



U.S. Civil-Military Strategic Framework for Afghanistan

Kabul, August 2013
(Revision 2)

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AN INTRODUCTORY MESSAGE FROM AMBASSADOR CUNNINGHAM AND GENERAL DUNFORD

Kabul, August 2013

Dear Colleagues:

Please find attached the revised U.S. Civil-Military Strategic Framework for Afghanistan, which provides strategic guidance for all American civilian and military personnel serving in Afghanistan. The revised Framework updates and replaces the October 2012 version, including the addition of a stand-alone section on transition, greater emphasis on preserving gains, and further clarity on the Transformation Decade; all of which is in consonance with GIRoA and, most importantly, the people of Afghanistan taking responsibility for their country.

The Framework articulates the vision for pursuing U.S. national goals in Afghanistan, while reflecting policy updates and changes related to the passage of time. It is based on the experience, lessons learned, insights, and perspectives of U.S. civilian and military personnel, as well as international and Afghan colleagues, serving throughout Afghanistan. The document is intended to function as a strategic guide for our efforts as we move forward amidst a challenging and constantly shifting operational environment.

As we turn the Framework into operational reality, there will be challenges, even as progress continues. Civil-military teamwork and coordination will help us overcome these challenges, while supporting our Afghan partners as they take ownership of their future.

Thank you for your service, your dedication, and your continued commitment to achieving our goals in Afghanistan.

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U.S. Civil-Military Strategic Framework for Afghanistan

SECTION I: U.S. Government Intent

Introduction, Purpose, and Scope

The U.S. Civil-Military Strategic Framework for Afghanistan outlines U.S. priorities through the Transformation Decade (2015-2024). It is meant to be adaptive, giving decision makers in Kabul and Washington, and policy implementers throughout Afghanistan, the flexibility needed to respond to changing conditions while advancing a set of commonly stated strategic goals and priorities.

The Framework has two primary functions:

- To articulate the strategic vision guiding United States Government (USG) efforts to achieve U.S. national goals in Afghanistan.
- To facilitate U.S. civilian and military cooperation and partnership in Afghanistan.

This iteration of the Framework updates and replaces the October 2012 version. It reflects policy updates and changes related to the passage of time as well as a heightened focus on transition, greater clarity on the Transformation Decade, and guidance from the U.S. Chief of Mission (COM) and Commander, U.S. Forces-Afghanistan (COMUSFOR-A). The Framework addresses a general shift from providing to advising, preserving gains, and preparing for program implementation and monitoring in a resource and access constrained environment.

Through December 31, 2014, both civilian and military efforts in Afghanistan will be focused on security, political, and economic transitions. Throughout the transition process, the USG will support the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan's (GIRoA's) efforts to enhance legitimacy, exercise sovereignty, and instill confidence in government institutions. For the U.S. mission, "transition" means a shift in security responsibility for Afghanistan to the Afghan Security Institutions (ASI) and the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) and a U.S. policy shift towards a more traditional diplomatic and development model. All USG efforts during transition should support GIRoA taking the lead in the critical areas outlined in the Framework. Further guidance on transition is captured in the newly added section "Transition Partnership with GIRoA."

Although this Framework is focused on USG efforts, its ultimate success will hinge on full cooperation with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the international community, and, most importantly, GIRoA.

U.S. National Goals in Afghanistan

As expressed by President Obama, our two national goals in Afghanistan are:

1. Disrupt, dismantle, and eventually defeat al-Qa'ida and its affiliates and prevent their return to Afghanistan.
2. Strengthen Afghanistan so that it can never again be a safe haven for international terrorism.

The United States, in partnership with the international community, is conducting a coordinated civil-military effort in support of GIRoA. Efforts in security, governance, the rule of law, and socio-economic development, together with Afghan efforts to promote an inclusive political dialogue leading to national reconciliation, should allow the USG to make substantial progress towards achieving U.S. national goals in Afghanistan by December 31, 2014. As we pursue U.S. national goals and conduct operations, we must be mindful of Afghan sovereignty and balance our efforts.

U.S. efforts must align with GIRoA's strategic vision of an Afghanistan that is reducing dependence on international assistance, improving delivery of government services, and promoting fundamental freedoms and human rights. GIRoA has outlined this vision in "Towards Self Reliance" which sets security and developmental goals for Afghanistan through the year 2030.¹ The first and necessary step for GIRoA is to reclaim full stewardship of security, governance, rule of law, and socio-economic development.

By the end of 2014, GIRoA will complete the shift from international-led to Afghan-led security while asserting full control in non-security sectors. The period of transition in the run up to 2015 is designed to allow GIRoA to gradually take the lead in critical areas and take advantage of the opportunity to fully guide these efforts with the international community in support. Our efforts should build the confidence of Afghans in their government and their security forces.

Although the challenges of security, governance, rule of law, and socio-economic development will continue through the Transformation Decade, the U.S. is committed to supporting GIRoA.

Key Pillars and Priorities

Security Foundation: Security is the foundation of the Framework, creating an environment that enables progress in governance, rule of law, and socio-economic development. As the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) transitions full security responsibility to GIRoA, the significance of security within Afghanistan will not change, even though the role of the USG is changing. The USG, in conjunction with the international community, will continue to

¹ Towards Self Reliance: Strategic Vision for the Transformation Decade, Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, July 8, 2012.

support the development of ASI and an increasingly capable ANSF that is able to neutralize the insurgency and promote peace and stability. A strong Afghan civil-military partnership, in tandem with successful execution of a GIRoA counterinsurgency campaign with ISAF supporting, will build the confidence of the Afghan people. In parallel, the USG will support Afghan efforts to seek a political settlement to the armed conflict through a broad-based reconciliation process.

