

82nd Airborne Division Governance & Economics Conference



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REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS



82nd Airborne Division Governance and Economics Conference

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Holiday Inn Bordeaux
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FORWARD

This report of proceedings is intended to provide a summary of the presentations and discussions that took place at the 82nd Airborne Division Governance and Economics Conference. To ensure adherence to the Center for Stabilization and Economic Reconstruction's policy of non-attribution the report is organized into major themes, not by schedule or speaker.

This report compiles the major points made by the speakers and panel members as well as comments and discussions stimulated by those presentations. Presentations and discussions summarized in this report reflect the personal viewpoints of the speakers and are not to be interpreted as official positions of any entity, agency, or organization.

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INTRODUCTION

The Governance and Economics Conference (GEC) was designed to assist 82nd Airborne Division (82nd ABN) in preparing for its upcoming deployment to Regional Command (South) (RC(S)), Afghanistan. The Conference focused on transition, rule of law, governance, funding, reintegration and reconciliation, assessment, relationships between the military and civilian organizations, economic development and United Nations' programs.

The event was held at the Holiday Inn Bordeaux in Fayetteville, North Carolina, July 11–13, 2011. The Conference was sponsored by the Task Force for Business & Stability Operations (TFBSO) of the Department of Defense, and was organized and delivered by the Center for Stabilization and Economic Reconstruction (CSER) of the Institute for Defense and Business (IDB).

Conference Objectives:

- Discuss assessment and metrics tools for measuring success in the AO
- Comprehending the interdependent nature of the most pressing issues in the AO, and the second- and third-order effects of that interdependence on kinetic and non-kinetic operations
- Understanding economic lines of operation policies, strategies, practices, and progress to date
- Understanding Afghanistan's government, tribal structures, interrelationships and authorities
- Helping deploying units understand and prepare for partnering with the Provincial Reconstruction Teams, including setting expectations regarding roles and ongoing projects
- Enhancing the effectiveness and sustainability of economic development, rule of law, good governance and essential services in the AO
- Establishing relationships with key officials and organizations involved in stabilization and economic reconstruction efforts in the AO, including from the international community
- Understanding basic logistical issues related to the deploying unit's support of reconstruction and stabilization activities
- Obtaining lessons learned from in-place units; translate into future plans on ground for deployment
- Developing awareness of the critical role of strategic communications and public diplomacy in the effective implementation of US policy

The Conference consisted of a series of individual and panel presentations, including dinner speakers, with ample plenary discussion and question and answer periods throughout. The Conference provided all attendees, and especially the 82nd ABN leadership, with the ongoing development plans and programs, the roles and functions of the major organizations engaged in Afghanistan and the opportunity to network with members of those organizations.

Transition

The process of transition within Afghanistan now enters nearly every conversation regarding the country as civil and military personnel alike consider its new trajectory and construct plans in order to ensure sustainability and success. All 33,000 additional US forces ordered to Afghanistan by President Obama in December 2009 will return by the end of 2012, with the initial 10,000 returning within 2011. Following 2012, forces will come back steadily as the Afghan Security Forces take the lead for the nation's security. This withdrawal should be completed by 2014, as transition will have Afghans responsible for their own security. At this time Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) should no longer be present and there will likely be one Embassy as well as four Regional Platforms. The strategic partnership developed between the two countries reinforces that the US is not abandoning Afghanistan. Rather, transition is a continuation of the efforts, not the conclusion of partnerships.

The situation in Afghanistan, however, remains quite fluid and dynamic, as evidenced by the recent assassination of Ahmed Wali Karzai, Chairman of the Kandahar Provincial Council and brother of President Karzai. Entering this period of transition, it is critical to find people willing and able to take further responsibilities within Afghanistan, allowing the US personnel the opportunity to give them space in which to operate independently. Generally speaking, Americans tend to see a problem and want to immediately find a solution. However, in this critical phase, the

questions should be, "What problems can Afghans solve themselves?" and "How can the US support this dynamic?" Accordingly, the White House policy will be careful not to overstep and over-aspire in its approach to Afghanistan.



