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AFTER THE WITHDRAWAL: THE WAY FORWARD IN AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN (PART I)

JOINT HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

AND THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

OF THE

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AFTER THE WITHDRAWAL: THE WAY FORWARD IN AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN (PART I)

TUESDAY, MARCH 19, 2013

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA AND
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ASIA AND THE PACIFIC,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The committees met, pursuant to notice, at 1 o'clock p.m., in room 2172 Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (chairman of the Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa) presiding.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. This joint subcommittee meeting will come to order. After recognizing myself, Chairman Chabot, Ranking Member Deutch, and Ranking Member Faleomavaega for 5 minutes each for our opening statements, we will then hear from our witnesses and without objection, the witnesses' prepared statements will be made a part of the record. Members may have 5 days to insert statements and questions for the record, subject to the length limitation in the rules.

Before I begin my remarks, I would like to convey my deepest condolences to the family and friends of U.S. Army Captain Andrew Michael Pederson-Keel of South Florida who was killed in action on March 11, 2013 while serving our country in Afghanistan. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family.

The Chair now recognizes herself for 5 minutes. Last month in a State of the Union address to the nation, President Obama announced that the United States will be drawing down our forces in Afghanistan by 34,000 troops over the coming year and projecting that our military presence in Afghanistan will be over before the start of 2015. The President also announced that our forces will transition into a support role, handing the reins over to the Afghanistan National Security Forces, ANSF, while our focus will be mainly on training and equipping these forces.

Reports indicate a remaining residual force of 3,000 to 9,000 troops, while many military commanders continue to push for a more robust role, including the Commander of U.S. Central Command, who recommended that nearly 14,000 troops be left behind post-2014. The way forward may be debatable, but we should agree that the decision must not be made for political reasons. Leaving before stability is assured would not only unravel all that we have

worked so hard to accomplish in Afghanistan, but it would undermine the efforts of our men and women who have served so bravely and have sacrificed so much in Afghanistan, like the aforementioned Captain Andrew Pederson-Keel.

Without the proper infrastructure, training, and support from U.S. and international forces, Afghanistan runs the risk of plunging into chaos. The national security interests of the United States, and indeed of our allies, are at stake because of the real threat that the Taliban could retake power and al-Qaeda could reestablish a safe haven from which to conduct operations.

Many allies are worried that the drawdown could lead to a significant increase in violence and terrorist-related activities that can further destabilize the conflict. Most see Karzai as an unpredictable leader, yet they are concerned about his possible successor. The U.S. must hold Karzai accountable for the lack of transparency, for the corruption problems that need to be corrected, to ensure a successful transition to a viable successor. Afghan's elections are within a year and electoral reforms are needed to ensure a free, fair, and transparent election that protects human rights and respects minority groups.

Karzai's recent actions reveal that he is attempting to play a dangerous, but calculated game, aimed at appeasing certain Afghan factions by vilifying the United States. Karzai accused us of working hand in hand with the Taliban to spread violence in Afghanistan. These inflammatory comments put the lives of our servicemen and -women in danger.

The Commander of the International Security Assistance Forces and U.S. Forces Afghanistan warned our troops that "Karzai's remarks could be a catalyst for some to lash out against our forces. He may also issue orders that put our forces at risk."

Karzai yearns to be known as the one who kicked out the foreign invaders and he fears that he will suffer the same fate as previous Afghan leaders before him who were overrun or executed by the Taliban. This would open the floodgates from Pakistan, a country which has long been an insurgency sanctuary for the Taliban, al-Qaeda, the Haqqani Network and other extremist elements. Pakistan must do more to prevent extremists from using this area as a staging point for attacks against the United States and our allies in Afghanistan.

We must make an honest assessment of our relationship with Pakistan and judge its willingness and capacity to work with us in order to ensure that Afghanistan does not succumb to the Islamist and extremist threats. Pakistan must also do its part by eliminating its ties to foreign terrorist organizations. We must evaluate our relationship with Islamabad if we are to continue to provide billions of dollars of taxpayer money to Pakistan. Pakistan's stability remains a vital U.S. national security interest and our relationship is paramount in order to fight regional and global terrorism, to stabilize Afghanistan and to protect long-term national security interests. Thank you.

I will now turn to my ranking member, my friend, my Florida colleague, Congressman Ted Deutch.

Mr. DEUTCH. Thank you, Madam Chairman, and thanks to our witnesses for testifying today. And before I begin my remarks I

would like to associate myself with the chairman expressing my deepest sympathy to the friends and family of South Florida native and U.S. Army Captain Andrew Pederson-Keel. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family.

After almost 12 years of war in Afghanistan and 2,177 American casualties, there is strong opposition among the American public to continue U.S. engagement there. Separately, there continues to be deep frustration regarding the state of our relationship with Pakistan. But we are working in an area where there are many daunting challenges and there are no easy answers.

In Afghanistan, the economy is dependent on foreign aid, yet corruption is rampant and too often aid is misused. In Pakistan, there are numerous insurgent safe havens that are being used to train and rearm the Taliban. And when you factor in sectarian tensions and regional anti-Americanism, you understand why so many Americans want to end U.S. involvement in Afghanistan and cut off billions in aid to Pakistan. But is now the time to fundamentally alter our strategy of a responsible troop drawdown in Afghanistan?

Over the next year, the President will be withdrawing another 34,000 troops. That is now nearly 2.5 million American men and women who served our country in Iraq and Afghanistan and have returned to their families and our communities. We have an obligation to these men and women to work in a bipartisan manner to get our Veterans' benefits and care in a timely manner, to find employment, and to address the mental health issues necessary to stop the rising suicide rate. The sacrifices of those who have served and are returning from Afghanistan have helped contribute to numerous sustainable goals there. There are positive stories to tell.

Under President Obama's leadership, we refocused our efforts and have now largely accomplished his goal of dismantling the core of al-Qaeda and ensuring that it can no longer use Afghanistan and the border areas of Pakistan to plan or conduct terrorist attacks against the United States homeland. Although the Taliban remains an active presence in Afghanistan, al-Qaeda in Afghanistan has been decimated which is crucial to our national security. And it is important to distinguish that although the Taliban has a reprehensible history in Afghanistan, it was al-Qaeda that provided a direct threat to our homeland.

In addition, largely due to U.S. international aid in Afghanistan, since 9/11, the maternal mortality rate has declined by 80 percent. Access to basic health services is available to more than 60 percent of Afghans, up from 9 percent in 2001. And life expectancy has increased from 44 years to 60 in the past decade. There have also been tremendous gains in gender equality. Today, one third of Afghanistan's 8 million students are female. Women now hold more than a quarter of the seats in the Parliament. By the end of this year, at least 30 percent of government workforce will be women. In spite of all of the challenges Afghanistan is facing, an Asia Foundation poll found that the majority of Afghans think that their country is on the right track.

Now if we are going to commit U.S. personnel and resources to Afghanistan under the enduring Strategic Partnership Agreement, the Afghan Government must take the necessary steps to become

a viable and stable democracy. Significantly improved cooperation with the Pakistani Government is critical to the successful drawdown of troops and long-term stability in Afghanistan. Despite years of frustration and mistrust, recently exemplified by Pakistan's decision to move forward with a natural gas pipeline with Iran, we do share some core interests with Pakistan. We want national reconciliation in Afghanistan and we do not want Afghanistan to be embroiled in another civil war. These are areas of agreement to work together on. But Pakistan must do more to ensure that safe havens along the border are rooted out.

If any American troops are going to remain in Afghanistan, President Karzai must create an environment that enables U.S. forces to assist and advise Afghan National Security Forces in securing their country. This means negotiating a bilateral security agreement that provides U.S. troops with necessary protections. President Karzai must also recognize that his recent inflammatory anti-American rhetoric seriously harms our efforts to create and ensure stability and security in Afghanistan.

The most important indicator for future stability in Afghanistan is the peaceful transfer of political power that will occur after the Presidential elections scheduled in April 2014. As we all know, the 2009 elections were marred by serious allegations of widespread fraud, resulting in the nullification of nearly 20 percent of the votes cast. If Afghanistan is going to progress as a sustainable democracy, it must start with free and fair elections in April 2014.

As I said at the outset, these are difficult challenges and there are no easy answers. After 12 years of war and over 200,000 American casualties, we owe it to the Americans and those Afghans who have sacrificed so much to get this right. We went into Afghanistan to protect our own national security and going forward, this must continue to be about U.S. national security. I look forward to discussing with the witnesses the best ways for the United States to secure our long-term security interests by helping Afghanistan move forward with its pursuit of a stable democracy and I yield back.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much, Mr. Deutch. We will now hear from the subcommittee chair and ranking member of Asia and the Pacific Subcommittee, starting with Chairman Chabot.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you for calling this important joint hearing with the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific. I am pleased to join your efforts to discuss the implications of the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan and the critical role Pakistan plays in successfully achieving a stable, peaceful, and independent Afghanistan.

The Obama administration's decision to expedite the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan poses a strategic risk to the stability and security interests of South Asia. The President's announcement in January that an additional 34,000 U.S. troops will leave Afghanistan by February 2014 threatens to plunge the region into a state in which terrorists will once again thrive. There is no clarity on the exact withdrawal plan or what a post-2014 Afghanistan might look like. With so many outstanding variables in play, I think a hasty retreat is unwise.

In November 2011, the Middle East and South Asia Subcommittee, which I then chaired, held a hearing on U.S. policies in Afghanistan and Pakistan in which it was discussed how, at that time, it was unclear what the plan entailed, when it would occur, how it was expected to play out, and what the administration hoped to accomplish beyond the 2014 withdrawal date. Now, a year and a half later, we know that Afghan forces will start taking the lead this spring and U.S. forces will transition to a supporting role.

We are also told now that U.S. troops will remain in Afghanistan after 2014 and focus on training and counterterrorism, but we do not know how many troops. A continuing U.S. presence in Afghanistan, however, rests on the finalization of the Status of Forces Agreement which President Obama says he hopes is completed by the end of the year.

Following Defense Secretary Hagel's visit to Afghanistan earlier this month, that may or may not happen.

Former Ambassador Ryan Crocker emphasized nearly 2 years ago that the U.S. needed to focus on "strategic patience." President Obama has chosen to ignore that advice. Withdrawing another 34,000 troops from Afghanistan by the end of the year jeopardizes the gains we have made in the south against the Taliban and in the east where Afghan and coalition forces are fighting the Haqqani Network. The odds that al-Qaeda will reestablish itself once the U.S. presence has significantly diminished is only increasing. This possibility becomes more likely once we take into account Afghanistan's corrupt and weak governance, and the insurgents' safe havens allowed to thrive in Pakistan.

Time and again, the administration has insisted that Pakistan must cease its tolerance of insurgents' safe havens, but Pakistan's leadership has ignored its requests. As a result, our relationship with Pakistan has dramatically deteriorated, and there are lingering doubts about whether its leadership is committed to pursuing peace and stability in Afghanistan or in the region for that matter.

This need of cooperation raises concerns about the administration's lack of a coherent assistance and development strategy with Pakistan. Pakistan has been one of the leading recipients of U.S. foreign aid in the post-9/11 period, yet its clear lack of support for our regional security goals fails to reflect that investment by the American taxpayer.

We know any successful withdrawal from Afghanistan, however, rests on the ability of the United States to foster relatively good relationships with Islamabad. We could even settle for lukewarm—but even that is easier said than done. This particular challenge is further strained because of the administration's failure to put in place an effective regional strategy that involves Afghanistan's neighbors, Pakistan and India.

Two thousand thirteen will be a critical year for Pakistan. It will hold parliamentarian elections this spring which could result in a new prime minister. Add to that the turnover of its top military position, and we could see huge implications for U.S. security interests. Because of Pakistan's growing nuclear arsenal, embedded terrorist networks, turbulent relationship with India, and extensive influence in Afghanistan, its internal stability needs to be a pri-

ority, otherwise it could become a huge liability for broader objectives in Asia.

Pakistan is hedging its bets. It continues to support extremist groups so that it can maintain an indispensable position in Afghan peace talks and deny India, our strategic partner, any significant influence. With the severe trust deficiency between our two countries, Afghanistan's decision to grant Pakistan a central role in selecting Taliban figures for governance positions is very concerning. With so many unresolved issues, a premature withdrawal from Afghanistan will leave behind a war between competing factions all with vying interests.

Lastly, there has been much discussion recently regarding notions that Pakistan is having a strategic change of heart. While Islamabad claims U.S. and Pakistani interests can be brought into alignment, I believe we must remain skeptical of the internal divergent interest that risk undermining U.S. objectives. I hope today's witnesses will touch on the likelihood that Islamabad's recent gestures are indeed a legitimate effort to cooperate with the U.S. and its neighbors.

I want to again thank Chairwoman Ros-Lehtinen for calling this hearing.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much, Chairman Chabot. So pleased to recognize now the ranking member, Mr. Faleomavaega.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Thank you, Madam Chair and Chairman Chabot. I would like to join my colleagues in welcoming the distinguished panel of regional and security experts who will address the way forward toward Afghanistan and Pakistan.

I have a particular vantage point as a Veteran of the Vietnam War. We all remember President Nixon's plan for Vietnamization of that war. I can clearly state that the future destiny of any nation is primarily determined, in my opinion, by the people of that nation itself.

After more than 12 years of the war in Afghanistan, a war that began on October 7, 2001, in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks, the American people are experiencing what I consider, Madam Chair, a profound sense of battle fatigue. This is a war that has lasted longer than our nation's 8-year struggle for independence against the mighty British Empire and longer than the 4 years of civil war that cost some 600,000 soldiers their lives. But unlike those mammoth struggles that we fought on American soil involving issues that clearly had a direct impact on all Americans, the war in Afghanistan has been fought in a distant place and only directly impacts those service members who answer the call and the tens of thousands of our military families that had to be part of that sacrifice. And they continue to do this today.

There are a number in our own country, particularly here in Washington, who call for a continued open-ended commitment in Afghanistan. They remind one of the American patriot, Tom Payne, who wrote and I quote, "The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will in this crisis shrink from the service of their country. For them the battle is joined, but it is for the others to do the fighting." In my opinion, Madam Chair, the American people never sought an open-ended commitment in Afghanistan, nor do they see the goal as nation building. They are well aware that Afghanistan has been

called the graveyard of empires. Not even Alexander the Great was able to conquer Afghanistan, nor the mighty British Empire or even the Soviet Union. Now what makes us think we can do differently?

I believe, Madam Chair, the goal of the American people was to retaliate by going against Osama bin Laden and his al-Qaeda who attacked us on September 11. Osama bin Laden is now dead and his son-in-law, the so-called mouthpiece for al-Qaeda, was recently captured and brought to the United States. The American people believe it is high time to declare victory in the war in Afghanistan and to bring our young men and women home.

Madam Chair, the Iraq War cost us $2.2 trillion, cost some 4,400 American soldiers' lives, and some 137,000 Iraqi men, women, and children their lives. What has it produced for us today? I cannot say enough of the sacrifices that our soldiers—we cannot even take care of our Veterans right now as a result of them having to fight in that war in Iraq as we are doing in Afghanistan.

I would like to note, Madam Chair, that after 60 years, we still have 29,000 soldiers in South Korea. There is supposed to be an armistice. What are we, the policemen of the world? That is the opinion of some of our colleagues here in Congress, I believe. Madam Chair, thank you so much.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Will the gentleman yield for a question?

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you. We are so proud of our patriots who are wearing our nation's uniform and in that I include my daughter-in-law, Lindsey, who has served admirably in Iraq and Afghanistan and continues to serve today. And so many who are battling it every day. Thank you so much. I wanted to point that out.

The Chair is so pleased to welcome our witnesses. First, Seth Jones. Dr. Jones is the associate director of the International Security and Defense Policy Center at the RAND Corporation as well as an adjunct professor at Johns Hopkins University School for Advanced International Studies. Thank you, Dr. Jones.

And next our committee welcomes Kimberly Kagan, founder and president of the Institute for the Study of War. Dr. Kagan served in Kabul for 15 months and as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Mike Mullen recognized Dr. Kagan with the Distinguished Public Service Award, the highest honor that a Chairman can present to civilians who do not work for the Department of Defense. Congratulations to the entire Kagan family.

Third, Peter Bergen, welcome, sir. The director of the National Security Studies Program at the New America Foundation here in Washington, DC, and a fellow at Fordham University Center on National Security. He is also a print and television journalist, documentary producer, author of four books, three of which were New York Times best sellers and three of which were named books of the year by the Washington Post. Do you also cook? No, okay.

And finally, we welcome Daniel Markey. Thank you, Daniel. Dr. Markey is senior fellow for India, Pakistan and South Asia at the Council on Foreign Relations where he specializes in security and governance issues in South Asia. From 2003 to 2007, Dr. Markey held the South Asia Portfolio on the Secretary's Policy Planning Staff at the U.S. Department of State.

I would like to kindly remind our witnesses that your testimony in full form has been made a part of the record. If you could summarize it to no more than 5 minutes that would be great. So without objection, they will be inserted into the record and we will start with you, Dr. Jones.

STATEMENT OF SETH G. JONES, PH.D., ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENSE POLICY CENTER, RAND CORPORATION

Mr. JONES. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you other members of both committees.

What I would like to do here in summarizing my remarks is note that I am pulling them both from my time as a researcher, spending time in Afghanistan for RAND, as well as at least one major tour as a senior civilian within U.S. Special Operations. Had several colleagues that were killed in country, so felt personally the loss of the U.S. soldiers in Afghanistan.

My bottom line, as I will outline it this afternoon is that I think it would be detrimental to U.S. national security to withdraw all forces from Afghanistan as the U.S. has done in Iraq. I think the United States should continue to conduct counterterrorism operations in the country and assist Afghans in conducting counterinsurgency operations after 2014, although perhaps with a presence and strategy that is more akin to U.S. efforts in other regions such as the Philippines and Colombia based on conditions in Afghanistan and the United States today.

I am going to make that argument based on three points. The first one, my assessment, including coming back from areas like Kunar, Nuristan, and Nangarhar along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border several months ago, I assessed that both Afghanistan and Pakistan and the extremely porous border that they share continues to be a hot bed of extremist, radical Islamist militancy. There are a range of groups in that region that continue to threaten U.S. security and its interests overseas including al-Qaeda which as several panelists here have noted has been weakened, but I would say, still retains a core leadership and still has a presence up in Kunar, where I was, with foreigners including British citizens training in camps under individuals like Farook al-Qahtani; Lashkar-e-Taiba which has conducted attacks in the region and has had operatives arrested in the United States for terrorist activity; Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan which was involved in the 2010 Times Square plot in New York City; the Haqqani Network and a range of others.

Based on my assessment of this region, I would say it would be detrimental to pull out all U.S. forces. We can talk about the specifics in the Q&A period. I would just point to the situation in Iraq after we left. As I look at the numbers there, al-Qaeda in Iraq has been involved in an average of 30 suicide and car bomb attacks per month this year which is a 50 percent increase from 2011 levels. Al-Qaeda has also been involved in Syria. Its main affiliate, Jabhat al-Nusra, is probably al-Qaeda's best armed affiliate group in the world now, especially after the raids of several military bases in Syria. I think as we have seen in Iraq, U.S. leaving does not mean militancy goes away.

Second, I would argue that as the ranking member noted earlier, Afghanistan society is improving in many ways. The data is very clear. Just to supplement his data, if you look at GDP data, GDP per capita rose from $92 in 2001 per capita to $543 in 2011. That is a massive increase. Foreign direct investment has massively increased. Infant mortality rates declined from 95 per 1,000 live births in 2000 to 73 in 2001. Primary school and secondary school enrollment have significantly increased. If you look at the secondary school numbers from 362,000 in 2001, the last year of the Taliban reign, to over 2 million today. So what we see is it is a more vibrant economy. It is a healthier economy. And it is a better educated economy than when we started.

