

**CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT
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**IS NATO UP TO THE AFGHAN CHALLENGE?
EXPECTATIONS FOR THE BUCHAREST MEETING**

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FREDERIC GRARE: Well, good morning, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. It is apparently a difficult day for many people, and I thank you very much for being so patient, even though we started a little late today.

As you all know, Afghanistan will be at the forefront of discussion in the forthcoming NATO summit in Bucharest. And the temptation is to say, once again. Since 2001, Afghanistan has always been in the conversation about international relations, has always been at the forefront of international relations. There was a period of, how could I say – perhaps it was briefly forgotten, but never for very long. And it seemed that we are facing there an unending conflict.

It took a new dimension, obviously, in 2001 because of 9/11, but also because suddenly NATO decided to move in. And that was something new, not only for Afghanistan definitely but definitely for NATO. It changed the nature of the alliance. It did raise a number of issues. And with these new questions came, obviously, new problems.

But things continue and there is definitely a sense of *déjà vu*. And with this sense of *déjà vu* in large parts of public opinion comes also the question that is usually formulated in much more diplomatic terms: What are we doing in this mess? And I think that by saying that, I just summarize what is in the mind, not only of public opinion, very many diplomats because it seems that there is never any answer to the problem over there.

So the same problems that have been discussed for months remain. I mean, how vital is winning the war in Afghanistan, both for Afghanistan of course but also for NATO and the international community? Is the strategy being followed there the right one? Is the number of troops on the ground sufficient? There have been endless debates about that, and that continues. How can the coordination of the international effort be improved, *et cetera*, *et cetera*? And for those of you who follow Afghanistan on a regular basis, it seemed that we've always been speaking about the same thing.

And yet, things are slightly changing. And I think that we have witnessed a few elements in the past few months which are definitely shaping the situation slightly differently. I mean, not necessarily in a decisive manner but they ask new questions, which in a sense will have to be answered and they will have to be taken into account.

Within the international community itself, there has recently, and after months of discussion again, a new U.N. representative for Afghanistan has been named, Ambassador Eide. He combines an experience of both NATO – because he was based there at NATO headquarters – and at the same time of concrete U.N. operation in the field, both in Kosovo and Bosnia. And he starts precisely between the coordination of the international community effort. I mean, NATO itself is elaborating a new strategy. And with this comes the question: Will this be sufficient to meet the challenge that we face within Afghanistan?

Again, the regional context is not radically different, but it is different. We have an election in Iran. We have an election in Pakistan. How is it likely to impact on the whole situation there? We also have had a new agreement of cooperation between NATO and

Russia, and I think this is something – potentially at least – significant. I mean, we don't know yet how it is going to play in the situation; but this is something that cannot be ignored.

And domestically, besides of course the insurgency itself and its evolution, Afghanistan will soon enter a new electoral period; 2009 will be the year when a new president will be chosen. And he will be chosen in totally different conditions than he was a few years ago. So how is it likely to impact on the counterinsurgency effort?

So as I said earlier, none of these elements are decisive per se. And many of them raise just as many questions as they provide answers. Yet, they cannot be ignored in any of our reflections on Afghanistan. And this is to partly engage in the direction that we have invited this morning Professor Jalali.

And I am extremely pleased at a personal level and honored to have him as a speaker this morning. I mean, you all know him. He is a distinguished professor at the Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies at the National Defense University here in Washington D.C. Before that, and perhaps more importantly – although there is no offense here to NDU – he was the interior minister of Afghanistan. He has, both as an Afghan who has lived taking part in the resistance and also as a journalist, knowing the U.S. full well, knowing the issues full well, I think no one could be more qualified to address some of the issues, give us both an Afghan perspective while taking into account at the same time the international constraints.

I mean, for those reasons, we are all happy to have him with us. And with no further delay, I better give him the floor. Professor Jalali, please.

(Applause.)

ALI JALALI: Thank you, Frederic. And thank you, Carnegie, for giving me this opportunity to share my views, perceptions on an important issue that is going to be an important factor in stabilization, not only of Afghanistan but also the region as a whole.

As Frederic said, next week – that's April 2 to 4 – Romania is hosting the 2008 summit meeting of NATO heads of state and government in Bucharest. The meeting generally is termed as the largest NATO summit in history. It is expected to draw up a vision statement, laying out NATO's long-term objectives in Afghanistan.

The statement is intended to reaffirm the allies' unified approach in action in achieving these objectives. With a series of preparatory work during the ministerial meetings, it is expected that the timeline military and development strategy with a series of benchmarks to be achieved over the next five years will be adopted in Bucharest. This will include expanding the reach of the Afghan government. In the face of Taliban-led insurgency, curtailing the illicit opium trade, enhancing the capacity of Afghanistan national security forces – that's Afghan national army and Afghan national police – and ensuring peaceful presidential elections next year.

However, as the experience of the past indicates, adopting joint plans and strategies is the easy part. Putting implementing mechanisms in place, unifying efforts in coordinating actions of all stakeholders at tactical, operational, and strategic levels is the difficult job. There's a lot of good ideas, good strategies around the world about Afghanistan. But there are few practical in implementing ways, means and mechanisms to implement them.

It is hard because it is extremely difficult to bring operational coordination to the effort of so many actors with uneven capacities and political concerns in responding to emerging challenges in highly volatile and dynamic environment. NATO is not the only actor in Afghanistan. You have UNAMA – United Nations – its agencies. You have other countries, non-NATO countries. You have European Union. And also, you have regional actors.

