraq.

### ***1. Coalition of the willing***

12. On 18 September 2001, one week after the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, the United States Congress (the Senate and the Chamber of Representatives) adopted a joint resolution authorising the use of military force against the perpetrators of the attacks. This marked the start of the American offensive in the war on terrorism. It gave the President of the United States the right to take coercive measures by force of arms. In the days which followed, intensive diplomatic and military resources were deployed on all continents, to win political and financial support and obtain rights of passage for, or the entitlement to deploy, forces and military equipment.

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<sup>4</sup> This war went beyond the framework of the fight against the al-Qa'ida network, to include military operations in Iraq. According to President Bush: "Our war on terror begins with al-Qa'ida, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated"; "Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People", 20 September 2001, [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov)

13. The primary objective of the campaign was to intimidate the Taliban regime controlling the bulk of Afghan territory, the intention being to secure either the expulsion of Osama Bin Laden and the leaders of the al-Qa'ida movement or their arrest and handover to the US authorities. When the Taliban leadership refused to cooperate, the regime became a legitimate target for the US Administration according to the principle enunciated by President Bush, in a speech given on 20 September 2001 before the United States Congress: "Every nation, in every region now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists. (...) From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbour or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime".

14. In preparing for military action, the United States sought as wide an international consensus as possible. However, it was also careful to retain maximum independence in terms of choice of means and the date and place of the start of the war on terrorism. In the first place, with regard to the United Nations, the reference to one of the founding principles of the organisation's Charter, "the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence" invoked in Security Council Resolution 1368 on "Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts", unanimously adopted on 12 September 2001 was interpreted as international acquiescence to the effective use of force by the United States against any country suspected of harbouring, assisting or supporting terrorist organisations hostile to American interests.

15. Amongst the allies, friends and partners of the United States, the European members of NATO and the European Union, including candidates for accession to those two organisations, politically came to the support of the United States. Expressions of solidarity at the outset were followed, in some cases, by offers of military cooperation. The North Atlantic Council, meeting at ambassador level, as early as 12 September 2001, raised the question of the application of Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, to the circumstances of 11 September. From a legal point of view, NATO would therefore be at war with international terrorism. In practice, although the United States indicated its satisfaction with this decision, it was not prepared to put its military resources into the Alliance framework. It was the more flexible machinery of a coalition of the willing that was used.

*(a) Enduring Freedom, phase I: All for One (October-December 2001).*

16. As hostilities against the Taliban regime began in Afghanistan, it was becoming obvious that the US Administration wanted to retain absolute control of the objectives and assets of the military campaign and on the post-conflict policy to be followed. Contributions from other countries were welcomed, provided that they did not interfere with the chosen strategies and tactics. All countries, irrespective of regime or geographic location, were invited to take part in the effort in coordination with the White House, the Pentagon and the State Department. In some cases, this involved making military installations available or opening up air corridors, agreeing to the transport or storage of military equipment or units, and in other cases, cooperating by providing intelligence on the terrorist organisations in question or participating in surveillance operations on land, sea or in the air.

17. For military contributions, the choice was more limited, based on real power projection and forces capabilities. In this area, in view of the specific geographic features of Afghanistan (a mountainous, landlocked country, surrounded by politically unstable ones), very few countries would be able to follow the United States. In addition, the issue of inter-allied interoperability (between the United States and allied European nations) again became acute. In addition, what the United States was able to achieve by diplomatic pressure and financial means could not necessarily be achieved by their allies. Countries participating in the coalition could only obtain the rights of passage and bases from which to deploy their forces, if the available slots had not already been taken by the United States.

18. These three factors combined (capacity, interoperability and diplomatic weight) were the Achilles heel of European involvement in military operations. Separately, they provided volunteer countries with some flexibility in choosing the nature of their involvement during the first phase of operations. Another barrier to European military engagement came from the United States itself. Although, starting in September 2001, the headquarters of the United States' Central Command, whose area of responsibility included Afghanistan, had received a number of allied European officers,

the officers in question, with the exception of the British, were not included in operational planning, but rather were notified and consulted on an *ad hoc* basis. The United States therefore retained complete control of operations and continued to be free to act as they wished.

19. On 7 October 2001, air attacks (planes and missiles) were launched on Afghan territory held by the Taliban using remote bases or bases within the region, US aircraft carriers stationed off Pakistan or submarines and surface ships. The United Kingdom was the only allied country to be involved in this move. It provided support in the form of air-to-air refuelling and intelligence and, as part of Operation Veritas, fired American-made Tomahawk cruise missiles, from two of its three nuclear submarines stationed in the area covered by Operation Enduring Freedom forces.

20. Furthermore, the attacks on 7 and 13 October are the only two incidents of offensive action recognised to date by the United Kingdom authorities as forming part of this initial phase. Operation Enduring Freedom was carried out and executed solely by the United States, which had extensive capacity in terms of power projection, enabling it to place unrelenting pressure on Taliban forces and infrastructure. Nevertheless, with the exception of some special forces units, before the end of November 2001, no troops were posted on the ground as such. The level of air superiority enjoyed by the Americans, using strategic and tactical resources, including rocket-armed unmanned aerial vehicles (Predators) served gradually to erode the combat capacity and reduce the mobility of the Taliban fighters.

21. This was a weakness exploited by the forces of the Northern Alliance/United Islamic Front for the Salvation of Afghanistan, the Afghan anti-Taliban coalition, combining essentially the Tajik, Uzbek and Hazara (Shiite) minorities and Pashtun opponents. Coordinated on an *ad hoc* basis and supported by small units of special American forces, these fighters took definitive control of northern and western Afghanistan (Mazar-el-Sharif on 9 November, Kabul and Herat on 12 and 13 November and Kunduz on 26 November). In the central and southern areas of the country, it was Pashtun rebels (from Afghanistan's predominant ethnic group) or Taliban leaders who had changed sides, who opposed the Taliban forces in power. It was they who benefited at ground level from the impact of the US air war. For, in addition to military objectives, the United States also had a political goal for Afghanistan; a project which was embodied in one man, Hamid Karzai, the current President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

*(b) Enduring Freedom: phase II: securitisation and reconstruction (December 2001 to date)*

22. When Kandahar, the main Pashtun town in the south of Afghanistan, was taken on 7 December 2001, the Taliban regime crumbled. Military operations declined in intensity and were concentrated in the regions bordering Pakistan, where large numbers of Taliban fighters with links to al-Qa'ida were in hiding. Around 3 December, Northern Alliance forces, assisted by groups of American special forces and supported by the US Airforce, surrounded the mountainous area of Tora Bora in search of the famous al-Qa'ida "bunkers", in actual fact, caves converted into rough and ready command posts, shelter for fighters and makeshift arms stores. On 17 December, fighting came to an end in the region, which had fallen into the hands of united Afghan and American forces.

23. Other "securitisation" operations, aimed at eliminating and weakening units or groups of Taliban fighters with links to al-Qa'ida continued until mid-2002. The most significant of these was Operation Anaconda, which lasted from 2-19 March 2002. During this operation, there was direct engagement of European special force units and air support, particularly from France, in the form of Super Etandard fighter planes, operating from the "Charles de Gaulle" nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, and Mirage 2000 aircraft based in Kirghizstan at the Manas air base. As with Tora Bora, Afghan fighters provided the greatest numbers of troops on land in loose coordination with American command. The operation yielded fairly modest results but it did contribute to further eroding the organised combat capability of the Taliban and groups with links to al-Qa'ida.

24. The deployment of European forces in Afghanistan had already started in November 2001 as part of Operation Enduring Freedom, but their engagement in combat, directly with special forces units or in the form of air support missions, became more widespread during Operation Anaconda. However, compared with International Security Assistance Force combat strength, the numbers involved were fairly low. The United States has the most troops in the Afghan theatre today (over four

years after the fall of Kandahar), with around 18 000 of the 21 000 soldiers and officers involved in Operation Enduring Freedom being from that country<sup>5</sup>. The European countries whose involvement was greatest were the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Norway, the Netherlands, and Denmark with the last three forming a “tri-partite” air task force with F-16 fighter planes based in Ganci in Kirghizstan.

25. Most European troops involved in the first phase of Enduring Freedom were deployed in units outside Afghanistan, particularly as part of naval surveillance operations. It was during the securitisation and stabilisation phase that land forces and their air support were brought into the theatre of operations. This was the case with forces from the United Kingdom: a Royal Marines contingent (40 Commando) was first deployed at the Bagram aerodrome near Kabul on 15 November 2001, and with the French troops: two companies from the 21<sup>st</sup> Marine Infantry Regiment were initially based in Mazar-el-Sharif on 18 November 2001 as part of Operation Hercules. Special forces from Denmark, France, Germany and Norway were involved in Operation Anaconda, as were units from the United Kingdom’s Royal Marines 45 Commando.

26. To varying degrees, European forces participated in various securitisation operations during 2002<sup>6</sup>, namely Ptarmigan (16-18 April), Snipe (2-13 May), Condor (17-22 May) and Buzzard (29 May-9 July). Australian and Canadian units also made a large contribution to these missions. These operations, which were the subject of extensive media coverage, degraded Taliban capacity to offer effective resistance to the new Afghan authorities and the forces of the “coalition of the willing” fighting under the flag of Enduring Freedom. However, to date, combat operations have not ceased, and are essentially led by American forces supported by army units or Afghan armed militia. Taliban fighters are still present in the south and east of the country, as are groups with links to al-Qa’ida.

27. The other aspect of Enduring Freedom was assisting the reconstruction of a destitute country whose infrastructure had to be constructed or rebuilt from scratch. However, because of the internal security situation, governmental, international and non-governmental humanitarian and aid organisations could not be set up or move around freely as they could in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo. Inter-Afghan rivalry, between and even within the groups that shared power, the problem of the opium poppy crop feeding the networks which produce and supply heroin to the European “market”, the Taliban, al-Qa’ida and Afghan factions opposed to ongoing political projects: all of these things prevented the sustainable and effective extension of the reconstruction effort beyond the larger urban centres where it reached only a quarter of the Afghan population<sup>7</sup>.

28. In order to deal with this situation as a matter of urgency, the United States, in cooperation with its European allies, devised a new mechanism: Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs). These structures consisted of military staff and civilians (essentially involving departments responsible for humanitarian aid within foreign affairs ministries and ministries for development and international cooperation), in numbers varying from a few dozen to over 100 (approximately 150). Issued with light arms for purposes of self-defence, PRTs can be supported in dangerous situations by heavier units from ISAF (rapid reaction forces) or Enduring Freedom. PRTs cover a limited geographic area in which they travel, first carrying out an audit of local requirements, before providing solutions to the problems found in cooperation with local authorities.

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<sup>5</sup> These figures only include Afghanistan and coalition bases set up in Kirghizstan and Tajikistan; Combined Joint Forces Afghanistan, US Central Command, January 2006, [www.cfc-a.centcom.mil](http://www.cfc-a.centcom.mil)

<sup>6</sup> Operations are referred to according to British nomenclature ([www.mod.uk](http://www.mod.uk))

<sup>7</sup> The majority of the Afghan population lives in rural areas. According to the Afghanistan Central Statistics Office, in 2005, the settled population was estimated as being 22 million, of whom over 17 million were living in rural areas. Approximately 3 million people live in the province of Kabul, 2.5 million of them in the capital city of the same name. Afghanistan’s total population is estimated to be between 24 and 30 million people and approximately 4 million refugees, essentially in Pakistan (over 3 million) and in Iran (between 800 000 and 1 million). The Afghan population has almost doubled in 15 years (1990-2005). A new census will be held this year: Afghanistan Central Bureau for Statistics, <http://www.cso.gov.af>; “Country Profiles for Population and Reproductive Health – Policy Developments and Indicators 2005”. United Nations Population Fund and Population Reference Bureau (United States, non-governmental). [www.prb.org](http://www.prb.org)

29. The aid provided is militarised humanitarian aid but which is also dependent on local intermediaries if it is to work effectively. PRTs contribute to the security control system of the area, thus making them potential targets for the Taliban and fighters with links to al-Qa'ida, and also for local war lords, opium producers and drug traffickers, dissatisfied Afghan factions and even families seeking revenge when a relative has been killed as a result of action taken by the coalition. Nevertheless, the idea appeals to the Canadians and a number of European allies, particularly the French, German and Italians, interested in the civil and humanitarian aspects, which are also a means of attracting public support for continued participation in Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. It also provides a reason for their more substantial and publicised commitment, in terms of manpower and resources, to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) which has been under NATO command and control since 2003.

## ***2. ISAF and NATO: the Alliance put to the test***

30. The first phase of US military operations against the Taliban regime was accompanied by intense diplomatic activity directed towards selecting the future leadership of the country. Logically, the first port of call should have been the Northern Alliance, united in its fight against the Taliban but divided over the future of the "liberated" nation. The opposition to the Taliban regime essentially brought together minorities and was dominated by two main groups, the Tajiks and the Uzbeks. The "President" was Burhanuddin Rabbani (a Tajik) and the military leader was the famous commander Ahmad Shah Massoud (a Panshiri Tajik). Other political leaders and war lords were also involved in the fight against the Taliban without real coordination: the Uzbek General Rachid Dostum, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar (a Pashtun) and Ismail Khan (a Herat Tajik).

31. Sharing power between these different leaders, who had limited territorial bases and no legitimacy outside of their family, clan or tribal circle, was a risky gamble given the negative experiences of the years which followed the withdrawal of Soviet troops. In addition, Major Massoud, who looked as though he would become international spokesman for domestic Afghan "resistance" fighters opposed to the Taliban, was assassinated by elements with links to al-Qa'ida on 9 September 2001. Less than 48 hours later, the attacks on 11 September 2001 would have even greater consequences for the future of Afghanistan. Behind the United States' decision to invade Afghanistan to eliminate or capture al-Qa'ida leaders and fighters and their Taliban allies was also the intention to bring about political change in Afghan power and social structures. The objective was to set up in Kabul a government representing the different ethnic, religious and political groups present in Afghanistan, with the exception of the Taliban movement.

32. This process was carried out, in parallel with the military operations, through an Inter-Afghan Conference, held in Germany from 27 November to 5 December under United Nations sponsorship. The meeting resulted in an agreement being signed between the various forces in Afghanistan opposing the Taliban regime. A Pashtun leader, Hamid Karzai, supported by the United States, was elected President of the Interim Administration of Afghanistan. The principal offices were entrusted to leaders from the Northern Alliance and other major opposition groups. Nevertheless, this new government was placed under international supervision and an international armed force was set up, whose purpose was to ensure the stability of new political structures. This force, provided for under Annex I of the Agreement, was confirmed under United Nations Security Council Resolution 1386, adopted on 20 December 2001.

### *(a) ISAF: objectives and evolution*

33. The United States' military campaign against the Taliban and al-Qa'ida was only the first stage in the offensive on international terrorism launched after the 11 September 2001 attacks. This response also formed part of a wider strategy with geopolitical objectives in Central Asia, Iran and Pakistan (a country with nuclear weapons). Control of Afghanistan was no longer merely a question of security aimed solely at preventing future worldwide terrorist attacks: the country was in effect positioned at the crossroads of an extremely important strategic area, where the interests of Russia, China, India and Pakistan were also involved. For the United States, it was essential that Afghan power not be dominated by one of its powerful neighbours and that it follow a direction favourable to American military presence and political influence in this part of the world.

34. ISAF therefore became a counterbalance to the Afghan factions – divided amongst themselves and sporadically linked with neighbouring countries – in power and in opposition. It was also important that ISAF continue to liaise closely with the United States. The model used in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo was a preferable alternative to a traditional United Nations force. The international force that was gradually being set up was, in practice, controlled by United States allies, foremost among its loyal followers being the United Kingdom Government, which took responsibility for command and guaranteed the security conditions necessary for the initial deployment of military units. Once the new Interim Administration of Afghanistan had been set up in Kabul on 22 December 2001, the deployment of the first British ISAF units began under the command of Major General John McColl.