Based on a range of other data, I would say including if you look at some of the improvements in the Afghan National Army, the Asia Foundation data is probably best. Afghans believe it has a better force today and it needs less support from foreign troops. We have made progress on multiple fronts. I think we lose that if we leave. Not to put a fine point on it. I would be happy to go into more details in the question and answer session.

Let me just say finally to conclude, I think it is helpful to have a discussion about the criteria for an exit. My view is the U.S. should exit this region when we have no serious national security threats to the U.S. We are not there yet.

Let me conclude briefly with a quote from the Lawrence of Arabia which I think will be helpful as we think about how to proceed. And I am going to substitute the word Arabia—Afghanistan for Arabia. Lawrence said, "Do not try to do too much with your own hands. Better the Afghans do it tolerably than that you do it perfectly. It is their war and you are there to help them, not to win it for them. Actually, also, under the very conditions of Afghanistan your practical work will not be as good as perhaps you think it is."

So with that, I will end.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Jones follows:]

Testimony

After the Withdrawal

A Way Forward in Afghanistan and Pakistan

Seth G. Jones

RAND Office of External Affairs

CT-382

March 2013

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The RAND Corporation

After the Withdrawal:
A Way Forward in Afghanistan and Pakistan[2]

Before the Committee on Foreign Affairs
Subcommittee on Middle East and North Africa and
Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific
United States House of Representatives

March 19, 2013

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before this joint hearing of the Subcommittee on Middle East and North Africa and the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific. This is an opportune time to discuss a way forward in Afghanistan and Pakistan. I have spent time in the region over the past decade in two separate capacities: as a researcher for RAND and a senior civilian within U.S. Special Operations Command in Afghanistan. My comments today draw from both experiences, combining research and analysis with operational experience on the ground.

My primary argument is that it would be detrimental to U.S. national security to withdraw all U.S. military forces from Afghanistan, as the United States has done in Iraq. The United States should continue to conduct counterterrorism operations and assist the Afghans in conducting counterinsurgency after 2014. The reason is straightforward: there are several militant groups in Afghanistan and Pakistan that threaten U.S. security and its interests overseas, including al Qa'ida (which still retains its core leadership along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border), Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (which has conducted terrorist attacks in the region and had operatives arrested in the United States), Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (which was involved in the 2010 Times Square plot in New York City), and Haqqani Network (which has conducted numerous attacks against U.S. forces and the U.S. Embassy in Afghanistan) among others.

While Iraq is obviously different from Afghanistan and Pakistan, it is worth highlighting the potential dangers of a complete U.S. military withdrawal. Al Qa'ida in Iraq (AQI) has increased its campaign of violence in Iraq and established a foothold in neighboring Syria since the U.S. departure. By early 2013, AQI was involved in an average of 30 suicide and car bomb attacks per

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[2] This testimony is available for free download at http://www.rand.org/pubs/testimonies/CT382.html.

month, an increase of 50 percent from 2011 levels – the last year U.S. forces were in Iraq. In addition, AQI has been active in Syria. Jabhat al-Nusra, AQI's affiliate there, has a growing number of foreign fighters, heavy weapons, and money, and is now potentially al Qa'ida's best-armed affiliate in the world. The experience in Iraq should serve as a lesson about the risks of withdrawing too early in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

In response to the instructions from both Subcommittees, I have divided my written remarks into four sections: security implications of the drawdown, the capacity of the Afghan government, Pakistan dimension, and a brief conclusion on the U.S. commitment.

I. Security Implications of the U.S. Drawdown

The United States continues to face a threat from terrorist groups in Afghanistan and Pakistan, including along a border that terrorists cross regularly with ease. Al Qa'ida presents the most serious threat. While it has been weakened because of persistent drone strikes, al Qa'ida continues to survive. It is currently led by Ayman al-Zawahiri and a range of senior leaders, including Abd al-Rahman al-Sharqi, Abu Zayd al-Kuwaiti, Hamza al-Ghamdi, and Abd al-Rahman al-Maghrebi.

In addition, al Qa'ida has developed a "symbiotic" strategy in the region. Since al Qa'ida lacks the legitimacy and power to establish a sanctuary in Afghanistan and Pakistan on its own, it has attempted to leverage local militant networks in the region. Al Qa'ida has not limited itself to one geographic area or one group. As Table 1 highlights, al Qa'ida has established close relations with the Haqqani Network and some other groups, though the degree of cooperation varies between al Qa'ida and its allies. This symbiotic arrangement provides al Qa'ida some redundancy. In addition, some al Qa'ida allies that have traditionally focused on Pakistan, such as the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, have become more involved in Afghanistan operations. In Pakistan, al Qa'ida hs established close ties with some groups, such as the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, Harakat ul-Jihadi-i-Islami, and Harakat ul-Mujahideen, and limited relations with others, such as Lashkar-e-Tayyiba. Al Qa'ida has also recruited a growing number of Pakistanis into its senior ranks, such as Abdallah al-Sindhi, Ahmed Farouq, Osama Nazir, and Hassan Gul (the latter was killed in October 2012).

Table 1: Al Qa'ida's Relationship with Groups in Afghanistan and Pakistan

Group	Comment on Relationship
Afghan Taliban	Cooperation limited to specific areas and commanders
Al-Badr Mujahidin	Limited support and shelter to al Qa'ida in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
Commander Nazir Group	Limited cooperation, including safe haven, materiel, training
Gul Bahadur's Group	Limited cooperation, including safe haven, materiel, training
Haqqani Network	Close strategic and operational relations
Harakat ul-Jihad-Islami	Close relations, including through HUJI-313
Harakat ul-Mujahideen	Close relations, especially through Fazlur Rahman Khalil
Hezb-e Islami Gulbuddin	Limited cooperation
Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan	Close relations, including in northern Afghanistan, FATA
Jaish-e-Mohammad	Limited cooperation
Lashkar-i-Islam	Close relations, including with Mangal Bagh
Lashkar-i-Jhangvi	Some cooperation, such as financing, planning for attacks
Lashkar-i-Tayyiba	Limited cooperation, especially at senior levels
Sipah-i-Sahaba Pakistan	Limited cooperation
Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan	Close strategic and operational relations

Several of these groups – such as al Qa'ida, Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, Lashkar-i-Tayyiba, and the Haqqani Network – present a threat to the United States and its interests in the region. In September 2009, for example, Najibullah Zazi was arrested for planning attacks with al Qa'ida on the New York City subway.[3] Several al Qa'ida operatives, including Saleh al-Somali (now deceased) and Adnan Gulshair el Shukrijumah, were involved in the plot. According to U.S. government documents, Zazi's travels to Pakistan and his contacts with individuals there were pivotal in helping him build an improvised explosive device using triacetone triperoxide, the same explosive used effectively in the 2005 London subway bombings. In October 2009, Chicago-based David Coleman Headley (aka Daood Sayed Gilani) was arrested for his involvement with Lashkar-e Tayyiba and senior al Qa'ida leaders to conduct a series of attacks, including the November 2008 Mumbai attack and a plot to attack a newspaper in Copenhagen. Headley's base in Chicago made him ideally suited for a future attack in the U.S. homeland.

In December 2009, five Americans from Alexandria, Virginia – Ahmed Abdullah Minni, Umar Farooq, Aman Hassan Yemer, Waqar Hussain Khan, and Ramy Zamzam – were arrested in Pakistan and later convicted on terrorism charges. They radicalized in the United States and went to Pakistan for training and operational guidance. In May 2010, Faisal Shahzad attempted to detonate an improvised explosive device in Times Square in New York City after being trained by bomb-makers from Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan.

[3] U.S. District Court, Eastern District of New York, United States of America Against Najibullah Zazi, 09 CR 663(S-1), February 22, 2010.

In sum, there are – and will likely continue to be – a range of Islamic extremist groups in the region, most of which are Sunni, that threaten the United States. A withdrawal of all U.S. forces from the region would significantly degrade the U.S. ability to conduct counterterrorism operations throughout the region and potentially allow a resurgence of these groups.

II. Capacity of the Afghan Government

There have been notable improvements in Afghan society in several areas thanks, in part, to a better functioning Afghan government. After all, the Taliban government that ruled until 2001 barely functioned. Economic conditions have improved because of the war economy, an increase in foreign investment, Afghan entrepreneurship and some progress from the Afghan government. Examples include:

- Gross domestic product (GDP) per capita rose from $92 in 2001 to $543 in 2011
- Foreign direct investment increased from $170,000 in 2000 to $83 million in 2011
- Agrarian output has improved; cereal production, for example, tripled from 1.9 million metric tons in 2000 to nearly 6 million in 2010[4]

Health metrics have also improved from appalling conditions during the Taliban years. Examples include:

- The infant mortality rate declined from 95 per 1,000 live births in 2000 to 73 per 1,000 live births in 2011
- Life expectancy for both men and women increased from 45 years in 2000 to 48 by 2010
- Clean water is more readily available; in 2001, only 22 percent of Afghans had access to improved water sources, but by 2010 half of Afghans had access[5]

Education has also improved. While data on literacy rates is unreliable, a growing number of male and female Afghans are going to school. Examples include:

- Primary school enrollment increased from 749,360 pupils in 2000 to over 5 million in 2010
- Secondary school enrollment rose from 362,415 in 2001 to 2,044,157 in 2010[6]

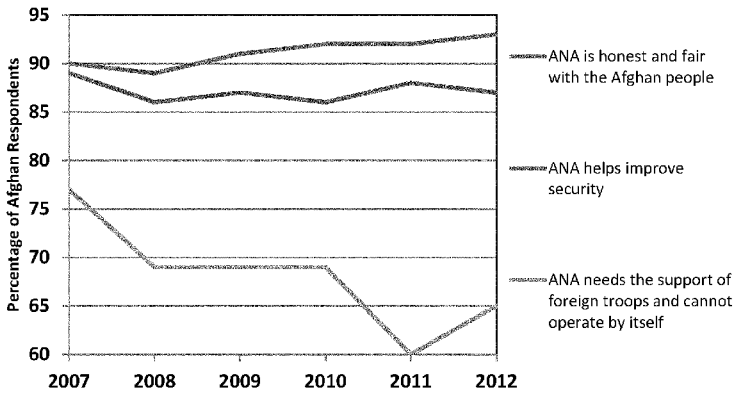
Afghan society is better off today than a decade ago. And Afghans in rural and urban areas are now better connected to each other – and the world – than ever before. Mobile cellular

[4] The World Bank, World Development Indicators Dataset, accessed on March 13, 2013.
[5] The World Bank, World Development Indicators Dataset, accessed on March 13, 2013.
[6] The World Bank, World Development Indicators Dataset, accessed on March 13, 2013.

subscriptions jumped from 0 in 2000 to 18 million in 2011.[7] The majority of Afghan households now have phones.

Yet there are still challenges that necessitate a sustained U.S. and international commitment. One is the quality of Afghan National Security Forces and the Afghan Local Police, which continue to require additional help in training, logistics, planning, and intelligence collection. As Figure 1 highlights, Afghan perceptions of the Afghan National Army are generally getting better. Nearly 95 percent of Afghans view the army as honest and fair, between 85 and 90 percent believe it is helping improve security, and a declining percentage of Afghans believe it needs support from foreign troops. It is worth remembering that the Afghan government faces an enemy that receives considerable aid from states (such as Pakistan and Iran) and non-state actors (such as global terrorist groups and their supporters in the Gulf and other locations). Consequently, a U.S. presence would be helpful in continuing to ensure the ANA and other Afghan security forces stay on this trajectory.

Figure 1: Afghan Perceptions of the Afghan National Army[8]

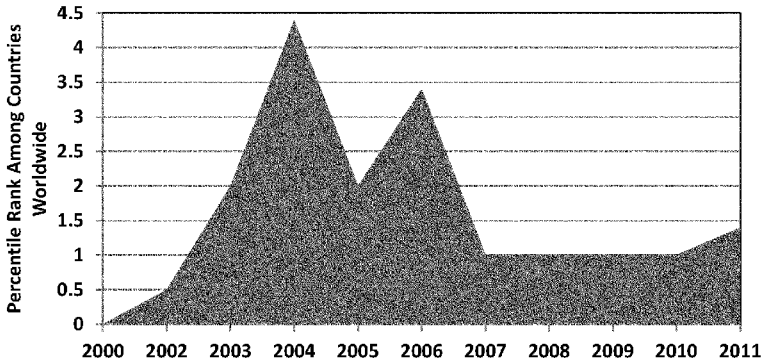


Another challenge is corruption. To maintain and build legitimacy, the central government and local institutions need to more adequately provide justice and service delivery to the population, including countering high levels of corruption. As Figure 2 highlights, however, Afghanistan

[7] The World Bank, World Development Indicators Dataset, accessed on March 13, 2013.
[8] The Asia Foundation, *Afghanistan in 2012: Survey of the Afghan People* (Kabul: Asia Foundation, 2012), p. 52.

remains in the bottom 1.5 percent of most corrupt countries in the world, according to World Bank estimates. But there have been some improvements thanks, in part, to U.S. encouragement and assistance. Two key players in the $900 million Kabul Bank scandal were sentenced earlier this month to five years in prison each, though Afghan authorities are seeking to increase the sentence. While shorter than most expected, the sentences nonetheless mark limited progress. A withdrawal of U.S. forces would likely decrease U.S. leverage in encouraging more systematic anti-corruption efforts.

Figure 2: Corruption in Afghanistan (Percentile Rank among Countries Worldwide)[9]



A final challenge is economic sustainability. Some economists are concerned about the potential for a recession in Afghanistan when international funding from the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) decreases. This might not be as much a result of declining development aid, but rather a decrease of services from ISAF activity. How can the United States help the Afghan government grow its revenue and productive sectors to help pay for services, investment, and security? There are several options that should be more effectively implemented. Examples include long-term development of a mining sector that offers substantial benefits from Afghanistan's virtually untapped deposits of iron, copper, cobalt, gold, and critical industrial metals like lithium. In the shorter term, there should be an emphasis on artisanal projects and a shift from illegal artisanal mining to legal small-scale mining operations. Afghanistan granted negotiating rights on copper and gold tenders last year, blocks in the Afghan-Tajik Oil Basin, and gas well refurbishments in Shirbirghan. But Kabul has yet to pass a revised mining law, which has stalled further projects. Despite the limited progress in Afghanistan's extractives sector, a

[9] World Bank, World Bank Governance Indicators Dataset, accessed on March 13, 2013.

complete withdrawal of U.S. forces would likely increase the possibility of a collapsed state and dampen the prospects of economic sustainability. During the Afghan civil war in the 1990s, there was virtually no international investment.

III. The Pakistan Dimension

Pakistan has long had a relationship with militant groups in Afghanistan. In the 1980s, Pakistan's spy agency, the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) Directorate, provided aid to the Afghan mujahideen with help from other organizations – including the Central Intelligence Agency. In the 1990s, the ISI helped support the Taliban. According to declassified U.S. documents, U.S. State Department officials understood that "ISI is deeply involved in the Taleban take over in Kandahar and Qalat."[10] ISI officers were deployed to such Afghan cities as Herat, Kandahar, and Jalalabad – and stationed in Pakistani consulates – to provide assistance and advice.[11] Another U.S. intelligence assessment contended that the ISI was "supplying the Taliban forces with munitions, fuel, and food," and "using a private sector transportation company to funnel supplies into Afghanistan and to the Taliban forces."[12]

Today, individuals from the ISI and Pakistan military continue to provide some support to Afghan insurgents. Indeed, Pakistan is running one of the most successful covert action programs today against a major power – and against the United States no less. The U.S. failure to curb Pakistan's sanctuary and support is particularly egregious since the United States was involved in an almost identical program 30 years ago – with the ISI – against the Soviets in Afghanistan. Islamabad's rationale for supporting Afghan insurgents is straightforward and, in many ways, understandable. Hemmed in by its arch-enemy India to the east, Pakistan wants an ally to the west. It doesn't have one at the moment. Instead, New Delhi has a close relationship with the Afghan government. Feeling strategically encircled by India, Islamabad has resorted to proxy warfare to replace the current Afghan government with a friendlier regime. With U.S. forces withdrawing from Afghanistan, Pakistan could get its wish.

Yet this outcome was not inevitable. The U.S. made three key mistakes along the way. First, U.S. policymakers failed to develop an effective regional strategy that involved Afghanistan's neighbors. At the Bonn Conference in December 2001, U.S. and other Western diplomats pulled together the regional powers, such as Iran, Pakistan, India, and Russia, to agree on a way

[10] U.S. Department of State, From Ron McMullen (Afghanistan Desk), "Developments in Afghanistan," December 5, 1994. Released by the National Security Archive.
[11] U.S. Embassy (Islamabad), Cable, "Afghanistan: [Excised] Criticizes GOP's Afghan Policy; Says It Is Letting Policy Drift," June 16, 1998. Released by the National Security Archive.
[12] From [Excised] to DIA Washington D.C., Cable, "Pakistan Interservice Intelligence/ Pakistan (PK) Directorate Supplying the Taliban Forces," October 22, 1996.

forward in Afghanistan. After Bonn, however, there was no follow-on institution to ensure regional collaboration, and cooperation quickly devolved into security competition.

Second, the United States and Pakistan failed to target the Taliban sanctuary in Pakistan. The United States has conducted drone strikes in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas. But senior leaders of the Taliban are located hundreds of miles south in Baluchistan Province and Karachi. Neither the U.S. nor Pakistan have targeted the Taliban command-and-control network there. Instead, the Taliban's leader, Mullah Muhammad Omar, resides well outside the area where drone strikes are occurring. So does the Taliban's inner shura, its most important decision-making body. The inner shura provides strategic guidance for the insurgency, exercises some command-and-control, and is the largest fundraiser. Indeed, Baluchistan has been so safe for Taliban leaders that most have moved their families there and sent their children to Pakistani schools.

Third, U.S. and Afghan leaders failed to co-opt as many former Taliban leaders as they could after Bonn, sending them instead to prisons at Bagram air base or Guantanamo. This was a mistake. The Taliban represented a faction of Afghan society that could not be indefinitely excluded from the country's political and economic life. Consequently, Taliban leaders, including several that considering reconciling with the Afghan government, slipped across the border into Pakistan.

According to a RAND study I led in 2008, the success rate of insurgent groups significantly rises when they have support from an outside power. Those insurgencies that received support from external states won more than 50 percent of the time, while those with no support won only 17 percent of the time. But that's not all. Insurgents have been successful approximately 43 percent of the time when they enjoyed a sanctuary.[13] Afghan insurgents enjoy both outside support *and* sanctuary, a doubly difficult hurdle for the United States and its allies to overcome. Ten years after the U.S. helped overthrow the Taliban regime, it is notable that successive U.S. administrations have decided not to target the Taliban safe haven in Baluchistan. The Soviet Union faced a similar dilemma in the 1980s, when it did not act against the seven major mujahideen groups headquartered in Pakistan.

In his book *The Bear Trap*, Mohammad Yousaf, who headed the ISI's covert war in Afghanistan against the Soviets, wrote that the insurgent sanctuary in Pakistan was essential to defeat the

[13] Seth G. Jones, *Counterinsurgency in Afghanistan* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2008).

Soviets and win the insurgency.[14] Sadly, Yousaf's observation remains relevant today. A withdrawal of U.S. forces would likely leave behind an even more chaotic war involving multiple sides: insurgent groups backed by Pakistan and Iran; an Afghan government backed by several states, including India; and a range of Uzbek, Tajik, Hazara, and other powerbrokers backed by virtually all of Afghanistan's neighbors.