But at the same time, the substantial transformation of NATO has created significant capacities and challenges. The emergence of a new NATO, quote a “new NATO,” capable to deal with challenges beyond the European theater, is an evolving process. The enlargement of the transatlantic alliance, both in terms of membership and geographic span and its growing role in a complex, globalized world has contributed to conceptual differences in defining specific threats and challenges and ways to respond to them.

In good old days, it was different. This was clear enemy. The threat was perceived the same way by all members of the alliance. There was a leadership of the United States, so it was easy. Now, the threat is more vague and difficult. And then, perception of a threat is not the same. So therefore, coordination is becoming problematic. NATO's Afghanistan mission is influenced by these changing paradigms. Afghanistan is a microcosm of emerging global threats and challenges that the global NATO is willing and expected to focus in the post-Cold War period.

My talk today is actually structured around four key points. These are: First, Afghanistan faces a challenge of state-building amidst a cycle of violence. It is easy for the long-term goals to be undermined by short-term priorities. Many actors with different levels of commitment, different level of resources are there, so therefore coordination in bringing together a unified strategy or adopting a unified strategy and implement it is extremely difficult.

Second, NATO's involvement in Afghanistan has been incremental in response to emerging challenges in a volatile national and regional environment with no proportioned mission and strategy adjustment. NATO entered Afghanistan to stabilize areas, which was considered to be post-conflict. It developed now today in conflict area. However, the mission statement has not been adjusted according to the changes in the situation.

And third, there is still a lot of potential to win in Afghanistan, but not through business as usual. And fourth, NATO engagement is not only a test for the new NATO political will and military capabilities. But it can also serve as an engine of the alliance transformation – engagement in Afghanistan.

So let me speak about three different periods in the engagement of NATO. The first is the current political and strategic environment in and around Afghanistan and emerging

challenges. More than six years after the U.S.-led invasion, Afghanistan faces a distinct threat of sliding back into chaos and instability. The country is challenged by revitalized Taliban-led insurgency, a record rise in drug production, a deterioration of the rule of law, and a weakening grip of the national government beyond major cities. The trouble come amidst growing regional challenges and weakening international resolve.

The main drivers of instability in Afghanistan are five: a chronic weakness of the Afghan government and state institutions; a revitalized insurgency; an exploding drug production in a weak economy. At the same time, uncoordinated military operation by international forces and shifting political dynamics in the region are additional contributing factors. These challenges have serious implications for stabilization effort and the process of state-building in Afghanistan.

The challenge of stabilization of Afghanistan is enormous and multi-faceted. It is the challenge of state-building amidst a circle of violence. The country is remote, poor, and extensively destroyed by three decades of conflict and civil war. The country is vas with porous borders and difficult terrain. The country is troubled by a resilient narcotics trade. And international intervention has been carried out by donors with uneven degree of commitment. The stability and reconstruction operations are under-funded, under-resources, incremental, and with little focus.

NATO defines its own mandate – stabilization and reconstruction – as the process to achieve a locally led and sustainable peace in a dangerous environment. So it is all of it. So therefore, unless you take every element of this statement into consideration, you cannot put together, adopt a comprehensive strategy. Therefore, the challenge in Afghanistan is expensive, not cheap. It's long-term, not quick-fix. It's strategic, not tactical. It is regional, not local. It requires comprehensive, long-term approach, not separate and fragmented actions.

So this is the kind of challenging situation that NATO faces. But NATO's involvement in Afghanistan did not come asked to respond to these challenges at once; it was incremental. NATO entered Afghanistan. It took responsibility in Afghanistan almost 18 months after the ouster of the Taliban and the destruction of al Qaeda network in Afghanistan. And so, the initial mandate of NATO, the initial statement of the mission of NATO at that time, if you compare it with today, it's very different. The challenges are different; the environment is different. However, there is a little change in the perceptions of the threat and the challenges in the minds of alliance as a whole. So therefore, different countries are looking at it from different perspectives.

So as I said, it is an alliance that actually agrees on the mission at all; however, they do it through different, separate, fragmented operations. There is no one operation of NATO in Afghanistan. If you go to Kandahar today, you will see the map of Kandahar in the PRT of Canadian forces. Go to Lashkar Gah, you will see the map of Helman there; or Tarin Kowt, the map of Oruzgan. Go to Mazar, you will have the map of Mazar-e-Sharif there, of Balkh Province. You do not see the map of Afghanistan.

Plus, NATO's mission is renewed every year. And people who go to serve, they serve six months to one year. So therefore, this conflict memory, or the strategic memory is

not there. So therefore, NATO – it's a very unique, very strange involvement of NATO in Afghanistan that you cannot – you'll find examples of it in the past. So therefore, you have to think anew. You have to be creative in order to make this mission successful.

I was there in the first two phases of the NATO in Afghanistan, also the preparatory phase—three in that. It was in August 2003 that NATO took responsibility for ISAF, international security assistance force that was mandated by the United Nations Security Council right after the ouster of Taliban, to be deployed in Kabul in order to provide security for the interim government that took power in December of 2001.

Before that, the Security Council had to go around, ask countries to take leadership of ISAF. The first ISAF was commanded by British officer, John McColl. And then, after six months, it was a Turkish general, General Zorlu. I was there when he took over. And then after that, General Van Heyst, then he took over. At that time, NATO was asked to take responsibility to bring some kind of continuity of command and control over there. And that was in August of 2003 that NATO took responsibility. And then, after so many calls from international community, from Afghans for ISAF to expand to the provinces, then NATO or ISAF agreed to expand to provinces, but however in the form of PRTs, first to the north.