Mr. Tom Baltazar, Senior Advisor, Office for Afghanistan and Pakistan, USAID, discussing Afghanistan transition

The US military surge is now complete and life is beginning to look a bit more normal for Afghans. The question remains of how truly sustainable this relative normality will be throughout and post transition, given the challenges of the process. As the military begins to withdraw, the civilian surge remains strong, with civilians joining the US military in every place, working to strengthen the Afghan government. There is also a diplomatic surge happening, which has received the most attention and energy over the last few months as Secretary

Clinton has given the Taliban a choice- to continue to be pursued on the run or to be willing to break with Al-Qaeda and lay down their arms. Under the latter choice the US would support the Afghan-led negotiation process and reconciliation. In terms of US interest, this approach would support the President's goal of the complete strategic defeat of AlQaeda, though this process will be quite difficult as Taliban leaders have killed many Americans.

The key to transition is sustainability, translating to revenue production in this

context. There will be the continued support of Counterinsurgency (COIN) operations as well as a focus on infrastructure (power, electrical systems) and economic growth (agricultural investments, food security, extractive production enticing risk capital, financial inclusion and public financial management.)

Pakistan must also be strongly considered in this process. Given its strategic and geographic importance, a political solution is unlikely if Pakistan does not play a constructive role throughout transition.

Regional Platform

The Regional Platform (RP) concept was initially implemented in Regional Command South-west as the United States Government (USG) brought more troops into the area. The US Department of State (DoS) understood that it would need to do more to support the mission, resulting in the civilian surge and the creation of the RP.

In order to operate in this environment and organize civil and military operations the Platform operates on a continuum visualizing 5 elements of stability (Shape, Clear, HoldA, HoldB, Build). This continuum offers a way to collaborate with military partners in a common language, allowing all parties to visualize the conditions that define governance across multiple phases as well as define the minimum essential conditions, thus synchronizing the relationship of governance and development to security operations.



This continuum emphasizes sufficiency and sustainability. Sufficiency speaks to what is minimum and essential for the Afghans to achieve key endstates. Sustainability relates

what is needed for the Afghans to sustain this and to strengthen durability, encompassing 4 stages (support, mentor, enable, sustain). There are no projected gaps concerning Civilian Stabilization Resources for the RP, allowing for projects to continue with the goals of improved capacity, stabilizing effects and transition alignment.

The Afghanistan Stabilization Initiative works to build sufficient and sustainable governance capacity at the provincial, municipal and district levels leading to transition. The 2014 endstate should be that the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) is able to provide basic services and continue to establish more effective, accountable and transparent government.

Key challenges in these areas include: lack of capacity of government officials, lack of formal budgeting training, vacant tashkiels, lack of transparency and limited accountability, failure of central government to address/acknowledge needs of sub-national governments.

There is also a focus on a sustainable agricultural economy aligned with transition with improved capacities and stabilized communities. With this transition endstate, new farming techniques, skills and marketing strategies will be introduced. Military-aged males will also be employed in Agriculture Infrastructure repair. The GIROA capacity to build, maintain and repair infrastructure to support the agriculture sector should also increase.

Economic Development

Afghanistan is a very small economy whose geo-political importance far outweighs its current economic value. The Afghan government has very limited capacity, particularly in economic areas. Government revenue collection is unable to support the relatively small budget. GDP for 2009 was \$15.6 billion with a 22.5% GDP growth rate (which decreased to 8% for 2010.) Services are now the leading GDP component, followed by agriculture (though agriculture remains the largest component within Kandahar.) Poppy cultivation in 2010 remained stable at 123,000 hectares, (comparable to 2008 figures and still less than the high of 193,000 from 2007) with 98% of the total cultivation taking place in nine provinces in the Southern and Western regions. The potential gross export value of opiates is equal to 25% of GDP.

Other important economic indicators for the country include:

- poverty rate (less than \$25/month)- 36%
- unemployment rate- 35%
- literacy rate- 28%
- population in which 50% are under 16 years of age

The pattern of poverty reflects major imbalances in conflict vs. non-conflict areas. Afghanistan is also ranked 155 out of 169 countries on the Human Development Index (HDI), a measure of life expectancy, literacy, standards of living and education worldwide, giving it the lowest rating of HDI in Asia.



Mr. Etienne LeBailly, Office for Afghanistan, Department of State, discussing Economic Development within Afghanistan

Donor assistance is driving GDP growth, meaning that GDP is growing rapidly primarily because donors are building and buying in the country. More than \$57 billion has been pledged by donors since 2002, with over 75% of funds appearing off budget. The majority of US assistance to Afghanistan has been funneled through the Department of Defense. The South and South-East corridors of Afghanistan, its least poor parts, account for 77 percent of the total USAID budget for the country, with aid to Helmand alone accounting for \$350 per person.