IV. Conclusion: A Sustained U.S. Presence

On September 11, 2001, Afghanistan was not just a sanctuary for al Qa'ida. The Taliban was also an ally. There were disagreements between Taliban and al Qa'ida leaders, as there are between most organizations. But Osama bin Laden's decision in the late 1990s to move from Tora Bora to Kandahar, only a few miles from Mullah Omar's residence, and the Taliban's refusal to hand over bin Laden after September 11 indicated a viable relationship. Today, the United States cannot accept a situation in which al Qa'ida and its local allies have an unchallenged sanctuary to plan and train for terrorist attacks against the U.S. homeland. Nor can the United States accept an Afghan government that is an ally of terrorists. Al Qa'ida's continuing relationship with senior Taliban, Haqqani, and other militant leaders – including the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan – suggests that a Taliban-led government would be a risky gamble for U.S. national security.

A viable long-term option may be relying on a limited U.S. Special Operations Force footprint, aided by the CIA and a small number of conventional forces. On the military side, it would focus on two goals: (1) assist Afghan national and local forces to prevent the military overthrow of the Afghan government by the Taliban, and (2) target al Qa'ida leaders and others plotting against the United States and its allies overseas. An Afghan-led counterinsurgency strategy would involve using U.S. forces to conduct several tasks:

- Train, equip, and advise Afghan National Army, Afghan National Police, and Afghan Local Police forces
- Conduct direct action operations against high value terrorism targets
- Provide limited "enablers," such as intelligence, civil affairs, and military information support operations

This strategy might require decreasing the number of U.S. and NATO forces to perhaps 8,000-12,000 by 2015, depending on ground conditions and other factors. This strategy entails some risks. It assumes that Afghan National Security Forces and local allies, with assistance from U.S. Special Operations Forces and others, would be adequate to degrade the Taliban-led insurgency.

[14] Mohammad Yousaf and Mark Adkin, *Afghanistan – The Bear Trap: The Defeat of a Superpower* (Havertown, PA: Casemate, 1992).

It also assumes that Afghan central government institutions would be adequate to establish some order and deliver services, at least in key urban areas. Current levels of corruption and incompetence raise long-term governance concerns. But this Afghan-led counterinsurgency strategy has several benefits. It relies on Afghans to do the bulk of counterinsurgency, though with limited U.S. assistance and oversight. It also ensures a steady drop in financial costs of the war. While it would be foolhardy to draw too many lessons from other counterinsurgencies since they represent different contexts, it is worth noting that small numbers of U.S. Special Operations Forces and intelligence units have been successful in helping defeat insurgents (or setting the conditions for a peace settlement) in Colombia, Philippines, and a number of other insurgencies.

But a precipitous U.S. withdrawal and continuing Pakistan support to Afghan insurgent groups could lead to Taliban control of part or most of Afghanistan over the next decade. The complete U.S. departure from Iraq has allowed AQI to recover and threaten broader U.S. interests in the region. Yet the stakes in Afghanistan and Pakistan are much higher than in Iraq, in part since it is the region where al Qa'ida was born and its leadership, which is still committed to attacking the United States, continues to exist.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Excellent way to end. Thank you, Dr. Jones. Dr. Kagan.

STATEMENT OF KIMBERLY KAGAN, PH.D., PRESIDENT, INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF WAR

Ms. KAGAN. Thank you very much, Madam Chairman, and the distinguished members of both committees. It is a great pleasure to be here with you today to discuss this vital issue.

I, too, like Dr. Jones, believe that a successful outcome in Afghanistan is essential to America's national security here at home, as well as throughout the region of Southwest Asia. And I, too, believe and indeed assess that the dismantling of al-Qaeda core, although it is something that has been undertaken over the last decade is far from complete and far from sufficient to achieve our national security objectives in Southwest Asia, in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Unfortunately, al-Qaeda is both an ideology and an agglomeration of organizations that rely on one another to perpetuate militancy not only in Afghanistan and Pakistan, but also elsewhere on the globe. And unfortunately, that means that dismantling al-Qaeda core does not actually suffice to complete the reduction of the threat of that radical militancy and terrorism against the United States or its allies in the West or within the region.

As Dr. Jones said, there are numerous groups thriving in the border lands between Afghanistan and Pakistan, whether it be al-Qaeda itself, TTP, LET, the Haqqani Network. And what we risk in withdrawing from Afghanistan too soon or in leaving smaller number of bases than necessary, is undermining the very counterterrorism strategy that we actually as a nation hoped to pursue and have continued to pursue through engagement along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border in an effort to ensure that other militant groups do not get the capabilities or develop the intention that they can execute to cause trouble in Pakistan, Afghanistan, or the region as a whole.

This is one of the issues on which I differ from the opinion of many senior administration officials because what we are talking about here is not simply whether al-Qaeda's affiliates have the will to attack the United States or its Western allies, we are talking about groups whose intentions, wills, and capabilities will change over time as our force presence changes, as Pakistani politics changes, and as Afghans' politics change.

Therefore, we actually have a requirement to continue to defend America's national security that goes above and beyond al-Qaeda senior leadership and actually requires a long-term presence, though not an indefinite presence, within the region. What does that long-term presence mean? What should it look like? Well, it needs to be based on the bilateral security agreement that we are working through with difficulty with President Karzai to achieve. It requires basing for its counterterrorism operations. It requires training the Afghan National Security Forces. But most of all, it requires being in Afghanistan for two reasons. One is to help preserve the essential stability of Afghanistan. Essential because when Afghanistan is stable, so too is the region. It is a centrally-located place and peace and stability inside of Afghanistan tend to

emanate outward toward its neighbors and have a stabilizing effect on them. Whereas, conflict and civil war inside of Afghanistan tend to invite proxy participation by foreign states and competition that results in violence, terror and militancy in a greater number of ungoverned spaces.

We have to remain in Afghanistan to prevent Afghanistan from once again becoming an ungoverned space wrapped in civil war. The Afghans right now are looking to us to commit to them and they are hedging against two possibilities. One is the possibility of radical success. That, in fact, the policies that they and we are pursuing now will lead them to a peaceful and stable Afghanistan in which their political lives and the kinds of changes will continue. The other is a civil war which will result not only in their loss of power, but in the destabilization of an entire region where this militancy will continue to exist. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Kagan follows:]

the weekly Standard

The Afghan Endgame

Frederick W. Kagan and Kimberly Kagan

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President Obama's decision to withdraw another 34,000 troops from Afghanistan over the course of the next year is unwise. It greatly increases the risk of mission failure in that important conflict, jeopardizing gains already made in the Taliban heartland in the south and compromising the ability of Afghan and coalition forces to finish the fight against the Haqqani Network in the east. It also increases the risk that al Qaeda will be able to reestablish itself in limited safe havens in Afghanistan over time. Removing troops and capabilities before Afghanistan's next presidential election, scheduled for April 2014, further exacerbates the danger that Afghanistan might collapse into renewed ethnic civil war.

It was not as bad as it might have been, however, and prospects for success in this conflict remain, although the odds grow ever longer. The president appears to have yielded to military realities and the laws of physics on a number of important points. The drawdown itself is paced to keep a significant number of American troops in Afghanistan through most of this coming fighting season: Around 6,000 troops are to be withdrawn between now and this spring; another 8,000 by November; and the final 20,000 by February 2014.

Senior administration officials explained on background that the first stage of this withdrawal is already underway and results largely from the deployment of brigades configured to conduct training and advising missions rather than combat. General Joe Dunford, the new commander in Afghanistan, will therefore have to redeploy only another 8,000 troops while fighting the enemy this summer—a far more manageable challenge than if he had had to redeploy the full 28,000 while still trying to accomplish his primary mission of helping the Afghans defeat our common enemies and consolidate gains. Administration officials also said that a sizable contingent of planners and logisticians now in Afghanistan to design and execute the drawdown are not counted against the total troop numbers—a vital fact, since writing and implementing such a plan is a massive undertaking that could well otherwise consume the staffs and commanders who must focus on continuing progress against the enemy and training the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF).

The president has also postponed an announcement—and, according to administration officials, even the decision—on the size of the post-2014 U.S. military presence in Afghanistan. That postponement is very wise. The discussion of the long-term presence is premature at this stage of the campaign. It is impossible to describe the security situation in 2015 before the 2013 fighting season has even begun. And considering that administration officials were floating the idea of keeping no troops at all in Afghanistan after 2014 when President Hamid Karzai came to Washington in January, the deferral of a decision on this matter is a relief.

Perhaps the most encouraging part of the change in the White House decision-making is that—according to senior administration briefers—plans to cut the ANSF by more than 100,000 troops starting in 2015 are not final. It appears that the president is considering supporting the current force of 352,000 ANSF troops through 2017 instead. Maintaining a large ANSF is absolutely vital. It is almost impossible to imagine a security situation in 2015 in which dismissing more than 100,000 trained Afghan soldiers and police (meaning unemployment for many of them) makes any sense. It is equally important to wait until we have seen how Afghan forces perform after the American and international mission changes in 2015 before deciding on the future size and composition of those forces.

It is still possible, therefore, that coalition and Afghan troops may be able to hold onto gains already made and even expand them over the course of this fighting season. That hope justifies continued support for an important mission, as well as continued

pressure on the White House to reduce the enormous risks it is assuming in Afghanistan in pursuit of extremely small rhetorical, political, and economic benefits.

The cost of keeping 14,000 troops in Afghanistan until next February rather than bringing them out by November is budget dust in the context of overall defense spending, let alone the national debt, the deficit, or any major social program. Even the cost of keeping all 34,000 troops now scheduled to come out over the next year in Afghanistan for another six or eight months would hardly register compared with other budget items. Administration officials accurately and honestly insisted that withdrawing those forces increases the risk of failure in Afghanistan. Accepting that increased risk—on top of the enormous risks the administration has already accepted by previous premature troops withdrawals—is difficult to justify.

The president's decision on Afghanistan was not as bad as it might have been—indeed, it was not as bad as it seemed certain to be at the start of this year. It leaves a glimmer of hope for success, which our commanders, troops, and diplomats in the field will exert all their powers to keep alive. But it was still a mistake that puts our nation's security in greater jeopardy. We hope that the president will continue to reevaluate his own willingness to accept risk in light of the rapidly diminishing economic and political returns he will receive from lowering force levels.

The war in Afghanistan is not yet lost. We are not yet losing, in fact, and success remains possible. But it is absolutely vital that the White House give General Dunford some flexibility to adjust the withdrawal timelines, and even to ask for temporary reinforcements, as the situation on the ground evolves.

Frederick W. Kagan & Kimberly Kagan

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much, Dr. Kagan.
Mr. Bergen.

STATEMENT OF MR. PETER BERGEN, DIRECTOR, NATIONAL SECURITY STUDIES PROGRAM, THE NEW AMERICA FOUNDATION

Mr. BERGEN. Madam Chair, members, thank you for this invitation. It is really a privilege to be speaking here today. I make my comments based on traveling to Afghanistan starting in '93 during the civil wars there under the Taliban, so I have a sense, personal sense, of what has changed over time. Many of these changes, of course, are very good. I have been traveling to Pakistan since 1983. Pakistan just celebrated an enormous milestone on Saturday which is the first civilian government to complete its term in Pakistani history. As you know, there have been three successful coups in Pakistan, many other coup attempts. So the fact that civilian government has completed its term and the Pakistanis will go to the polls to elect another civilian government, we are looking at a period when we might have a decade of uninterrupted civilian rule which is enormously important as we look to the future of the region. The Pakistani military has no interest at this point in mounting a coup and also probably doesn't have the capability to do so. And so we are a kind of different space. This is an optimistic moment I think for Pakistan, despite all the problems that we know exist in that country.

Another great opportunity is the election which we referred to in Afghanistan is both a moment of opportunity and of great peril. If this election is as flawed as the 2009 election, this could precipitate a return to a new civil conflict. If, on the other hand, this is reasonably fair, reasonably free, and reasonably uncontested, this will set Afghanistan down the path to basic ally some sort of political agreement that will prevent the renewal of some civil war there.

On the matter of troop numbers, we can have a debate about whether 8,000 is the correct number of 15,000. I think much more important is the issue of what we say when we actually announce the figure. We have negotiated a great U.S. investment in this Strategic Partnership Agreement and a partnership agreement that goes on until 2024. We should make it clear that our commitment is until 2024, whether it is 6,000 soldiers or 9,000 or 10,000, whatever the final number is, because Afghans have received a lot of conflicting signals in the past about our intentions. For instance, when the surge was announced of 30,000 troops it was also announced that July 2011 withdrawal date. And that became more important in certain Afghans' minds than the fact that President Obama in his first term actually tripled the number of troops in Afghanistan from 30,000 to 90,000. But there was real concern about this withdrawal date. So we shouldn't make the same mistake twice.

On the question of is a civil war likely, I associate myself with the comments of Mr. Deutch and also Dr. Jones. I mean there has been so much change in Afghanistan, positive change, that there is a great deal of investment. There is nothing like going through a civil war to prevent the idea—it seems like a good idea. And so many people have seen positive changes in their lives. I just want-

ed to add some to the data that Dr. Jones and Mr. Deutch mentioned. Five million refugees have returned home to Afghanistan. There is nothing like a refugee returning home as a signal of faith in the future of the country. Relatively few of the millions of Iraqi refugees have returned home to Iraq. Iraq is still regarded as too unstable.

There are proportionately, as you probably know, Madam Chair, more women in the Afghan Parliament than there are in the halls of U.S. Congress. And you can list a whole set of data like this. And surprisingly, there has been a lot of discussion about the economy Afghanistan once the ACAP goes out. But if you look at a World Bank recent study which was very rigorous and comprehensive, they espoused that the growth rate in Afghanistan will drop from about 9 percent to about 5 percent. So the economy may do pretty well.

On the issue of the army, of course, this is a flawed force in many senses. The big problem here is the desertion rate. The retention rate now in the Afghan army is 27 percent leaving every year. So on the other hand, you are seeing a lot more Afghan soldiers and policemen dying. Now about 300 Afghan soldiers and policemen dying a month. In January, we saw three American soldiers die which was the lowest number in 4 years. So you are beginning to see a real change in the actual—willingness of the Afghan army and police who take casualties in after all, what is their own war.

On the issue of the Haqqani Network, I think it is going to be—Pakistan is going to continue its basic acquiescence and/or sort of lukewarm support for the Haqqanis. That is not going to change. When it is in their interest to attack the Taliban as they did in South Waziristan and Swat, they will do it and conduct serious military operations. Interestingly, we have seen absolutely no evidence. It is hard to prove negatives that Osama bin Laden was getting any kind of official support from the Pakistani Government. That is the assessment of the intelligence community. It is also—we have recovered a number of documents from the Abbottabad compound and there is nothing in there to show that bin Laden was being supported by the Pakistani Government.

One final note, in terms of improving the Pakistani relationship, 2011 was sort of a nadir. I think it is getting better. Pakistan has never threatened to close down the air corridor which is absolutely vital to our supply effort in Afghanistan. Kandahar Airport is the busiest airport in the world, 700 flights a day. Pakistan has never even threatened to close that air corridor. And so I think there are things that we can build on. What about a U.S.-Pakistani free trade agreement? What about something that has often been mentioned in the past which is lowering the very high rate of tariff on Pakistani textiles? Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Bergen follows:]

Peter Bergen
Director
New America Foundation

House Committee on Foreign Affairs

After the Withdrawal: The Way Forward in Afghanistan and Pakistan

March 19, 2013

1. Opportunities in Afghanistan and Pakistan and How the U.S. Might Nurture Them.

The next year is a moment of real potential opportunity in both Afghanistan and Pakistan, and should be treated as such by the United States. The problems of both countries are quite well known, but less well understood are the areas of strengths in both nations; strengths that if properly nurtured and developed will help to secure long term U.S. interests in the region.

This past Saturday, March 16, 2013 marked an extraordinary moment in Pakistan's history, as this is the first time that a civilian government has served its entire five-year term (from 2008 to 2013). And, for the first time in its history, the Pakistani military appears both unwilling and unable to mount a coup against any civilian government. The military has mounted four coups since Pakistan's independence in 1947. Around six weeks from now, in May, Pakistanis will go again to the polls to elect a new civilian government for a five-year term, and there is now a good prospect for continued, uninterrupted civilian government until at least 2018.

While Pakistan's problems are many—in particular its weak economy, tiny tax base, chronic energy shortages and often-feckless leadership—there are some underlying strengths of its institutions that are too often overlooked. Pakistan may have a largely ineffectual state, but it has a vibrant civil society. As a result of this strong civil society, Pakistan had its version of the Arab Spring long before the wave of demands for accountable governments emerged in the Middle East. It was, after all, a movement of thousands of lawyers taking to the streets protesting the sacking of the Supreme Court chief justice by the military

dictator Pervez Musharraf in 2007 that helped to dislodge Musharraf from power.[1]

Pakistan also has a vibrant media. A decade ago, there was only Pakistan TV, which featured leaden government propaganda. Now there are dozens of news channels:[2] many of them are conspiracist and anti-American, but many of them are also anti-Taliban and pro-democracy.

In the past year or so, the Supreme Court has taken on the ISI, Pakistan's powerful military intelligence agency, successfully demanding that the organization produce prisoners who had disappeared for years.[3]

In November 2011, Pakistan agreed to a pact with long-time rival India granting India "most favored nation" trading status;[4] something that would have been unimaginable a few years back. This important development was sanctioned by Pakistan's powerful army, which is a significant player in the country's economy and understands that one way out of Pakistan's economic mess is to hitch itself to India's much larger economy.

Despite the visibility of the hardline religious parties on the streets of Pakistan, in the voting booth, these parties have recently fared very poorly. A coalition of pro-Taliban religious parties known as the MMA secured control of two of Pakistan's four provinces in an election in 2002 and 11% of the votes to the National Assembly. But the MMA garnered only a piddling 2% of the vote in the 2008

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[1] This section draws upon http://www.cnn.com/2012/07/23/opinion/bergen-pakistan
[2] http://atwar.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/05/26/pakistans-opinionated-media-landscape/
[3] http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/07/world/asia/isi-in-pakistan-faces-court-cases.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0
[4] http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/11/02/us-pakistan-india-trade-idUSTRE7A13VE20111102

election.[5] The showing of the pro-Taliban religious parties in the May 2013 election is likely to be equally unimpressive.

In terms of Pakistan's long term health and stability, the fact that the country is poised to enter into a unprecedented era of lengthy civilian rule will help erode the Pakistani military's present position as having uncontested supremacy in all matters that relate to the country's national security, in particular its relations with India and with Afghanistan. The military has backed armed proxies in both India and Afghanistan to maintain its perceived interests in these countries. A more confident civilian Pakistani government is over time less likely to support these insurgent and terrorist groups.

The United States should seek to further cement ties to the next civilian government in Pakistan and some concrete ideas about how this might be accomplished can be found below in section 5.

Another great opportunity (and potential peril) will present itself in Afghanistan within the next year, when Afghans go to the polls in April 2014 for the third presidential election since the fall of the Taliban. If that election is perceived as being relatively free and fair this would go a long way to ease tensions in the Afghan body politic, increase Afghanistan's overall security, and reassure both Afghan and outside investors that the country has a promising future. On the other hand, if the 2014 election is seen as unfair, corrupted and is deeply contested this would likely precipitate a vicious circle of conflict, deteriorating security, and capital flight.

The U.S., therefore, should do everything it can to provide technical and security assistance to make these elections go as well as possible. But unlike what happed in the run up to the 2009 Afghan presidential election, the U.S. should not get involved in backing certain candidates. This had the unintended effect of

[5] http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/104699.pdf

splitting the opposition to Afghan President Hamid Karzai as key leaders of the anti-Karzai opposition all believed that they were "America's candidate." It also deeply alienated Karzai, whose occasional diatribes against the United States are best understood as due to his lingering resentment over this issue.[6]

A key aspect of U.S. and NATO planning for the Afghan presidential elections in April 2014 is that given the fact that there are no discernible frontrunners to succeed Karzai, there may be no clear winner who attains more than 50 percent of the vote, which under Afghan electoral laws would necessitate a run off election between the two leading candidates. Therefore security, technical and economic assistance for the Afghan elections should be prepared to extend into the summer of 2014 as its not clear as yet when that run off might be held.