Now, what is PRTs? PRT is a group of 100, 150, sometimes 250 military and non-military officials who were charged with the business of expanding the authority of central government to provinces, to peripheries, to facilitate a secure environment, and also to facilitate reconstruction. Now, in those days, that was easy to do this. In fact, the two PRTs that helped me a lot were the PRT of Gardiz in 2003 and PRT of Mazar in October of 2003.

In the spring of 2003, Gardiz was in chaos. All thugs and warlords were controlling it. Now, I restored law and order, stabilization, replacing the police chief, replacing the army division chief, replacing the governor with only 200 police officers from Kabul. However, that was successful because PRT had – the presence of PRT meant the presence of the international community, of the Operation Enduring Freedom. That was an outpost of the international community. But that PRT was actually, as some people call it, the tip of an iceberg. The iceberg was there. So they knew that if something happens, this PRT, there is a great force behind it with a very clear mission, with a very clear determination, intention to come and interfere. So Gardiz, with the help of the PRT, was stabilized in less than a month.

Then, in October of 2003, two factions were fighting with tanks and artillery in the north, with civilians dying there. Two factions nominally the heads of two corps, Eight Corps and Seven Corps of General Dostum and General Atta. And the PRT actually was instrumental in forcing the two – when I went there representing the central government – not only to stop the fighting, disengage the warring factions, to dismantle, dissolve the two corps or two military faction, and then to collect all heavy weapons – tanks, artillery pieces, everything.

And from that day, you have a peaceful conditions in the north, because, again, that PRT had a strong international backing behind it. If you compared it to today's PRTs, some PRTs are efficient; some PRTs are called showcases. Some countries only wanted to add a

flag to ISAF and come there. And they rarely go out of their compound. And sometimes, I use the Coca-Cola terminology for it to call it PRT Classic and PRT Lite. And there are also some caffeine-free PRTs though.

Now, the first phase was actually PRTs. However, these PRTs had a strong backing of Operation Enduring Freedom coalition forces behind it. And the phase II from Kabul – the phase two it expanded to the north from Badakhshan all the way to Faryab. And then, in phase three, it went to the west.

However, that took place in 2005; 2005 was the time that Bonn Accord actually completed. Presidential elections were held and then parliamentary election was held in September of 2004. Then, there was a call from the Afghan government to have the ownership of the strategy. In those days, since the insurgency wasn't very strong, the Afghan government's ownership was important, so therefore, Afghanistan had an elected president, had an elected parliament, and then it had a national army, national police, and other institutions. So therefore, in 2005, you have that new revised operation plan by foreign ministers recognizing Afghan ownership and established more efficient coordination with the Afghan government. That worked very well too.

And in those days, there were three cases, when the Afghan government wanted to remove some powerful regional strongmen or powerholders, PRTs actually were supportive of the government. At that time, Afghanistan was supported party not supporting party. And the international community was supporting party not supported party. So that was also easier in those days.

However, phase III was difficult. The phase III was the expansion of NATO to the south. In 2005, when the decision was made, still the south was not very, very difficult. The insurgency was not very strong. So therefore, it was easy. There were four issues that NATO had to revise.

First, to rewrite the statement because south was different from the north and from the west; it was drug trafficking, the tribal conflicts, insurgency, terrorism. So there was a pressure to rewrite the statement. It is no longer to go and do some reconstruction, facilitate security, or have security forces. But at the same time, it required to have a robust mandate; so therefore, rewriting mission statement.

Then, the raising troops for the south, until 2006, there were only – except the Operation Enduring Freedom that had a base in Kandahar about 3,000, there was only one PRT in Lashkar Gah; 200 to 250 people, that was all, the whole south. So raising troops was a problem.

And third, how to deal with treatment of prisoners – before that, the Operation Enduring Freedom – actually the U.S.-led coalition – was taking prisoners to Bagram or to Guantanamo Bay. They were taking custody of prisoners. However, the Europeans wanted to have a change. And some of them even insisted that we will deliver prisoners to the Afghan government provided the Afghan government does not send them to United States or give it to the United States. So this was an issue at that time.

And then, command structure – what kind of a command, because at that time, it was under two command: Enduring Freedom and also the ISAF. It was easy until February 2006 when the Norwegian PRT in Faryab Province was attacked. There was no element quick-reaction force in the context of NATO to go and help it the same way as we were helping Gardiz; the same way we were helping Mazar-e-Sharif. It was a different type of PRT, different kind of – (inaudible) – until British forces actually intervened. So therefore, the need for a solid force that can intervene with kinetic operations in the South was needed.

So therefore, then the debate in Europe started – in Netherlands, in Canada, and also in England, and also in Canada about the sending forces to the south. And that was the time the Taliban took the impression that they can beat NATO in the south because they do not have that resolve to fight like Enduring Freedom was fighting elsewhere. They were wrong, actually. Eventually, all these three countries sent their troops to the south and they fought gallantly in the south. And that's how it foiled the kind of operation that the Taliban wanted to – the object they wanted to achieve. And they failed in three objectives. First, they failed in defeating NATO forces in the south. Second, they failed in influencing public opinion in NATO capitals to reduce the support from their force to the south. And third, they failed to stage a rebellion in the south.

Then, the fourth – however, the fourth phase was easier because in the east, already there was U.S. forces with PRTs. And NATO actually took over. Currently, what you are looking for are fully 2,000 ISAF or NATO troops, which is half of it – almost half of it are in the east or in the national support element, about 20, 21,000. In the rest, the bulk of it is about 12,000 in the south; and then you have in the north, and the south, and also in north and west in the center of Kabul.