35. In its initial configuration, ISAF comprised roughly 5 000 soldiers and officers, 1 500 of whom were British. 19 countries were involved: 18 European states plus New Zealand. On 4 January 2002, a Military Technical Agreement was signed in Kabul between the Afghan authorities and the ISAF command, governing the relationship between and defining the responsibilities of the two parties. This document completed the provisions of the Bonn Agreement and of Resolution 1386 concerning the establishment of ISAF<sup>8</sup>. According to these three founding texts, the main objectives of the Force are as follows:

- “helping the new Afghan authorities in the establishment and training of new Afghan security and armed forces” (Bonn Agreement, Annexe I);
- assisting “in the maintenance of security for Kabul and its surrounding areas. Such a force could, as appropriate, be progressively expanded to other urban centres and other areas” (Bonn Agreement, Annexe I);
- assisting “in the rehabilitation of Afghanistan’s infrastructures” (Bonn Agreement, Annexe I);
- assisting “the Afghan Interim Authority in the maintenance of security in Kabul and its surrounding areas, so that the Afghan Interim Authority as well as the personnel of the United Nations can operate in a secure environment” (United Nations Security Council Resolution 1386);
- providing “assistance to help the Afghan Interim Authority in the establishment and training of new Afghan security and armed forces (United Nations Security Council Resolution 1386)”;
- assisting “the Interim Administration in developing future security structures” [...] “the Interim Administration in reconstruction”; identifying and arranging “training and assistance tasks for future Afghan security forces” (Military Technical Agreement).

36. The 4 January Military Technical Agreement is not merely a technical document. It also contains a number of significant political provisions, including the affirmation of ISAF’s primacy over the Afghan authorities and the forces which they command. This position is only made possible because of the composition of the force and the support which it receives from the United States; 16 of the 19 countries participating in the first months were members of NATO and/or the European Union, two were accession candidates and one (New Zealand) was a close ally of the United States. The force assisting the Interim Administration of Afghanistan was an autonomous one whose political objectives were defined between Washington and Brussels (NATO Headquarters), taking into account other European capitals with political, economic and humanitarian interests in Afghanistan.

37. The deployment of ISAF went smoothly, with initial stabilisation and assistance operations beginning in January 2002. During the first six months, the force made a significant contribution to establishing the authority of the Afghan President, Hamid Karzai, and can be credited with holding in check the various Afghan factions involved from the outset in the new government or which subsequently came on side. For the people of Kabul and the surrounding areas, the armed international presence became a guarantee of peace and security, within the limits of its action capabilities. It also

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<sup>8</sup> See Appendix IV

enabled humanitarian non-governmental organisations to operate in a relatively secure environment. Nevertheless, ISAF's size, and the limits the participating countries placed on their involvement in the force, meant that this relative stability and security could not be extended beyond the area for which it was responsible.

38. Initially scheduled to last for three months, the British command was extended until June 2002, when Turkey assumed responsibility under Major-General Hilmi Akin Zorlu. Turkey deployed 1 340 officers and soldiers and assumed command of ISAF's multinational headquarters. The Turkish contingent also had responsibility for the security and control of Kabul International Airport (KAIA). Despite political and material limitations, ISAF, under Turkish command, improved its visibility by organising joint patrols with the Afghan army (in the process of being trained) and the Kabul police, by providing security at a key meeting of the Loya Jirga<sup>9</sup> (10-16 June 2002) and by conducting regular humanitarian and reconstruction work (which was also limited on account of insufficient financial resources).

39. Nevertheless, during this period, three major attacks took place, indicating the volatile nature of the Afghan security situation: the assassination (which was never explained) of the Afghan Vice-President, Hadji Abdul Kadir in Kabul on 6 July 2002; the failed attack on President Hamid Karzai<sup>10</sup> in Kandahar on 5 September 2002 and the explosion of a high-power bomb in the centre of Kabul on the same day (resulting in 30 fatalities and over 150 people injured). The assassination attempt on Hamid Karzai would, if successful, have had a major impact on the future of the stabilisation process in Afghanistan and revealed the limitations of ISAF action. All these events highlighted the shortcomings of ISAF action, at least in terms of prevention and counter-terrorism capabilities in Kabul, also reopening the debate on ISAF being extended outside of Kabul. On this subject, Major General Zorlu commented that engagement of this kind would have to be supported by "stronger units, with tanks, with armoured units and with attack helicopters"<sup>11</sup>.

40. At this time, it was already clear that the European countries involved in ISAF were not individually in a position, for reasons of personnel, equipment and budgetary resources, to engage over the long term with large numbers of troops and heavy equipment, in Afghanistan. For its part, Turkey benefited from logistics and economic assistance from the United States, enabling it to deploy its forces in 2002 (US\$ 228 million)<sup>12</sup>. This, coupled with the difficulty of finding a replacement ISAF command every six months, raised the question of a change in the command, control and planning structure.

41. While the system of half-yearly rotations of command was retained, the idea of having NATO act as coordinator and subsequently assuming responsibility for ISAF gradually emerged as the logical solution. On 23 May 2002, the United Nations Security Council agreed to extend ISAF's mandate for a further six months; indicating, in the absence of a clear political direction for the future of the country and an exit strategy, that an international armed presence, as was the case in Bosnia and Kosovo, would be a long-term fixture. This perspective was confirmed by United Nations Security Council Resolution 1444 of 27 November 2002, which extended ISAF's mandate for a further six months.

42. Scheduled to take place in December 2002, the rotation in command from Turkey<sup>13</sup> to Germany and the Netherlands, which had decided to engage the German-Netherlands Army Corps, was once again the subject of organisational and logistics difficulties. Geographic isolation from Europe, the

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<sup>9</sup> During this meeting, Hamid Karzai was appointed Head of the Afghan Interim Government (2002-2004). "Loya Jirga" means "Grand Assembly" in Pashtu and is a temporary collegial decision-making body made up of tribal leaders, religious authorities and authorised personalities. Approximately 1 500 delegates (including 160 women), chosen or elected at local level, took part in the June 2002 Loya Jirga in accordance with the provisions of the Inter-Afghan Bonn Agreement signed in December 2001.

<sup>10</sup> Since then, Mr Karzai's personal security has been the responsibility of the United States, through the US Department of State Bureau of Diplomatic Security.

<sup>11</sup> "The International Security Assistance Force; The Origins of a Stabilization Force"; Dr Sean M. Maloney, Canadian Military Journal, Summer 2003, [www.journal.forces.gc.ca](http://www.journal.forces.gc.ca)

<sup>12</sup> *Idem.*

<sup>13</sup> Turkey will resume control of ISAF command within the framework of NATO, from February to August 2005.

lack of sea access and of easy access by land from neighbouring countries meant that European armies experienced considerable difficulties because of their limited capacity in terms of strategic and tactical airlift. In addition, continued military activity as part of Operation Enduring Freedom, accompanied by the strong US air and land presence restricted the space available to ISAF units for air corridors and points of entry and storage. Recourse to NATO, an institution central to transatlantic defence cooperation, ultimately became the only logical option for facilitating the rotation of forces and ensuring continuity in the chain of command which, thus, became less reliant on unpredictable national force projection factors.

*(b) NATO takes control*

43. During 2002, the United States and European countries engaged in Afghanistan endeavoured to find a formula which would allow better coordination between the Enduring Freedom and ISAF missions. Combat and assistance roles had already been allocated, enabling European allies to place greater emphasis on their stabilising and humanitarian role in order to improve their public image back home. However, although the way in which the war against the Taliban and al-Qa'ida had developed had considerably reduced the combat capabilities of the various Afghan factions in government, on the domestic front, they had become involved in a struggle over power sharing and control of the country's resources (essentially international aid), from which the use of force could not be ruled out.

44. One of the methods envisaged for reducing the potential for internal conflict involved encouraging the formation of an Afghan army and police force, which would be independent of ethnic and tribal connections. This task fell within ISAF's mandate and was essentially undertaken by three European countries: France, Germany and the United Kingdom. The United States also took action in this area, but did so independently. However, even now, results are fairly limited because priorities and methodologies changed with the rotations between countries and also according to what funds and equipment were available. ISAF also supports those initiatives for setting up Afghan security forces by providing trainers and equipment.

45. As the time grew closer for the rotation of command from Turkey to Germany and the Netherlands at the end of 2002, the idea of ISAF being transferred to the United Nations was put forward by the German Defence Minister. The idea behind this was to provide a more satisfactory solution to logistical, planning and asset allocation issues and to ensure continuity of the chain of command. However, the fact that over 90% of the Force's manpower came from European member states of NATO gave weight to the Alliance's quest, supported by the United States, for a more visible role in Afghanistan. Furthermore, the use of a framework-nation, together with six-monthly rotation, was a machinery first tested during NATO missions in the Balkans and with which SHAPE (Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe) military planners were familiar.

46. The arrival of the German-Netherlands Army Corps at ISAF Command accelerated the process of the Atlantic Alliance taking control. The Corps, based in Munster in Germany, had been one of NATO's international general military headquarters since September 2002. During the preparations for its deployment, Germany and the Netherlands had experienced equipment and logistics difficulties and had turned to NATO with a request for support "in the planning and execution of [ISAF] III. More specifically, they requested assistance in the areas of force generation, intelligence, coordination and information sharing and communications"<sup>14</sup>. NATO therefore became directly involved in running ISAF. This *de facto* position was formalised when Canada, which joined ISAF in February 2003, took over the helm and, unwilling or unable to assume all of its responsibilities as a framework-nation, asked the other Alliance countries to agree to ISAF becoming NATO's responsibility.

47. On 16 April 2003, the North Atlantic Council decided directly to support ISAF on the basis of four guidelines as follows:

- "an in-theatre headquarters to command and coordinate the operation";
- a force commander, to be selected by NATO's Supreme Allied Commander Europe from among the Allied nations providing troops to ISAF;

<sup>14</sup> "The Road to Kabul", Diego Ruiz Palmer, NATO Review, Summer 2003, [www.nato.int](http://www.nato.int)

- strategic coordination, command and control, which will be exercised by the Supreme Allied Headquarters Powers Europe (SHAPE);
- political direction and coordination by the North Atlantic Council”<sup>15</sup>.

In practice, from that moment on, the Alliance assumed full responsibility for ISAF. NATO’s political and military structures were mobilised for the organisation’s first operation outside the Euro-Atlantic security area. In June 2003, the North Atlantic Council, which met at foreign minister level, formalised NATO’s engagement in Afghanistan which officially took effect in August. On 25 June, SACEUR, the American General James Jones, appointed the two commanders of the “new” ISAF, the German General Götz Gliemeroth, seconded by the Canadian General Andrew Leslie. During July 2003, the NATO “force” began being deployed to Kabul. On 11 August 2003, NATO assumed full responsibility for ISAF.

48. The start of NATO’s involvement also met the United States’ wishes for greater Alliance involvement in the theatres of operations of the war on international terrorism. However, what was achieved in Afghanistan did not prove to be possible for the Polish contingent deployed in Iraq, the second front of the American offensive in the global war on terror. Poland, as Germany, the Netherlands and Canada had done, requested direct support from NATO, but the request opened up a political debate leading to a minimalist solution, involving the provision of support, but without authority being transferred to NATO.

49. In the case of Afghanistan, a consensus had been achieved amongst virtually all member states. The continuity of the chain of command had been guaranteed, NATO was also providing joint funding for infrastructure and assets and relative coherence in terms of in terms of ISAF’s political objectives. To that end, the office of Senior Civilian Representative in Afghanistan was created, to which Hikmet Çetin, a former Turkish Deputy Prime Minister (1978) and Minister for Foreign Affairs (1991-1994), was appointed<sup>16</sup>. Mr Çetin’s mandate has been renewed four times and he is expected to be replaced in summer 2006.

50. NATO’s role was recognised and reinforced by United Nations Security Council Resolution 1510 of 13 October 2003. This document essentially contains three main provisions: it extends ISAF’s mandate to cover all of Afghanistan, calling on it to “work in close consultation with [...] the Operation Enduring Freedom Coalition” (a reference missing from the founding texts) and extended the mission for 12 months, as opposed to just six. NATO’s presence in Afghanistan was therefore a long-term factor and ISAF was brought closer to Operation Enduring Freedom. Between 2003 and 2005, NATO gradually saw its involvement spread outside Kabul, albeit without major success, as a result of a lack of appropriate human and material resources. The transatlantic organisation also began its involvement with the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), the first of which was set up by Germany in the Kunduz region in autumn 2003. Eight others followed, in the north and west of the country, in 2004 and 2005.

51. NATO’s taking over control of ISAF also caused the number of contributing countries to rise. The framework in which the Alliance operates, even if countries are obliged to bear the majority of the costs of deployment and supporting their forces, provides for greater and more flexible involvement than an each to his own approach. In 2004, ISAF already had 6 500 soldiers and officers from 25 member states, eight NATO accession candidates and partners, and New Zealand; these numbers were swelled in 2005 by 2 000 additional soldiers and officers deployed to assist securitisation of the country during the Provincial Council and general elections on 18 September. At the end of 2005, ISAF totalled 9 000 soldiers and officers.

52. On 8 December 2005, the North Atlantic Council made the politically sensitive decision to almost double ISAF manpower, to extend the Force’s presence to the south (phase 3 of the extension) and then to the east (stage 4 of the extension) and to take a more active involvement in the war against

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<sup>15</sup> “Same name, same banner, same mission as NATO enhances ISAF role”, NATO Update, 16 April 2003, [www.nato.int](http://www.nato.int)

<sup>16</sup> Mr Çetin has also been a member of parliament and was a member of Turkey’s first delegation to the WEU Assembly.

the illegal cultivation of opium poppy, used to manufacture heroin bound essentially for the European market. By taking this initiative, ISAF came closer operationally to Enduring Freedom, including in the areas of counterterrorism and counter-insurrection (the Taliban). The regions in question were also those where Taliban fighters and al-Qa'ida were most active and where they had rearguard positions, in (autonomous) tribal areas of Pakistan. Troop numbers are to be increased to 15 000 soldiers and officers<sup>17</sup>, but calling for volunteers has proved laborious and that deployment, scheduled for the first few months of 2006, will now take place in the summer or in September.<sup>18</sup>

### *III. Challenges facing Afghanistan*

53. During this fifth year of the European armed presence in Afghanistan, an initial assessment would indicate relative success despite problems initially encountered and the continued presence of a large number of shortfalls in terms of military capability. The increase in the number of troops engaged over the 2002-2005 period has not been synonymous with effectiveness. The fact that the number of participating countries has increased from 18 to over 30 barely hides the fact that only a limited number of them are able to contribute actual combat capability in terms of human and material resources. This qualitative dependency is one of the weaknesses of the force deployed. Very few countries have contributed more than 1 000 soldiers, and often their engagement does not last longer than four to six months. In terms of equipment, limitations are also considerable. Very rarely have more than a dozen fighter and transport planes and helicopters, for example, been provided by any one participating country<sup>19</sup>.

54. Distance and geography complicate the logistics chain which on the whole continues to be the responsibility of individual countries, the net effect being high numbers of participants, each with very few resources. Overall, the number of soldiers, officers and units of equipment is very high bearing in mind that the mission's mandate does not go beyond peacekeeping in Kabul or secure areas. In dangerous situations, the American air and land forces' ability to strike<sup>20</sup> acts as a powerful deterrent. Moreover, the internal political situation within Afghanistan is making the work of the international troops easier, despite an increase in violence caused primarily, but not exclusively, by the Taliban and al-Qa'ida. The various ethnic, tribal and political groups sharing power in central government and in the provinces are also able to take advantage of this presence, which provides them with money and other material benefits.

55. Nevertheless, as we have been reminded by recent events linked to the "cartoon war", the goodwill of the people towards foreign forces has not been as firm as was the case in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo. The situation is much more volatile and those who are avowed opponents of foreign influence, or likely to become so in the future, are aware that a large international military presence cannot be sustained over the longer term. Afghanistan could only be drawn into a sphere of European or Euro-Atlantic influence if this extended to all of Central Asia, and that is something which would require rather more than 15 000 soldiers and, above all, the direct investment of billions of euros and dollars.