The effort to set the conditions for a free and fair Afghan election in 2014 is far more important than the pipedream of getting some kind of peace deal with the Taliban. Years of U.S. talks with the Taliban haven't gone much of anywhere, and predictably so because the "moderate" Taliban who wanted to reconcile with the Afghan government have already long done so.[7] Second, "the Taliban" are really many Talibans, so a deal with one insurgent group doesn't mean the end of the insurgency writ large. Third, the history of "peace" deals with the Taliban in neighboring Pakistan shows that the groups can't be trusted. Deals between the Pakistani government and the Taliban in Waziristan in 2005 and 2006 and in Swat in 2009 were merely preludes to the Taliban establishing their brutal "emirates," regrouping and then moving into adjoining areas to seize more territory.

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[6] http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=174037658

[7] This section draws on http://articles.cnn.com/2011-05-24/opinion/bergen.taliban.talks_1_taliban-leader-taliban-foreign-ministry-islamic-emirate?_s=PM:OPINI

Finally, and most importantly: What do the Taliban really want? It's relatively easy to discern what they don't want: international forces in Afghanistan. But other than their blanket demand for the rule of Sharia law, the Taliban have not articulated their vision for the future of Afghanistan. Do they envision a democratic state with elections? Do they see a role for women outside the home? What about education for girls? What about ethnic minorities?

It is the outcome of these general elections in Pakistan later this year and in Afghanistan in spring 2014, rather than the precise number of U.S. soldiers who are posted in Afghanistan after the withdrawal of American combat troops in December 2014 that are the most critical factors in determining the future of both countries, and also in securing the long term interests of the United States in the region.

Last year the United States and Afghanistan negotiated a Strategic Partnership Agreement, which ensures America will continue to play a supporting role there until 2024.[8] The exact details of what that agreement means in practice are still being hammered out (and these negotiations may take until November) but they are likely to include not only significant U.S. aid but also many thousands of American soldiers stationed in Afghanistan for years into the future as a guarantor of the country's stability.

The U.S. military has given Obama a range of options under which as few as 6,000 or as many as 20,000 soldiers would remain in Afghanistan after 2014.[9] Those forces would work as advisers to the Afghan army and mount special operations raids against the Taliban and al-Qaeda. While military experts can debate the efficacy of, say, 8,000 U.S. troops remaining in Afghanistan after 2014 versus 15,000 -- and this is an entirely legitimate discussion -

[8] http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/05/01/fact-sheet-us-afghanistan-strategic-partnership-agreement
[9] http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/13/us/politics/obama-to-announce-troops-return.html

-it is worth underlining that whatever the final decision is on troop levels, the key point is that the Obama administration and other U.S. officials should emphasize very clearly that the thousands of American soldiers who will remain in Afghanistan are there to support the U.S. long term partnership agreement with Afghanistan which stretches for more than a decade.

This is important to emphasize because Afghans have been understandably confused by some of the different signals the Obama administration has made about its commitment to Afghanistan in the past. Major confusion arose following President Obama's December 2009 announcement of the "surge" of 30,000 troops to Afghanistan, which was coupled with the announcement that those troops would begin to withdraw beginning in July 2011. In many Afghans' minds the withdrawal date became more important than the fact that Obama actually tripled the number of U.S. soldiers in Afghanistan during his first term from around 30,000 to a total of 90,000.

Once the post-2014 troop levels are finally determined, the Obama administration should emphasize that the U.S. commitment to Afghanistan is set to last until at least 2024. This will help in multiple ways: First, this guarantee of a long-term U.S. commitment to Afghanistan will encourage other NATO countries -- and also non-NATO allies -- to maintain some of their own troops in Afghanistan to continue to work with the Afghans in areas like training the army and police well past the end of the NATO combat mission in December 2014.

Such an announcement will also help reassure Afghans that the U.S. won't be simply turning off the lights in Afghanistan in December 2014. After the Soviet Union withdrew from Afghanistan in 1989, something that was accomplished at the cost of more than a million Afghan lives and billions of dollars of U.S. aid, the United States closed its embassy in Afghanistan during the

George H. W. Bush administration and then zeroed out aid to one of the poorest countries in the world under the Clinton administration.[10] It essentially turned its back on Afghans once they had served their purpose of dealing a deathblow to the Soviets. As a result, the United States had virtually no understanding of the subsequent vacuum in Afghanistan into which eventually stepped the Taliban, who rose to power in the mid-1990s. The Taliban granted shelter to Osama bin Laden and his al Qaeda organization from 1996 onward.

Also this announcement of long-term commitment to Afghanistan's stability by the United Sates will signal to regional powers like Pakistan and Iran that the U.S. plans to remain engaged in Afghanistan for many years into the future.

The United States continues to station thousands of troops in South Korea more than five decades after the end of the Korean War. Under this American security umbrella South Korea has gone from being one of the poorest countries in the world to one of the richest. It is this kind of model that most Afghans want and the U.S. needs to provide so Afghanistan doesn't revert to the kind of chaos that beset it in the mid-1990s and from which the Taliban first emerged.

[10] this section draws on http://www.cnn.com/2013/01/10/opinion/bergen-afghanistan-troop-levels

2. What are the security implications for Afghanistan and the US of drawing down the number of troops in Afghanistan?

Some smart commentators on Afghanistan worry that the Afghan civil war will renew itself after the United States and other NATO countries withdraw combat troops at the end of 2014. In an influential July report in the *New Yorker*, veteran war correspondent Dexter Filkins described how Afghans are girding for another civil war, and he quoted a former U.S. official based in Kabul as saying, "A coup is one of the big possibilities -- a coup or civil war."[11]

This is overwrought. A return to the kind of civil war in which hundreds of thousands died following the Soviet withdrawal in 1989 and the 1992 collapse of the Najibullah communist government is quite unlikely for many reasons, not least the fact that the United States is not going to collapse as the Soviet Union did, an implosion that precipitated the fall of the Najibullah government. When the Russian aid stopped flowing to Najibullah, he couldn't maintain his military, which opened the way for his overthrow.

Much has been achieved in Afghanistan over the past decade, which will not be undone when American combat troops leave at the end of 2014. Afghanistan just after the November 2001 fall of the Taliban resembled Germany after World War II: The country had been utterly destroyed, around a third of the population had fled, and more than one in 10 of its citizens had been killed in the previous two decades of war. Many Afghans had fled for Pakistan and Iran during the 1980s and 1990s -- some 6 million out of a population of 15 million.[12]

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[11] http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2012/07/09/120709fa_fact_filkins?currentPage=all

[12] This section draws upon http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2013/03/04/what_went_right

As a result of the U.S.-led occupation of Afghanistan and the enterprising spirit of the Afghans themselves millions of Afghans have voted with their feet: Since the fall of the Taliban, more than 5 million have returned home.[13] By way of contrast, some 2 million Iraqis left their country during the recent war there. Only a tiny fraction of those refugees has gone back.

The country to which those millions of Afghans have returned is in fundamental respects very different from the one it was before the 9/11 attacks. Let's start with the most obvious point: The Taliban are removed from power. This was a movement that gave sanctuary not only to Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda, but also to pretty much every jihadi militant group from around the Muslim world.

Thanks to the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, al Qaeda ("the base" in Arabic) lost the best base it ever had: a country in which it ran something of a parallel state, with training camps churning out thousands of recruits, and from which bin Laden and his henchmen conducted their own foreign policy, attacking U.S. embassies and warships, and planned the deadliest mass murder in American history.

Al Qaeda has never recovered from the loss of its Afghan base. Its last successful strike in the West was the July 2005 series of suicide attacks on London's transportation system. Meanwhile, the war against al Qaeda continues to be fought from Afghanistan. The SEAL team that killed bin Laden in 2011 took off in stealth helicopters from an airfield in Jalalabad, in eastern Afghanistan. And the drones that have inflicted heavy losses on other al Qaeda leaders continue to deploy from Afghan bases.

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[13] http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49e486eb6.html

The chances of the Taliban coming back to run Afghanistan are now vanishingly small. Favorable views of the Taliban in polling across Afghanistan over the past several years are consistently no more than 10 percent. There is nothing like experiencing life under the Taliban to convince Afghans that the group cannot deliver on its promises of an Islamist utopia here on Earth. And if the Taliban have scant chance of returning to power, their al Qaeda buddies have even less chance of returning to Afghanistan in any meaningful way. Few Muslim countries harbor a more hostile view of al Qaeda and its Arab leaders than Afghanistan.

Afghans have good reasons to fear the Taliban. The group imprisoned half the population inside their homes, preventing women from having jobs and girls from attending school. Although Afghanistan today remains a deeply conservative Muslim society, proportionately more women are now serving in the Afghan parliament than in the U.S. Congress. And while only fewer than 1 million children, almost entirely boys, were in school under the Taliban, now more than 8 million children are in school, more than a third of whom are girls.

One of the most common questions pollsters ask is, "Is your country going in the right direction?" A poll by Rasmussen at the end of December found that 33 percent of American voters believed their country was going in the right direction.[14] By contrast, a poll of some 6,000 Afghans conducted by the well-regarded Asia Foundation found that in 2012, 52 percent of Afghans thought their country was on the right track.[15]

This finding isn't so surprising when you consider what remained of the Afghan economy under the Taliban. There were just six

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[14] http://www.rasmussenreports.com/public_content/archive/mood_of_america_archive/right_direction_or_wrong_track/january_2013/33_say_u_s_heading_in_right_direction

[15] http://asiafoundation.org/country/afghanistan/2012-poll.php

commercial banks in the entire country, and, according to the IMF, they were "largely inactive."[16] There was virtually no phone system.

Afghanistan's GDP in 2001 was some $2 billion -- about the size of Burkina Faso's. In a decade, GDP has gone up to $20 billion (though a good deal of it is attributable to foreign aid). Today, one in two Afghans has a cell phone, which they use for everything from getting their salaries wired to them to making utility payments. There are also now dozens of newspapers and TV channels. Where once Kabul's streets were largely silent, they are now a bedlam of traffic and thriving small businesses.

At the time of the Taliban, only a tenth of the population had access to basic health care, a situation made more complicated by the Taliban's medieval view of women.[17] Now, almost all Afghans have access to more and better health care. As a result, in just one decade Afghan life expectancy has gone up an average of 18 years from 45 years to 62 years for men and 64 for women. This kind of dramatic increase in longevity took four decades to accomplish in the United States between 1900 and the beginning of World War II.

Many Westerners have a skewed assessment of the scope of the war in Afghanistan, bracketing it with the war in Iraq. But the conflicts in the two countries are quite different. At the height of the Iraq war in 2006, 100 civilians were dying every day. Today in Afghanistan, around six civilians are dying daily in a war in a country that has a population roughly on par with Iraq's. And who is causing most of those casualties? The Taliban. U.S. and other NATO forces have taken care to ensure that their soldiers do not contribute to the civilian death toll. Indeed, some American cities

[16] http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/wp/2009/wp09150.pdf
[17] http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/9130961

are today more violent than Afghanistan. In New Orleans, residents are now around six times more likely to be murdered than Afghan civilians are to be killed in the war.

3. What is the capacity of the Afghan government to address various security, crime and corruption issues, as well as the threat from the Taliban?

A key issue facing the Afghan government as the U.S. draws down its forces is how will the Afghan economy fare? Should the economy collapse, the Afghan government's ability to deal with security and crime issues as well as the threat from the Taliban would all be substantially eroded. Already, rents in Kabul are tumbling and NGOs are laying off staff. Surprisingly, however a rigorous and comprehensive World Bank study last year found that Afghanistan will continue to have a healthy growth rate dropping from its present robust 9 percent a year rate "to closer to 5 percent on average until 2018."[18] (US yearly growth rates over the past four years have been around 2 percent).

The economic contraction as the U.S. draws down is likely to be less severe than might be supposed partly because the hundreds of billions of that the US military has spent in Afghanistan over the past decade is spending that almost entirely benefits….the United States. The World Bank study points out that "military spending by the United States (and other countries) finances the salaries of military personnel, investments in weapons equipment and systems, sustainment, logistics and research of international forces, and operations contracted and paid for outside the country. Although it indirectly benefits Afghanistan's economy by supporting security, the direct positive impact on poorer

[18] http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2012/07/04/000333038_20120704045213/Rendered/PDF/708510v20WP0Bo0ansition0Beyond02014.pdf

households appears to be limited. The impact of its withdrawal is therefore likely to be muted."

It is incontrovertible that a good deal of aid to Afghanistan has ended up lining the pockets of corrupt Afghan officials. Less well understood is that good chunks of the aid have also gone back West in the form of large salaries and perks for expatriates. A 2008 report by the British charity Oxfam found that around 40 percent of aid to Afghanistan was funneled to donor countries to maintain home offices in the West and pay for Western-style salaries, benefits, and vacations.[19]

And even less well known is that one of the world's most successful aid programs has been implemented in Afghanistan, funded by organizations such as the U.S. Agency for International Development and the World Bank. Known as the National Solidarity Program, the cost-efficient and popular program gives modest grants to local self-elected village councils to do with as they will.[20] Around 30,000 councils have been set up, and they have disbursed some $1 billion for some 60,000 specific projects since 2003. As a result, thousands of schools and countless irrigation networks have been built, positively affecting the lives of about two-thirds of the rural population.[21]

The investigation of the troubled Kabul Bank, in which some 900 million dollars was lost to fraud, shows that the culture of impunity for corrupt Afghan officials is beginning to erode. Earlier this month 21 officials were found guilty of fraud and two of the former heads of the bank were sentenced to five years in prison. The Afghan Attorney General's office said last week that it would

[19] this paragraph draws upon http://afpak.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2010/08/10/keeping_promises
[20] This section draws upon http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2013/03/04/what_went_right
[21] http://www.nspafghanistan.org

appeal the sentences as being too soft given the scale of the fraud.[22]

(It is worth noting that while complaints are often justifiably made about the corruption and impunity of certain Afghan officials, in the United States itself according to Bloomberg Businessweek, "The fraud analytics firm Interthinx estimates that there were between $1 trillion and $4.8 trillion in fraudulent mortgages issued nationwide between 2005 and 2007, yet criminal cases against banks for originating such mortgages have been very rare. There have been a few prosecutions of individuals, a few large civil suits brought against banks such as Bank of America and JPMorgan Chase, and deferred prosecution deals where lenders have paid a financial penalty in lieu of criminal charges. But in the wake of the financial crisis only one bank in the whole country has, as an institution, been criminally indicted for mortgage fraud.") [23]

A key question is the extent to which the Afghan army and police can operate effectively against the Taliban as the U. S. withdraws. As yet the Afghan army hasn't shown the ability to conduct large-scale operations without significant American support. In addition, a big issue for the army is the extraordinarily high attrition rate. Today, a little more then a quarter of the recruits to the army drop out every year. As result, NATO is now considering maintaining the size of the Afghan army and police at 352,000 soldiers through 2018.[24] (Estimates of the size of the Taliban typically are in the 25,000 range.)

Despite the inability of the Afghan army to conduct large-scale missions without U.S. help, the transition of Afghanistan's

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[22] http://www.tolonews.com/en/afghanistan/9781-attorney-general-disagrees-with-kabul-bank-special-court

[23] http://www.businessweek.com/articles/2013-01-31/mortgage-fraud-prosecutors-pounce-on-a-small-bank

[24] http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/05/world/europe/05iht-letter05.html

provinces and districts to Afghan army and police control has gone somewhat well over the past year. According to NATO, "Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) have been taking the lead for security in areas where 87% of the Afghan population lives. In 2013, it is expected that all areas of the country will have entered the transition process and the ANSF will assume security lead across the whole country."[25]

As Afghan forces have assumed more responsibly for security, American casualties have dropped. In January, three U.S. soldiers died in Afghanistan -- the lowest monthly American casualty count in four years.[26] In short, the war is winding down, and the "surge" of 30,000 U.S. soldiers into Afghanistan that was completed in September has indeed blunted the Taliban's momentum, as it was intended to do.

In 2012 Taliban attacks dropped as much as a third compared with the year before. These figures come from the Afghanistan NGO Safety Office (ANSO), an organization that has collected data about violence in Afghanistan for many years and is far from a cheerleader for NATO.[27] In a 2012 report ANSO stated that the sharp drop in violence is "the first reliable indicator that the conflict may be entering a period of regression after years of sustained, and compounded, growth by all actors in the field."[28]

The Afghan National Army, which certainly needs to be further professionalized, is already the single most admired institution in the country. It will not collapse as Najibullah's military did once the Russian money flow dried up, not least because the United States and other NATO countries will not allow it to do so.

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[25] http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_2013_02/20130221_130221-backgrounder-inteqal-en.pdf
[26] http://articles.latimes.com/2013/feb/14/world/la-fg-afghanistan-casualties-20130215
[27] http://www.ngosafety.org/index.php?pageid=67
[28] http://www.ngosafety.org/store/files/ANSO%20Q1%202012.pdf

4. The relationship between the Taliban and other extremist organizations with Pakistan.

In 2009 as the Taliban marched some 70 miles away from the Pakistani capital Islamabad, the army launched major military operations in the northern region of Swat and the western area of South Waziristan to end the Taliban's control of these areas; operations that were generally successful and were done with a good amount of Pakistani public support.

Pakistani officials are swift to point out, correctly, that as a result, more Pakistani soldiers have died fighting the Taliban than the servicemen of the U.S. and other NATO countries combined.

What of "core al Qaeda," which attacked the United States on 9/11 and is headquartered in Pakistan? This group hasn't, of course, been able to pull off an attack in the United States in twelve years. Nor has it been able to mount an attack anywhere in the West since the attacks on London's transportation system eight years ago.

Osama bin Laden, the group's founder and charismatic leader, was buried at sea almost two years ago and despite concerns that his "martyrdom" would provoke a rash of attacks in the West or against Western interests in the Muslim world there has instead been...nothing.[29] Meanwhile, CIA drone strikes in Pakistan during President Obama's tenure alone have killed 38 of al Qaeda's leaders in Pakistan, according to a count by the New America Foundation.

Those drone strikes were so effective that shortly before bin Laden died he was contemplating ordering what remained of al Qaeda to move to Kunar Province in the remote, heavily forested mountains

[29] This section draws on http://www.cnn.com/2013/02/03/opinion/bergen-al-qaeda-deadly

of eastern Afghanistan, according to documents that were discovered following the SEAL assault on the compound where bin Laden was hiding in Abbottabad, Pakistan. Core al Qaeda is going the way of the dodo.

It was the U.S. intelligence community's assessment within weeks of the Abbottabad operation in which bin Laden was killed that there was no Pakistani official complicity in bin Laden's five-year sojourn in Abbottabad and nothing in the "treasure trove" of thousands of pages of documents recovered from his compound provided any proof that bin Laden had support from Pakistani officials.

U.S. officials, however, continue to believe that the Pakistani government provides some level of support or at least acquiescence to the presence of the Haqqani network in Pakistan's tribal areas, which unlike a number of other Taliban groups doesn't attack the Pakistani state. Given that the Haqqanis are influential in eastern Afghanistan and Pakistan wants to be able to have some influence in that region after the US drawdown in 2014 this state of affairs is unlikely to change.

In short, if it is in Pakistan's interests to attack a Taliban group or associated extremist group like al Qaeda it will. And if it isn't, it won't. In this regard its helpful to recall that the United States provided massive support to the Sunni ultra-fundamentalist Afghan warlord Gulbudinn Hekmatyar during the war against the Soviets, but is now at war with him.