The updated statement is different from the past. The updated statement of mission is conduct military operations. Start with conduct military operations in the assigned area of operation. This is the assigned area of operation – can be interpreted in different ways – to assist the government of Afghanistan in the establishment and maintenance of a safe and secure environment with full engagement of Afghan national security forces – that's the army and police – in order to extend government and influence, thereby facilitating Afghanistan reconstruction and contributing to regional stability. Very general statement, but in practice, you don't see this. Either the ways are not there or the means are not sufficient to do this.

The mission encompasses a wide set of activities, according to the statement, ranging from humanitarian, highly kinetic conventional, and special operations. But you do not have the means there. The mission is seen by a certain nation as peacekeeping and reconstruction and are opposed to get engaged in military operations. So therefore, certain countries believe in the statement; not all of them. So therefore, it is not an alliance strategy, although we agree on the statement. It is a fragmented strategy.

So the problem is here that we have a different perception of the threat. If the threat means that you have to – if you cannot win militarily, but you shouldn't militarily either – then the national caveats – there are only six countries who have no national caveats or minimal national caveats. These are United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, Turkey, and, believe it or not, Macedonia. And then, the rest, you have national caveats.

These are different caveats. In some countries, you have the caveat that – okay, I think it's about 82 caveats for some regions. And it includes, you cannot go out of your compound after 6:00 in the evening in the dark. You cannot go for patrolling more than six kilometers or 10 kilometers off your base. Or, you cannot accommodate even other members of NATO or PRTs in your compound. So if you look, make a list, you'd think it's not an alliance. It is different countries have come there to play their own small wars.

Then, there is when there is a disagreement with U.S. policies now. Is it real disagreement or is it a pretext for something else? For example, they'll mention Iraq. For example, they mention the U.S. policy in the Middle East. They mention Guantanamo Bay. They mention Abu Ghraib things. Now, are they pretext or they are really elements that shape the strategies (?).

On the other hand, some countries believe or think that the United States is using NATO as a toolbox, using it the way it wants. Maybe someday, it would remove all its troops from Afghanistan and leave NATO to do that. Or sometimes probably or even go back far as I have spoken in Europe, that it is not only Afghanistan. This is a larger strategy or larger design of the United States in the region. So we are going to be part of it; we are being used as toolbox of that policy.

These are misperceptions. The bottom line is that you have a mission. You agreed on a mission. Then, you have to contribute to the accomplishment of the mission, not in a tactical way but in a strategic, long-term way. That is missing.

And the public opinion is a problem in Europe, of course. And there is a decline of the public support to involvement of European countries in Afghanistan. But the problem is that instead of some countries try to shape opinion, they reflect the opinion in their policies. And I was speaking once with some political parties in Europe and they argued how can we convince people that we do not have achievements in Afghanistan? And I said, yes, you do not have achievement in Afghanistan.

But you do not have positive interest in Afghanistan; you have negative interests in Afghanistan. I think you have to tell them what is going to happen if you fail. And that is going to be the basis of the logic of intervention in Afghanistan. However, we don't see much of this. I think it is mostly reflecting the public opinion in policies, not the logic of what is going to happen if Afghanistan fails to Europe, to the region, and elsewhere.

So now, if you briefly assess the current mission of NATO, we have four or five important issues. First, there is a basic unity of purpose in Afghanistan, but allies defer on ways and means. Second, no unified strategy on counterintelligence, counterinsurgency, reconciliation with Taliban, counter-narcotics, and development. Development for some countries means that you have a PRT; you go build a bridge, a school, a clinic, a clinic that you cannot find doctors for it, a school that probably they locate in an area that no children can go to, or there are two countries building two schools in the same area, same village.

Development helps security and stability, however, if it is part of a national strategy, part of reconstruction or state-building of Afghanistan. In all development countries, post-

conflict situation, different actors come and do different things. However, it helps only if it is the centrality of state is maintained there. Otherwise, it's uncoordinated, transient, and also maybe it duplicates and actually sometimes work at cross-purposes.

The counter-narcotics, although 90 percent of opium or heroin produced from Afghanistan goes to Europe, but there is no strong determination to get involved in counter-narcotics. They countries say that we will train, we can provide intelligence, we can provide some kinds of transportation: but not involvement. Although, in the South, the insurgency and drug trafficking are all together. You cannot separate them from one another. If you find insurgency, you have to find narcotics trade too.

The reconciliation with Taliban has not been integrated into overall strategy. So people are doing it different ways. Unless this reconciliation is part of an overall strategy and policy under the ownership of Afghan government, separate in the fragmented action and speaking with different voices actually can create more difficulties, more complexities in the situation. Now, you have seen that certain countries are going to talk to Taliban at tactical level. Some even are more to appeasement. I've heard in some areas that they go out; they say we are not going to destroy your poppies; we are not going to fight you. Even if you fight the government, we are not going to interfere. This is appeasement; this is not reconciliation. In some other areas, they're doing it without the knowledge of the Afghan government.

Okay, a tactical level for commanders can do this, but at a strategic level, you have to have a unified strategy because in Afghanistan, you are facing three very different types of insurgency. One is traditional-historical. That is local, not ideological, and tactical. Those who will fight the government, they want to reestablish an equilibrium that has been destroyed – network of tribe, clans, and others. The second is the Taliban-led, the core Taliban-led insurgents. They will not settle for less than taking over. It is ideological; it is strategic or national; and also, it's long-term. And then the third is al Qaeda or transnational kind of insurgents. And that is global. And they are not only interested in Afghanistan and Pakistan. They are waging a global war.