#### *1. Mid-term report and lessons for the Europeans*

56. When Operation Enduring Freedom began in October 2001, many European countries stated their readiness to assist the United States, although only one was able to participate directly in combat. It took just over three months for European forces to start deploying in very small numbers to Afghanistan and in February 2002 ISAF became fully operational. In the meantime, actual contributions were restricted to the dispatch of special forces units, in fairly small numbers, primarily for reconnaissance missions. The United Kingdom's most significant contribution during October and November thus consisted of the mid-air refuelling of American aircraft. It was whilst ISAF was being

<sup>17</sup> The transition from phase 3 to phase 4 will also necessitate engagement in terms of soldiers (and equipment) to increase to a total of nearly 25 000 troops in late 2006 or early 2007.

<sup>18</sup> Statement made by NATO spokesman, weekly press conference on 26 January 2006, [www.nato.int](http://www.nato.int)

<sup>19</sup> Special mention should be made to the United Kingdom, which decided to deploy some 20 aircraft, airplanes and helicopters as part of ISAF reinforcement scheduled for 2006; [www.mod.uk](http://www.mod.uk)

<sup>20</sup> Fighter jets and helicopters deployed by European forces also contribute to ISAF protection but are significantly fewer in number.

set up, following the Bonn Agreements of December 2001, that the majority of NATO's European members began moving towards Afghanistan.

57. For once, progress was not being held up through a lack of political will, but rather, through a chronic shortage of resources in terms of power and force projection. This was an issue which had haunted NATO's European members, and European Union member states as part of European security and defence policy, since the cold war ended in 1990-1991. The 1991 Gulf war and crises and conflicts in former Yugoslavia and in Africa caused intense debate and led to the necessary and gradual modification of European capability. Cooperation began, investment was scheduled to take place and was made, but the fact was that 10 years later, in 2001, Europeans still did not have adequate projection resources in terms either of quantity or adaptability.

58. There was also, in the case of the theatre of Afghan operations in 2001, the absence of any diplomatic, economic and commercial "strike force". Lengthy negotiations were required with certain Central Asian governments to obtain rights of passage to station forces and equipment, even on a very limited basis, for short periods of time. Whereas, as far as the United States was concerned, all that was needed could be summed up in the political dictum: "Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists", with a few financial and economic concessions thrown in. Consequently, fragmented measures taken by countries, for foreign policy or domestic reasons, had been the rule, rather than multinational action. Had the United States been willing, NATO could have been at the centre of this effort from the very beginning.

*(a) European shortfalls revealed in the war on international terrorism*

59. For 50 years, in the framework of the Atlantic Alliance, European forces had been prepared, equipped and trained for a major conventional or nuclear conflict between opponents with "equivalent" capabilities. Territorial defence had been of primary importance as a defence concept. Certain countries had retained and maintained their ability to deploy because of their colonial past or their active involvement in United Nations peacekeeping missions.

60. In 1991, the Gulf war showed the limitations of this approach, including between countries with similar capabilities such as France and the United Kingdom<sup>21</sup>. In former Yugoslavia, political factors, rather than military ones, lessened the initial impact of European intervention in the conflict in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina (through the United Nations' Protection Force). However, once the political decision was made and implemented, military action was initiated successfully (NATO strikes against Serbian forces in Bosnia, the Dayton Agreements and NATO's Implementation Force IFOR [to ensure their implementation]).

61. NATO's air campaign against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia served, in the matter of the status of the territory of Kosovo, as an indicator of the increasing scale of the operational disparity, qualitative and quantitative, between European countries and the United States. Throughout the campaign, the wide range of air assets, the near monopoly of tactical and strategic intelligence and the "physical" occupation of national European aerodromes made available to NATO turned the campaign into a demonstration of US Air Force power.

62. Face was saved on land by the fact that European troops made up most of the manpower deployed as part of the NATO force in Kosovo (KFOR). The lessons learned in the Gulf, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo provided the basis for a large number of initiatives aimed at developing European force and power projection capability including (most importantly), in the service of the European Union.

63. Intelligence was one of the key elements of success in all these campaigns, from the Gulf to Kosovo. Seeing, deciding and acting: a whole network-centric triad based on intelligence, information, the analysis of such information and its interpretation and distribution. In these types of military campaigns, this ability to see and know almost everything about the enemy is one of the deciding factors. It relies on a combination of visual, electronic and human resources, which range from optical

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<sup>21</sup> The United Kingdom has the advantage of having had professional armed forces since the 1960s offering greater flexibility of use and higher deployability than the French armed forces (which still operated conscription until 1995).

satellites and radar to surveillance UAVs, the interception of communications from any source or a special forces soldier “lighting up” targets with a hand-held laser pointer. The supreme power of America in this area is well known, hence the United States’ advantage over the enemy and over her allies. This also implies global coverage, something which Europeans do not have.

64. Since the mid-1990’s, effort and progress have been made in this area in Europe, but the intelligence capability required to launch a campaign on the scale of Afghanistan (or Iraq) has not yet been attained. Europeans occupy “niche” positions in observation<sup>22</sup>, communications and navigation<sup>23</sup> satellites, electronic warfare, UAVs and human intelligence, but the fact that these capabilities are compartmentalised and scattered reduces their effectiveness. It is a strategic political question for which a satisfactory answer has yet to be found. In the case of Afghanistan, the United States was the only one with a global vision and the common operational overview needed to execute successfully its plan to remove the threat of the Taliban and al-Qa’ida from the country.

65. Strategic air and sea transport are also priorities. Nevertheless, European countries face here a problem of resources and priorities in regard to equipment that is at best not yet harmonised. Their fleet of transport planes is old, their range only improving very slowly or not at all, in line with modernisation of engines and airframes, their maximum payload is not always appropriate to new equipment (size, weight). In order to resolve this problem, a number of countries are leasing new American aircraft, the Boeing C-17 Globemaster (an expensive option), while others are contracting commercial services using Russian and Ukrainian Antonov aircraft.

66. Pending production and commissioning of the Airbus A-400M (a “European” carrier), scheduled for 2009-2012<sup>24</sup> at the earliest, NATO has signed an agreement with Ruslan Salis GmbH (the German-based subsidiary of the heavyweight cargo airline, Volga Dnepr) – a Russian-Ukrainian company set up specifically for the purpose – for the provision of Antonov-124 aircraft. SALIS (Strategic Airlift Interim Solution) was officially implemented at a ceremony at Leipzig Airport in Germany on 23 March 2006. Two Antonov aircraft will be permanently stationed at the airport and can be used at 72 hours’ notice. They must be able to provide 4 800 flying hours per year with quotas being awarded to each country. Four additional aircraft may also be made available for back-up at 6-9 days’ notice. Operations are coordinated by the Strategic Airlift Coordination Cell based in Eindhoven (Netherlands)<sup>25</sup>.

67. The Memorandum of Understanding<sup>26</sup>, signed on 28 June 2004 in Istanbul (Turkey) between 15 NATO members involved in this initiative, sets an annual quota of 1 859 flying hours. France and Germany have a total of 1 300 hours (750 and 550), with Canada in third place (150 hours). The potential cost of this project, which could last beyond 2012, is estimated by various sources from the general and specialist press at some 1 billion euros (between 700 million and 1.2 billion). According to the Memorandum, France and Germany bear 60% of the costs (on the basis of the cost-sharing code

<sup>22</sup> For the ESDP, the European Union has a unique resource in this area, the Satellite Centre in Torrejón (Spain), set up by WEU in 1991. The objective of the Centre is to process and interpret various types of satellite images from space, civilian and military sources.

<sup>23</sup> The European Union is in the process of implementing Galileo, a satellite-assisted navigation system, comparable and superior to the American GPS (Global Positioning System) system which is currently in use. Galileo also has defence applications. The United States is also in the process of deploying a new GPS satellite constellation.

<sup>24</sup> The A-400M Airbus will considerably increase European transport and power projection capability. It has a payload of 40 tonnes; the Hercules C-130J which various European countries and the United States have has a payload of 20-25 tonnes. The next group up includes the C-17 Globemaster (80 tonnes) – but production of this is likely to stop in the future – the American C-5 Galaxy (125 tonnes) and the Antonov AN-124 (Russia and Ukraine) with a payload of 150 tonnes.

<sup>25</sup> The SALIS initiative was set up in 2002 following the Atlantic Alliance’s Prague Summit and involves 15 NATO members – Belgium, Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Turkey – plus Finland and (in the future) Sweden. The contract is to last for a minimum of three years and will provide a minimum of 2 000 guaranteed flying hours. The project is to cost 38 million euros. The contracting authority is the NATO Maintenance and Supply Authority (NAMSA); [www.namsa.nato.int](http://www.namsa.nato.int)

<sup>26</sup> “Interim Strategic Air Lift Capability for Outsized Cargo – Strategic Air Lift Interim Solution (SALIS) MOU”; Istanbul, Turkey, 28 June 2004.

agreed by the SALIS participating states). In view of the Antonov-124 aircrafts' range and payload capacity, their first destination will probably be Afghanistan. SALIS is also available for European Union operations and could be used for the deployment of a Union battlegroup, commanded by Germany, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) with a view to the forthcoming elections.

68. The situation with regard to sea transport is no better. With the exception of France and the United Kingdom, European capability is generally very limited. Other forces either have to use French and British vessels, or the private sector must be called into play. This is the option taken by other recognised maritime powers, including the United States, but the availability of dedicated assets, adapted and equipped for the transport of forces and equipment is an operational advantage. They can come in closer to shore and are less dependent on the state of the port and its reception facilities. Here, no genuinely European project is in progress. Investment is national, with a view to providing a shared resource, a "pool" of platforms.

69. Even if the Europeans had had intelligence and force projection capability to the extent that the United States did, they still lacked power projection resources. There are no long-range bombers in service in Europe. Progress has been made in modernising combat jet and helicopter fleets and transport helicopters. But these are few in number and not such as to make it possible to organise sustained strikes by day or night, over very long distances. Aero-naval capability is very limited: the British, and the French with the "Charles de Gaulle" nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, being the exceptions. However, there are insufficient aircraft: the French Rafale fighter jet has only just entered into service and the British Harrier vertical take-off aircraft has limited capacity. Its replacement, the JSF/F-35, will not be available until after 2013.

70. To further complicate matters, there is also a shortage of cruise missiles, which are dependent on intelligence to ensure that missiles are fired accurately. The British have fired a number of US-manufactured Tomahawk missiles from their nuclear submarines, but they are expensive (between €500 000 and €1 million) and are not produced in the United Kingdom. Their more intensive use by the United States means that it has priority in terms of replacement. The entry into service of the European missile, Storm Shadow (SCALP-EG), in 2003, has increased Europe's flexibility in this area but it is intended solely for air platforms and a range of 250 kilometres (compared with over 1 000 km, for the Tomahawk). This means that, in the case of a landlocked country like Afghanistan, unrestricted access to the surrounding airspace is required. The French Navy is considering the possibility of a similar sea-, land-, or submarine-launched device.

71. This leaves infantry, where human resources are most important. Adding together the total number of European land army troops (NATO and the EU), the figure exceeds 1 million: 1.6 million soldiers and 2.9 million reservists. In the United States, the number of armed troops stands at 1.4 million (excluding reservists and the National Guard). The army has 500 000 soldiers and officers and 700 000 reservists and National Guard officers. The Marine Corps has 175 000 soldiers and officers (across all ranks) and the special forces, an independent command from the time of the Afghanistan campaign, has 42 000 soldiers (31 000 regular troops and 11 000 reservists). These three branches played an active part in Operation Enduring Freedom. With a human pool of this kind, two-thirds of them deployable<sup>27</sup> (the army, its reserves and the National Guard), the United States had a wide choice of strategic, operational and tactical options.

72. In Europe, assuming that the issues of power and force projection can be resolved, deployable units still have to be found. However, with the exception of several large countries such as France, Germany and the United Kingdom, the number of deployable troops is no more than a few hundred to a few thousand. Because of cost considerations, domestic political issues and public sensitivity about foreign combat operations, no country is able to deploy tens of thousands of soldiers and officers on a long-term basis, with the logistical support, equipment and rotation that this would involve, as was clearly shown in Afghanistan and Iraq. The number of American troops in Iraq has remained constant

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<sup>27</sup> According to the United States Congressional Budget Office (CBO), 300 000 army troops and 470 000 reservists were considered to be deployable (2003 figures), "The ability of the US military to sustain an occupation in Iraq", CBO testimony statement of Douglas Holtz-Eakin, Director, 5 November 2003, [www.cbo.gov](http://www.cbo.gov). The Marine Corps and Special Forces are by definition assigned to overseas operations.

since 2001. There have been between 140 000 and 150 000 in Iraq since 2003<sup>28</sup>; in January 2006 there were 160 000 soldiers and officers.

73. In both theatres of operations, European allies are caught up in a constant seesaw motion. Certainly, operational demands on them are not on the same scale as for the Americans, but no European country has maintained high levels of forces on the ground. Each time, replacements have to be found from “willing” countries. The example of the United Kingdom in Iraq provides a case in point. The United Kingdom initially sent in 46 000 soldiers and officers, but scaled down the number to 18 000 when hostilities ceased in May 2003, and subsequently to 8 600 in May 2004 and 8 000 in November 2005. Discussions are currently in progress to further reduce this number by half, partly to enable the commitment to reinforcing ISAF as from summer 2006 to be honoured.

74. Other European countries engaged in Operation Iraqi Freedom have experienced the same trend: high levels of initial engagement followed very quickly by a process of gradual or rapid reduction. Moreover, a major European multinational unit has never been deployed in full in an overseas theatre of operations, something which could have been effective in addressing the recurring problem of human resources management amongst European countries engaged in overseas operations. Even with the gradual increase in ISAF troop numbers, an exception to the rule of rotation between countries every four to six months<sup>29</sup> could not have been made for Afghanistan.

*(b) The experience of ISAF*

75. Although European forces could not succeed in an operation like Enduring Freedom without the involvement of the United States, they are nevertheless essential as a support and stabilisation force. The experience of the Balkans provided a laboratory and catalyst for the design, testing and development of concepts and mechanisms for the command and control and use of forces in a multinational framework, but which is never truly integrated.

76. The framework-nation, multinational Combined Joint Task Forces, the search for solutions to the problem of forces generation and rotation, the question of logistics and joint funding of some engagements, the pooling of or “reinforced cooperation” over equipment are all illustrations of the kind of support provided to the Balkan operations in which WEU and NATO were mobilised in the 1990s.

77. The lessons learned have been applied to the context of Afghanistan, which in turn will ultimately help improve the external intervention capabilities of NATO and European forces (both of the member states and partners in operations). In Afghanistan, ISAF has also faced problems still visible in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where a European Union force has taken over from the NATO force, as well as in Kosovo.

78. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, in 1995, NATO’s European members (including accession countries and partners) deployed 40 000 soldiers and officers out of a total of 60 000 (20 000 of whom were Americans). In 1999, four years later, 50 000 soldiers were sent to Kosovo (7 000 of whom were Americans). Some of these forces have been taken from the NATO Stabilisation Force based in Bosnia and Herzegovina (32 000 soldiers in May 1999). At the time of the Afghanistan campaign, in 2001, NATO troops in the Balkans had been reduced by two-thirds in Bosnia (21 000 soldiers) and by more than one-third (30 000 soldiers) in Kosovo, compared with the peaks of 1995 and 1999.

79. When ISAF was set up in late 2001, troop numbers were set at a record low (of approximately 5 000 soldiers), due to opposition from the Afghan Northern Alliance and because of an obvious lack of significant contributions from European countries from whom these were expected. The United Kingdom has provided the largest numbers, hoping that it would encourage others, and has by and large been followed by its partners. In total, between 4 600 and 4 800 soldiers have been deployed from no less than 19 countries. Given the volatility of the local situation, such numbers were too limited for the European presence to have an impact on political developments in Afghanistan.