The Afghan Government Economic Strategy includes the following points:

- develop fiscal sustainability
- strengthen the budget as an instrument of policy
- improve budget execution
- develop capacity to implement programs
- increase accountability and transparency

The four pillars of the US Embassy Kabul Economic Strategy include: job creation; private sector development; improve infrastructure; fiscal sustainability. In the *short term*, US strategic guidance focuses on:

- sustainable job creation
- promoting investment
- reducing barriers to trade
- developing a skilled labor force
- encouraging a sound market-oriented legal and regulatory framework

For the *long term*, guidance highlights:

- diversifying Afghanistan's private sector
- improving infrastructure
- advancing fiscal sustainability, with the goal of Afghanistan becoming a regional trade hub

The Civil-Military Integrated Economic Strategy works to leverage emerging regional trade corridors to broaden access to regional markets, allowing border access for commerce, not insurgents.

The economic future of Afghanistan focuses on mineral resources and overcoming the challenges for mineral extractions. There are large amounts of mineral reserves within the country, yet it is hampered by weak mining laws, poor infrastructure (road, rail, water, electricity), insurgency, access to ports and lack of transparency. Transparency International ranks Afghanistan 176 out of 178 on its corruption index, a major obstacle to investment and correlated economic growth.

Financing

Financing operations in Afghanistan can be very complex, with a multitude of different funding sources available to units. Operation and Maintenance – Army (OMA) supports the day-to-day operational maintenance and sustainment of service common equipment, systems and personnel. OMA includes administration, logistics, communications, and other service wide support requirements to include stock fund purchases. Review board requirements vary depending on region/requirement and local “Money as a Weapon System” (MAAWS) rules. Units should refer to a local MAAWS manual for the most accurate and up-to-date requirements.

A subset of OMA is Logistics Civilian Augmentation Program (LOGCAP) which funds contractor-provided services in lieu of organic military logistical support. Currently LOGCAP includes dining facilities, Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) operations, laundry, water works, billeting, vector control, repair services, and power generation/distribution. Requests are approved in Afghanistan (under \$750K) and sent to US Army CENTCOM for funding.

Another major funding source is the Commanders Emergency Response Program (CERP). CERP allows commanders to respond to urgent humanitarian relief and reconstruction requirements such as employment opportunities for local citizens, potable water provision, and school supplies. The primary components include: reconstruction, humanitarian relief, battle damage and condolence payments.

Acceptable uses include:

- Water & Sanitation
- Agriculture/Irrigation
- Healthcare
- Education
- Telecommunications
- Transportation
- Rule of law & governance
- Civic clean-up activities
- Repair of civic and cultural facilities
- Condolence Payments
- Battle Damage/Repair
- Protective measures incl. fencing, lights, barriers to enhance survivability of critical infrastructure sites



For FY11 \$1.3B was requested for CERP; with all four Congressional committees recommending \$900M with \$800M for Afghanistan. Additionally, the House and Senate Appropriations Committees added restrictive language which would limit projects to \$20M and require a 15 day Congressional notification for any projects larger than \$5M. There is also evolving legislation in response to Afghanistan’s lack of infrastructure and congressional restrictions for CERP called the Afghanistan Infrastructure Fund (AIF). AIF will provide

units the flexibility to support infrastructure projects with strong Counterinsurgency (COIN) importance and will focus on medium and long-term projects, allowing CERP to focus on small scale, short-term projects as was originally intended. However, the increase in larger scale projects for Afghanistan recently received from theater will continue to put pressure on the program.