So therefore, the national reconciliation talk with Taliban has to take all these different things into consideration – whom to talk to, whom to engage, what is the political price that you can accept, and what is the end state? There is a growing suspicion in Afghanistan that some countries are trying to find colonial kind of solution to the tribal issue in the south, create a new FATA in Afghanistan, which is not going to work in Afghanistan because Pashtuns in Afghanistan are integrated into a nation. It's everywhere – north, south, east, west, everywhere. It is not only in one area.

Second, the people have negative reception about Taliban. They do not want them to come back, even locally. And third, if you go to treat these people in the south, tribes in the south, separately, it has a domino effect. It is going to spread to other parts of Afghanistan. And that is a recipe for fragmentation of the country.

And then, command and control is a major problem. The ISAF, Operation Enduring Freedom, CSTC-A – or the combined security transition command for Afghanistan, U.S.-led – and also national commands, they are all different channels. A PRT

in the north reports to ISAF, coordinates with other elements in the area – United Nations – but at the same time, it reports to its country. Many PRTs, many countries or their elements are at the same time responsible in getting instruction from their own countries.

So therefore, the poor ISAF commander, he has to work on all these things, although, in order to bring some kind of coordination, the ISAF has created three deputies. One deputy is for reconstruction and stabilization operations. That works with the Afghan government. However, unfortunately, there is no strong national security and economic council on the Afghan side to work with that. The second is for air operations. And the third is with OEF, Operation Enduring Freedom. However, these are all local and also fragmented and not focused.

So what can be done – the third issue? I think there are three major issues for the NATO. And I hope this vision, statement of vision in Bucharest that is going to address it. And then, there will be a major united effort to make it possible to implement. These three issues is one of strategy. The strategy, the stabilization, and reconstruction is part of an overall strategy. It is not the whole thing that some countries believe that this is their mandate.

Counterinsurgency operations cannot be won militarily, but it can be lost militarily. The counterinsurgents never win – insurgents never win, only counterinsurgents lose. So therefore, this should be taken into consideration in an overall strategy. On the other hand, NATO is not going to defeat Taliban in Afghanistan. Afghanistan will defeat the Taliban. So therefore, building that capacity in Afghanistan is important. Therefore, you have two challenges: fighting this insurgency that you face and building the capacity and long-term state-building that eventually will take over. Now, the challenge is this: How do you reconcile the competing demands of these two? That should be resolved in the overall strategy.

Second, the means – the means are not enough. There is a call from everywhere, the troops, money, and time. We need troops, money, and time. Okay, time depends on the level of troops and level of money, level of the development of the Afghan government. Means mean not only troops but at the same time capacity to accelerate the development in creating Afghan capacity, Afghan institutions, particularly Afghan army and Afghan national police.

Now, in six years, major investment of the United States, now you have an army of about 50,000, around 50,000. With police from 2002 to 2006, Germany invested 70 million euros, about \$80 million in six years. Where U.S. took over, well, it's billions of dollars that they're spending. However, that program is late. Now, on the other hand, dumping all demobilized militias on police actually created that problem that you cannot resolve it easily today. So therefore, means also how to accelerate building the capacity of Afghan government to make it a good and efficient partner.

And with term of troops, you have to have sufficient troops that you are clearing the area from insurgents to hold it and to rebuild it. That capacity is not there. Now, there is a call of 7,500 troops. The United States is sending 3,200 troops; 1,000 will go for the OMLTs, or operation military liaison teams, which is mentors for the Afghan army and

police. But, by some calculations, until the Afghan institutions are capable to do the job, I think there is a need for double the number of ISAF troops, up to 70 to 80,000. Where is the number? I don't know. We have to think about it.

The third is the command and control. The counterinsurgency is 20 percent military that NATO is doing; 80 percent non-military. There is no ownership of 80 percent. And it's a free-for-all. All countries do something there. It is like five countries coming to Afghanistan. One says, I will build a clinic. The other says, I will provide lab equipment, the other training of staff, the other ambulances, and the other salaries; five countries to build that clinic. However, they do it in five different provinces because there is no coordination, no ownership of the 80 percent.

Ideally, Afghan government should have it. However, Afghan government does not control the funds. Two-thirds have to go outside the government control. It does not control military operations; ISAF or Enduring Freedom is conducting it, without coordination with the government in many cases. And third, it does not even control development choices. So therefore, this 80 percent has no ownership.

Now, the worst thing is that the overall strategy should have 20 percent plus 80 percent – 100 percent. The 100 percent does not have an owner. Ideally, that should be Afghan government. However, during the past seven years, sufficient investment was not made to make this Afghan government a very efficient partner.

So the command and control is now – let's face the reality – it is not possible for many countries to go and fight. Germany is not going to do it. Spain is not going to do it. Italy is not going to. Many other countries will not do it. So what is the choice? You have the need and you have this. I think if they are not going, therefore you have to have a reconfiguration of the command system. I think there is a need to have one command of ISAF with subcommands in the north and subcommand in the south. Those who are willing – the United States go to the south. And the rest go to stabilization and reconstruction operations in the north.

At the same time, the overall command should also take responsibility for coordination, looking at the regional issues in the north in Central Asia and the south in Pakistan. Not necessary to deploy forces there but to responsibility for the coordination of the statutes with these areas.