5. The future of US Pakistan relations and US regional security.

U.S.-Pakistani relations -- which were at a nadir in 2011 because of a CIA contractor killing two Pakistanis, the bin Laden raid and the death of some two dozen Pakistani soldiers during a NATO airstrike -- are gingerly improving. Pakistan has reopened the ground routes for NATO supplies to cross Pakistan into Afghanistan, which were closed for months to protest the deaths of the Pakistani soldiers during the NATO airstrike.[30]

Tellingly, Pakistan has never even threatened to close the crucial air corridor across Pakistan that allows U.S. and NATO aircraft to fly into Afghanistan. One can get a sense of how important this air corridor is from the fact that Kandahar Air Field near the Pakistan border in southern Afghanistan is reported to have the busiest runway in the world with some 700 flights landing or taking off there every day.[31]

Pakistan is the second most populous nation in the Muslim world and is armed with nuclear weapons. The United States cannot allow such an important country and an ally of the past three decades to become an enemy.

Michael J. Mazarr, professor of national security strategy at the U.S. National War College, and myself, together with a group of Pakistani economists, journalists and former government officials as well as their American counterparts with considerable experience in Pakistan, over the course of an examination of the troubled U.S.-Pakistan relationship during 2011 determined that a key step to improve the relationship would be a shift from a relationship in which the U.S. sends aid to Pakistan to one in which

[30] This section draws on http://www.cnn.com/2012/07/23/opinion/bergen-pakistan
[31] http://www.kdab.afcent.af.mil/comkaf/index.asp

the emphasis is on trade that benefits both sides. In short, trade rather than aid.[32]

Textiles constitute 60% of Pakistani exports, half its manufacturing output and a third of its industrial employment. Yet Pakistani textiles make up less than 4% of U.S. textile imports. Pakistani textile imports to the United States are taxed at roughly 12 percent, while those from France are taxed at only 3 percent. The tariffs on Pakistani textiles should be reduced.

A further step should be to negotiate a U.S.-Pakistan Free Trade Agreement. Even if such negotiations were protracted, as is often the case with such agreements, they would be a signaling device showing that the United States is serious about a new kind of relationship with Pakistan and would help to assuage the bruised Pakistani feelings surrounding the U.S.-Indian civilian nuclear deal.

Pakistanis want access to American markets, not more American handouts, which in any event come so laden with caveats and reporting requirements that a good deal of the aid is never actually spent. This is not to suggest that the U.S. should cease activities such as the aid that was given to the earthquake victims in Pakistan in 2005 and the flood victims in 2010 -- efficacious actions for which Pakistanis were grateful -- but rather that the US-Pakistan relationship should be reconceived of as not simply a donor-recipient relationship but rather a real relationship through increasing trade.[33] Such initiatives on tariffs and trade will surely

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[32] the full report can be found here http://newamerica.net/sites/newamerica.net/files/policydocs/NAF_NWC_Pakistan_Strategy_Report_1.pdf

[33] this section draws upon "Ten Years on: The Evolution of the Terrorist Threat Since 9/11" Testimony presented before the House Armed Services Committee, Subcommittee on Emerging Threats by Peter Bergen June 23, 2011

confront political obstacles in the United States but could perhaps gain traction when proposed as an alternative to aid.

The issue that presently dominates Pakistanis' perception of the United States is the CIA drone campaign in their country. Upon taking office in January 2009, President Barack Obama almost immediately made drones one of his key national security tools. By February 2013, he had already authorized 301 strikes in Pakistan, six times more than the number of strikes carried out during President George W. Bush's entire eight years in office. Under Obama, the drone program accelerated from an average of one strike every 40 days to one every four days by mid-2011.

Using reports from a range of reliable news outlets, the New America Foundation, has calculated that over the life of the drone campaign in Pakistan, between 2004 and February 2013, some 1,963 to 3,293 people were killed. New America estimates that the confirmed number of Pakistani civilians who have been killed by drone strikes during the same time frame is between 261 to 305, or 10 percent of the total number of casualties.

The London-based Bureau of Investigative Journalism (TBIJ) and the D.C.-based Long War Journal also maintain counts of drone casualties in Pakistan. TBIJ reports that between 411 and 884 Pakistani civilians have been killed in U.S. drone attacks, representing 16-25 percent of the total casualties TBIJ has counted.[34] On the low end, the Long War Journal reports that 153 Pakistani civilians have been killed, representing just 5.6 percent of the 2,645 deaths it has recorded over the life of the drone campaign.

In March 2013 following a visit to Pakistan, Ben Emmerson, the U.N. special rapporteur on human rights and counter-terrorism,

[34] http://tribune.com.pk/story/402505/pakistan-civilian-deaths-from-us-drones-lowest-since-2008/

emailed the Associated Press that the Pakistani government had told him it has confirmed at least 400 civilian deaths by U.S. drones.[35] This number is in the range of the low estimate of 411 civilian deaths estimated by the Bureau of Investigative Journalism and also comports with the New America Foundation figures estimating between 261 and 305 civilians have been killed and a further 200 to 330 "unknowns" have also been killed. These "unknowns" are individuals who may be militants or civilians, but there is not enough public information to make any such determination.

Even if it is the case that over time fewer civilians have been killed by drone strikes, the program is deeply unpopular within the Pakistani public.[36] During the summer of 2010 the New America Foundation sponsored one of the few public opinion polls ever to be conducted in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas where all the drone strikes are located and found that almost 90% of the respondents opposed U.S. military operations in the region.[37] A Pew poll conducted in June 2012 found that just 17% of Pakistanis support the U.S. conducting drone strikes to help combat militancy in their country.

Beginning in 2012, Pakistani officials rarely based their criticism of U.S. drone strikes on the incidence of civilian casualties and have instead pointed, quite reasonably, to another objection: the U.S. violation of Pakistan's national sovereignty.[38] The Pakistani parliament voted in April 2012 to end any authorization for the program, a vote that the United States government has ignored.[39]

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[35] http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2013/03/16/un-official-says-us-drone-strikes-violate-pakistan-sovereignty/
[36] http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/13/world/asia/pakistan-demands-an-end-to-cia-drone-strikes.html
[37] http://pakistansurvey.org/
[38] http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/aug/03/cia-drone-strikes-violate-pakistan
[39] this paragraph draws on http://www.cnn.com/2012/07/13/opinion/bergen-civilian-casualties

Seemingly at least partly in response to the deep unpopularity of the drone program in Pakistan, the number of drone shrikes has declined significantly since 2010 when there was the greatest number of strikes, 122, to 48 strikes last year.[40] This is a good development because if the cost of drone program that kills largely low level members of the Talban is deeply angering 180 million Pakistanis that is a very high price to pay.

On Afghanistan, Pakistan has some important common goals with the United States, NATO and Afghans themselves. Pakistan does not want to see Afghanistan collapse into a renewed civil war, which would destabilize Pakistan, nor does it want to see the Taliban in charge of the country again. When the Taliban was in power in Afghanistan the group resisted Pakistani efforts at control, while the Pakistani Taliban have killed tens of thousands inside Pakistan. These basic shared goals: No civil war and no Taliban control of Afghanistan can help to create the conditions for a successful post-2014 Afghanistan

Pakistan also wants a Pashtun-led government in Kabul and for the Taliban to have some representation in the south and the east. These are also goals the Afghans can live with. Karzai is, after all, a Pashtun and given the fact that Pashtuns are the largest ethnic group, the next president of Afghanistan almost certainly will be a Pashtun. And other ethnic minorities can live with a situation in which the Taliban assume a number of provincial and district governorships providing they lay down their arms, join the political process and recognize the Afghan constitution.

The Afghans could go a long way to reducing the tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan by recognizing the Durand Line that was drawn by the British in 1893 as the border that divided Afghanistan from what is now Pakistan. The fact that Afghanistan

[40] http://counterterrorism.newamerica.net/drones

doesn't officially recognize this border makes its claims that Pakistani-based militias routinely violate this border ring a little hollow. Also recognizing the border would reduce Pakistan's concerns about a renewed "Pashtunistan" movement that seeks to create a country for Pashtuns carved from both Pakistan and Afghanistan.[41] And it would be an important confidence building measure between the two countries.

[41] http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field(DOCID+af0022)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much.

Dr. Markey.

STATEMENT OF DANIEL S. MARKEY, PH.D., SENIOR FELLOW FOR INDIA, PAKISTAN, AND SOUTH ASIA, COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. MARKEY. Thank you, Madam Chair, and all of the members of the subcommittees. It is a real honor to be here today.

Now as you have heard so far from the other panelists, I think here in Washington we tend to focus on Pakistan and the U.S.-Pakistan relationship primarily within the context of the war in Afghanistan. And what I would like to do is try to shift the emphasis a little bit to really focus on the U.S.-Pakistan relationship, Pakistan in and of itself because I think that the consequences of a rupture in that relationship would be dire not just for what they say about Afghanistan, but for other reasons as well. And why do I say this?

As has been mentioned already a little bit, but I think I can expand, Pakistan is very important both for the counterterror reasons that have been mentioned, the regional militancy issues, but also because it is a nuclear armed state and to put this in context, imagine a Pakistan or a U.S.-Pakistan relationship that was similar to the U.S.-North Korea relationship, keeping in mind that North Korea has about 24, 25 million people; Pakistan about 200 million, keeping in mind that Pakistan has about 100 nuclear weapons and North Korea probably has a handful of them.

Cooperation with Pakistan is significant and important. It is also frustrating and inadequate and that we must appreciate. But things could get much, much worse in this relationship. We should seek to avoid that. Beyond the bilateral issues, there is also the regional question. Look at the map. Look where Pakistan is. Look at the location next to India, next to China, along the Arabian Sea, bordering Central Asia. This is a strategically-relevant place that will continue to be so well into the future, well after the war in Afghanistan ends one way or another.

Now fortunately, although 2011 and 2012 were very rocky in the U.S.-Pakistan relationship, we have seen a shift in tone. Pakistan reopened the ground lines of communication, restarted dialogues with the U.S. Presented itself as being more eager to be involved in the reconciliation process with the Afghan Taliban. Now this is driven primarily, I believe, by Pakistan's anxiety about the future, anxiety about the war in Afghanistan. Now that anxiety is not especially new, but the tone has shifted and that we should appreciate.

And it has shifted primarily because of our actions. If there has been a change in Pakistan's strategic calculations, which I don't think the change is all that significant, it has been driven by a more significant shift on our part. And this has already been alluded to. That shift is on our part, has to do with the decisions that we have made, the U.S. Government has made to withdraw forces from Afghanistan faster and at greater numbers than I think the region would have anticipated just a matter of a year or two ago.

And I think this has also been coupled with a far more energetic effort on our part, on the U.S. Government's part, to reach out to Afghan insurgents through this process of reconciliation.

So if there is a change, it has been the change of the United States. And what will this mean? What will these changes mean for post-2014? I would sketch out two scenarios and we have heard a bit of this so far. But if everything works as we hope, that is, if we can build the Afghan National Security Forces and transition to them over time or on time and bear some of the burden for that with our allies; if we can see Afghanistan through the next political transition, that is, their Presidential elections; if we can bring the bulk of the insurgents on board through some sort of a reconciliation dialogue; and if we can maintain a cooperative relationship with whatever new Afghanistan emerges to keep up a fight against remaining terrorist cells, that would be great. Then I think the United States' core interests will be met. Pakistan's interests will be met. The region's interests will be met. Afghans will be pleased. But if we can't do this, if we can't succeed in this process and it breaks down along one or more fronts, then what is likely to happen is the situation in Afghanistan will deteriorate.

And I am more concerned that perhaps—than at least some of my colleagues here, who I am more concerned that we could see a spiraling of the insurgency and a downward deterioration into worst civil conflict. At that point, the consequence for Afghanistan will be dire, but I would also point to the consequence for the U.S.-Pakistan relationship. There will be mutual recriminations. We will blame each other. We already do so. The consequences then could be for greater rupture between the United States and Pakistan. So the end game of the war in Afghanistan could set us up for a break in the U.S.-Pakistan relationship.

What should we do from this? First, don't confuse what we are seeing with Pakistan as more of a strategic shift. See it as a tactical response to our behavior. Secondly, look for narrow points of cooperation where we can with the Pakistanis. We will not agree on many important things. We will agree on some. And finally, we should use the time that remains in our drawdown in Afghanistan where we still are focused with arms, personnel, resources, senior level attention, to strike hard at our adversaries and enemies along the border with Afghanistan and Pakistan, both because they will be a threat to us if they persist as others have made out, but also because they will be a threat to Pakistan, the U.S.-Pakistan relationship and the region moving ahead. So we have a limited amount of time to really make a military difference on that score as well. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Markey follows:]

COUNCIL *on* FOREIGN RELATIONS

March 19, 2013

A Pakistani Strategic Shift?

Prepared statement by
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Council on Foreign Relations

Before the
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Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, House Committee on Foreign Affairs
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Chairman Chabot, Chairman Ros-Lehtinen, Ranking Members Faleomavaega and Deutsch, and members of the subcommittees, thank you for inviting me to testify today. I would like to submit my written testimony for the record.[1]

The United States and Pakistan spent most of 2011 and at least half of 2012 lurching from crisis to crisis, their relationship teetering at the edge of an abyss. In recent months, however, moves by Islamabad have raised hopes in Washington that Pakistan might be navigating a "strategic shift" that would restart normal, workmanlike cooperation and, more important, would allow America to escape from its war in Afghanistan.

Anyone who has watched the U.S.-Pakistan relationship over the past decade will know that U.S. officials have long craved a real, honest-to-goodness shift in Pakistan's mindset, which would see Islamabad abandon its dangerous use of terrorism as a tool of statecraft; patch up its relations with India in the east and Afghanistan in the west; and build a more prosperous, democratic, and moderate society. In pursuit of these ends, the Obama and Bush Administrations have courted Pakistan with various combinations of diplomacy and cash.

More than once since 9/11, the sincere American desire to see Pakistan change its ways has led U.S. officials to interpret Islamabad's tactical pirouettes as evidence of a strategic about-face. As a consequence, the United States took more generous approaches than were warranted and then felt frustrated and betrayed when the inadequacies of Islamabad's "strategic shifts" came to light.

Washington need not commit these errors again. India's recent dealings with Pakistan suggest the path toward a smarter approach.

Skeptics will conclude that Pakistan, over and over, has played the United States for a fool. They will find this latest round of "strategic shift" talk especially galling. Haven't we been down this path before? Haven't we showered Islamabad with billions of dollars in aid only to discover Osama bin Laden, not in a cave, but in a high-walled compound near Pakistan's most prestigious military academy? Didn't Admiral Michael Mullen, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, tell us in 2011 that Pakistan used the terrorist Haqqani Network as a "veritable arm" of its intelligence service? We needn't play the game again only to learn, again, that Pakistan is wedded to much the same strategy as it has followed since 1947, when in its first war with India it sent irregular Pashtun tribal forces into Kashmir to wrest that territory from New Delhi's control.

The skeptics make important points. Tangible evidence of Pakistan's latest strategic shift is thus far extremely limited, just as in past episodes. Yet when it comes to official statements and diplomatic outreach, there is little doubt that Pakistan is up to something different this time.

On the rhetorical side of the ledger, Pakistan's army chief, General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, kicked off speculation about a strategic shift with his Independence Day speech on August 14, 2012. At the center of the speech was an extended argument about the threat that domestic extremism and terrorism pose to Pakistan. After defining extremists as those who seek to force their beliefs upon others, and terrorists as extremists who resort to violence, Kayani concluded: "The war against extremism and terrorism is not only

[1]This testimony originally appeared January 10, 2013 as an article in *The American Interest* under the title "Is This Time Different?"

the Army's war, but that of the whole nation." Many Pakistanis interpreted Kayani's emphasis on this conflict inside Pakistan as a telling sign of the army's redefined priorities (particularly as it came on a day normally reserved for commemorating the sacrifices of Pakistan's wars with neighboring India).

Since August, other top Pakistani officials have echoed Kayani's remarks, and have also taken pains to speak about Afghanistan in more constructive ways. In response to allegations that Pakistan continues to use Taliban insurgents to project influence into Afghanistan, Pakistani officials have started to argue that anxiety, not ambition, drives their regional policies. Looking ahead to the 2014 drawdown of U.S. and NATO/ISAF forces in Afghanistan, Islamabad claims it has every interest in a stable, peaceful, sovereign, and independent Afghanistan. Some officials add that Afghanistan need not even be friendly to Pakistan, so long as it is not unfriendly. It is hard to see any daylight between Washington and Islamabad when Pakistani Foreign Minister Hina Rabbani Khar observes that, "The best possible scenario that we can think of for 2014 is that as elections take place and as transition takes place in Afghanistan, all Afghan groups are able to demonstrate their strength, their will through the election process, not through violence. And that is a future that we must be working toward."

To be sure, Pakistani leaders have made similar points in the past. But there should be no mistaking the fact that Islamabad now intends to convince American audiences that core U.S. and Pakistani interests can be brought into alignment. Considering how terrible relations between Islamabad and Washington got over the course of 2011 and early 2012, such olive branches are especially striking. They come alongside Islamabad's energized diplomatic outreach to Washington, Kabul, and New Delhi.

With Washington, Islamabad has restarted several dialogues that had crashed to a halt in 2011. Senior U.S. officials who were turned away from Pakistan less than a year ago have recently chaired working groups on issues like energy and defense cooperation. Trilateral "core group" meetings (U.S.-Pakistan-Afghanistan) have opened the door to a new round of negotiations with Taliban insurgents. In particular, Pakistan has released at least 18 Taliban prisoners and offered safe passage so that they, and perhaps others, might participate in talks with other Afghan counterparts. Over the course of 2012, senior Pakistani and Afghan delegations met more than twenty times. President Hamid Karzai, among other Afghan officials, has welcomed these moves and expressed his appreciation for Pakistan's newfound, more constructive approach.

Pakistan renewed its outreach to India well before its latest moves with Afghanistan and the United States. At least by official Indian accounts, Pakistan's latest diplomatic surge resulted from the fraying of relations between Islamabad and Washington in 2011. Eager to remove at least one problem from its overcrowded agenda, Pakistan re-opened and energized talks with India, starting with trade and cross-border economic ties. In November 2011, the two agreed to extend Most Favored Nation status to one another. Other Indo-Pakistani discussions have opened the door to less onerous travel restrictions for businessmen and may pave the way for the full resumption of a wildly popular series of India-Pakistan cricket matches.

U.S. officials initially saw Islamabad's overtures to New Delhi as marginal diversions—or at best silver linings—in the context of Pakistan's generally frustrating behavior. Yet the longer the era of good feeling persists, the greater the hope that the normalization process might take on a life of its own.

3

Let's Not Get Carried Away

Islamabad's friendly words and constructive diplomacy should be taken seriously, but what Pakistan has not done may ultimately prove to be more revealing than what it has.

To put it differently, over the past 18 months Washington's strategy has shifted more than Islamabad's. In September 2011, when Admiral Mullen criticized the ISI's links to the Haqqani Network, many in Washington (and in Pakistan, for that matter) assumed that the United States had finally decided to hold Islamabad's feet to the fire, had finally determined that Islamabad would pay a price for aiding and abetting terrorist groups with American blood on their hands. Perhaps that was Mullen's intention, but the Obama Administration backpedaled from his statement and the episode had no discernible effect on Pakistan's policies.

Similarly, a year later Obama Administration officials, including Secretary of Defense Panetta, publicly voiced doubts about whether Pakistan's army would follow through on its frequent hints and strike the Haqqani Network's home base of North Waziristan, a step Washington had sought for years. Panetta anticipated that the military campaign would take place, but expressed concern that it might not target the Haqqanis. He suggested that Pakistan's army might instead attack only the homegrown insurgents (the so-called Pakistani Taliban) that had taken up arms against Islamabad. As of this writing, not only has Pakistan failed to go after the Haqqanis, but no major North Waziristan campaign of any type has materialized.