Special Funding Authorities

- **Military Construction (MILCON)** – MILCON is the appropriation used to execute infrastructure improvements supporting Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). These requirements can be funded through three different funding streams, and normally applied against CENTCOM’s annually developed Contingency Construction Priority List (CCPL).
- **Minor Construction (O&M)** – “Unspecified” Minor Military Construction, using OMA appropriation for unspecified minor construction up to \$750K per project (\$1.5 million if intended solely to correct life, health, or safety deficiencies).
- **Contingency Construction Authority (CCA)** – Congressional authority to use OMA funding in lieu of Military Construction (MILCON) in excess of the OMA limitation of \$750K with a \$500M limit for Afghanistan. Projects must benefit US forces.
- **Rewards Program (RP)** – Combatant Commanders may authorize payment of monetary funds or payment-in-kind to persons for providing U.S. government and/or allied forces personnel with information or non-lethal assistance that is useful to the operation. It may be used for information leading to the kill or capture of select enemy personnel and information on weapons and ammunition caches, but it is not a weapons buyback program. There are different approval authorities which are dependent on the amount being requested.
- **Counter-Narcotics (CN)** – The Department of Defense’s CN funding provides unreimbursed support to specified foreign countries to stop the flow of illegal drugs. The focus of support in Afghanistan is developing the interdiction capacity of Afghan counter-drug forces. The two primary Department of Defense counter-drug authorities allow for the funding of repair parts, training, infrastructure development, and C2 networks and to provide support for the counter-drug activities of specified countries. Requests for CN funding require a counter-narcotics nexus and are validated in Afghanistan before being

forwarded to USCENTCOM to determine if funding is available.

- **Other People's Money (OPM)** – Other people's money is used when organizations solicit the Army for mission support and then reimburse the Army for services rendered. Funds are normally reimbursed using a Military Interdepartmental Purchase Request (MIPR).
- **Combatant Commander Initiative Fund (CCIF)** – Supports unforeseen contingency requirements critical to joint warfighting readiness and national security interests; USCENTCOM initiatives compete with those from other unified commands. Typically these requirements are joint exercise, or contingency operations related.
- **Overseas Humanitarian Disaster and Civic Aid (OHDACA)** – For humanitarian purposes and pays for medical, dental, veterinary projects; preventive medicine; engineering projects (construction/repair of schools, orphanages, wells, latrines, etc.), training and activities related to clearing of land mines and other explosive remnants of war, promotes establishment of AOR-country capability.

- **Afghan Security Forces Fund (ASFF)** – Funds appropriated for Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan (CSTC-A), partnered with the Government of Afghanistan and the internal community plans, programs and implements structural, organizational, institutional and management reforms of the Afghanistan National Security Forces (ANSF).
- **Afghan Reintegration Program** – Funds transferred from CERP for Afghan Peace & Reintegration Program (APRP)

Other funding sources at work within Afghanistan include:

- Department of State Title 22 funds
- United States Agency for International Development, also Title 22 funds
- GIRoA National Solidarity Program
- NATO funds International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) includes various NATO & Non-NATO partner nations
- Donor nations provide funds for various special purposes or into Trust Funds
- Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

Relationships Between the Military and Civilians

The importance of a good relationship between the military and their civilian partners has been well documented, yet the gulf between the two cultures has continued to cause difficulties when deciding the optimal methods of achieving the United States government objectives in Afghanistan. Each side must strive to understand the other and work toward full integration of effort.



Civil-Military Relationships Panel with Mr. Nick Dowling (IDS International), Mr. Todd Diamond (Chemonics International) and Mr. Jim Hake (Spirit of America)

The Interagency Provincial Affairs (IPA) coordinates the work of PRTs, the civil-military units made up of the Department of State, USDA and USAID employees deployed throughout Afghanistan to extend the reach and enhance the legitimacy of the national government by improving security and facilitating economic development. IPA leads US Embassy inter-agency field operations at the district, provincial and regional levels. To this end, the IPA ensures effective inter-agency and civil-military coordination on US/IJC/NATO efforts to strengthen sub-national governance with an emphasis on GIRoA's delivery of essential

services to the people of Afghanistan. In insecure areas, IPA will focus on the COIN objective of stabilization.

Civilian and military officials often suffer from strong prejudices about the other group, yet all agreed that strong partnerships among all actors will bring the most desired outcomes. It is critical to move past those prejudices to find common ground on which to stand. With this point in mind, it is important to get to know their counterparts and partners early in the planning stages. It is also important to approach these projects with a team mentality, valuing the team aspect above who may be right in an instance or who may be in charge.

Numerous American businesses and the American people have expressed a desire to help the troops on the ground in Afghanistan. Commanders should be given the opportunity to use the expertise of these people. The aim is to help troops create positive interactions with the population with resulted increases in security in an area. US agencies and military will also be working with contracting parties over several projects and in many areas. There should be strong communication with these groups as well.