<sup>28</sup> In the Iraqi theatre of operations, there were initially 175 000 American troops (March 2003). In January 2006, their total number was close to 185 000, 150 000-160 000 of whom in Iraq itself. Source: United States Department of Defense.

<sup>29</sup> With the important exception of Canada, which from 2003 decided to keep its forces in place for one year.

80. The statement from the outset from the United Kingdom that its presence would be of limited duration has forced other countries to provide volunteers. Despite goodwill, the limits of the volunteer effort have quickly become apparent. Conducting multinational operations thousands of kilometres from national HQs (or from NATO in Belgium) is not something of which all European countries are capable. Some will always find it easier to act as framework-nations, having sufficient assets to do so – both in terms of quantity (forces and equipment) and quality (command and control). NATO assuming control of ISAF has provided a partial solution to this problem: the Operation HQ is based at the Allied Joint Forces Command (JFC) in Brunssum, in the Netherlands, and the Force HQ in Kabul.

81. Within this configuration, the problem of using volunteers has been resolved by a system of HQ rotation between NATO member states: Canada (July 2003-August 2004), the European Corps (August 2004-February 2005), Turkey (February 2005-August 2005), Italy (August 2005-May 2006). After Italy, it will become the responsibility of NATO's Allied Rapid Response Corps, under British command. The advantage of this system is that it not dependent on "voluntary" national contributions, as ISAF was initially. Nevertheless, there are also limitations involved in this solution of national rotation: each new country taking over command brings its own new national approach and staff have to settle into and become accustomed to the environment.

82. The idea which is taking shape is the creation of a permanent "composite" HQ in Kabul, no longer dependent on a headquarters defined by NATO (such as Eurocorps, the German-Dutch HQ, NATO's Rapid Reaction Corps and others certified by the various countries involved as being a High Readiness Force Headquarters). The operational headquarters would continue to be based in Brunssum, and would also administer the rotation of officers from the various countries involved (in theory, all NATO members and partners) in the ISAF "composite" headquarters in Kabul. This would increase flexibility of the ISAF missions by facilitating adjustment to changes in the security situation and lead to greater operational continuity (less dependent on national restrictions).

83. The problem remains of finding enough troops trained and equipped for the various tasks for which ISAF is responsible: securitisation, stabilisation, assisting security and reconstruction, training Afghan armed and security forces, keeping in check both the Taliban and al-Qa'ida, and also Afghan groups and the factions sharing power. The initial increase in the number of soldiers, from less than 5 000 in 2003 to 8 000-9 000 currently, was made possible by a small number of countries, with the addition of further very small contingents, numbering a few dozen to a few hundred soldiers. This multinationality is a good indicator of NATO's "federal" capability but also has drawbacks, since each contingent has different priorities and rules of engagement on account of national policy, equipment and training issues.

84. However, diversity of this kind, coupled with differences in the length of tour of duty and the type of forces used – assistance, support or combat (very few) – also limits the influence of Europeans on the strategic choices for Afghanistan, since each country has its own national agenda (for political, economic, humanitarian and cultural reasons, for example). Political commitment to the "new" Afghanistan is nevertheless a crucial factor in the success of the process of change under way there. It requires a constant and continuous military presence, one of the ways in which this political commitment is expressed. Numbers and a sustained presence were therefore decisive factors in this equation. The "major" countries have a significant role in this, because they also have the resources to provide economic and technical assistance, something still lacking as far as consolidation of the central Afghan Government is concerned.

85. In terms of human resources, another area which the ISAF experience could help to develop is the use of reservists, something which is common practice in the United States, even in Iraq (and for long-term operations of between 8-12 months on occasion). In Europe, the United Kingdom is the country with a model most closely resembling that in the United States, but on a smaller scale. By increasing the use of reserve forces in rearguard bases and Provincial Reconstruction Teams (since reservists have experience in both civilian and military spheres), greater numbers of active forces could be made available for combat in new missions arising from the extension of ISAF towards the south and east of Afghanistan – eliminating the poppy crop and counter-insurrection measures (as

opposed to counterterrorism). This could resolve the current quantitative deployment limits but would also involve higher costs for individual national budgets<sup>30</sup>.

86. Staff training is also essential to achieving the crucial stage of contact with the people. Afghanistan is a Muslim country and the presence of Islam is evident throughout all sectors of society. Ethnic diversity is another factor to take into account, since each group has its own religious, social, cultural, economic and political particularities. During the Assembly's Defence Subcommittee's visit to Afghanistan, the Rapporteur noted that contact with the local population was limited because of language and cultural barriers. Language training and cultural awareness are factors to be taken into account from the outset to avoid the dangers of over-reliance on interpreters and other local intermediaries, which may prevent the local population from freely airing its grievances.

87. Another factor limiting ISAF's initial options, and subsequently those of NATO, has been the difficulty in finding the necessary capabilities, particularly with regard to equipment, for this kind of remote mission. At the end of 2003, three helicopters were available to ISAF. To enable Germany to deploy the first ISAF Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Kunduz, NATO had to find additional transport helicopters. While sufficient quantities of equipment existed in Europe, it was not until mid-2004 that the Netherlands and Turkey eventually supplied six helicopters. The same problem presented itself when it came to the dispatch of intelligence specialists and capabilities and armoured vehicles, both essential to allow ISAF to expand outside the Kabul region.

88. The perseverance of Lord Robertson, NATO Secretary-General in 2003, eventually paid off. Lord Robertson – it was he who coined the phrase: “Those who are not prepared to go to Afghanistan will find Afghanistan coming to them”<sup>31</sup> – eventually managed to persuade NATO's European members to make a firm commitment there. The situation has now improved, experience having provided a solution to the initial problems, although there are still gaps. And the main effort continues to fall on the shoulders of a small number of countries, with most of the reinforcements scheduled for 2006 coming from the United Kingdom (3 300 soldiers for a three-year period), Canada (2 000) and the Netherlands (1 100).

89. Investment in equipment is also considerable, with more than 20 aircraft to be deployed by the United Kingdom<sup>32</sup> and the Canadian launch of a miscellaneous equipment procurement programme, covering items such as armoured vehicles and air surveillance mini-drones<sup>33</sup>. France and Germany will also increase their manpower numbers, although to a lesser degree, and their contributions will focus on the training of Afghan armed forces and the activities of Provincial Reconstruction Teams.

90. Nevertheless, the multiplicity of different types of equipment is also increasing complexity in terms of interoperability. The problem regularly arises with regard to relations and cooperation between the Europeans and the United States in the framework of transatlantic defence, but also among European forces themselves. NATO has the advantage of a certain level of harmonisation of procedures and standardisation of some equipment (communications, munitions, for example), but each country always provides a certain amount of expertise, equipment and technology that is not always directly accessible to other allies.

91. The civilian aspects of ISAF's action, reconstruction and humanitarian assistance are crucially important for establishing the credibility of the European presence in Afghanistan. Civil and military initiatives such as PRTs provide a partial and very limited response to the country's requirements. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and United Nations agencies are also present, but for safety reasons, their activities are essentially confined to Kabul or to very secure areas in the north. Civilian

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<sup>30</sup> Despite the efforts made by former NATO Secretary-General, Lord Robertson, and his successor Mr de Hoop Scheffer, the Alliance has not yet been able to set up a common fund for financing foreign operations – the majority of costs are covered by national budgets, which would partly explain the differences in terms of rules of engagement and priorities in missions, for example.

<sup>31</sup> Speech given by NATO's Secretary-General, Lord Robertson, in Washington on 12 November 2003; [www.nato.int](http://www.nato.int).

<sup>32</sup> Statement made by the United Kingdom Defence Minister, John Reid, Ministry of Defence, 26 January 2006, [www.mod.uk](http://www.mod.uk). The cost of deployment and British operations on site is estimated to be £1 million over a 5-year period.

<sup>33</sup> In the sum of 200 million dollars; source: “Army Equipment for Operation Archer”, Canadian Department of National Defence, 29 November 2003, [www.forces.gc.ca](http://www.forces.gc.ca).

“humanitarian” organisations are an easy target for the armed opposition or criminal gangs. International aid is therefore dispersed across a wide range of initiatives in response to priorities defined by foreign sponsors and their Afghan clients.

92. NATO cannot go beyond its mission to promote the conditions for the smooth operation of assistance programmes. The experience in the Balkans can once again serve as an example, always provided that the European Union becomes more involved in Afghanistan. The EU has a Special Representative in the field, the Spanish diplomat Francesc Vendrell, who is coordinating Union political action in Afghanistan. The European Commission is also taking action in Afghanistan, albeit separately. Logically, synergy between the Union and NATO would appear to be a means of increasing the effectiveness of their action in the longer term. NATO could concentrate more on the missions falling within its sphere of responsibility, with the EU increasing its civilian capability involvement, including the training of police forces under the protection of the Alliance’s European soldiers. However, the Union appears to be somewhat sidelined compared to the United Nations, which has taken the initiative in the reconstruction process in Afghanistan in line with the ambitious plans set out in the Afghanistan Pact adopted during the London Conference on 1 February 2006.

## ***2. The new ISAF: consequences for NATO***

93. In 2006, NATO will start its third year in Afghanistan by expanding its mission and its capabilities and by sketching out a long-term political project. The Italian General commanding ISAF, Mauro Del Vecchio, talks about a long-haul mission, set to run over more than 10 years<sup>34</sup>, until the Afghans can take in hand their country’s future, in terms of internal and external security, and in keeping with the vision set out by the President of the United States, George W. Bush, of global democratisation as a way of providing international security and prosperity in line with the interests of and under the leadership of the United States.

### *(a) Afghanistan in 2006: internal security and the foreign environment*

94. Nevertheless, the situation is far from stable. Each spring, since 2002, Afghanistan has experienced a wave of violence which was more or less contained until 2005. The difference now is the intensity and regularity of activity carried out by the Taliban and their allies against the forces of the (Enduring Freedom) Coalition and the central government in Kabul. Although violence is greatest in the east of the country, all provinces are at risk, as was explained by ISAF military leaders to the Defence Subcommittee when it visited Afghanistan on 16-18 March 2006.

95. The Taliban are now better organised, and sheltered by rearguard bases in Pakistan, in autonomous “tribal” areas. Their activity is largely based on what is happening in Iraq, the other outpost of the global democratisation hoped for by the United States. Suicide bomb attacks have taken place, radio-controlled bombs have gone off and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) on roads have already resulted in the deaths of several American and Canadian soldiers<sup>35</sup>, and less severe losses amongst European military personnel. However, although the Taliban constitute the primary threat to internal and external security, they are not the only cause for concern.

96. The production of opium poppy and the continued instability and conflict between Afghan ethnic and tribal leaders are also a major cause for concern. The Afghan Government has made a commitment to eradicating the poppy crop, which is not dissimilar to the situation in Colombia. Indeed, on the one hand, there is the armed security struggle and on the other, a programme of economic assistance to farmers. The problem is that economic alternatives depend on international donors and fall far short of the real needs of farmers and their families. In Afghanistan, over 17 million people live in rural areas (as compared to a settled population of 22 million) and are dependent on agriculture. In terms of alternative production, only the domestic market, also in a poor condition because of years of war and the absence of commercial infrastructure, can provide any kind of outlet

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<sup>34</sup> “Afghanistan: ISAF expands into south, prepares for long-term stay”; Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 13 February 2006, [www.rferl.org](http://www.rferl.org). General Del Vecchio will be replaced in July by Lt. General David Richards, United Kingdom, when ISAF VIII is replaced by ISAF IX (NATO Rapid Reaction Force)

<sup>35</sup> A senior Canadian diplomat, Glyn Berry, Political Director of the Provincial Reconstruction Team led by Canada in the Kandahar region, was also killed in a suicide attack on a vehicle, near Kandahar on 15 January 2006.

since Afghan production cannot compete with the regional market (Pakistan, Iran, India and Central Asia).

97. Furthermore, promises of compensation made to farmers in exchange for the destruction of their crops and the cessation of their poppy-growing activities have not always been kept. According to information published by the Senlis Council, a non-governmental organisation based in London (and present in Afghanistan), which supports the idea of an opium poppy crop to meet the needs of the pharmaceutical industry, the United Kingdom authorities promised, in 2002, to pay farmers in the Helmand region (where British and Dutch troops are in the process of being deployed), around 350 dollars per fifth of a hectare of cultivated field. This was accepted by local farmers but they did not receive payment once cultivation of the crop was stopped and the fields destroyed. The resentment caused by this failure to keep one's word (something of great importance in Afghan tradition and culture) has now given the Taliban and other militant opposition factions grounds for calling for armed resistance against European troops being deployed in this part of the country<sup>36</sup>.

98. Religious and cultural aspects must also be taken into account as a potential cause of instability. The "cartoon war" over the depiction of the Prophet Mohammed had limited repercussions in Afghanistan, with the exception of a number of minor and brief demonstrations. Nevertheless, following these incidents, on 8 January 2006 a Norwegian PRT's base in the town of Maymana in north-west Afghanistan was attacked. Four Afghans were killed and four members of the Norwegian troops, which had to be reinforced by British units, were injured. European F-16 jets carried out intimidation flights over the town. In the capital, Kabul, demonstrators attacked the Danish Embassy and had to be dispersed by the police, using force. More demonstrations took place in Herat and Jalalabad.

99. If this crisis caused a limited backlash in Afghanistan, compared with that in other Muslim countries; it was also because the media there, particularly radio and television – the written press being accessible only to a literate minority – are controlled by the government and ISAF, some national components of which provide support programmes to radio, television and the press. This psychological action – important since it is aimed at obtaining popular support for the difficult process of national reconstruction – helps to maintain a semblance of security. However, it is difficult to have a clear idea of Afghan public opinion and its perception of the role of European and American forces in the country, an impression which was confirmed by the visits to the various ISAF country contingents undertaken by the Assembly's Defence Subcommittee.

100. Religious factors should not be underestimated in Afghanistan, as illustrated also by the controversy surrounding an Afghan who converted to Christianity after his stay in Germany as a refugee. Rejected by his family, Abdul Rahman was forced to leave Afghanistan for Italy, where he was awarded asylum status on the grounds of religious persecution. Initially imprisoned in Kabul, he faced the death penalty for his conversion – the Afghan legal system is based *de facto* on Islam and the principles of Muslim law, including the sharia (which means "the path leading to the water"). The Afghan religious authorities, whether moderate or otherwise, were unanimous about the fact that the conversion was a crime for which he should be sentenced to death. The Afghan Government came under pressure from the United States and European Governments whose forces were deployed in the field to free Abdul Rahman, who was finally released on the grounds of diminished psychological responsibility. However, his physical safety in Afghanistan was compromised and he had to go into exile<sup>37</sup>.

101. Insecurity is also the result of a complex political situation where central power is held by one person, President Hamid Karzai. Nevertheless, another centre of power is in the process of emerging:

<sup>36</sup> "Broken promises of British Government have led to the breakdown in relationship with Afghanistan farmers in key province" and "Insurgency assessment report reveals disintegration of Government control in Pashto Belt of southern Afghanistan"; The Senlis Council, 26 March 2006; [www.senliscouncil.net](http://www.senliscouncil.net). Legal action for damages has been taken in the United Kingdom through Leigh Day & Co Solicitors, "Afghan farmers sue over poppy crops", by Ian Bruce, *The Herald* (Scotland), 10 March 2006, [www.theherald.co.uk](http://www.theherald.co.uk).

<sup>37</sup> To some extent, this sets a precedent for the right of asylum for current and future converts from Islam who are forced to go into hiding under pain of punishment as severe as the death penalty.

the parliament, which recently claimed the right to approve ministerial changes decided upon on 20 May 2006 (including the replacement of Abdullah Abdullah, the Foreign Affairs Minister in post since 2002, by Rangeen Dadfar Spanta, one of President Karzai's diplomatic advisors). Both houses of parliament count among their members a number of warlords, tribal and clan leaders and also Taliban leaders who have joined forces with the authorities and do not support the extension of foreign influence in Afghanistan or the central government. Furthermore, despite major campaigns to demilitarise and demobilise armed gangs, funded by international donors<sup>38</sup>, militia and private armies are still active in Afghanistan in the defence of various interests.