Indeed, Pakistan has held its line on the Haqqanis and North Waziristan while the United States has shifted its expectations and focus. Under heavy congressional pressure, the Obama Administration designated the Haqqanis a Foreign Terrorist Organization in September 2012. Otherwise, Washington appears to have pulled away from pressure tactics with Islamabad.

Whereas U.S. officials had hoped to see Islamabad put the screws to Afghan insurgents on Pakistani soil, now Washington appears willing to settle for Pakistani-facilitated peace talks with those same insurgents. Yes, Pakistan has released Afghan Taliban prisoners and participated in conversations with U.S. and Afghan officials about reconciliation. This could be called a "strategic shift", but, crucially, most of the shifting has come on Washington's side, where there is now more acceptance of Pakistan's influence over the peace process than ever before.

Pakistan's basic position on counter-terror cooperation with the United States is also unchanged. Publicly, the civilian government remains opposed to the American use of drones. Privately, as far as is possible to discern, Pakistan's leaders tacitly accept the drones but prefer to limit U.S. operations to remote parts of the country well beyond the range of journalists and most of the Pakistani public. As a consequence, Washington directs strikes only within designated "boxes" of territory along the Afghan border.

Pakistan's intelligence agency remains opposed to covert U.S. operations on Pakistani soil and has clamped down on U.S. visa applications. Some of this is understandable given Pakistan's history of territorial insecurity. Pakistanis vigilantly guard their sovereignty, and Islamabad has suffered the political blowback of high profile incidents like the 2011 Raymond Davis affair, when a CIA contractor shot dead two Pakistanis in Lahore. Pakistan could make itself even less helpful on the counter-terror front by cutting ISI-CIA

cooperation entirely. But Pakistan could also do a great deal more, and its dealings with the United States still fall far short of being full, transparent, or friendly.

Moreover, in many parts of Pakistan Kayani's admirable rhetoric on the need to curb extremism has had no discernible consequence. A number of Pakistan's most renowned extremists (including Hafiz Saeed, the founder of the terrorist group Lashkar-e-Taiba, which is responsible for the 2008 Mumbai attacks, among many other horrific acts of violence) have united under the banner of the "Defence of Pakistan Council" to rally support for an anti-American, anti-Indian, Islamist vision of Pakistan's future. So long as these groups direct their vitriol outward, they appear immune from state sanction. This holds true in spite of Washington's April 2012 offer of a $10 million reward for information leading to Hafiz Saeed's capture.

From India's perspective, Pakistan's inaction on Saeed is part and parcel of a broader problem. Pakistan has done next to nothing to bring the perpetrators of the 2008 Mumbai attacks to justice. Pakistani officials cite the limits of their judicial system and an assortment of legal/technical barriers as reasons for slow progress, but Indians believe the true story is much simpler: Pakistan refuses to cut its longstanding support to Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) or its affiliates. On this score, the Indians are right. Pakistan banned LeT in 2002, but the group simply renamed itself and went back to work. Pakistan has also taken steps to limit infiltration into India by LeT and other terrorist groups, but none of these steps have put the anti-Indian terrorists out of business.

Nor has Islamabad coupled its diplomatic outreach to New Delhi with other measures on the military front that would signal a genuine strategic shift. For instance, Pakistan is building tactical (very small, short range) nuclear warheads and delivery systems. These weapons are intended to deter an Indian invasion that Pakistani military planners fear might come the next time Pakistan-based terrorists strike India. Pakistan's tactical nuclear program is worrisome because it threatens to introduce nuclear weapons at an earlier stage in any future Indo-Pakistani war. Even worse, if the Pakistanis believe they can deter Indian punishment, they might be more willing to give a green light to new terrorist provocations in the first place. From India's perspective, Pakistan looks like it is using its nuclear program to keep sub-conventional military options (terrorism) open. This is hardly a recipe for normalizing the relationship, and hardly a strategic shift.

India's Experience

India's leaders appreciate that Pakistan has not really come around to view the relationship in fundamentally new terms. And yet New Delhi is still ready to talk and to explore areas where its interests overlap with Islamabad's. There are three reasons why.

First, India lacks serious alternatives to negotiations with Pakistan. Since partition in 1947, India has repeatedly tried and failed to wall itself off from its neighbor. Today India is by far the greater power, but smart Indian policymakers understand that military tools cannot subdue Pakistan without threatening India's prosperity and, if nuclear weapons are taken into account, India's very existence. Any punishment India can deliver to Pakistan would come at a prohibitively high price, if only because it would disrupt and jeopardize business activity and economic growth. For India, desperate to help hundreds of millions of its citizens escape from grinding poverty, such disruptions would be especially painful.

Moreover, as Pakistani domestic troubles mount, New Delhi recognizes that Pakistan's weaknesses are more threatening than its strengths. Fearing refugee flows, loose nuclear weapons and the rise of militant Islamists, India has an interest in making sure that Pakistan does not fall apart at the seams. Indian diplomacy offers Pakistan more space to get its house in order.

Second, even if Islamabad never intends to change its ways, India can still achieve temporary gains from a diplomatic process. Bilateral talks are valuable simply by helping to ward off Indo-Pakistani war for a matter of months or years. The ruling Indian National Congress party will score political points if India sees peace through its next election cycle. And India's economy will benefit from freer trade with Pakistan as long as it lasts; even impermanent deals can be worthwhile.

Third, it is conceivable that the diplomatic process of normalization will contribute to a virtuous cycle. If diplomacy enables Pakistani businessmen to get richer from their investments in India, they will be more likely to whisper words of restraint in the ears of their nation's politicians and generals, and their Indian counterparts would do the same on the other side of the border. In general, as Indian and Pakistani economies become more integrated, war gets more costly and the constituencies for peace gain power.

Economic integration also has the potential to change Pakistan's political and economic trajectory by creating jobs for young men and women who might otherwise turn to violence; by encouraging investment in infrastructure and technology that will make industry more competitive on the global market and forestall the flight of capital and talent; and by loosening the repressive hold of feudal elites who will face a world in which educating their peasants will be more profitable than keeping them down. The latest Indo-Pakistani diplomatic effort is nowhere near achieving any of these goals, but the longer it lasts the more space it creates for bottom-up peacemaking of all types.

India is therefore a willing partner in Pakistan's diplomatic outreach. Yet New Delhi has been careful only to meet Islamabad halfway in their dealings. Holding a firm line has been a political necessity for Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, who cannot afford to look weak in front of his domestic audience. Politics aside, the Indian commitment to a diplomatic principle of tit-for-tat is also a sound strategy that enables New Delhi to make the most of whatever Islamabad puts on the table. If talks yield incremental progress, great; but if diplomacy breaks down or India suffers another terrorist attack, India's leaders cannot be blamed for being overly generous.

Playing tit-for-tat has also enabled New Delhi to tie specific demands to specific deliverables. For instance, Prime Minister Singh has repeatedly put off travel to Pakistan—a trip that would redound to Islamabad's advantage—until tangible progress is made in prosecuting the Pakistan-based plotters of the Mumbai attack. India's diplomacy also de-links the various issues it faces with Pakistan. As a consequence, disappointing progress on the counter-terror front has not blocked worthy efforts to improve trade ties.

Follow India's Approach

With some modification, an Indian-style approach to Pakistan comprised of tit-for-tat and de-linkage could also work for the United States. Where Pakistan is forthcoming, as it now appears to be with Afghan peace talks, the United States should seize opportunities and pocket gains as they come. Where Pakistan

disappoints, as it continues to do on military operations in North Waziristan, the United States should withhold favors. Frustration along one front (such as Pakistan's inaction on LeT or its continuing support of the Haqqani Network) should not necessarily hold others (like U.S. investments in infrastructure and education) hostage.

President Obama began his first term with ambitious rhetoric about the need to move away from what members of his national security team called a "transactional" relationship with Pakistan. By ramping up civilian aid to Pakistan, opening a range of diplomatic dialogues, and intensifying efforts at military and intelligence cooperation, Washington aimed to transform Pakistani attitudes about the nature of the relationship, to strengthen Pakistan's capacity for constructive cooperation and, by extension, to make it more likely that Islamabad would choose policies favorable to the United States.

Owing to the near-collapse of U.S.-Pakistan relations in 2011, however, the White House has in many respects already retreated to a tit-for-tat, de-linked approach to Pakistan. Over the past year, the Obama administration has grown increasingly sophisticated in its ability to calibrate the flow of military assistance to Pakistan in response to Islamabad's actions. Washington suspended military aid when Islamabad closed NATO supply routes to Afghanistan, then resumed it when the routes re-opened. All the while, most of Washington's development aid for Pakistan flowed undisturbed by the drama over supply routes and other security matters. Behind closed doors (not least on Capitol Hill), the Obama Administration has had to argue the merits of de-linking civilian aid, weighing its value in promoting Pakistani stability against Islamabad's unhelpful and irresponsible behavior on so many fronts.

Full and public candor about such decisions may be politically and diplomatically impossible. Publicly, U.S. diplomats should welcome Pakistan's constructive moves and the prospect of more to come without exaggerating or imputing a strategic shift that has yet to materialize. At the same time, in order to sustain and defend a tit-for-tat, de-linked approach, the Obama Administration should be honest with itself and, when appropriate, with congressional leaders about the tradeoffs the United States is making and those it would be willing to make down the line.

Washington should consider, for instance, whether it would halt its support to Pakistan's F-16 fighter jet program if Pakistan's next army chief puts his foot down and demands an end to the U.S. drone campaign; if he accepts drones but expands Pakistan's support to LeT and the Haqqani Network; or if he threatens nuclear war with India. Unless the Obama Administration knows which of its payoffs (or sanctions) are tied to which actions by Pakistan, it will have a hard time calibrating its responses to Pakistan's behavior, explaining those decisions to officials inside the U.S. government charged with implementing them, and justifying them to members of Congress who foot the bill.

Aside from the need for candor, these examples also highlight the first of several important differences between the situations faced by Washington and New Delhi. Unlike India, the United States sends billions of dollars of assistance to Pakistan. Since money is fungible, a dollar Washington sends to help build roads or dams frees up a dollar in the Pakistani budget that can be devoted to building tactical nuclear warheads. This makes de-linkage harder. Washington will be better off if it directs its assistance to specific projects in Pakistan rather than deliver general budget support or funneling cash into programs that the Pakistani government would choose to fund even if Washington did not.

Second, New Delhi has only come to accept its present approach toward Pakistan after decades of frustration and bloodletting. Washington need not exhaust itself further before adopting a similar strategy, but then again, the United States is far more powerful than India, and thus has a greater capability to isolate (or assist) Pakistan through military, diplomatic, and economic means. By following India's example and accepting a world in which Pakistan continues to pursue policies inimical to American interests, Washington also accepts an unnecessarily constrained vision of U.S. power and influence.

No one can argue with the fact that the ambitious approach of the early Obama years has failed. Questions should be asked, however, about whether that failure was a consequence of the strategy itself, its inadequate implementation, or inappropriate expectations for how long it might take to work. Should 18 months of intense U.S. diplomacy and a few billion dollars have upended Pakistan's decades-long approach to managing its affairs at home and abroad? Could any bilateral relationship have withstood a crisis-packed year like 2011? Probably not.

This does not mean that the United States can (or should) now return to the "transformational approach" favored in 2009, but it does suggest that U.S. policymakers have more tools at their disposal than their Indian counterparts, and that Washington need not retreat to New Delhi's level of ambition. In particular, the United States should not give up on long-term projects designed to promote political and economic development in Pakistan just because they have not yet transformed Pakistan for the better. Patience will be a virtue; the slow and steady application of U.S. power through coercion and inducement has the potential to yield success where shock therapy has not.

Third, India faces the prospect of an infinite future of living next-door to Pakistan. U.S. dealings with Pakistan, on the other hand, are framed by the endgame of the war in Afghanistan and increasingly by timetables for NATO's military drawdown. It is fashionable now in Washington to suggest that with fewer forces in Afghanistan, the United States will depend less on Pakistan (and in particular, its supply routes), and therefore will have more leverage in its future negotiations with Islamabad. And it is true that Washington will retain influence in South Asia even as its military presence wanes.

That said, reductions in resources, manpower and senior-level attention devoted to Pakistan's region cannot help but make it harder for Washington to coerce or cajole Islamabad. By this logic, the period between now and 2014 would be the best time for the United States to use all of the tools at its disposal to bring about a shift in Pakistan's strategy. Given how hard this task has been in the past, only a highly coercive, integrated approach of diplomatic, military and economic coercion could conceivably hope to turn the tide. Yet squeezing Islamabad would be risky for Washington, and as a practical matter Obama Administration officials appear to have no stomach for it at this stage.

As a second best solution, the United States should ratchet up its attacks on groups like the Haqqani Network and Lashkar-e-Taiba in ways that go well beyond what India can do, whether by way of drone strikes, attacking financial flows, or other military and covert operations. To the extent that Washington can demonstrate its commitment to destroying these groups and to depriving Pakistan of any reason to view them as useful proxies in Afghanistan or India, it should make every effort to do so. In addition, Washington should devise longer-term, post-2014 plans for addressing these sorts of threats after the United States has pulled the lion's share of its forces out of Afghanistan. Washington had better not take its eye off the ball in

Pakistan as it did throughout much of the 1990s as the terrorist threat metastasized. History shows that there is no way for the United States to escape the threats posed by South Asia, at least not for long.

Risks and Tough Choices

Policymakers who take up the reins in the Obama Administration's second term should recognize that a posture of tit-for-tat and de-linkage comes with other risks as well. For instance, Afghan negotiations with the Taliban hold hope, but the American desire to see a quick settlement could lead U.S. policymakers into concessions easily exploited by Pakistan-backed insurgents who have no interest in severing ties with international terrorists or accepting central tenets of the Afghan constitution. A fig leaf settlement may well permit NATO to head home, but it could also set the stage for renewed Afghan civil war and the return of terrorist safe havens to Afghan soil.

In addition, over the coming year Pakistan's leadership will be playing a complicated political game at home. National elections and the scheduled retirements of the army chief and the supreme court's chief justice by the end of 2013 all raise the specter of instability and crisis. In similar historical circumstances, Pakistan's military has asserted its influence in extra-constitutional ways. A narrowly conceived strategy of de-linkage could require Washington to overlook such trespasses if the generals simultaneously deliver progress in Afghan peace talks or cooperation in counter-terror operations. Knowing this, Pakistan's generals would have that much less reason to fear any negative consequences from political interference, at least with respect to relations with Washington.

All of this is to suggest that even if the United States steals a page from India's playbook and calibrates its response to Pakistan's new policy initiatives, Washington will be forced to make a series of gut-wrenching decisions about its priorities. A candid acceptance of that reality would, however, be far better than falling into the well-worn pattern of hoping that Pakistan has embarked upon a true "strategic shift", interpreting Islamabad's tactical moves as evidence of a new mindset, and generously rewarding Islamabad in the hope of encouraging and accelerating change—only to lament our naivety if Pakistan fails to deliver.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much. Excellent testimony and I will speed through the questions so we can get as many members as possible. Our exit strategy, the bilateral security agreement, and certainly our exit from Iraq was not optimal, as President Obama would say about other things. Is the same mistake going to be repeated in Afghanistan, along with legal immunity for our U.S. forces in Afghanistan?

Another controversial point between Karzai and the United States has been the issue of prison transfers from U.S.-run detention center near Bagram to Afghan custody. There have been several delays with the last one coming while Secretary Hagel was just in Afghanistan. Why is Karzai so adamant that these transfers happen immediately? Why has this been such a difficult issue to resolve? With all of the corruption problems surrounding the Afghan Government, can the U.S. trust that government to properly secure those prisoners in a manner consistent with our standards? And why is Karzai willing to undo all of the good will that had occurred between the U.S. and his government over this issue? What is the symbolism or the significance of Bagram for Karzai?

We will just start down the line. Thank you, Dr. Jones.

Mr. JONES. Madam Chair, this is a very important issue. In working with several Afghan ministers along these lines, I would note that the Afghan Government more broadly has been more amenable to working through these issues than some of the public statements from the President would indicate. On issues like prison transfers, I would add other things like night raids and the use of Special Operations in villages. Public statements have ended up being slightly different from the negotiating strategy of the government in private.

I think, in part, what we have got to be able to see through is that some of these statements, in my view, by the Afghan President are done, in part, for domestic political purposes, to try to demonstrate to his constituency, his population, that he is not a puppet of the United States. So I think we have to take some of his comments into domestic politics, into a domestic politics context. So what does that mean? I think most of these issues, including the Bagram prison transfers, we will be able to negotiate. I think we do have to be careful that we do not hand over prisoners, as we have seen with individuals like Mullah Zakir, who is the second or third in command—the leading military commander of the Taliban that they released. So I think we can hold fast on several issues. But I found them in practice more amenable.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much. Dr. Kagan.

Ms. KAGAN. Thank you. To expand on Dr. Jones' point, President Karzai is facing an Afghan electorate even if he himself is not running for President in 2014. Certainly, he wants to ensure a smooth succession between him and someone who also represents the same ideas of Afghan Pashtun unity that he would like to represent and symbolize.

To do so, he is going to play to some of his Afghan audiences by reinforcing his commitment to his own sovereignty, something frankly that he has emphasized quite a lot in public rhetoric and also in private rhetoric over a number of years when it comes to

legal immunities of detainee transfers, Special Operations forces privileges, and so on and so forth.

I think what is essential here is first to recognize that we, the United States, are never going to have a total conversion of interests with President Karzai. He is the President of a sovereign nation and he has different interests from ours. But just because he speaks actively in public to posture to his electorate does not mean that that forms the basis of his policy or the basis of his expectations of the United States going forward.

It is also vital that the United States does not actually lose authorities over the next year to conduct the kinds of operations that we will need to conduct in order to maintain a counterterrorism mission. And insofar as President Karzai is bargaining to take away some of these authorities, it is okay for us to push back and to push back hard in order to make sure that we secure our national interests.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you. And in the interest of time, I am going to cut you gentlemen off and give time to Mr. Deutch. We are in recess, but we expect that we will have votes in just a little while.

Mr. Deutch.

Mr. DEUTCH. Thank you, Madam Chairman. As we look forward to 2014, a key factor to stabilizing Afghanistan for the future and really to ensure our own national security interest is to improve Afghan governance. And as several of our witnesses have said today, corruption has been rampant in Afghanistan for many years. In order to have long-term legitimacy, the central government has to root out corruption at the highest levels and it seems that a good opportunity to show that will be in the Presidential elections in 2014.

Mr. Bergen, you had said in your testimony that the elections represent both a great opportunity and a potential peril for the country. I agree with you. What are the chances of a peaceful transition of power? Is Afghanistan capable of running free and fair elections? And what should the United States do, what can we do to help the Afghans prepare for the 2014 elections? And are there lessons to learn from the 2009 elections to help ensure that 2014 is not a repeat of those? I will start with you, Mr. Bergen.

Mr. BERGEN. Thank you, sir. In 2005, Afghanistan had a Presidential election in which the turnout was 70 percent and there hasn't been a Presidential election in this country since 1900 where there was 70 percent turnout. So there is nothing inherently Afghan about not being able to conduct their reasonably good election. Two thousand nine was flawed. We played a little bit of a role, the United States, in the sense that we privately told a number of different Afghan leaders that we are backing you which had the unintended effect of splitting the opposition to Karzai. We shouldn't make that same mistake again.

The election is something that we can provide security assistance to and technical assistance to. At the end of the day, it is a U.N. mission more than a United States kind of government mission. And we should be cognizant of all of the issues we have just discussed, that something that is reasonably free and fair enough in

which we don't sort of back, seem to be backing anybody in particular, that will be very, very useful for Afghanistan's future.