All actors must remain cognizant of the fact that they are on the same team. Should work and/or projects not proceed as planned they must stand beside their partners in front of the Afghans, projecting a united picture of US efforts in the country.

Governance

The governance situation in Kandahar remains tenuous, particularly after the assassination of Ahmed Wali Karzai, President of the Provincial Council. His death creates a vacuum in Kandahar, with many asking who will fill this role on the Council, though it is speculated that the individual who attained the second largest amount of votes in the last election will rise to the position. However, Ahmed Wali Karzai was a known quantity in the region and there are benefits to dealing with someone of his visibility. Just weeks following Karzai's death, the Mayor of Kandahar, Ghulam Hamidi, was also assassinated, deepening the power vacuum in the Taliban's stronghold. These attacks have jeopardized the government's hold on this critical region.

Governance, generally, is the process by which decisions are made and implemented. Though some may say there is no governance in Afghanistan, this statement is not true. There is, in fact, governance in the country, though it is often lacking, poor or strong but undesirable.

The Afghan government is composed of three branches: Executive, Legislative and Judicial. Geographically, it is divided into 34 provinces which are subdivided into districts (approximately 360 nationwide). Provinces and districts are administrative subdivisions- it is not a federal system. Key line ministries include:

- Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD)

- Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL)
- Public Health
- Finance (Mustofiat)

Lack of capacity and security are strong challenges to governance in Kandahar. Positive changes in security have occurred, yet it remains to be seen whether these changes are sustainable or fleeting. The lack of government capacity also indicates that governance and military capacities are not in sync as it is relatively easier to clear an area, but much harder to bring governance to that same area.



Mr. Abdullah Sharif of IDS International discussing Governance from an Afghan perspective

This lack of capacity is a result of the fact that donor countries are competing with GIROA for the limited capacity within the country as many of Afghanistan's 'stars' are going to NGOs and international organizations for higher salaries. In order to remedy this situation donors must partner with GIROA, affording them a voice in these discussions and empowering the country

with its own capacity. It is also critical that the Afghan National Army take a leading role in the security of the country to help drive governance.

In Afghanistan, authority does not always equal power. The military must identify the truly influential tribal leaders in their areas and understand the relationships among the various leaders as well as formal and informal areas of leadership. Though maliks and elders may have a great deal of influence, they are not technically part of the structure of government. Attempts, however, are being made to integrate these two, rather than work around one or the other.

It is also critical to ensure that Afghan partners aid in this transition process, equipping Afghans to bear responsibility for their future. These partners, otherwise, risk handicapping the Afghan government. For example, if fuel is needed for a particular project, it should be passed through the Ministry of Finance. If partners obtain the fuels by their own processes themselves, Ministry of Finance procedures will not be strengthened, nor will its specific

weaknesses be identified. A system will not improve if it is not used. The systems in place, however difficult, must be utilized in order to foster and strengthen governance.

While operating with Afghanistan it is critical to understand which ministries oversee which services. For example, water falls under three different ministries depending on its location: Mines and Minerals for underground water, Water and Energy for drinking water and MAIL for irrigation water. Understanding these different allocations will substantially aid in getting things done and contacting the right offices without wasting precious time.

Afghan governance, budgeting and decision-making are highly centralized with service delivery responsibilities fragmented across stove-piped ministries. It is important to understand also that at Provincial, Municipal and District levels, there is no accountability to citizens for performance of local government.

Rule of Law

Afghans see justice in a religious context. It is through the lens of respect and honor for family, or in other words, from the communal context. It is, ideally, viewed as the achievement of peace. Asia society's annual survey found that only 48% of Afghan respondents have confidence in the government/formal justice system. The majority of those respondents think that state courts are corrupt and do not resolve cases promptly. These are serious issues which must be addressed within the transition process and are key foci of donors.



Ms. Patricia McNeerney, Senior Afghan Training Coordinator, Foreign Service Institute, discussing Rule of Law within Afghanistan

Afghanistan is a civil law system, based upon the Egyptian model. There is a history of secular, religious and customary law. Afghans relied on this customary law for centuries, decided by tribe and geography. Civil and Sharia Law are linked in the country. The 2004 Constitution explicitly states that civil law is consistent with the principles of Sharia, or Islamic, Law which is designed to regulate everyday life. Prior to 1964 there was a dual legal system in place whereby Sharia courts heard criminal,

family and personal cases while state courts hear commerce, tax and civil service matters.