102. The formation of a central Afghan army is one solution to this problem and different training programmes, supported by ISAF and administered by framework nations, particularly the United States, France and the United Kingdom, are in progress, ranging from the training of officers and sub-officers to instruction for soldiers. Afghan forces are also involved in security and combat operations against the Taliban and it is these forces which are involved in the physical destruction of the poppy fields. The aim of European countries and the United States is to form an army of at least 70-80 000 soldiers by 2008 at the latest. Nevertheless, progress has been slow and there are many shortfalls in terms of equipment and projection capabilities to cover the whole of Afghan territory, where access is poor by road or air (difficult weather conditions). There is also the issue of cost since, in a country like Afghanistan, earning regular money is the main reason for signing up (this would also apply in Iraq).

103. For the time being, funding for this effort is being provided by international donors. If the Afghan Government had to meet all defence costs, it could only do so at the expense of peoples' economic and social welfare (already poor enough as it is). The international commitment to Afghan security forces is therefore vitally important, not just in terms of training (and assessment) but also of its significant economic impact. Money was also the means used by the Taliban, warlords and major opium traffickers to recruit fighters, pay informers, and meet the needs of the families of fallen fighters and suicide bombers. Long-term economic assistance commensurate with the security challenges must continue, if the United States and the European countries are to win the fight against time.

104. The regional geostrategic environment has also changed and become slightly more hostile to NATO achieving its plans for Afghanistan. Relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan are still difficult, despite the mutual assurances of peace given at the highest level. Taliban fighters – and probably some of their Pakistani protectors in the security forces – benefit from this situation. Pakistani tribal areas are not out of the reach of American and Pakistan armed forces, but they continue to shelter militant factions opposed to the Kabul Government and the armed American and European presence<sup>39</sup>.

105. Another example is Uzbekistan, which closed its land and airspace to the United States and NATO, with the exception of Germany, which needed to use Termez Airport to refuel and transport German troops between Europe and Afghanistan. The Iranian nuclear programme and its potential for armed conflict with the United States and European allies is another cause for concern, even though Tehran's interests are more focused on Baghdad. Nevertheless, the presence of a major Diaspora (over 800 000 refugees) also constitutes a potential breeding ground for groups hostile to the Kabul Government and foreign forces in Afghanistan.

106. Similarly, the resumption of political and economic activity by Russia, China and India<sup>40</sup> (which is of definite concern to Pakistan) in Central Asia strengthens uncertainty in Afghanistan. Russian and Chinese opposition to the permanent American armed presence in the region to fight the Taliban and al-Qa'ida has not developed into support for armed action to destabilise Afghanistan, a country with

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<sup>38</sup> These include the Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration programme, a G8 and United Nations initiative (Afghanistan's New Beginnings Programme, ANBP) under Japanese leadership; [www.undpanbp.org](http://www.undpanbp.org).

<sup>39</sup> Pakistan has stationed over 70 000 soldiers in border areas and is regularly involved in combing tribal areas for opposition militant factions.

<sup>40</sup> Total aid granted by India to Afghanistan since 2002 is estimated at over US\$ 500 million. Indian Airlines is one of the few international commercial airlines to fly to Afghanistan.

which both countries are trying to have a good relationship. However, this situation may change, depending on how relations between these two countries and the United States develop.

*(b) The expansion of NATO*

107. It is therefore the combination of these factors and events (which are not exhaustive), not all of which are related, that has significant potential to create strategic instability. Another question that arises, in view of NATO's geographic extension, is the relationship between ISAF and Operation Enduring Freedom, a debate which has not been resolved and which will prove to be a source of political problems for the Atlantic Alliance. However, as the former Canadian Defence Minister, John McCallum, stated in 2003:

"I would like to leave you with two messages. First, NATO must succeed in Afghanistan. The mission in Afghanistan is a litmus test for the Alliance. It brings together all the facets of the NATO of tomorrow – out-of-area operation, new capabilities, deployable and usable force, and strategic partnership. If, as allies, we fail in Afghanistan, we will fail its people, we will fail the international community and we will fail our Alliance and our vision for the future.

The second message is that success in Afghanistan depends on a strong political commitment from all NATO capitals. The Alliance is only as good as its members choose to make it. Only a resolute commitment from all allies, expressed through long-term political, military and financial engagement, will help bring self-sustaining and lasting security, sufficiency and pluralism to the Afghan people. With such a commitment from its members, NATO will not fail and will have secured its future as an effective force for international peace and security."

108. That was in December 2003. It was in late 2005 and early 2006, following lengthy discussions in NATO and national debates in the parliaments of the United Kingdom and Netherlands (which, along with Canada and Australia, were the countries to contribute most forces) concerning "Stage 3 Expansion" – NATO's new operational plan for Afghanistan – that a fundamental decision was finally made. The main provisions of this decision, taken by the North Atlantic Council on 8 December 2005, are as follows:

"ISAF's key military tasks will include:

- Assisting the Afghan Government in extending its authority across the country;
- Conducting stability and security operations in coordination with the Afghan national security forces;
- Assisting the Afghan Government with the security sector reform process;
- Mentoring and supporting the Afghan national army;
- Supporting Afghan Government programmes to disarm illegally armed groups.

ISAF's key supporting tasks will include:

- Supporting Afghan Government and internationally sanctioned counter-narcotics efforts within limits (NOT participating in poppy eradication or destruction of processing facilities or taking military action against narcotics producers);
- On request, providing support to humanitarian assistance operations coordinated by Afghan government organisations;
- Supporting the Afghan national police, within means and capabilities".

109. In practice, this means ISAF's geographic extension to the south and east (currently areas of conflict), an increase in the number of Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), the creation of regional commands (as was done in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo) and of troops and the provision of troops and equipment not limited to the 6 000 soldiers already announced. NATO is also in the process of constructing or standardising military installations in the north, west, and south of the country for its own requirements, the aim of all of this being "to assist the Afghan Government to extend and exercise its authority and influence across the country".

110. The North Atlantic Council's decision also clearly stated that:

“ISAF and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), the ongoing US-led military operation in Afghanistan, will continue to have separate mandates and missions. ISAF will continue to focus on its stabilisation and security mission whilst OEF will continue to carry out its counter-terrorism mission.

Clear command arrangements will coordinate, and where necessary, deconflict efforts within the two missions as agreed under the auspices of the operational plan.”

This “clause” was meant to reassure certain European members of NATO of continued assistance in the reconstruction of failing states, a concept also put forward in the European Union's European Security Strategy, adopted by the European Council in Brussels on 12 December 2003. The uncertainty arose because the more ISAF extends into Afghanistan, the more it will come up against local interests, including those of warlords, opium poppy growers and minorities or majorities with grievances against the central government, whose only way of asserting its authority is to rely on the international (and particularly the American) armed presence.

111. Stage 3 of the extension, according to the explanations that were provided to the Assembly's Defence Subcommittee by ISAF military authorities in Kabul, in fact paves the way for the process of NATO's full coverage of Afghanistan and the merger between ISAF and Operation Enduring Freedom, stage 4 of the extension. This will be implemented subject to the progress made on the ground, possibly from late 2006. In this case, the command of the “new” enlarged<sup>41</sup> ISAF would be entrusted to an American general with two deputies, a European for operations relating to ISAF's current reinforced mandate (PRTs, assistance, training) and an American for combat operations, to support Afghan forces against the Taliban and al-Qa'ida. Stage 3 could already involve some American forces involved in Operation Enduring Freedom deployed in the south of Afghanistan, some of them forming part of Provincial Reconstruction Teams coming under the command of the British General to act as the next ISAF commander.

112. It is in fact on the United States that the primarily responsibility for developments in Afghanistan rests. However, the US is not in a position to control the political, economic, religious and social dynamics affecting the rebuilding process in Afghanistan. The US military presence is for the time being the only power recognised by all factions. However, to compensate for the weakness of the authority of Hamid Karzai, the Afghan President, practically its only real ally, the United States also relies on local leaders, who thus obtain money, arms and power. If that situation were reversed, this would inevitably lead to overt resistance, which would benefit the Taliban, al-Qa'ida and regional powers hostile to the presence of Americans and Europeans.

113. Thus NATO's dilemma in Afghanistan, described by the former Canadian Defence Minister as “perform or perish”, is revealed in its true dimensions. NATO must also come to terms with Afghan leaders within the power structure, both government supporters and opponents. As far as the Taliban movement is concerned, the choice is more obvious. But it too is divided, and a number of its leaders have drawn closer to the Kabul Government in exchange for privileges, which has allowed the Afghan President-elect, Hamid Karzai, to strengthen his power base at the expense of the Northern Alliance and other ethnic and religious minorities. Nevertheless, the divisions in Afghanistan according to different allegiances, influences and beliefs, are all too real, as is foreign influence.

114. One of the areas where ISAF action is in danger of running into difficulty is the Provincial Reconstruction Teams. The more ground that PRTs cover, the greater their vulnerability (a Team consists of approximately 150 military staff and some civilians). The greater their presence, the greater the expectations people have of them, in terms of benefits, assistance and protection against the various abuses by local authorities, or simply to counter difficult living conditions. With the increase in PRTs from nine to 13 and “Stage 3 Expansion”, NATO is counting on increasing its visibility and positioning itself as a player in economic reconstruction, at the risk of looking like a second

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<sup>41</sup> In this case, the total number of ISAF/Enduring Freedom forces, operating under a single NATO command, would still be more or less the same as it is currently – 30 000 in total for both operations. This would enable the United States to repatriate at least 5 000 soldiers (out of 18 000).

government as compared to local and central authorities unable (or unwilling) to take effective action. For such international assistance calls for some kind of reciprocity in the military, political or social spheres (the enhancement of the status of women, for example)<sup>42</sup>.

115. PRTs, made up essentially of military elements, in fact also have an “intelligence” function. The more they spread out within Afghanistan, the more they face complex situations, particularly as regards what stance to take with regard to tribal leaders and local “warlords” with links to opium poppy cultivation or involved in other illegal activities (various smuggling and arms trafficking activities, for example). A number of these local leaders collaborated with Operation Enduring Freedom, ISAF’s “big brother” in the war against the Taliban and al-Qa’ida, and are thus themselves “protected” from any unfriendly action from ISAF. However, even if it refuses to get involved in the “opium war”, NATO will inevitably go down that route, indirectly to begin with, through activities such as intelligence, emergency assistance (air equipment or land forces) and the provision of logistics support and transport.

116. Indeed, actively participating in eliminating (eradicating) the poppy crop is one of the objectives of the United Kingdom forces which will be deployed in the south of the country in the province of Helmand. In a statement made by John Reid, the United Kingdom Defence Minister, concerning the forthcoming British deployment, references to the detrimental impact of opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan are a recurring theme:

“And we are working to make sure our goals are Afghans’ goals too. Assisting Afghan counter-narcotics initiatives is an obvious example. We help them and they help themselves. As I mentioned earlier, 90% of the heroin injected into the veins of our young people originates in Afghanistan. And Helmand province is the largest single source of opium in Afghanistan. So we can help train Afghan counter-narcotics forces and support their operations. We can provide intelligence. We can assist the Afghan Government explain their policies to the people. Above all, we can, along with the Afghans, create the environment in which economic development and institutional reform – which I emphasise again are both essential to the elimination of the opium industry – can take place”.

The list of forces and equipment to be deployed bears more resemblance to those of a 19<sup>th</sup> century expeditionary corps than a PRT humanitarian mission:

“(…) the range of tasks for our PRT is large. The PRT will be a part of larger British force, providing a framework of security, over 3 300 strong, which itself will come under a new Multinational Brigade (South), which will initially be under Canadian alternating with British command.

Indeed, our contribution, the Helmand Task Force, will include elements of the Headquarters of 16 Air Assault Brigade, and an airborne infantry battlegroup. Based initially around the Third Battalion, The Parachute Regiment, it will incorporate a force of eight Apache Attack Helicopters, provided by 9 Regiment, Army Air Corps, the first time indeed that we have deployed this impressive new capability on an operation. 9 Regiment will also supply four Lynx Light Utility Helicopters while 27 Squadron, Royal Air Force, will provide a detachment of six Chinook Support Helicopters.

Other major units and capabilities include Scimitar and Spartan armoured vehicles from the Household Cavalry Regiment, a battery of 105mm Light Guns from the 7th Parachute Regiment, Royal Horse Artillery, a battery of Desert Hawk Unmanned Aerial Vehicles from 32 Regiment, Royal Artillery, 13 Air Assault Regiment and 29 Regiment of the Royal Logistics

<sup>42</sup> A full and detailed overview of the reconstruction efforts, the role of PRTs and NGOs can be found in two 2005 studies: “Afghanistan 2005 and Beyond Prospects for Improved Stability Reference Document”, Barnett Rubin, Humayun Hamidzada and Abby Stodard, Netherlands Institute of International Relations “Clingendael”, Conflict Research Unit, April 2005, [www.clingendael.nl](http://www.clingendael.nl) and “Humanitarian and Reconstruction Assistance to Afghanistan 2001-05 from Denmark, Ireland, the Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom, A Joint Evaluation Main Report”, Chr. Michelsen Institute (Lead Agency, Copenhagen), Development Consulting and German Association of Development Consultants, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, October 2005, [www.um.dk](http://www.um.dk) (Development Evaluation Department).

Corps, 7 Battalion Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers and 16 Close Support Medical Regiment. We shall also deploy four additional Royal Air Force C-130 Hercules transport aircraft. It is a substantial package and one that the Chiefs of Staff agree is necessary to maximise their chances of success and minimise the risks”<sup>43</sup>.

117. A deployment of this kind can only be justified on the grounds of protecting (British) forces and indicates that confidence in the Afghan armed and security forces, both those already trained and in the process of being worked up, is not very high. It is a demonstration of force to the local population, in an unstable environment where levels of dissatisfaction are high. Providing capability of this kind to a PRT is laudable, but a military presence has high visibility and is likely to attract hostility. The ambiguity surrounding the role of PRTs also largely explains the reluctance of many non-governmental organisations to become involved with Operation Enduring Freedom or ISAF in their reconstruction projects<sup>44</sup>.

118. 2006 will therefore be a crucial year, not just for Afghanistan, but also for the future of NATO’s expeditionary commitments. The organisation has to succeed, but at what price? The Netherlands’ reluctance has revealed the doubts in a number of European capitals over extensive engagement in Afghanistan. ISAF’s merger with Enduring Freedom will also cause concern at the thought of European troops being engaged in an American-style path to war, when Iraq is still on the mind of public opinion in Europe. Problems of respect for human rights, the risk of collateral damage caused by participation in operations to eradicate the poppy crop, the involvement (even limited) in acts of war, the regional geostrategic context, the religious factor and the absence of economic progress in the short term are making what started purely as a mission to assist the Afghan authorities into something far more complicated.

119. Now elected and enjoying a certain level of popular legitimacy, those authorities are still not in a position to do without international assistance and to guarantee security and economic reconstruction. Furthermore, notwithstanding all the international conferences on Afghanistan (in Tokyo in 2002, Berlin in 2004 and London in 2006), Afghanistan is not the first priority of European and American international aid. According to a study published by the Clingendael Institute for International Relations in the Netherlands<sup>45</sup>, it is estimated that the amount of aid required between 2002 and 2010 for reconstruction is 27 billion dollars (Berlin, 2004). Around half has been promised by international donors (countries and international organisations), 9 billion has been invested, 3.9 billion has been spent, 3.3 billion of which on projects in the field (approximately 1 billion for projects already completed).