Mr. DEUTCH. Dr. Kagan, do you have thoughts on what would constitute free and fair enough?

Ms. KAGAN. Afghans tend to settle their political differences through compromise and negotiation. And since they have a Presidential, rather than a parliamentary system, what we should expect to see is a negotiation among the political leads of Afghanistan in advance of the election to make different power sharing agreements that will fall into place depending on the outcome of the election.

What is free enough and fair enough I think is a very important question. But what is more important is what is actually going to convey a degree of legitimacy on the government and a capability to govern the country which is absolutely necessary to prevent the kinds of security vacuums that will give rise to al-Qaeda.

Mr. DEUTCH. But isn't legitimacy going to be based ultimately on whether the election is perceived to be free and fair, Dr. Jones?

Mr. JONES. Yes, they are. Frankly, I think that the challenge with this election as opposed to previous ones is assuming President Karzai does not run, you are going to have a range of individuals with questionable national legitimacy that may have greater incentives to stuff ballot boxes, pay individuals to vote, intimidate. So this is partly an information issue. I mean one thing the U.S. has to do with several of its allies is to continue to collect information on anything about voter fraud, payment of information, intimidation, and to get involved both privately and publicly in calling this out. I think if that is made very clear very early on, that may deter some of the voter fraud that may be likely in next year's elections.

Mr. DEUTCH. Dr. Markey, can we deter that voter fraud? Can we prevent it from happening?

Mr. MARKEY. I am pretty skeptical about the prospects for the upcoming election. I mean, look, the last one was deeply flawed and we were heavily present. The next one we will be much lighter footprint, fewer people around the country. Our capacity to police it, our capacity to have leverage over the process, I think, are just going to be much, much more limited. I think we will see the kinds of abuses that you are talking about. I would broaden the conversation a bit though. I would say first of all, the elections will be important and they will to some—possibly, if they happen at all given the kind of instability that may emerge, they may ratify the kind of process that Kim is talking about, a kind of internal dialogue. But that dialogue is probably also going to have to include questions about the constitutional system and the constitutional order there, if in fact, it is going to bring on board some part of the insurgent movement. I mean if that is the plan, if part of the plan is reconciliation, you are going to have to bring in people who are now outside the political process.

So the elections may be kind of a capstone to that. Will still be ugly and messy, but will have to be more of a ratification of a broader dialogue than a simple, neat process.

Mr. CHABOT [presiding]. The gentleman's time has expired. The gentleman from California, Mr. Rohrabacher, who is chairman of the Eurasia and Emerging Threats is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. And to my friend, Mr. Faleomavaega, I would like to suggest that his analysis of the war weariness of the American people is right on target. And what I wanted to remind him of earlier and just remind us is that Mr. Faleomavaega is a combat Veteran and also the Samoan people have contributed a great deal to our military over these last 10 years of conflict. I just wanted to put that in the record.

I find it a little bit disturbing that we are talking about—from what I just said, that we need to make sure America remains there and has military forces there after 2014. There is a contradiction there. And the fact is, the American people don't want to stay in that part of the world. Let me just note that the optimism of this panel, especially the last two members here about Pakistan, let us just note, things have changed in the last 20 and 30 years. I mean you can see it, even before the testimony today, people were describing Pakistan in a different way than what we would have 20, 30 years ago.

Pakistan is no longer our ally and India is no longer the ally of the Soviet Union. What we have now is an ally in India and an enemy in Pakistan, not because we are declaring they are our enemy, but because Pakistan has declared itself an enemy of the United States. Nobody but an enemy would take the murderer, the terrorist who slaughtered 3,000 Americans and given him safe haven and then arrest the man who helped us bring justice to that murderer and arrest him and call him a traitor.

Pakistan has declared themselves—it is about time we realize that Pakistan is the source of many of the problems that we have there, rather than being optimistic that Pakistan is going to change.

Let me get on to this about Afghanistan. We have imposed Karzai onto the Pakistanis. Karzai had no popular base of support and instead of letting the king, King Zahir Shah, play his rightful role in bringing about a new type of government, a new government in Afghanistan, we superimposed Karzai on them and in fact, our Ambassador Zal wrote their constitution which is totally contrary to their own national patterns of life. It is the most centralized constitution government in the world today. The President appoints the Governors. What would happen to the President appointing the Governors in our country? There would be a lot of conflict there over who was going to hold power, because once you establish absolute power people fight over it.

Let me just suggest I think that we have done in Afghanistan since driving out the Taliban and let us note it wasn't the United States that drove the Taliban out. It was the Northern Alliance with the support of the United States. Then we created an unsustainable government, an unsustainable governmental sector of that society. It is unsustainable because it is contrary to their decentralism and we put people in power that didn't have any popular base of support or ethnic base of support.

Well, if it is unsustainable, how can anyone suggest that we remain in Afghanistan and just have more of our people killed like this poor captain down in Florida who the chairman is lamenting and who represents all of the people killed in all of our—throughout all of our districts as well? So why should we stay knowing that the government is an unsustainable government that we created in the first place. You have 21 seconds to answer that.

Mr. CHABOT. Is it directed at anyone in particular?

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Whoever. I made comments. Go ahead. Mr. Markey, do you want to take me on about Pakistan?

Mr. MARKEY. Sure, just on that. I think you are right in a sense. Pakistan has been incredibly frustrating and at times would be better characterized as an adversary or enemy, particularly with respect to our differences in Afghanistan. But let us be careful what we wish for because they could be an even worse enemy than they currently are.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. They are friends with China.

Mr. CHABOT. The gentleman's time has expired. The gentleman from Samoa, who actually is the ranking member of the Asia and the Pacific Subcommittee, Mr. Faleomavaega, you are recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I generally don't like to oversimplify a given issue, but as a matter of historical perspective, I want to share my view with our panelists. We were in Korea for 3 years, and 30,000 of our soldiers lost their lives. We were in Vietnam for 10 years, and 60,000 of our soldiers lost their lives with some 200,000 of our men and women wounded and maimed for life. And some 2 million Vietnamese women and children killed in that terrible war. Then we were in Iraq for some 8 years; and 4,400 soldiers lost their lives. There seems to be a consistency of the pattern and look at how long we tend to stay once we start a war. It seems like it is always easy to start a war, but to end itqu seems to be really, really difficult as my good friend from California is expressing the very same concern that I have.

I understand Dr. Jones and Dr. Kagan both are of the view that we should continue to stay in Afghanistan. I think we need to go back to the very beginning, why we ended up in Afghanistan. It was due to the attack on the American people on September 11th. Guess what? Nineteen terrorists attacked our country. Fifteen were savvy Arabs, one Egyptian, one Jordanian. Not one Iraqi among the 19 terrorists who attacked us. I think the whole world, even our country, was in favor of pursuing Osama bin Laden. He was the instigator. He is the one that organized al-Qaeda. We need to go after them. Where? Because he was in Afghanistan. But what happened? We shifted gears and said, "No, not just Osama bin Laden. We need to go after Saddam Hussein." And for other reasons we missed the whole purpose of why we were in Afghanistan, which was to go after al-Qaeda and Osama bin Laden.

And then of course, we added the idea that we need to do a little regime change. Added to the problem with the Taliban at one time controlled Afghanistan and an entirely different set of situation where the Taliban, they didn't attack us. The Taliban has no intention of attacking our country. In fact, they want us out of Afghanistan. Let them do their little thing.

The fact of the matter is that 12 million Pashtuns live in Afghanistan and this is where the Taliban has its base, with some 27,000 Taliban, as I understand it. But on the borderline with Pakistan, there are 27 million additional Pashtuns that live there. So is it any surprise that Osama bin Laden was able to stay in Pakistan for nearly 5 years until we were finally able to locate his whereabouts?

My concern is that it is very easy for us here to say, "Oh, we need to leave our soldiers there." I believe that this should be the very last act the Congress, the administration, or our Government makes when we put our men and women on the line in harm's way, it better be for the final security of our national interest. Some have said the war in Iraq was a war of choice, the same way that the war in Afghanistan is a war of choice. Where do we really come into sensing this balance where we have to be there and the fact that we send our soldiers in harm's way to do this to protect our national interest?

I know your position and I respect that, but I just cannot believe that we are going to be there another 10 years or the suggestion that it is vitally critical to our national interest that we stay in Afghanistan. Could you elaborate a little more on that, Dr. Jones?

Mr. JONES. Yes, sure. And I sympathize with the range of your comments on other theaters including Iraq to some degree. But let me just say this, two things. One is that the American presence in the strategy can vary quite a bit. The U.S. has played a very useful role in undermining and countering terrorist and insurgent groups with a limited presence in the Philippines and Colombia and a range of other places that does not require large amounts of money, large numbers of boots on the ground, and large numbers of Americans dying. So I do think there is some variation in how we proceed that may look like other cases.

The last thing I will note is my concern right now in Afghanistan is that we look up in Kunar province where we have current al-Qaeda training camps, small, they are there because they have a local Taliban ally in that case. It is a district-level commander. That is the situation I want to make sure if we leave too quickly that that stuff doesn't spread.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. I am sorry, my time is up. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you. The gentleman's time is expired.

Mr. Bergen, let me ask you a question. You mentioned in your statement that you felt it was a mistake that the administration had announced the surge in Afghanistan and basically, at the same time, announced that we are pulling out by this date. What do you think were the consequences of announcing that when they did? What could have or should have happened differently? What do you think were actually the results of that?

Mr. BERGEN. Yes, I mean this is all in the context of trickling the number of troops in Afghanistan from 30,000 to 90,000 which happened under President Obama. But unfortunately, people and the media of which I am part of, sort of seized on the part of the speech where it said the drawdown was going to start in July 2011. I think the problem with that is that Afghans do actually want us to stay, generally speaking. They are not happy about some of the

things that have happened, but they see us as a guarantor that the Taliban won't come back and a guarantor that neighboring countries, whether it is Iran or Pakistan, don't take too much of a role in the future of their country.

And so I think in retrospect July 2011 was a mistake. So let us learn from our mistakes when we announce the new level of troop numbers and we have already negotiated the Strategic Partnership Agreement. Let us point out that the Strategic Partnership Agreement is still 2024 and these are not combat troops. These are advisory troops, some people doing counterterrorism. So the concern about large numbers of American soldiers dying in post-2014 we have already seen the numbers are in single digits right now every month as opposed to much larger numbers we were seeing before. So I think just learn from this error, if possible.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you. Let me shift gears. Recently, the Iran-Pakistan pipeline, also called the peace pipeline, gained some momentum. The pipeline was inaugurated this month in the southern Iranian port city of Chah Bahar by President Ahmadinejad and President Zadari. Iran offered Pakistan a loan of $250 million to $½ billion to work on the 781-kilometer portion of the pipeline inside Pakistani territory. Russia and China have also indicated their willingness to help Pakistan to construct the pipeline. In January, U.S. Consul General Michael Dodman said the State Department would impose sanctions against Pakistan if it finalized the deal with Iran.

Taking into consideration that once a country is dependent on a particular source for their natural gas supply, it is extremely difficult to change course, how do we assist Pakistan to diversify its energy sources in order to reduce its desire to partner with Iran? And would you recommend that the U.S. impose sanctions on the foreign companies that are involved in this pipeline project and should U.S. assistance to Pakistan be conditioned on its continued support for the pipeline?

Dr. Kagan, do you want to take that or Mr. Markey?

Mr. MARKEY. Thanks. First of all, I would say, to me, the pipeline is deeply problematic and there are all kinds of reasons to oppose it. It also appears to be a political stunt and I believe it s a stunt by the Pakistani outgoing government to attempt to portray itself as more anti-American and more independent than many Pakistanis have believed up until this point. And it is also a stunt to try to show that they are doing something to meet Pakistan's energy needs that is tangible when they haven't met those energy needs over the past several years.

And so in that category, and recognizing that this is a pipeline that is proposed to go across some of Pakistan's most difficult territory through Baluchestan Province which is going to be very difficult to build and I believe almost impossible to build and certainly impossible to build on the timeline that they have in mind, I would suggest that while we should do everything to oppose the pipeline, including threatening sanctions should they turn it on, and including suggesting an alternative, a pipeline from Turkmenistan, TAPI pipeline that would probably meet their energy needs as well or better and would pose none of the problems that this Iran pipeline does pose, that that should be the package that we go ahead with.

That doesn't mean imposing sanctions now, but it does mean leveling threats and making it clear that those sanctions would be imposed should they open such a pipeline down the line. But as I say, it is years away if it ever happens.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you very much. My time is about ready to expire so I will now turn to Mr. Wilson, the gentleman from South Carolina. Five minutes.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you all for being here. I am particularly concerned about insider attacks. Over the weekend, I had a very sad opportunity to participate in a visitation for a very dedicated young American who has done so much for our country. She is retired Sergeant 1st Class Inez Renee Odom-Baker of Cayce, South Carolina. She was murdered during an insider attack this month as she was serving with dedication to help the people of Afghanistan as a civilian contractor. My sympathy to her two sons, Andrew Odom and Larry Mitchell, Jr. and family.

Dr. Kagan, for you and your colleagues, what assurances can you provide to the families of personnel serving in Afghanistan that improved security is in place to reduce the number of insider attacks?

Ms. KAGAN. I cannot possibly myself give guarantees to the families of those who are in Afghanistan. And the issue on green on blue attacks is something that is meant to be of concern to all of us because it is a strategic opportunity that the Taliban is taking that disaffected individuals within the Afghan army who are not affiliated with the Taliban. The Afghan Government is unfortunately not able to deal with it entirely because, frankly, our proximity to, partnership with, and continued interaction with the Afghan National Security Forces is so essential to the long-term outcome and stability in Afghanistan. Despite these attacks and despite the threat that they pose to the men and women who serve in military and civilian capacities we actually need to persist with that close partnership in order to achieve our strategic objectives over the long term, namely a degree of stability in Afghanistan and an ability for that army to have the capability to defend its own country's borders so that ultimately we can reduce our forces and come home.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you. If any other would like to comment? Yes, Dr. Jones.

Mr. JONES. Yes, just a couple of things. One is the levels of insider attacks were at a historical peak last year. Both ISAF and the various components made a concrete effort to improve and I was out there looking at some of this, the vetting process for the Afghan local police and the Afghan national police and the Afghan national army which seems to have reduced by the end of the year in some cases, the number of green on blue attacks, including the collection of information, monitoring of cell phones conversations and some cases with active Taliban or Taliban sympathizers to make sure if there are any problems with current Afghan national or local security officials that those are dealt with.

I think there has been a greater recognition, some vetting has been improved. But I would say the other thing I would just comment on is this is one area where I do think we have to push back on the President of Afghanistan. Comments like the United States is collaborating or has common interests with the Taliban has the

potential to cause an increase in insider attacks if that is the message that the President of that country is sending out to his forces. So I think a very strong pushback to him that those statements actually are counterproductive because they threaten the security of U.S. forces operating in there would be helpful.

Mr. WILSON. If Mr. Bergen or Dr. Markey, do you have—and indeed, I appreciate the efforts of vetting and I was happy to hear even to the point of monitoring cell phone conversations, it is particularly important to me. I am very grateful. Thanks to my wife, Roxanne, we have four sons serving in the military today. They are Veterans of Iraq serving with Bright Star in Egypt and Afghanistan. And so our family truly is appreciative of any effort to make sure that insider attacks are eliminated, reduced, and so again, I want to thank all of you for being here today and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CHABOT. The gentleman yields back and we would like to thank you for also serving this country, as well. I want to apologize to my Democratic colleagues. I went over here twice in a row. The gentleman from California is also the ranking member of the Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade Subcommittee. Mr. Sherman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHERMAN. I doubt very much whether we are going to see a peaceful, unified, progressive state in Afghanistan, but I have no doubt that there will be those advocating for unlimited American resources, treasure, and blood to try to achieve that objective.

Dr. Jones, I want to thank you for your pointing out that we can have antiterrorist presence in Afghanistan involving tiny fraction of the cost and casualties than we have experienced over the last several years, especially since the surge.

And I believe it was Dr. Markey who suggested a U.S.-Pakistani free trade agreement. Again, there is no—you did not? Excuse me. Mr. Bergen. I would point out that the cost of that to American workers has to be calculated among the other costs that those focused on this area would have the taxpayers and people of America pay.

Now the Taliban would not be in business in Afghanistan if it was hunted down by the Pakistani national security enterprise as if it was a true enemy of Pakistan. So the question I have and I will ask you to accept the premise whoever volunteers to answer this, that indeed we installed Karzai. There are few who doubt that. Why did we choose to install someone who was so distrusted by Pakistan or at least elements of the ISI that they have chosen to keep the Afghan Taliban as a potentially useful asset for future involvements in Afghanistan? Why did we not install somebody in Kabul that the Pakistanis could unite behind and view those who waged war against Kabul as enemies of Pakistan? Do I have someone?

Yes, Dr. Jones.

Mr. JONES. My understanding is the record is fairly straightforward on this and that is the U.S. envoy to the Bonn negotiations, Ambassador Jim Dobbins at the time actually ran. He said this in his book that came out several years ago that he ran President Karzai's name by the ISI directly and—or actually gave them the opportunity to provide their top choice as he did with the Indi-

ans, the Chinese, and others and President Karzai was their—was the ISI's choice as their most palatable option in Afghanistan. That view clearly changed over the next several years, but I think for the record, that point anyway appears to be fairly straightforward.

Mr. SHERMAN. Thank you. Dr. Markey, do you have a view on that?

Mr. MARKEY. I think it is important to just take us back to that early period and to appreciate the extent to which we, the United States, believed that the Taliban were truly a spent force. And I think that most of the countries in the region also believed that they had been thoroughly beaten and that this was a very winnable prospect and that Karzai, if it is true that the ISI were willing to accept him as sort of a best of bad alternatives candidate, they were willing to do so because they believed at the time that the war had been won by us, that it was over.

Mr. SHERMAN. Another view is they just view whoever we installed in Kabul is somebody who would only be there for a year or two and they would sweep him aside and put in whoever else they wanted which is the other story I have heard.

Mr. MARKEY. Possibly, but there was a pretty dramatic and convincing route of the Taliban at that time. And their ability to reconstitute themselves took a matter of years.

Mr. SHERMAN. Whether it was the Taliban or someone else, the idea that the government we installed would survive against whatever group the ISI put together. Anyway, I want to shift to a completely different subject and that is Pakistan which I believe is far more important to us long term than government.

We are not doing too well in attracting friends among the Pakistani public, even with our public diplomacy. Pakistan speaks a variety of different languages. What should we do to reach out to the different communities that make up Pakistan? Should we be doing more, for instance, the Sindhi language with our broadcasting through Voice of America and through public diplomacy? Or should we adhere to the view of some in Islamabad that we should treat Pakistan as a purely Urdu-speaking country?

Who wants to answer this one? Dr. Bergen.

Mr. BERGEN. To some extent it is not what we say, it is what we do. Right? The thing that really angers the Pakistanis the most right now is our drone program. And the Afghan Parliament is basically an April——

Mr. SHERMAN. I am asking about broadcasting in the Sindhi language and you are talking about our drone program?

Mr. BERGEN. Well, I am going to say it doesn't matter what we say in Sindhi, Urdu, or Punjabi or Pashtu or any language if we have things that anger them at a very basic level.

Mr. SHERMAN. Okay. Do I have another response? I agree that the drone program has angered many in Pakistan and as the apprehension and death of bin Laden on their territory, but sometimes you have to do what you have to do. It doesn't mean we shouldn't do the best job of public diplomacy that we can do. And I yield back.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you. The gentleman yields back. The bells that you heard here mean we have votes on the floor. Several members have already headed over, so we are going to head over now,

so we are in recess. We will be back in probably a half hour, maybe less. Thank you very much. We are in recess.

[Off the record.]