Traditional dispute resolution relies on community-based traditional justice mechanisms to settle disputes. Local jirgas, or decision making assembly of male elders, are the key mechanism. Decisions in these settings are made in accordance with understandings of morality and justice, also known as Pashtunwali, or the non-written ethical code and traditional lifestyle followed by the Pashtun people. Within Pashtunwali, a society of equals is the ideal, with strong precepts regarding revenge, hospitality, sanctuary and honor. Within this framework, restitution and accountability at the personal level- not the punishment of the wrongdoer- is the ultimate goal.

The current US Rule of Law (ROL) strategy has 4 pillars:

- Tackle Impunity and Build State Capacity
- Reform Detention and Corrections
- Provide for Traditional Dispute Resolution
- Build Leadership Capacity in the Justice Sector

With this strategy the US ROL assistance seeks to offer Afghans meaningful access to fair, efficient and transparent justice based on Afghan law and to help eliminate Taliban justice and defeat the insurgency. These changes will increase the Afghan government's legitimacy and improve its perceptions among Afghans by promoting a

culture that values the rule of law above powerful interests.

Corruption is also viewed as endemic and has, in many ways, become part of survival. The Anti-Corruption Strategy also has 4 pillars:

- Improve Transparency and Accountability

- Improve Financial Oversight
- Build Judicial Capacity
- Help Civil Society/Public Counter culture of Impunity

Current challenges to ROL strategies include: legal reform, land title, capacity, security, corruption and public perceptions.

Assessment

Accurate and useful assessment will be a critical component in the upcoming transition processes within Afghanistan in order to identify best practices and course-correct where necessary. However, assessment is often poor, erratic and haphazard. COIN data are often inaccurate and incomplete to an unknown degree. It is, in fact, not possible to accurately or even usefully measure COIN except within a very specific context. Accordingly, assessment should be bottom-up to the greatest extent possible to ensure that it reflects ground truth, retains context and is congruent with COIN principles. COIN assessment should be decentralized, as is consistent with COIN doctrine where COIN operations are intentionally decentralized, context-generated and mosaic in nature.



Mr. Ben Connable, International Policy Analyst, RAND Corp, discussing assessment in COIN environments

Quantitative COIN data are often inaccurate, with no way to anchor the data with any baselines. Part of the issue stems from the fact that there are serious concerns from the field regarding the collection of data. Often in the field, individuals are forced to answer collection requirements even when the data

do not exist or when the metrics themselves do not accurately capture the reality on the ground. As a result, there is no buy-in at the tactical level with data fabrication seemingly commonplace. With aggregation of often inaccurate data, key points of consideration may be overlooked, or hidden, from decision makers who may receive a completely different sense than what is actually happening at the local level.

A combined top-down and bottom-up approach will be most useful in RC (S), with mission-type metrics supporting success. Assessing from the bottom will allow tactical commanders latitude in describing their area of operations. Analyzing from the top down will then put subordinate assessment in the correct context, allowing for a greater understanding of the varying conditions.

Mission-type metrics are those that matter in a local context as determined by the tactical-level staffs and may vary from area to area or over time. These metrics ensure that assessment reflects the context, local conditions and shifts in local focus over time. It also ensures that local commanders control the collection process to reduce unnecessary collection risks, also preventing data fabrication. These should be embedded within iterative processes with structured feedback mechanisms in place to ensure that assessment remains aligned with changing conditions on the ground.

Regarding governance and economics, a key focus for assessment will be on government

legitimacy through service provision. In this case, key measures would include:

- Percentages of on-budget vs. off-budget money spent
- Amount of allocated development money spent by GIRoA
- Percentage/amount of CERP spent through GIRoA line ministries over time.

Conclusion

Afghanistan has entered a critical transition stage. The military surge is complete and with forces drawing down, all energies and resources will be poured into the transition processes. All partners, both civil and military, have begun transforming into transition mode. Sustainability will be key in order to make sure that the work and resources utilized now will have a lasting effect once the US presence is significantly reduced. As Afghans begin taking responsibility for their own security and future, they will need the continued support, and united effort, of all American actors.