120. The authors of the study also stress that in terms of military presence (number of soldiers per inhabitant) and financial contributions to reconstruction<sup>46</sup>, “The degree of effort places Afghanistan far below all Balkan operations, East Timor, and Iraq, and even below Namibia and Haiti in the 1990s. (...) Afghanistan may be seriously under-resourced or, (...) that international actors are pursuing “state-building on the cheap” in Afghanistan”<sup>47</sup>. For example, the European Commission has made a commitment of 1 billion euros in assistance to Afghanistan over a period of five (!) years, from 2002 to 2006. The difference is that a significant part of this sum will go towards political projects (governance) and be used to pay foreign consultants and European companies wishing to benefit from

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<sup>43</sup> Statement made by the United Kingdom Defence Minister, United Kingdom Ministry of Defence, 26 January 2006; [www.mod.uk](http://www.mod.uk).

<sup>44</sup> “The US Experience with Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan Lessons Identified”, Robert M. Perito, United States Institute of Peace, Special Report 152, October 2005, [www.usip.org](http://www.usip.org) and “Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan”, Andrea L. Hoshmand, International Security and Economic Policy Project Course, University of Maryland (United States), 10 May 2005, [www.publicpolicy.umd.edu](http://www.publicpolicy.umd.edu)

<sup>45</sup> “Afghanistan 2005 and Beyond. Prospects for Improved Stability Reference Document”, Barnett Rubin, Humayun Hamidzada and Abby Stodard, Netherlands Institute of International Relations, “Clingendael”, Conflict Research Unit, April 2005, [www.clingendael.nl](http://www.clingendael.nl)

<sup>46</sup> According to a plan developed by researchers from the Rand Corporation (United States) in “The UN’s role in nation-building: from the Congo to Iraq”; Rand Corporation, MG-304, 2005, [www.rand.org](http://www.rand.org)

<sup>47</sup> This formula is attributed to Mr Ashraf Ghani, Afghanistan Ministry for Finance from 2002 to 2005 and currently Rector of the University of Kabul.

reconstruction projects<sup>48</sup>. During 2005-2006, the Commission had anticipated maintaining aid at the level of 200 million euros/year<sup>49</sup>. For comparison, profits from the poppy crop are estimated at more than 2.5 billion dollars/year.

121. The population of Afghanistan expects assistance and protection from the international community. It should be the focus of all securitisation and reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan, and rightly so, in view of past and present suffering, caused in many cases by the negligence of developed countries, particularly European countries and the United States. However, it must not turn into the “collateral damage” of the fight for political and economic influence in Central Asia. NATO’s engagement in Afghanistan will only be successful if it combines political, economic and social aspects, something which the organisation cannot guarantee. It can help to ensure that the environment is secure, but only for a short time, before two factors inherent in this type of intervention: the effect of occupation and donor fatigue, result in a turn for the worse.

122. For the time being, the attitude towards the international military presence in Afghanistan is positive (or indifferent), but as it is extended, it will come into conflict with Afghan interests – whether legitimate (social, religious and traditional ones) or illegal (drugs, Taliban, opposing militant factions). A number of neighbouring countries also have geopolitical, energy and economic interests in Afghanistan that may be affected by the presence of NATO and the United States. A security approach on its own – it has been suggested that PRTs be renamed PSTs (Provincial Security Teams – is insufficient. Engagement in Afghanistan should meet economic requirements and achieve results quickly – over half the population, which continues to grow steadily, at a rate of 2.6-3.9% per annum<sup>50</sup>, is under 18 years of age and life expectancy is around 45.

123. Through the international military presence, the United States and European countries are primarily responsible for internal and external security and the reconstruction of Afghanistan. Until the country can truly take charge of its own destiny, this is an important and decisive challenge for the credibility of both NATO and the European Union. Withdrawal is no longer an option, but there will be a need to provide economic resources to ensure that Afghanistan is a success story. Otherwise, the result will be a country drained of resources, at the mercy of armed groups and intervention by neighbouring countries. The Afghan people have already suffered too much from the geostrategic games played by major powers in the past. The country’s future will, at the end of the day, lie with an Afghan solution in an Afghan context. With no security, there will be no reconstruction, without economic and social progress, there will be no security. They are two sides of the same coin and are decisive in ultimately building an Afghan State that is sovereign and modern.

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<sup>48</sup> United States assistance also forms part of this structure: 1 billion dollars in 2004, 622 million in 2006 (source USAID, [www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov)). For example, the reconstruction of the “strategic” route between Kabul and Kadanahar was entrusted to a Texan company, which sub-contracted the work to Indian and Pakistani companies. The annual cost of US military operations in the region exceed 10 billion dollars.

<sup>49</sup> “National Indicative Programme of European Community Support 2005-2006 – Afghanistan”, European Commission, 2005, <http://europa.eu.int>

<sup>50</sup> “Country Profiles for Population and Reproductive Health – Policy Developments and Indicators 2005”, United Nations Population Fund and Population Reference Bureau (United States, non-governmental), [www.prb.org](http://www.prb.org)

## APPENDIX I

### *Afghanistan: geography, population and economic indicators*

#### *1. Geography*

Area: 647 500 sq km (a territory comparable to that of Germany and Poland together).

Number of provinces: 34.

Mountains: Afghanistan is a landlocked country mostly surrounded by rugged mountains. The Hindu Kush mountain range, in particular, stretching from north-east to south-west and thus dividing the country into two parts, contains Afghanistan's main peaks, with a concentration of the highest summits in the northern area of the Wakhan corridor along the route to China.

Valleys: Fertile valleys and plains can be found in the mountains, especially in the north and in the south-west of the country. In these areas the population reaches its highest concentration.

Natural borders: Considering the nature of its territory, not least the lack of any access to the sea, Afghanistan's natural borders are mainly traced by its mountains.

Rivers: The country has four main rivers, Amu Darya, Hari Rud, Kabul and Helmand. Due to its climate (arid to semi-arid), the Afghan rivers are unnavigable for the main part of the year and flow only seasonally.

#### *2. Transport*

Main land roads: 21 000 km, 2 793 km paved and 18 207 km unpaved (1999 est.). The main roads link the principal Afghan cities and Afghanistan itself with the neighbouring countries.

Air infrastructure: 10 paved runways (among them, the two international airports of Kabul and Kandahar and the military air base of Bagram) and 37 simple unpaved lanes (2004 est.).

Waterways: 12 000 km (2004 est.), mainly Amu Darya.

#### *3. Population<sup>51</sup>*

Population: 29 928 987 (July 2005 est.).

Life expectancy (at birth): total: 42, male: 41, female: 42.

Age pyramid: under 15 years: 45%, 15-65: 53% over 65 years: 2%.

Gender ratio (2005 est.): population under 15 years: females 45%, males 55%, 15-49 years: females 46%, males 54%, over 50 years: females 10%, males 90%.

Main population centres: Kabul, capital, (2 206 300 pop.), Kandahar (349 300 pop.), Mazar-i-Sharif (246 900 pop.), Charikar (pop. 202 600), Herat (pop. 171 500), Jalalabad (pop. about 100 000).

Ethnic groups: Pashtun (42%), Tajik (27%), Hazara (9%), Uzbek (9%), Aimak (4%), Turkmen (3%), Baloch (2%), other (4%).

Religions: Sunni Muslim (80%), Shi'a Muslim (19%), other (1%).

Languages: Afghan Persian or Dari (official) 50%, Pashtu (official) 35%, Turkic languages (primarily Uzbek and Turkmen) 11%, 30 minor languages (primarily Balochi and Pashai) 4%, much bilingualism.

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<sup>51</sup> Sources: World Bank, United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (MANUA), Population Reference Bureau (United States, ONG); [www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org), [www.unama-afg.org](http://www.unama-afg.org), [www.prb.org](http://www.prb.org).

#### 4. *Economic indicators*<sup>52</sup>

Currency: Afghani (AFA) 1 = 0.017 € 1 = 0.020 US \$.

GDP: US \$ 6 billion (2004 est.).

GDP (per capita): US \$ 253 (2005 est.).

GDP (per sector): Agriculture 57%, Industry 23.2%, Services 19.8% (2000 est.).

Population living below the poverty line (US \$ 2 a day): 70%

Inflation rate: 13.8% (2004).

Budget: revenues US \$ 12 800 million, expenditure US \$ 26 716 million (2005 est.).

Donor grants and loans: US \$ 14 984 million.

Agricultural products: opium, wheat, fruit, nuts, wool, mutton, sheepskins, lambskins.

Industrial products: small-scale production of textiles, soap, furniture, shoes, fertilizers, cement, hand-woven carpets, natural gas, coal, copper.

Exports: US \$ 1 749 million (2004 est.).

Export commodities: opium, fruit and nuts, hand-woven carpets, wool, cotton, precious and semi-precious gems.

Export partners: Pakistan, India, US, Germany.

Imports: US \$ 4 440 million (2004 est.).

Import commodities: capital goods, food, textiles and petroleum products.

Import partners: Pakistan, US, India, Germany, Turkmenistan, Kenya, South Korea, Russia.

External debt: US \$ 8 billion.

#### 5. *The opium economy (2005)*<sup>53</sup>

Afghanistan is the first opium producer in the world (87% of global production) with 131 000 hectares cultivated (2004 est.) and a potential production of 4 200 metric tons (2004 est.).

Average opium yield: 32 kg/ha (2004 est.).

Net opium cultivation (percentage of land): 2.9% (2004 est.).

Number of provinces affected: 34 (all).

Number of households involved in opium cultivation (percentage of total population): 10% (2004 est.).

Total export value of opium to neighbouring countries (percentage of 2003 GDP): 60% (2004 est.).

Gross trafficking profits of Afghan traffickers: US \$ 2.2 billion (2004 est.).

Household average yearly gross income from opium of opium growing families: US \$ 1 700 (2004 est.).

Per capita gross income from opium of opium growing families: US \$ 260 (2004 est.).

Trafficking routes:

- Traditional trafficking route (or Balkan Route): Afghan opium is shipped directly to Iran and Pakistan and later transported to Turkey. From there it is then trafficked through Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary or through Albania and the countries of former Yugoslavia before heading to the rest of Europe, in particular to the United Kingdom. This route was

<sup>52</sup> Sources: World Bank, International Monetary Fund, United Nations Development Program (PNUD); [www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org), [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org), [www.undp.org](http://www.undp.org).

<sup>53</sup> Source: "Afghanistan Opium Survey 2005", United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime; [www.unodc.org](http://www.unodc.org).

traditionally the principal one until the 1990s when the Northern Route gradually emerged as a viable alternative.

- The Northern Route (or Silk Route): Opium shipments through the Northern Route involve several former-USSR countries. After crossing the Afghan Northern border, opium is then trafficked to Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan before ending up in Russia or European markets, mainly Baltic and Scandinavian countries, via Moscow and St. Petersburg.

## APPENDIX II

### *The political organisation of Afghanistan*

#### *1. The Constitution*

In January 2004 the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan acquired a new Constitution. It was drafted between 14 December 2003 and 4 January 2004 and officially signed on 16 January. It comprises 162 articles (including seven miscellaneous provisions and five transitional provisions) and 12 chapters.

#### *2. The President*

The Afghan President is directly elected by the Afghan people for a five-year term. He cannot be re-elected for more than two terms and he has to be a Muslim Afghan born in Afghanistan. He is the Head of State, the Head of Government and also the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces of the country.

The current Afghan President, after the October 2004 elections, is Hamid Karzai, who officially took office on 7 December 2004.

The former King Mohammad Zahir Shah, holds the honorific title of “Father of the country” and presides symbolically over certain occasions without retaining any governing authority.

Chapter III of the Constitution defines the President’s powers and duties:

- “Art. 60. The President is the head of the state of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, and conducts his authorities in executive, legislative, and judiciary branches in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution (...)
- Art. 63. The President-elect, prior to resumption of his/her duties, performs the following oath of allegiance” (...):

“In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate

In the name Allah Almighty, in the presence of you, representatives of the nation of Afghanistan, I swear to obey and safeguard the provisions of the sacred religion of Islam, to observe the Constitution and other laws of Afghanistan and supervise their implementation; to safeguard the independence, national sovereignty, and the territorial integrity of Afghanistan and the fundamental rights and interests of the people of Afghanistan, and with the assistance of God and the support of the nation, to make great and sincere efforts for the happiness and progress of the people of Afghanistan”.

- Art. 64. The power and duties of the President are as follows:
  1. Supervising the implementation of the Constitution.
  2. Determining the fundamental policies of the state.
  3. Being the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces of Afghanistan. (...)
  7. Convening Loya Jirga. (...)
  8. Declaring the state of emergency. (...)
  9. Inaugurating the National Assembly and the Loya Jirga. (...)
  11. Appointing of Ministers and the Attorney General. (...)
  12. Appointing the head and members of the Supreme Court. (...)
  13. Appointment, retirement and acceptance of resignation and dismissal of judges, officers of the armed forces, police, national security, and high-ranking officials in accordance with the law. (...)
  16. Signing of laws and legislative decrees. (...)
- Art. 65. The President can call for a referendum on important national, political, social or economic issues. (...)

- Art. 67. In the case of resignation, impeachment, or death of the President, or of a serious illness that could hinder the performance of duties, the Vice-President undertakes his duties and authorities. (...)
- Art.68. (...) In case of the simultaneous death of the President and Vice-President, his duties shall be implemented by the Chair of the Meshrano Jirga (House of Elders) and in the absence of the chair of the Meshrano Jirga (House of Elders), Chair of the Wolesi Jirga (the House of People), and in the absence of the Chair of the Wolesi Jirga (the House of People), the Foreign Minister shall take the duties of the President in accordance with article 67 of this Constitution. (...)
- Article 70. (...) After expiration of his term, the President is entitled to financial benefits of the presidency for the rest of his life in accordance with the law except in the case of dismissal”.

### **3. The Government**

The Afghan Government is composed of 27 Ministers and 2 deputy Presidents appointed by the President with the approval of the National Assembly.

According to Chapter IV of the Constitution:

- “Art.73. The Ministers can be appointed from within and without the National Assembly. (...)
- Art. 74. Prior to taking office, the minister performs the following oath in the presence of the President:

“In the name of Allah, the Merciful and Compassionate, I swear in the name of God Almighty to support the provisions of the sacred religion of Islam, follow the Constitution and other laws of Afghanistan, protect the rights of citizens, and safeguard the independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Afghanistan, and consider God Almighty present in performing all my responsibilities, and honestly perform the duties assigned to me”.

- Art.75. The government has the following duties:

Execute the provision of this Constitution, other laws, and final orders of the courts.

Protect the independence, defend the territorial integrity, and safeguard the interests and dignity of Afghanistan in the international community.

Maintenance of public law and order and elimination of administrative corruption.

Prepare the budget, regulate financial affairs, and protect public wealth.

Devise and implement programmes for social, cultural, economic, and technological progress.

Report to the National Assembly at the end of the fiscal year about the tasks accomplished and about the main plans for the new fiscal year.

Perform other duties as recognised by this Constitution. (...)

- Art. 76. In order to implement the main policies of the country, and regulation of its duties, the government shall devise and approve regulations. (...)
- Art. 79. In cases of recess of the Wolesi Jirga, the government can adopt legislation in an emergency situation on matters other than those related to budget and financial affairs. The legislative decrees become laws after they are signed by the President. legislative decrees should be submitted to the National Assembly. (...)
- Art. 80. The Ministers, during the course of their work, cannot use their posts for linguistic, regional, ethnic, religion and partisan purposes.”

#### **4. The Parliament (Loya Jirga)**

The Afghan Parliament, otherwise known as Loya Jirga or Grand Assembly, represents the highest level of representation for people in Afghanistan. It is made up of members of the National Assembly, a bicameral body which consists of the Wolesi Jirga, or House of People, with representatives directly elected for a five-year term and the Meshrano Jirga, or House of Elders, whose members are partly elected by provincial Councils, local district Councils and the President himself, together with the Chairpersons of the provincial and district Councils and the Ministers. The new Parliament was elected on September 2005.

According to Chapter VI of the Constitution:

- “Art. 111. Loya Jirga is convened in the following situations:

To take decision on the issues related to independence, national sovereignty, territorial integrity, and supreme interests of the country.

To amend the provisions of this Constitution.