And to conclude, I will say that there is a lot of possibilities to succeed in Afghanistan for four main reasons. First of all, the Afghans are tired of war. They want to have peace. They accept the presence of the international community. They support the presence. Second, the institutions that was built, the foundations laid during the past six years, I think you can build upon these. You are not in 2001 to start everything from scratch. And third, the Afghans support the current political process. They do not see Taliban as an alternative, despite the problems that they face in south. And finally, I don't think that the international community or a global NATO will afford to see the effort in Afghanistan fail because it's not going to be Afghanistan; it's going to be a regional problem and beyond.

And so therefore, Afghanistan is both. It's a microcosm of what NATO can face in its global role. You have all things. Sometimes I call this problem in Afghanistan and South Asia the theme park of problems. You just name a problem; it's there. The kind of problem that you – local, regional, transnational – you have it there – drug trafficking, smuggling, everything. So therefore, it's a microcosm of the kind of threats that NATO in its global role is going to face everywhere in the world. So therefore, it's a test for NATO.

Is it going to work or not? If it does not work there, I don't think it will work anywhere else. At the same time, it's good. Afghanistan probably will contribute to this new global NATO because it can serve as an engine of transformation of NATO. I thank you for your attention, ladies and gentlemen.

(Applause.)

MR. GRARE: Well, thank you very much, Professor Jalali. We now have a bit of time for a Q&A session. And I'm sure that this very comprehensive presentation will raise a number of questions in the audience. May I just request all of those who have questions to briefly introduce yourselves before asking your question?

Who wants to start? Yes, sir, please. The microphone is coming.

Q: Hi, Paul Richter with L.A. Times. What are relations like now between the NATO countries and President Karzai? U.S. officials defend him staunchly in public. Are relations still that sweet? And what about the other NATO countries?

MR. JALALI: Well, I think the relationship between Afghans, international community inside Afghan, within NATO, is all influenced by what happened in the past six years. If you look in Afghanistan, you have disenchantment at three levels.

At the grassroots level, there is a disenchantment with the failure of the government to provide security and services to people. So it is dangerous because this pushes people; it pushes people toward insurgents, Taliban, drug traffickers, unemployment – unemployment can create a lot of problems for people. This is one level of disenchantment.

Then, there is a second level of disenchantment. That's at the government level, President Karzai and the international community. Now, what happens at the grassroots level, it also reflects on the perceptions of the government. The government believes that it did not receive the sufficient support from the international community. The international community did not respond to the demands of Afghanistan, but supplied what they thought they could do. It was a supply-driven project not a demand-driven project. So therefore, on the other hand, everything was done in many cases outside the government control. So therefore, there is a disenchantment with the international community.

For example, you heard that disagreement on the use of air strikes in counterinsurgency operation – if insurgents are hidden in a village among population, shooting them or hitting them with artillery and air strike creates civilian casualties. And then, you also heard that talking to Taliban with a knowledge of government actually

irritated the government. Many other things like this that was done without coordinating with Afghanistan.

On the other hand, look at the counter-narcotics. The international community, many partners are fighting among themselves how to deal with it. And I heard it from President Karzai himself that he said, we look right; this is something else we don't know what to do. So this is a disenchantment too. And this is also dangerous because it forces the government to make tactical deals with other powerholders, warlords who have their own agenda. They are not interested in stabilization. Unstable situation are in their interest.

The third, which is becoming very, very – a source of concern to everybody is at the international level. What happens in London and what happens in capitals of NATO countries, public opinion, that they are asking their government to leave Afghanistan or to reduce their engagement in Afghanistan, that's another level of disengagement. This is dangerous because this sends a signal to Taliban and also to non-state fighters that they hedge their bets. The regional powers also they try to hedge their bets. And that contributes to instability in Afghanistan.

So these all are part of the problems that I hope that a unified strategy, a resolve of the alliance level should address. You know, I was in the resistance during the Soviet occupation. Mujahideen had a saying that the Russians have all the watches; we have all the time. Now, Taliban copied this. They say the West has all the watches; we have all the time.

MR. GRARE: Sir, please, and then you.

Q: My name is Bill Putnam from DOD. Quick question, sir. When you were talking about NATO and saying how some of the countries want to fight and some don't and give it the responsibility in the south and the east to those who want to fight and the ones that don't, let them do stabilization and reconstruction. My question to you is, there are many who believe that if NATO does not succeed in Afghanistan, there is no reason for NATO to exist anymore.

And so, if you have a situation where, say, the Dutch, and the Canadians are fighting in the south and are asking for help, and nobody is willing to come forward and give that help, but they say, we'll do reconstruction, how do you then sell that to populations in Europe and other places such as Canada and say, it's okay; we're going to do the fighting; they'll do the reconstruction because what you have then is uneven labor. And if you're a Canadian population, you're going to look at Germany and say, why won't you pick up the slack? We've done our time. How does the alliance succeed in a situation like that?

MR. JALALI: Yes, that's a problem. I think this all depends on – as I said, there is a need for U.S. leadership of NATO again. That leadership is not as strong as it was during the Cold War. I think that leadership should be established. Maybe that leadership would eventually solve these problems. Otherwise, if you – at the same time you are fighting, infighting in NATO that some want to fight, some don't want to fight; there is no future for NATO; it's true. However, if you think that NATO or Afghanistan should be stabilized, a way should be found. And that is the – only leadership of the United States can do this. I don't see any other options for it.

MR. GRARE: Providing perhaps that the leadership of the United States doesn't forget that the same leadership precisely has been asking for decades the same German to stay where they were and not to militarize too much. That's also a dimension of the problem, which tends to be forgotten a little too quickly. So that's different.

Please, ma'am.