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN [presiding]. The subcommittee is now back in session and I am going to recognize Mr. Kinzinger to take a slow 5 minutes.

Mr. KINZINGER. I will take a slow 5 minutes. Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you all for waiting through the votes and being here. It has actually been a pleasure to listen to you.

Ms. Kagan, it is great to see you. Thank you for all your hard work and I point you out just because I know of your work well and I appreciate things that you have done. Actually, I have to admit I was very bothered earlier when I heard America basically in essence, in a round about way, referred to as an empire when somebody had mentioned that Afghanistan is the deathbed of empires like for some reason America has somehow been chasing the vast natural resources in Afghanistan or the huge copious amounts of oil. I will tell you that Afghanistan in my mind, although U.S. interests are at stake, was a war that was fought out of frankly, I think, moral justification; an entire culture that believes that women couldn't even be in the same room as men. You hear about people that would have their nose and ears cut off because somebody in the family committed a crime and they would be used as payment. Frankly, I think what America has done and what the Western world has done in Afghanistan has been frankly pretty amazing.

I also want to briefly explore the issue of the surge and the surge in Iraq. When President Bush added troops to Iraq it wasn't the addition of the troops that really made the difference. It was that in that time the enemy believed that America could not stand the heat of the improvised explosive attacks of the attacks that were going on, the massive casualties, and thought that President Bush would eventually say we are done. We can't take it any more.

And not only did the President not say that we are not done, he said we are going to send more troops in and we are going to win this war. And what you saw when that happened was on a dime the war in Iraq turned. And the war in Iraq went from a bloody 100 American troops lost a month to a massive shift and a victory, frankly, for the United States that I feel and I am afraid that we squandered away a year ago.

In Afghanistan, and this is my first question, we talked about the 2014 timeline. I think it was Mr. Bergen that had mentioned the second you say we are surging troops, but they are leaving, so basically the last troop going in is actually going to cross paths with the first troop leaving from the initial entrance, you send a message to the enemy and the Taliban have saying. They say America has the watches, but we have the time. So you send a message to the Taliban and you say hey look, we are sending more troops, but just wait your turn. I know you have been fighting this war for decades, just fight it a few more years because we are out. It sends the wrong message.

So the question I have for the four of you and please answer very briefly, what is up with the year 2014? Is there a reason that 2014 was actually picked? Is there a reason on the ground? Or was 2014

used because of a political concern back here at home? It is palatable to the American people. Because I think, as I heard my colleagues on the other side mention, when you use American troops you have to do so very judiciously. I agree. When you use American troops though, you should never make a decision that involves American troops based on politics at home or it is time to leave.

So let me just ask. I will start with you, Dr. Jones. What is special about the year 2014 or is it politics?

Mr. JONES. I think the answer, it is a political decision. Period.

Mr. KINZINGER. Dr. Kagan.

Ms. KAGAN. I concur. Two thousand fourteen does not make sense from the perspective of what we are trying to accomplish in Afghanistan. The choice of 2014 was a political decision.

Mr. KINZINGER. Mr. Bergen?

Mr. BERGEN. I think it is a little more complicated than that. This was a decision that was arrived at with the Afghan Government and also with our NATO allies which number, I think, 21 in Afghanistan right now. And we have negotiated a Strategic Partnership Agreement until 2024. So it is not like we are turning the lights off in 2014.

Mr. KINZINGER. Dr. Markey?

Mr. MARKEY. No doubt that it has a political component, but the original 2014 suggestion, I believe, actually came from President Karzai and then was latched on to by the administration. Just one quick point, it did send a wrong message to the Taliban. It sent the wrong message to the entire region, so it was beyond just the adversaries. It was our allies, as well as the regional players.

Mr. KINZINGER. I agree with you and I appreciate you bringing that up because in the Middle East it seems that we like this idea of if you smile really well, and the West if two people get in a fight one person says I am sorry and you have an agreement then. In the Middle East, it is frankly strength. And the second you say we are eager to get out of here, you have just shown the enemy they can outlast us.

My last point, and it is not a question. It is a point. Vietnam, we can look back at the Vietnam lessons and say we should or shouldn't have been there. I will argue that a different day. But at the end of Vietnam, we left people that have stood up and fought for a southern government that fought for freedom. We ended up leaving them high and tight, high and dry, and a lot of people died as a result.

Now the next major war we get involved in, Iraq and Afghanistan. The implications of the United States leaving—and the Western allies—I don't mean of everybody—leaving Afghanistan at a time when frankly a lot of people have stood up and said I will put my life on the line to defend a new Afghan Government and to defend freedom and to defend the women's ability to go to school and to be human, frankly. If we leave, I think that sends a message to the rest of the world that if we ever have to do something like this again and it is ignorant of us to think we never will, it would be very hard to get locals on our side when we ask them to support the United States or the Western world again.

With that, Madam Chairman, thank you. I yield back.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much. And so pleased to yield to another combat veteran, Congresswoman Gabbard. Thank you.

Ms. GABBARD. Thank you very much, Madam Chairwoman. I appreciate the insight that each of you have shared today, as well as the variety of opinions that have been voiced by our colleagues on the committee. Really my question is centered around more specifics. Each of you has touched on at one point or another, using different words, about the necessity to remain in Afghanistan specifically, but what does that actually look like? What does that actually mean when you are talking about numbers of troops on the ground? I think Dr. Jones mentioned during one of his responses to the questions saying that it doesn't necessarily mean that you have tens of thousands or over hundreds of thousands of troops that remain there.

I would like to know your thoughts on specifically what going forward that looks like and how long that will be required in order to achieve the goal that you have stated that you feel are important to our national security?

Mr. JONES. Very briefly, the way I envision this right now, one option any way because I think there are a range on the table is on the military side, we can talk about civilian presence later. The goal I think has got to be to focus on training, equipping and advising Afghan national army, Afghan national police, and Afghan local police forces, conducting direct action operations against high-value targets. And then providing some limited enablers such as intelligence, civil affairs, military information, support operations.

Based on a range of estimates, including the size of Afghan National Security Forces and others, one could envision, depending on allied commitments of forces anywhere between 8,000 to about 15,000 American forces.

The question on timing and a lot would depend not just on the numbers because I think we get into a numbers game pretty quickly. It also depends on the strategy one uses and other factors, how you deal with the sanctuary. The sanctuary is a key component, should be a key component of any strategy in Afghanistan because the leadership structure has not been targeted and sits across the border in Pakistan, especially the Taliban's command and control node.

My one last comment along these lines is I think on the timeline and exit, I can't put a year there because I think it is a conditions-based one that ties in very closely to the threat to the U.S. homeland and its interests overseas coming from this area. When that threat goes away, I think it is time to go.

Ms. KAGAN. I concur. I don't think that there is anyone here on the panel who believes that there should be an indefinite number of troops committed to Afghanistan indefinitely. We are in a process of drawing down, in part because of the changes that the Afghan security forces have themselves experienced. During our surge, they, too, have surged. But it is absolutely vital that our withdrawal of forces remains conditions based, based on conditions of the ground, that the commanders in Afghanistan have the flexibility to bring in the units that they need to hold the bases that

they need and conduct the logistical support that they need in order to do the missions that Dr. Jones has mentioned.

Therefore, as we look at the drawdown, it is very important, really quite vital, that it not happen faster than conditions on the ground permit.

Ms. GABBARD. Thank you. I think it is just important to note the distinction. I know there were some comments made that militancy does not go away when the U.S. leaves. Car bombs and attacks that are still continuing in Iraq, al-Qaeda's presence in Syria, I think it is something we can all agree on that the threat from al-Qaeda exists, not only in Afghanistan, but in other places. And it is one that is based on an ideology, not based on a commitment or allegiance to a specific country which is why I think it is most necessary for us to stay focused on what is the mission at hand, what is the specific threat that is facing our country, and recognize forward looking what will be required to address that threat, not just in Afghanistan, but across the entire regions, stay focused on those counterterrorism activities.

And so I think when we look at that threat as opposed to a noble cause of trying to bring stability to an unstable region, and essentially acting as a police force or nation building in different countries which we would all love to be able to do, but because of limited resources and assets, don't have those capabilities. Thank you.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much. Mr. Connolly is recognized.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Thank you, Madam Chairman, and thank you for holding this hearing. Welcome to our panel.

I was talking to a nonprofit representative who has been doing a lot of work in Afghanistan and one characteristic he made was from his point of view once the United States withdrawal is met, the deadlines are met, that what is left behind is sort of a situation that will muddle along. It is not going to collapse. It is not going to look like Saigon in 1975. There are some enduring institutional changes that we will have helped leave behind that actually will make a positive difference and that that is probably the best we are going to look for and that is probably what the likely situation is going to look like on the ground for some period of time.

Would you all agree with that characterization?

Mr. Bergen?

Mr. BERGEN. Basically, yes.

Mr. CONNOLLY. That is succinct.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. We are not used to that.

Ms. KAGAN. I would disagree with that characterization.

Mr. CONNOLLY. You would disagree.

Ms. KAGAN. I do. I think that we have made some very fundamental changes to the situation in Afghanistan, but I do not know that Afghanistan will muddle along. I think that, in fact, the potential for rekindling a civil war in Afghanistan, for state collapse, for state withdrawal, exists. And our path out of Afghanistan can accelerate or decelerate that kind of collapse and help to ensure that Afghanistan—to ensure that Afghanistan continues to muddle along. We need to make sure that there is support to the Afghan Government.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Dr. Jones.

Mr. JONES. I think part of the answer to your question depends on identifying a handful of key variables that could push this in a roughly muddling along in a positive way to very badly destabilizing. I would just point to at least three off the top of my head. One is the activity of neighbors. Increases in weapons, money, other resources from the Iranians, the Pakistanis, the Russians, the Indians, and other countries in the region could lead this to something very different from muddling along. The early 1990s, in my view, in Afghanistan similar scenario, was not muddling along. It was deeply destabilizing.

Second, are we talking about a U.S. combat presence ending or simply the U.S.—and focusing on train and equip, or does the U.S. leave period? What the U.S. does on a military perspective, if it stays and does some training versus combat, that could vary those outcomes.

The third, frankly, is the quality of Afghan governance. The 2014 election, if that goes badly and you get fracturing among say Tajiks and Uzbeks up in the north who do not support the direction of the government, will tend to rip the fabric apart in ways that I think would be worse than muddling along. So the elections, the neighbors, U.S. presence, combat or otherwise, I think are several variables that will impact that.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Yes, Dr. Markey.

Mr. MARKEY. I think these are all reasonable concerns. I think muddling along should actually be seen as pretty good success and muddling along will only happen if a degree of resources continue to flow both to the Afghan National Security Forces and more broadly to the Afghan state. I mean it is not self sufficient. So muddling along, I think, should be seen as pretty decent and we should be concerned about some of these downside risks.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Yes, given the alternatives. Two-part question real quickly about the Taliban. The same person observed part of what will help the muddling along positive scenario is actually the intense dislike for any return of the Taliban in most of the country and that that is pretty clear.

Secondly, I wonder what your opinion is about can Taliban be negotiated with? Count me a skeptic, but there are those that say they could be.

Mr. BERGEN. Yes, and no.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Thank you. I only have 28 seconds. I really appreciate that.

Dr. Jones, can you match that kind of succinctness?

Mr. JONES. No.

Mr. CONNOLLY. We have got a bunch of Calvin Coolidges up here, Madam Chair.

Mr. JONES. Very quickly, the intense dislike, yes. But an insurgent group that has outside sanctuary and outside support can overcome intense dislike in a country.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Bergen's answers, Madam Chairman, remind of the story I told about Calvin Coolidge. He is at a dinner party where a woman sat next to him, President Coolidge, and said you have got this reputation for being so laconic and I bet somebody $100 I could get you to say three things. He looked at her and said you lose.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Very good. Thank you, Mr. Connolly.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Thank you.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. DeSantis, this is a tough act to follow. We need a historical joke.

Mr. DESANTIS. Well, I do appreciate Calvin Coolidge. He is a very underrated President, so I thank my colleague from Virginia for invoking him.

In terms of the footprint that you recommend, Dr. Jones, and I agree. In terms of having folks there, I think you recommended between 8,000 and 12,000. Sometimes people say oh, just throw some Special Operations forces in there. But you don't just throw Special Operations forces in there. You have got to have at least some conventional forces to support them and obviously, intelligence and the CIA component as well.

Where does that put you in terms of what the administration has said in terms of numbers? Do they want a total or have they left the door open for this type of strategy?

Mr. JONES. Well, it is unclear right now. They have opened the door for numbers, possibly numbers along these lines by 2014, but the question is for how long? And I think this goes back to Mr. Bergen's point earlier. Without a better sense of what this means in 2015 or '16 or '17, I think those numbers are partly meaningless because locals will look at the longer-term commitment.

Mr. DESANTIS. Now given the fact that obviously there is a lot of things going on in Afghanistan, we probably really didn't understand when we went in in 2001. Tribal society, they have certain customs that are different from ours. What is kind of the best case scenario in terms of what we can reasonably expect of an Afghan Government because a lot of constituents and Americans will say they really believe that we need to fight terrorism, but they think that Afghanistan, like those people will just never have a decent government. So can you guys just give your assessment on that?

Mr. JONES. I can very briefly comment. If you look at even the most stable period of Afghanistan's history, let us say 1929 to 1978, government that controlled some key urban areas, some key lines of communications on roads, but had tribes, sub-tribes, and clans involved in adjudicating controlling key parts of rural Afghanistan. I think that is your best bet in the future, a limited central government and a range of tribal, sub-tribe, clan and other actors that continue to influence in rural areas.

Ms. KAGAN. I think it is important that the American people know that Afghans see Afghanistan as an entity though. And that one of our goals in Afghanistan is keeping a united state surrounded as it is by unruly neighbors. And that the mythos that the Afghans don't want to recognize themselves as a state even though they find tribe and clan and locality of prime importance is a misconception that Americans impose on Afghans.

Mr. BERGEN. Just to answer that, the first modern Afghan state was founded in 1747 so it is an older country than the United States and even the Taliban doesn't want to devolve. It is a strong nation, but a weak state.

I think what is realistic is let us look at their neighbors. You have Iran which is a theocratic autocracy. You have Uzebekistan that boils dissidents alive which is a Soviet-style regime. And you

have Pakistan which has had four military coups. So by those standards, Afghanistan is already looking reasonably good. And my prognosis, in the 1970s, Afghanistan was a tourist destination, so within living memory there is a whole different Afghanistan. So it is not dream-a-vision that you have somewhere. It is somewhat functional.

Mr. MARKEY. I agree with a number of these points, but I would actually also focus on our capacity, the Afghan capacity to keep together and build up a more successful National Security Force. The army, and our ability to keep it together, their ability to keep it together and not to see that fracture will be very important to national unity. Above and beyond these concerns, I mean there will be all kinds of corruption, war lordism. I mean these kinds of things can happen, but it really falls apart if the one institution of national security also collapses.

So if I were to put my finger on something, that would be the thing I would put it on and that is something that I think we are capable of helping them along with over a reasonable time frame.

Mr. DESANTIS. And then finally, and anyone can take this. There was a comment made by someone earlier in the hearing about the Taliban, they don't really want to come attack America over here, whatever. I guess in your judgment when they allowed al-Qaeda to operate, obviously that was a huge—the regime got crushed after 9/11. Would they want to work with al-Qaeda again as the U.S. withdraws? Or is that something that they view that as a mistake that they had made, that yes, they are Islamic fanatics and they do that, but they didn't have the desire to export terrorism. Is that accurate?

Mr. JONES. I think very briefly it is impossible to generalize about the Taliban. The inner Shura has expressed some concerns about al-Qaeda, but we see local al-Qaeda commanders developing a relationship with local Taliban commanders, meaning that part of the answer depends on what level of the organization you are talking about.

Mr. DESANTIS. Thank you.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much, Mr. DeSantis. Thank you to all the members and all of our wonderful staffers who make this look easy, but most especially to the panelists. Thank you for excellent testimony and thank you to the audience as well. With that, our joint subcommittee is now adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 3:32 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

Material Submitted for the Hearing Record

JOINT SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING NOTICE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6128

Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa
Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), Chairman

Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific
Steve Chabot (R-OH), Chairman

March 13, 2013

TO: MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

You are respectfully requested to attend an OPEN hearing of the Committee on Foreign Affairs to be held jointly by the Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa and the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, to be held in Room 2172 of the Rayburn House Office Building (and available live on the Committee website at www.foreignaffairs.house.gov):

DATE: Tuesday, March 19, 2013

TIME: 1:00 p.m.

SUBJECT: After the Withdrawal: The Way Forward in Afghanistan and Pakistan (Part I)

WITNESSES: Seth G. Jones, Ph.D.
Associate Director
International Security and Defense Policy Center
RAND Corporation

Kimberly Kagan, Ph.D.
President
Institute for the Study of War

Mr. Peter Bergen
Director
National Security Studies Program
The New America Foundation

Daniel S. Markey, Ph.D.
Senior Fellow for India, Pakistan, and South Asia
Council on Foreign Relations

By Direction of the Chairman

The Committee on Foreign Affairs seeks to make its facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. If you are in need of special accommodations, please call 202/225-5021 at least four business days in advance of the event, whenever practicable. Questions with regard to special accommodations in general (including availability of Committee materials in alternative formats and assistive listening devices) may be directed to the Committee.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

MINUTES OF SUBCOMMITTEE ON *Middle East and North Africa; Asia and the Pacific* HEARING

Day *Tuesday* **Date** *3/19/13* **Room** *2172*

Starting Time *1:01 p.m.* **Ending Time** *3.32 p.m.*

Recesses [*1*] (*2:35* to *3:11*) (____ to ____) (____ to ____) (____ to ____) (____ to ____) (____ to ____)

Presiding Member(s)

Chairman Ros-Lehtinen, Chairman Chabot

Check all of the following that apply:

Open Session [✓]
Executive (closed) Session [ ]
Televised [✓]
Electronically Recorded (taped) [✓]
Stenographic Record [✓]

TITLE OF HEARING:

After the Withdrawal: The Way Forward in Afghanistan and Pakistan (Part I)

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ros-Lehtinen, Chabot, Wilson, Kinzinger, Cotton, Perry, Weber, DeSantis, Meadows, Yoho, Deutch, Connolly, Faleomavaega, Sherman, Bera, Frankel, Gabbard, Grayson, Meng, Cicilline, Kennedy

NON-SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: *(Mark with an * if they are not members of full committee.)*

HEARING WITNESSES: Same as meeting notice attached? Yes [✓] **No** [ ]
(If "no", please list below and include title, agency, department, or organization.)

STATEMENTS FOR THE RECORD: *(List any statements submitted for the record.)*

SFR - Perry

TIME SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE _____
or
TIME ADJOURNED _____

_____
Subcommittee Staff Director

QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD OF THE HONORABLE SCOTT PERRY

JOINT SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

"AFTER THE WITHDRAWAL: THE WAY FORWARD IN AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN (PART I)"

March 19, 2013

Dr. Kagan: What specific strategic and tactical benchmarks were considered in determining the timing of the drawdown of forces in Afghanistan?

Dr. Kagan: What is being done differently than their actions in Iraq by the Administration to ensure a Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) is reached in Afghanistan? Is the dynamic of negotiations regarding immunity for American military personnel similar to the situation in Iraq?

Dr. Kagan: What will U.S. action be if the Taliban, al Qaeda, or other extremist forces move back to Afghanistan after 2014? Would a Status of Forces Agreement prevent flexibility for strategic and tactical commanders? Would a new SOFA be required to adjust troop levels? What can the U.S. do to ensure that the Afghans can keep the Taliban, al-Qaeda and other extremists from establishing safe-havens in Afghanistan? What will the position of the Administration be if no SOFA is maintained?

[NOTE: Responses to the above questions were not received prior to printing.]