To prosecute the President. (...)

- Art. 113. The quorum of the Loya Jirga for voting is completed by the majority of members. The decisions of the Loya Jirga are taken by a majority of the present members except in cases as explicitly stated in this Constitution.
- Art. 114. Discussions of the Loya Jirga are open except when one fourth of its members demand their secrecy, and the Loya Jirga accepts this demand. (...)

#### **5. Political parties, movements and Afghan NGOs**

Political parties: Since the overthrow of the Taliban regime and, more precisely, since the approval of a new, historical law in September 2003 that allows political parties to form freely, Afghanistan has opened its political arena to many new political actors. According to the latest estimates (August 2005), there are 12 main parties and 64 minor parties all registered and approved by the Ministry of Justice.

Among the most important ones are:

- the Islamic Social Party of Afghanistan,
- the Social Nationalist Afghan Party,
- the Liberal Democratic Party of Afghanistan,
- the Democratic Watan Party of Afghanistan, and
- the Communist Party of Afghanistan.

Many of them however (roughly 45) have come together in a loose coalition called “The National Front for Democracy in Afghanistan” in the attempt to overcome the high level of fragmentation and achieve concrete results.

Political movements: Afghanistan has a significant number of political movements. Among the most important are the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA), the Northern Alliance, which played a fundamental role in the fight against the Taliban regime, the National Islamic Movement, the Society of Servants of the Holy Koran together with several political pressure groups spread all over the country.

Afghan NGOs: according to the registration department of the Afghan Ministry of Economy, the official number of Afghan non-governmental organisations is 2 017 (February 2005 est.). They operate in different fields, namely agriculture, health, reconstruction, road construction, education, irrigation, water supply, human rights and women’s rights, to quote but a few. The true number of Afghan NGOs, however, should be reconsidered as many of them have turned out to be “briefcase organisations”, in other words organisations without any ethical charter pursuing their own interests and relying on international funding.

## APPENDIX III

### *Security and defence apparatus in Afghanistan*

#### *1. The Armed Forces*

Since the overthrow of the Taliban regime, international forces, mainly the United States, the United Kingdom, France and Germany, have coordinated their efforts in an attempt to create an Afghan National Army (ANA). The project, which was officially set in motion in May 2002, aims to set up an independent army through well-structured training programmes, gradually substituting Afghan qualified officers and soldiers for external forces.

So far, about 27 000 recruits (January 2006) from all over the country, 147 of them women, have been trained. However, the problem of desertion, which stems from the difficulty of guaranteeing equal ethnic representation, still remains to be tackled effectively.

#### *2. Paramilitary and police forces*

International forces in Afghanistan are also cooperating to create an Afghan National Police (ANP). Germany, in particular, together with the United States, has had a leading role in training the police force, including the border police, since 2002. As with the Afghan National Army, every effort is being concentrated on the establishment of a qualified, professional and ethnically balanced police corps, committed to respecting democracy and human rights. To date, nearly 55 000 police officers, including some women, have been trained successfully. It is planned to increase this number to 62 000 by the end of 2008.

#### *3. Non-governmental militias*

The phenomenon of armed militia has its roots in the war against the soviet occupation and the pro-soviet Afghan regime. They thrived during the civil war period from 1992-1996. The Taliban fought them but when the regime fell in 2001, privatisation of security ensued as protection was required by the various Afghan political players and ethnic, tribal and clan factions. Delays in setting up national security forces have meant that some militia and private armies continue in existence. A number of them cooperate in coalition operations under "Enduring Freedom" in return for money and aid.

Militias can be described as competing factions with their own rules, commonly organised on a tribal basis. The true size of the Afghan militias is unknown to date but many of them have come together under the Afghan Military Forces (AMF). One of the Afghan Government's priorities is to re-establish its authority over the entire country, so the UN, with Japan, has designed a Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) programme to dismantle the non-governmental militias and, in doing so, to encourage the commanders and their followers to integrate back into the new political, social and economic life of the country and to promote the setting up of an Afghan National Army and an Afghan National Police Force.

Some results have been achieved to date, with up to 63 000 combatants having been "disarmed", but many obstacles still remain in the way of the creation of stable institutions. Alongside the AMF, considered, up to a point, as regular militias, many other irregular corps exist. It is estimated by international observers that there are still 1 800 armed gangs involving some 100 000 individuals and many other armed groups operating privately and independently. The Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups programme (DIAG) is currently addressing the issue through the disarmament and disbandment of illegal armed groups, and the promotion of socio-economic programmes as a way towards higher levels of stability.

## APPENDIX IV

### *The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan*

#### *1. The ISAF mission*

ISAF is a European-led “coalition of the willing”, created in accordance with the Bonn Agreement of December 2001 to support the reconstruction of Afghanistan following the fall of the Taliban regime, and deployed under a mandate from the UN Security Council (Resolution 1386 of 20 December 2001). According to UNSC Resolution 1386, ISAF’s primary mission is “to assist the Afghan Interim Authority in the maintenance of security in Kabul and its surrounding areas, so that the Afghan Interim Authority, as well as the personnel of the UN, can operate in a secure environment”. Furthermore, the Security Council called on member states participating in ISAF “to help the Afghan Interim Authority in the establishment and training of new Afghan Security and Armed Forces” and allowed it to take the “necessary measures” to implement its mandate.

ISAF’s mission was extended for another six months, through UN Security Council Resolution 1413 (23 May 2002) and further prolonged for an equivalent period at the end of 2002 with a new UNSC Resolution 1444 (27 November 2002). Then a significant further step was taken with UNSC Resolution 1510 (10 October 2003) which extended ISAF’s mandate to cover the whole of Afghanistan, providing better support to the government in establishing its authority over the entire country.

#### *2. NATO and ISAF*

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1510 followed on from and accorded with another important decision taken previously, on August 2003, to bring ISAF under NATO authority. Since 11 August 2003, the International Security Assistance Force has been supported and led by NATO and financed by troop-contributing countries. NATO is responsible for the command, coordination and planning of the force, including providing force commanders and headquarters on the ground in Afghanistan.

Ultimately, the involvement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, operating for the first time in its history outside the European area, has made it possible for European contributing countries to rely on multinational headquarters, thus solving the thorny problem of finding a new lead nation for the ISAF mission every six months.

#### *3. NATO-ISAF developments: the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT)*

Structured as a military-civilian partnership, the first PRTs were launched in 2002 in the framework of the United States-led operation Enduring Freedom, which aimed to consolidate and extend the control of the Afghan central state authorities by creating a secure environment in the Afghan regions and establishing cooperative relations between the US-led coalition and the local authorities and population.

In October 2003, Germany launched the first ISAF-PRT in the region of Kunduz with NATO support. This initiative laid the basis for ISAF’s further expansion. Since then, the International Security Assistance Force has gradually gained control over the north of Afghanistan, with five PRTs established (first phase of ISAF’s expansion, completed in October 2004) and the west, with four PRTs set up (second phase of ISAF’s expansion, completed in September 2005).

Following the adoption of UNSC Resolution 1623 (13 October 2005), ISAF has been given a further 12 months’ authorisation to complete its task, and especially to address the issue of the southern part of the country (Stage 3 Expansion of ISAF operational plan). On 8 December 2005, the North Atlantic Council (NAC) adopted a package of decisions envisaging an even more coordinated and structured ISAF presence on Afghan territory through the deployment of new troops and the creation of at least four other PRTs and supporting bases.

Ultimately, stronger relations between ISAF and international actors like the UN, the European Union, the G8 and the NGOs operating in Afghanistan are seen as a good basis for moving towards enhanced stability, with the prospect of a future commitment in the eastern part of the country.

#### ***4. ISAF Headquarters and commanders***

When ISAF was initially created in December 2001, it was substantially conceived such that individual nations volunteered to lead the mission for six months at a time. This system, based on periodic rotation, lasted, as anticipated, until August 2003 when NATO finally took over ISAF command. Until then, four different countries had held the reins of the coalition as follows:

- ISAF I run by the United Kingdom (from December 2001 to June 2002), under Major General John McColl;
- ISAF II run by Turkey (from June 2002 to February 2003, for six months and two extra months pending Germany and the Netherlands setting up their headquarters), under Major General Hilmi Akin Zorlu;
- ISAF III run by Germany and the Netherlands (from February 2003 to August 2003), under Lieutenant-General Norbert Van Heyst and his Deputy, Brigadier General Bertholee (Netherlands);

NATO-led missions:

- ISAF IV (ISAF-I-NATO) under Lieutenant-General Götz Gliemeroth (Germany); (from 11 August 2003 to February 2004);
- ISAF V (ISAF-II-NATO) under General Rick Hiller (Canada) (from 9 February 2004 to August 2004);
- ISAF VI (ISAF-III-NATO) under General Jean-Louis Py (France), Commander of the Eurocorps, a multinational rapid reaction force composed of units from France, Germany, Spain, Belgium and Luxembourg (from August 2004 to February 2005);
- ISAF VII (ISAF-IV-NATO) under Lieutenant General Ethem Erdagi (Turkey) (from 13 February 2005 to August 2005);
- ISAF VIII (ISAF-V-NATO) under General Mauro Del Vecchio (Italy) (from 4 August 2005 to May 2006).

#### ***5. Contributing nations***

The ISAF mission is now supported by 36 troop-contributing nations. Among them are:

- 26 NATO member States: Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States;
- Nine partner nations: Albania, Austria, Azerbaijan, Croatia, Finland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ireland, Sweden and Switzerland;
- One non-European State: New Zealand.

Given ISAF's responsibility for the whole of Afghanistan, contributing nations are in charge of different parts of the country. Germany currently controls operations in the north, Italy in the west, Canada and the Netherlands in the south and the United States in the east, while France and Turkey have oversight, on a rotational basis, of the operations in the central area, including Kabul.

#### ***6. Size of the ISAF mission***

In early 2006 there are some 9 200 soldiers deployed by both NATO and non-NATO countries, together with another 20 000 troops deployed by the United States under Operation Enduring Freedom, which, unlike ISAF, is primarily a military, counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism operation.

Individual contributions by each country supporting the ISAF mission change on a regular basis due to troop rotation. The top four contributing nations (in December 2005) are: Germany (with over 2 100 soldiers), Italy (with over 1 900), Canada (with over 800) and finally France, Spain and the United Kingdom (each with over 500).

## APPENDIX V

### *The Afghanistan Compact*

Four years after the signing of the Bonn Agreement on Afghanistan, the first phase of the political process of rebuilding the country was achieved with the election of President Karzai in November 2004 and the parliamentary elections of September 2005. On 31 January and 1 February 2006, an important international Conference on the future of Afghanistan took place in London with the aim of devising a strategy of engagement for the years to come. The final declaration of the London Conference is known as the Afghanistan Compact.

The document sets out a detailed plan which addresses issues considered crucial if the existing progress in the country is to go forward to completion. The paper, based on a five-year strategy, encompasses three main areas of activity: security, governance, rule of law and human rights; and economic and social development, and, though not expressly stated, dealing with the narcotics problem, considered to be a constant threat to the country's stability.

#### *1. Security*

With regard to security, all the participants were agreed on the centrality of this issue as a condition essential to Afghanistan's development, as well as on the broad meaning of the term. Security, in fact, does not merely depend on military action but, more specifically, if it is to be guaranteed, must spring from a well-structured programme covering areas which range from strengthening the central authority of the government and its institutions to the establishment of national security forces and constructive cooperation between Afghanistan and its neighbours.

With this as the objective, the Afghanistan Compact envisages among its main points: expansion, with the support of the Afghan Government, of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission, Operation Enduring Freedom, and the Provincial Reconstruction Teams; the completion of the process of setting up an Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police both of which have to be professional, functional and ethnically based; a more coordinated effort to eradicate the opium poppy crop; the destruction of all mines and ammunition and finally, by the end of 2007, the disbandment of all illegal armed groups in all provinces.

#### *2. Governance*

The Afghanistan Compact defines democratic governance, rule of law and respect for human rights as fundamental prerequisites for the country. Firstly, greater efforts have to be made to eradicate corruption at administrative level and provide a functional and reliable system, with trained staff able to extend the Afghan Government's authority throughout the country. Furthermore, it is essential to create a credible judicial structure and to promote and protect human rights.

In this area, ambitious projects have been set in motion, among them, monitoring machinery to verify that anti-corruption decisions are actually enforced and a structured reform of public administration. Moreover, by the end of 2010, Afghan women will have been guaranteed active participation in all of the country's governance institutions, whilst, at judicial level, a more credible framework will become operational within four years through wide-ranging reform of the legal system. Ultimately, greater emphasis will be placed on human rights compliance which will be closely monitored by the Afghan Government, the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) and the UN.

#### *3. Economic and social development*

Kabul, with the support of the international community, aims to invest heavily in the economy and in social development in six strategic sectors: infrastructure and natural resources, education, health, agriculture and rural development, social protection and, finally, economic management and private sector development.

With regard to infrastructure and natural resources, the Afghan Government wants to improve the entire transport system through the construction of new roads and the upgrading of domestic airports. Moreover, starting from the end of 2007, there will be greater commitment to environmental protection, with particular regard to air and water quality. Irrigation plans will therefore become more

practicable and a larger number of households in urban and rural areas will have access to running water and electricity. Mineral and natural resources will form the basis of profitable domestic and foreign investment.

Education plans are calculated to increase rates of enrolment and significantly reduce the gender gap; tests are to be introduced to assess teachers' skills. A further aim is to increase the number of female teachers by 50%. The curriculum is to be revised and more attention paid to the conservation and restoration of the country's cultural heritage.

Reduction of maternal and infant mortality and a widespread vaccination campaign against preventable disease constitute the core of the health programme.

More thorough-going measures are to be taken in agriculture and rural development. By the end of 2010, more resources will be allocated to increasing lawful agricultural production and promoting structural reforms aimed at empowering local communities. This will help meet the need to offer local farmers profitable alternatives to the poppy crop in order to completely eradicate the drugs problem by the end of 2010.

A range of social protection measures is envisaged: a significant reduction in the percentage of people living on less than US \$1 a day; increased assistance to disabled people; the creation of more employment opportunities for young people and demobilised soldiers; rehabilitation and integration of refugees into their local communities and firm action to help chronically poor women find jobs.

Lastly, with regard to the management of the economy and private sector development, the Afghanistan Compact promises more transparent financial management at both central and provincial level – to be monitored by the international community – which will help increase government revenues. Laws and regulations governing the private sector will be simplified and new business organisation laws are soon to be drafted. At the same time, the banking system is to be completely overhauled, either through restructuring or simply by dismantling commercial banks previously owned by the government. Efforts will be made to promote regional cooperation on trade and transport.

#### *4. Narcotics*

Although dealt with as part of discussions of other related issues, action against the narcotics trade is clearly a priority for Kabul and the international community and therefore merits particular consideration. The Afghanistan Compact puts forward a rigorous policy for completely eliminating the problem. This is to be achieved by: improved interdiction and law enforcement, wider cooperation between Afghanistan, neighbouring countries and the international community in tackling the drugs trade, improvements to the rural environment, offering farmers involved in poppy production lucrative alternatives and the setting up of counter-narcotics agencies with more effective penalties against corruption amongst officials. Lastly, greater emphasis will be placed on the fact that producing or trading in opiates is to be considered immoral and against Islamic law.

The final part of the Compact focuses on the clear mutual commitment made by the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the international community. In keeping with the March 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, the Compact stresses the importance of increased Afghan involvement in the stabilisation process. Kabul may still be dependent on international backing, but it is in fact able to set development priorities and has full responsibility for establishing strategies.

The international community, on the other hand, assists and cooperates with the Afghan Government to maximise aid, ensure its transparency and monitor the feasibility of certain projects to both rationalise international funding and ensure that donors' support is used more effectively.

With regard to implementation, the Afghanistan Compact provides for the formation of a Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board, of senior Afghan Government officials and representatives from the international community, and co-chaired by one of the senior officials and the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Afghanistan. The Board will be responsible for ensuring that the principles set out in the Compact are applied correctly and that its objectives are achieved. Moreover, it will provide public reports on the progress of the implementation of the Compact.