Q: Hi, my name is Allison Slater. I'm in my last semester at SAIS at Johns Hopkins. I have one question. And that is, the fact that you touched on it a little bit and that was the economic part of this. How much can this be solved using economic solutions, especially when it comes to the drug problem? You didn't really touch on that enough.

MR. JALALI: Yeah, the 80 percent of people in Afghanistan are involved in one way or other in agriculture. And yet, during the past several years or decades, agricultural products declined to 50 percent of the pre-war period; 60 percent of cattle destroyed; I mean, perished; 70 percent of forests were destroyed. And yet, during the past six years, only 3 to 4 percent of international assistance were enlisted in restoring agriculture. Once in 2004, I suggested that instead of PRTs in some areas, you have to create ARTs – agriculture reconstruction teams.

However, unfortunately it is not – because the agriculture sector, why I say it is the farming; it is the marketing; it is the packaging industry; it is the roads, water, and electricity infrastructure. But at the beginning of 2006, when people came, they were looking for these small, quick-impact projects. Quick-impact projects help locally; but it does not create the basis for a solid development of the country. So therefore, yes, development is very important. However, development does not mean what you do to – if it is related closely with security, it is not going to have a major impact. If it is related to the overall state-building infrastructure, then it helps. And I think agriculture is one area to focus upon.

Now, there is a dam, Kajaki Hydroelectric Dam, in Helmand Province. That was built in '50s and '60s. If you repaired that – Kajaki was destroyed during the war – it provide electricity to about 2 million people in Kandahar and Helmand Province. That can make a major impact. Bring real changes in the lives of people. However, because of the lack of troops to provide security in order to repair that building, it is there. And the control of Taliban and Musaka Lafa (sp) over a year actually prevented repair work on Kajaki dam. This can also provide water for irrigation, also revise agriculture in that area, which actually is a measure to stem growing of poppies.

MR. GRARE: Well, if there are no questions right now, let me ask you a couple of questions regarding the regional situation, not to deal with Pakistan – perhaps surprisingly – but to address the role of other – or potential role – of the other Asian powers. After all, Afghanistan is an Asian country and it is operating – it is the backyard of many other regional giants. I'm thinking of course of India; but I'm thinking also of China. Is there a role, if any, for those two countries in Afghanistan? If so, what kind of role and what would be the limitation to that role as well.

MR. JALALI: Yeah, the international consensus in 2001 was a major factor in bringing the new order to Afghanistan because Bonn was – in Bonn, there was a consensus among international partners. That consensus is gone now because different countries look at Afghanistan from their own regional interest, which has changed since 2001. Look at Uzbekistan. Uzbekistan, the Karshi-Kanabad was the base of U.S. forces. You don't have that. At the same time, Russia was very cooperative during the Bonn process and then later on. But then, China, the same way – you know recently the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, seeing that Afghanistan was sliding back into chaos actually suggested that a conference by Shanghai Cooperation Organization should be held in order to find a solution for Afghanistan.

So it is the countries like China and Russia, looking at Afghanistan today because of their views about other issues that they have with the United States and Europe. So therefore, I think the recent overtures by Russia to cooperate in Afghanistan is something that you have to look at with an optimistic way. If they can find a way – however, it is not going to be participation in NATO operation in Afghanistan, because recently, you heard the protest and demonstration in Afghanistan that they heard that Russian troops will come to Afghanistan.

So therefore, yes, they can play a major role – you know, a productive role. However, I think it depends on their views on other issues around the world. It is probably missile issues, other things – all factors that they also shape their views on Afghanistan.

MR. GRARE: What about China?

MR. JALALI: China has been involved from the beginning, supportive of Afghanistan and the stabilization of Afghanistan, because China's concern in Central Asia, Afghanistan is security and energy. And in both cases, a stabilized Afghanistan is welcomed by China. However, the presence of the U.S. force in Afghanistan and perceptions that it's not only for Afghanistan but for the whole region, that creates a misunderstanding, misperception. And I don't think this is the case because in Afghanistan, there were times that we were trying to move some of the U.S. forces enough to stabilize some areas in the West. It was very difficult because the partnership between Afghanistan and the United States – the partnership – is only on the paper. There is nothing practically done in order to – in the context of that partnership.

It is, I think, the United States is not interested beyond Afghanistan. Afghanistan is important for the United States to be stabilized because it's also an element for the stabilization of the region, Afghanistan and Pakistan. But I don't think it's a very big design that is for Central Asia or some other thing.

MR. GRARE: Thank you. So, please.

Q: Ken Dillon, Scientia Press. I'd like to return to the question about agriculture, which as you pointed out is very important in Afghanistan. And specifically to the question of alternative livelihoods to poppy-growing, there have been many attempts but there has not been much funding for them, until there was supposed to be the counter-narcotics trust fund, which had various figures – 70 million, was supposed to have 100 million – whatever –

a lot of money in an Afghan context. I wonder if you could give us your assessment of the attempts so far at alternative livelihoods, your views about what has happened to that counter-narcotics trust fund money, and your ideas about where we should go on the question of alternative livelihoods.

MR. JALALI: Well, there is a different perception about alternative livelihoods. Alternative livelihoods helps only if it is considered as a goal, not as a means. So far, alternative livelihoods have been used as a means. Go to a farmer; help him with some seeds, some fertilizers; even in 2002 to pay him. But it is not sustainable. What is your goal next year?