## APPENDIX VI

### *Lithuania-led Provincial Reconstruction Team in Afghanistan*

*Lithuania's Provincial Reconstruction Team in Afghanistan operates as a part of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force mission.*

The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) was established under the United Nations Security Council Resolution of 20 December 2001. At first, ISAF was deployed in Kabul and the surrounding district to support Afghanistan's leadership and ensure security, so as to enable the representatives of the UN assistance mission in Afghanistan and other organisations operate in a safe environment.

In August 2003, NATO took over the leadership of ISAF, while the United Nations Security Council Resolution of 13 October 2003 provided for extension of the mandate beyond the Kabul area. The establishment of the ISAF Provincial Reconstruction Teams began first in the provinces of northern Afghanistan.

#### ***Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs)***

PRTs are joint units that include from 60-300 military and civilian specialists representing different states and led by one of them. Their purpose is to strengthen the reach of Afghanistan's central government into the provinces, helping ensure stability and a safe environment there, as well as creating appropriate conditions for provincial reconstruction.

In order to strengthen the influence of central government, PRTs:

- establish good relationships with political, military and religious leaders in the region;
- promote and contribute to cooperation between the regional and central authorities.

In order to help ensure stability and a safe environment, PRTs:

- promote the reform of the security sector by strengthening Afghanistan's national army, policy, border guard services in the region;
- act as mediators between local leaders and communities;
- monitor and assess the situation by means of mobile surveillance and communications units.

In order to create appropriate conditions for reconstructing the province and the state, PRTs:

- mediate between and encourage the activity of national, international and non-governmental organisations and their agencies in the province;
- assess and support the reconstruction process and assists in establishing priorities and areas of policy.

#### ***Establishment of the Lithuania-led PRT***

In November 2004, NATO Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe invited the Baltic States to establish a PRT in northern Afghanistan. At the meeting with the Lithuanian President, Valdas Adamkus, in December 2004, NATO Secretary General, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer once again proposed to consider establishing, in cooperation with other Baltic States, a joint Baltic States PRT. During the visit to Vilnius in January 2005, the Supreme Allied Commander Europe stressed that a critical moment for the Alliance had arrived when the implementation of the second stage of the PRT development must be finally defined. A positive decision by Lithuania would be extremely important. The US Ambassador to NATO, R. Nicholas Burns, expressed the opinion in his letter to Lithuanian Ambassador Gente Damusis, that Lithuania would be capable of leading the new PRT and would greatly assist Afghanistan. Bearing in mind the special importance attached to the ISAF operation by the Alliance and the confidence expressed by the Allies, Lithuania agreed to manage the establishment of the PRT in Afghanistan's Ghor Province. On 19 May 2005, the Government of the Republic of Lithuania adopted a Resolution on the PRT's status.

June 2005 saw the start of the setting up of the military component of the Lithuanian-led PRT in Ghor Province in the framework of the NATO-led ISAF operation. In view of NATO recommendations, the

Lithuanian PRT acquired primary operational capabilities on 12 July 2005 and full operational capabilities by 31 August. A third rotation of servicemen are currently carrying out their duty.

The United States, free of charge, provides the Lithuanian-led PRT with strategic air transport for deployment, maintenance for a one-year term and all equipment requested that cannot be provided by NATO states and partners. In addition, Denmark is making one mobile surveillance and communications unit and four headquarter officers available, while Iceland contributes one mobile surveillance and communications unit and a civilian expert. The United Kingdom has been preparing Lithuanian servicemen for the mission. Croatia as a NATO partner has also contributed to Lithuania's PRT-3 by sending eight servicemen.

#### ***The Lithuania-led PRT's civilian component***

In view of the fact that at the moment Lithuania does not have representation in Afghanistan and that it is essential to maintain frequent contacts with the representatives of the Government of Afghanistan it has been decided to send the Lithuania Special Operations Unit to Afghanistan which, if necessary, could also perform a function of diplomatic representation. On 30 June 2005, the Government of the Republic of Lithuania adopted Resolution No 732 on the establishment of the Special Mission of the Republic of Lithuania ensuring the activity of the PRT civilian component in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. On 14 June 2005, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan was sent the text of the intergovernmental agreement on sending the Special Mission of the Republic of Lithuania to Afghanistan, which received the consent of Afghanistan's Minister for Foreign Affairs.

In July 2005, the PRT political representative appointed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania, the Head of the Lithuania Special Mission in Afghanistan, departed for Ghor Province in Afghanistan. Lithuanian civilian experts are working as part of this mission headed by a diplomat from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. An expert from the Police Department of the Republic of Lithuania was appointed to the Special Mission and started working with the mission on October 2005.

The United States has appointed a representative of the State Department and another from the Agency for International Development (USAID) to the Lithuanian-led PRT civilian component and has allocated funds for projects.

The Special Mission organises the civilian activity of the Lithuania-led PRT: including maintaining contacts with political, military and religious leaders in the region, promoting cooperation between regional and central authorities and mediation between local leaders and communities. The Mission will play a crucial role in promoting the establishment and activities of other national, international and non-governmental organisations and agencies in Ghor Province. Lithuania's programme of civilian activity in Ghor Province is being drafted following an analysis of the situation in the Province. Support for the education system in Ghor Province is envisaged as the most important area of activity.

#### ***Political and practical advantages for Lithuania of leading a PRT***

Lithuania's decision to lead the PRT in Afghanistan consolidated Lithuania's status as a reliable NATO member state capable, in the eyes of the Allies, of making a solid contribution to the efforts of the international community for strengthening world peace and stability. Lithuania became the first of the new Alliance member states, to lead such a responsible mission. The establishment of the PRT and leading the team consisting of military and civilian personnel from several states has brought invaluable practical benefits for the Lithuanian army. To date, the country's military units have taken part in operations led by other states and have had no experience in leading international missions. In the Ghor Province of Afghanistan, Lithuanian servicemen have themselves carried out primary reconnaissance, established a base camp, deployed a unit, organised logistical provision, secured communications, arranged for the implementation of all PRT tasks and are responsible for the success of PRT operations. This experience is especially helpful for the continuing reform of the Lithuanian army and for strengthening military capabilities. When extending a civilian component in future, other state authorities (e.g. Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Health, etc.) could also gain experience by participating in international missions.

**DRAFT RECOMMENDATION**  
*on European forces in Afghanistan: learning lessons*

The Assembly,

- (i) Supporting in full international efforts to rebuild Afghanistan;
- (ii) Considering that strengthening Afghan government structures set up under the political process initiated under the Bonn Agreement of 5 December 2001 and legitimised by the 2004 presidential elections and 2005 parliamentary elections constitutes a key stage in the successful rebuilding of that state;
- (iii) Considering that ensuring the security of Afghanistan and its external borders is a prior condition for initiating and carrying forward the economic and social reconstruction of the country;
- (iv) Noting that the Afghan government authorities have not yet reached the required level, nor have they the capability, fully to assume this responsibility;
- (v) Considering, therefore, that, under present circumstances, the international assistance represented by the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), under NATO command, is essential to help build an autonomous Afghan security and defence capability;
- (vi) Stressing the importance of programmes supporting the training of Afghan executive staff, soldiers and police officers, led and coordinated by the European countries involved in ISAF and the United States within the framework of Operation Enduring Freedom;
- (vii) Noting the key role, within ISAF, of the European forces deployed by NATO and EU member states and accession candidate and partner countries of those two organisations;
- (viii) Aware of the difficulties and challenges faced daily by NATO and national contingents within the framework of the ISAF mission;
- (ix) Considering that the experience thus acquired is also important for the lessons it affords in respect of rectifying shortfalls and building defence capabilities, both at national level and in order to increase the effectiveness of NATO and of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP);
- (x) Noting that rotations in command at intervals of less than a year are insufficient to provide the continuity and coherence needed to ensure the success of the ISAF mission and do not allow for real interaction with the Afghan people as part of humanitarian assistance;
- (xi) Noting the low level of contact, outside military missions, between European forces and the Afghan people, because of language, culture and local traditions, and also because military units remain in the field only for brief periods;
- (xii) Considering that, to be able to carry out their mandate effectively, Provincial Reconstruction Teams need more staff and sufficient budgetary resources to meet the needs of the local population with which they have contact;
- (xiii) Considering that the expansion of ISAF to the whole of Afghanistan is underway, it is necessary to ensure that the international security assistance effort is coherent;
- (xiv) Stressing that such expansion puts the forces in question at greater risk than in the area around the capital Kabul and in the north and west of Afghanistan;
- (xv) Stressing that the European forces to be deployed in the south and east of Afghanistan need to have all the human and material resources, including budgetary resources, that they require to complete their mission, carry out reconstruction-related tasks (Provincial Reconstruction Teams) and for their own security;
- (xvi) Considering that it is also important to maintain a distinction between humanitarian operations providing assistance to local populations, and military operations involving counter-insurrection action

capabilities or active assistance to Afghan government forces involved in this type of action or in combating opium poppy cultivation;

(*xvii*) Considering, in that connection, that a regular and transparent flow of information is needed to national parliaments and public opinion in European countries concerning the missions being undertaken by national forces in Afghanistan and the way in which these are progressing, if European countries' and NATO's engagement in Afghanistan is to continue over the longer term;

(*xviii*) Stressing that the primary political objective of the presence of European forces in Afghanistan is actively to support and contribute to rebuilding the country, so as to enable Afghanistan regain full sovereignty and command of its destiny, free from the outside interference which has been the principal source of the disasters that have befallen the Afghan people for over a quarter of a century;

(*xix*) Considering that the international military presence is only a temporary measure to help rebuild Afghanistan and that the political, economic and social commitments made publicly since 2001 must be effectively followed through if the expectations of the Afghan people in terms of the country's economy and of their health, education and social and cultural development are to be met,

**RECOMMENDS THAT THE COUNCIL INVITE WEU NATIONS AS EU AND NATO MEMBERS, CANDIDATES AND PARTNERS TO:**

1. Fulfil, over the longer term and through the provision of resources, commitments made in the ISAF and NATO frameworks to help strengthen Afghan government structures in the security and defence fields;
2. Provide national military units with the range of military and budgetary resources they need to carry out their missions, including humanitarian tasks;
3. Coordinate their respective objectives and missions more closely in a spirit of complementarity and in line with the various national priorities, so as to give greater coherence to the international security assistance effort in Afghanistan;
4. Ensure that the international military presence is not the only solution put forward for rebuilding Afghanistan and define credible, short-term achievable political, economic and social strategies for assisting the development of Afghanistan;
5. Agree, in NATO, on a strategy for gradually reducing the international military presence in Afghanistan, subject to ISAF's military objectives gradually being accomplished and progress being made in establishing and developing Afghan security and defence capabilities;
6. Intensify efforts to help train up civilian security capabilities in Afghanistan;
7. Assist the Afghan authorities eradicate opium poppy cultivation, by taking part in the training of Afghan executive staff (within the military, the police and the judicial system) involved in this mission and by giving financial support to alternative programmes for Afghan farmers dependent for their livelihood on that crop;
8. Contribute to the effectiveness of this mission by continuing to track down and dismantle European networks of traffickers in the heroin produced from the Afghan poppy crop;
9. Encourage a more visible commitment to Afghanistan on the part of the European Union, backed by sufficient budgetary resources, through coordinated action via the three pillars (intergovernmental, Community and mixed), including, with NATO's agreement, the deployment of a battlegroup in Afghanistan to protect European civilian personnel in the country;
10. Keep the Assembly informed about missions undertaken by the national forces of WEU nations deployed in Afghanistan within the framework of ISAF and Operation Enduring Freedom and on how they are progressing.

**AMENDMENTS 1-7<sup>54</sup>**

—————  
*tabled by Mr Gubert*  
*(Italy, Federated Group)*  
—————

1. Before recital (*i*) of the preamble to the draft recommendation, insert the following two recitals:  
“Recalling that the responsibility for rebuilding Afghan government infrastructures first and foremost lies with those who decided to destroy it without any thought for all of the consequences;  
Recalling that the United States decided to embark on Operation Enduring Freedom outside the NATO Alliance and without the authority of the UN Security Council;”
2. In recital (*i*) of the preamble to the draft recommendation, after the word “Supporting,”, insert the word “however,”;
3. At the end of recital (*iv*) of the preamble to the draft recommendation, insert:  
“, also because of the *de facto* recognition of armed groups working for local and tribal political leaders often linked to drug traffickers”;
4. Delete recital (*xiii*) of the preamble to the draft recommendation.
5. In recital (*xiv*) of the preamble to the draft recommendation, replace “such expansion” with “the expansion of ISAF to the whole of Afghanistan;”
6. After paragraph 5 of the draft recommendation proper, insert the following new paragraph:  
“Establish in any event the principle that the international presence in Afghanistan cannot be of indefinite duration;”
7. In paragraph 9 of the draft recommendation proper, delete all text from “mixed)” to the end of the paragraph.

*Signed: Gubert*

**AMENDMENTS 8-19<sup>55</sup>**

—————  
*tabled by Mr Chope and others*  
*(United Kingdom, Federated Group)*  
—————

8. After recital (*xvi*) of the preamble to the draft recommendation, insert:  
“Recognising that despite all the international declarations and actions since 2001 opium production in Afghanistan in 2005 reached record levels;”

*Signed: Chope, Wilshire, Malins*

9. In paragraph 1 of the draft recommendation proper, after “security” insert “, administrative”.

*Signed: Malins, Chope*

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<sup>54</sup> See 3<sup>rd</sup> sitting, 20 June 2006 (Amendment 6 adopted; Amendments 2, 5 withdrawn. Amendments 1,3,4,7 not adopted.)

<sup>55</sup> See 3<sup>rd</sup> sitting, 20 June 2006 (Amendments 8,9,10,11,14,17,18,19: adopted. Amendments 12,13,16 not adopted. Amendment 15 withdrawn.)

10. In the draft recommendation proper, after paragraph 1, add the following paragraph:  
“Clarify urgently the main objectives of the military mission in Afghanistan; define how it is to be achieved; and ensure that sufficient resources are available to bring the military objective to a successful conclusion within three years;”  
*Signed: Malins, Chope*
11. In the draft recommendation proper, after paragraph 1, add the following paragraph:  
“Encourage more countries to participate as members of the NATO/ISAF mission in Afghanistan to facilitate early achievement of the military mission;”  
*Signed: Chope, Wilshire, Malins*
12. Delete paragraph 4 of the draft recommendation proper.  
*Signed: Chope, Malins*
13. Delete paragraph 5 of the draft recommendation proper.  
*Signed: Chope, Malins*
14. In the draft recommendation, after paragraph 6, add the following paragraph:  
“Accept that the objective of eliminating opium production in Afghanistan cannot be achieved by military means;”  
*Signed: Chope, Wilshire, Malins*
15. In paragraph 7 of the draft recommendation proper, leave out from “eradicate” to the end of the paragraph and insert “to focus on developing programmes for farmers other than opium poppy cultivation;”  
*Signed: Chope, Malins*
16. At the end of paragraph 8 of the draft recommendation proper, insert “and enjoin the Government of Pakistan to assist in this endeavour;”  
*Signed: Chope, Malins*
17. After paragraph 10 of the draft recommendation proper, insert a new paragraph as follows:  
“Call on the United States to enter into dialogue with the Assembly of the Western European Union concerning the future of Afghanistan;”  
*Signed: Chope, Malins*
18. After paragraph 10 of the draft recommendation proper, insert a new paragraph as follows:  
“Call on the international community to raise such funds as are necessary annually to purchase the entire poppy crop from Afghan farmers and thereafter, through an appropriate organisation to destroy such crop, save for that portion deemed necessary for medical research and use;”  
*Signed: Chope, Malins*
19. After paragraph 10 of the draft recommendation proper, insert a new paragraph as follows:  
“Report regularly to the WEU Assembly on all actions, progress, successes and failures obtained.”  
*Signed: Chope, Malins*