In the past, several times, there was eradication, but it wasn't sustainable. Alternative livelihood was not sustainable. So therefore, I think the solution should be sought through development approach. You have to do something in order to change that culture. It takes time. Until you do this, I think instead of –the Senlis Council actually is promoting this idea of licensing – but I think there were some ideas that might have worked in 2003, 2004. Instead of providing alternative livelihood to farmers who grew poppies, to subsidize illicit crops at a higher price, it will encourage the illicit agriculture because in many cases, when they paid or compensated the opium growers, it actually encouraged areas which did not have any culture of poppy growing because somebody would come and help you.

However, alternative livelihood is a very difficult issue. You know, a hector of – on hector of land growing poppy, actually, the revenue from this for a farmer is around \$5,000. Well, it depends – between \$4,500 to \$5,500. If you grow wheat, that is one hector of land – then [revenue] is not more than \$400. So therefore, compensation I think is very difficult. However, you can do that. You can buy over a period of time, like five years, six years, gradually reduce it – first year a higher price, then you reduce it, until five years then you see that illicit agriculture grows – or the orchards, the fruits, actually bear fruits. Then at that time you change the culture.

But at the time, you have to go after traffickers because in Afghanistan, the producers do not create traffickers; traffickers create producers. And on the other hand, the 70, 80 percent of the revenue go to traffickers, not to producers, and 20 percent only to farmers. And farmers, in may cases they say, if you give me water, if you give me electricity so that can grow – wheat in a larger area, I will do it, but if I have only a limited access to water, and I can grow crops in one hector of land, I better grow poppies because that means that the money I get from poppies actually to support my family, not on wheat.

But if he has the choice to grow wheat in 10 hectors of land, whether it is his own land or leased land, whatever, or sharecropper, then he will have a better product, better harvest, and more value. So, therefore, you have to look at it through development perspective approach, not just alternative livelihood as a means. And you talked about trust fund. That is fine. However, there is a national drug control strategy on the books – four priorities. The first is destruction of traffic network – four priorities – second, providing alternative development; third is building institutions; and fourth, reducing demand.

But you have disagreement among international partners. Now there is the pressure and the United States for spraying and massive destruction. Is it going to work? Well, the

United Kingdom and some other countries – the United Kingdom is a lead nation on counter-narcotics in Afghanistan – disagrees, because it looks for a long-term, gradual reduction of production of poppy.

And on the other hand, while Afghan law enforcement capacity is limited, NATO and other countries helping Afghanistan are reluctant to go after traffickers. Even if I suggested in 2004 they're legitimate targets, don't go and destroy farms, but go and target labs and stockpiles, or convoys, large convoys coming in very remote areas – target those, but still there's a reluctance to do this. So there is also just the lack of capacity in Afghanistan, the lack of intention to do or agreement with how to deal with poppy cultivation.

Now, there is good news too. Last year, there was – in 2006, there were six poppy-free provinces. In 2007, it went to 13. This year, they say that maybe it will increase to 22, mostly in the northwest center and east. In the south, you have insurgency. Seventy percent of the Afghan opium was produced in four provinces in the south, which is facing insurgency. Fifty percent of it was all of the Helmand province. So there's a close connection between insurgency and the – that production and trafficking.

So, therefore, it is a question of security, with the improvement of security in the center. So in other words, you have to mainstream the drug control strategy into all aspects of development – governance, security, and economics. And now it is a low-risk activity in a high-risk environment. You have to reverse this proportion. Make it a high-risk activity in a low-risk environment.

MR. GRARE: Jessica. We still have time for two questions.

Q: Thank you. Jessica Mathews at the Carnegie Endowment. I wondered if you could just tell us for a minute about Iran's current role and how it interacts with NATO and the U.S. especially.

MR. JALALI: Iran has been very supportive from the beginning of our stabilization of Afghanistan, not only because Iran was actually at one point an open hostility with the Taliban. And Iran took it in a blessing for the oust of the Taliban in Afghanistan.

On the other hand, a stabilized Afghanistan can also provide the market for Iran, its reach to Central Asia, and so therefore, Iran saw its interest in a stabilized Afghanistan. At the same time, Iran has a problem of drug addiction, drug trafficking, and Iran, with cooperation with the United Kingdom and also, you know, D.C., cooperated with Afghanistan to stem the flow of drugs across the Afghan-Iranian border.

However, with the deterioration situation in Afghanistan, with the, you know, intensification of, you know, differences with the United States, Iran has now also pursued a two-track policy. On the one hand, it helps the Afghan government. It continues to help in reconstruction with Afghanistan, building roads, particularly in Herat and Nimruz and other parts of the Afghan country. But at the same time, Iran, like many other countries, tried to hedge their bets, to create new spheres of influences and look for new proxies.

So if the situation, if troubles are brought to Iran, they will be able to bring troubles to the United States in Afghanistan. And unfortunately now today, Herat was very, very unstable. Herat was very stable until 2006. Now you see many – the last two weeks – I think 98 percent of – (inaudible) – the traders, merchants actually stage a protest in Herat – a strike to protest in security in Herat – Herat was a very secure place.

So why is it happening? Because there are some influence. It's not only from Iran, but many neighbors of Afghanistan were supportive are now trying to hedge their bets in Pakistan. Frederic can talk more about that.

MR. GRARE: Definitely not. Not today at least. (Laughter.)

Well, Professor Jalali, thank you very much. This session is now coming to a close. But I would like to thank you for a very comprehensive approach. I think that it does open many, many paths to different thinking in the future. I think that it does also make very clear that this Afghan strategy cannot be discussed in isolation from Afghans themselves. And this is certainly one of the lessons that will grow from this session. With that, thank you very much for you all for coming today and a good day to everyone. Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

(END)