Governance Pillar: The USG’s support to governance in Afghanistan is designed to empower government and its institutions to be representative, accountable, responsive, constitutionally legitimate, and capable of performing key functions. The USG will support the peaceful transfer of political authority through an inclusive, credible, and transparent election in 2014, which is an essential step of consolidating a viable and legitimate system of governance in Afghanistan that empowers both men and women.



The USG will also seek to strengthen checks and balances within the Afghan government and independent institutions, as well as stem corruption through support for transparent and accountable government. Finally, the USG will support strengthening the national and sub-national budgetary process as an essential component for the effective and sustainable delivery of services.

Rule of Law Pillar: The USG’s support for rule of law in Afghanistan is designed to improve a legal structure that enhances stability in the forms of good governance, a vibrant civil society, economic growth, and women’s rights. The USG will continue supporting efforts by GIRoA and civil society to provide meaningful access to fair, efficient, and transparent justice based on Afghan law and continue strengthening the linkages between formal and customary justice. The USG will also support GIRoA’s efforts to target the culture of impunity and empower relevant law enforcement, prosecutorial, and judicial elements in order to reduce corruption and strengthen the legitimacy of GIRoA.

Socio-Economic Development Pillar: The USG’s support for socio-economic development is designed to build a stronger Afghan economy by growing key industries, improving health and education, reducing gender inequities, strengthening regional economic integration, developing key economic infrastructure, and building relevant GIRoA capacity. A stronger Afghan economy will lead to greater stability within Afghanistan and the broader region. In particular, an economy that provides jobs and an adequate tax base to fund government-provided services will enhance and strengthen the Afghan people’s confidence in GIRoA.

SECTION II: Context

“It’s important to recall why America and our allies were compelled to fight a war in Afghanistan in the first place. We did not ask for this fight. On September 11, 2001, 19 men hijacked four airplanes and used them to murder nearly 3,000 people...these men belonged to al-Qa’ida – a group of extremists who have distorted and defiled Islam...to justify the slaughter of innocents. Al-Qa’ida’s base of operations was in Afghanistan, where they were harbored by the Taliban – a ruthless, repressive, and radical movement that seized control of that country...”²

President Barack Obama, December 1, 2009

Strategic Narrative: Stability, Peace, and Prosperity

Years of conflict and war severely damaged the fabric of Afghan society and shattered its governmental institutions. However, following more than a decade of international assistance, Afghans are taking ownership of their future. By the end of 2014, Afghan political transition will have occurred and full responsibility for security throughout the country will have transitioned from ISAF to GIRoA and its security forces.

By the time security transition is complete, all Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) and District Support Teams (DSTs) will have closed and transferred critical functions to GIRoA and traditional development agencies. Coalition forces will have ended combat operations and postured themselves for a Train, Advise, and Assist mission in support of a sovereign Afghanistan. The end of combat operations will mark the beginning of a new, enduring strategic partnership with the people of Afghanistan and an Afghan government that can protect its people, serve their interests, and offer a more stable, peaceful, and prosperous future.

For peace to prevail there must be an end to the use of violence as a political tool to influence the population and change government. To this end, the USG will continue to support GIRoA’s efforts to achieve political reconciliation and reintegrate insurgents without compromising the necessary outcomes of any peace process: that the insurgents renounce violence, sever all ties with al-Qa’ida, and commit to abide by the Afghan constitution, including its provision for the rights of women and minorities.

As transition proceeds, ISAF will formalize its supporting/supported relationship with ANSF. USG assistance programs will shift away from directly delivering services and towards providing assistance that aligns with GIRoA’s strategic vision, “Towards Self Reliance,” and its National Priority Programs (NPPs). The ultimate goal is for GIRoA to use its own institutions and resources to provide essential services to the Afghan people. As President Obama stated, it must be clear to the Afghan government and, more importantly, the Afghan people that they bear ultimate responsibility for their own country.³

² President Barack Obama, Remarks by the President in Address to the Nation on the Way Forward in Afghanistan and Pakistan, West Point, New York, December 1, 2009.

³ President Barack Obama, Remarks by the President on the Afghanistan-Pakistan Annual Review, December 16, 2010.

Assumptions

The Framework includes necessary assumptions in order to allow U.S. civilian and military planners to prepare for future activities. The assumptions listed below will be reviewed regularly for validity.

1. GIRoA's strategic goals remain generally congruent with U.S. goals in Afghanistan through the Transformation Decade.
2. The current Military Technical Agreement (MTA) and Diplomatic Note 202 (U.S.-Afghanistan Status of Forces Agreement) will serve as the legal framework for U.S. military operations within Afghanistan through the end of 2014.
3. The USG and GIRoA will negotiate and conclude a Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) and NATO will conclude a Status of Forces Agreement with GIRoA to define long-term security partnerships beyond 2014.
4. There will be a NATO Train, Advise, and Assist mission at the end of the ISAF mandate.
5. GIRoA and the international community will make acceptable progress on indicators outlined in the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework, resulting in continued financial support from the international community through the Transformation Decade.
6. GIRoA revenue generation will not cover operating expenditures, including increased security spending, and development costs until sometime after 2025.
7. Regional powers will influence Afghan political affairs and challenge the interests of the USG in the region.
8. An inclusive, credible, and transparent presidential election will be held in 2014, allowing for a peaceful transfer of executive authority with an outcome widely accepted by Afghans.
9. GIRoA and the international community will support Afghan-led political reconciliation.
10. The security environment in population centers and key terrain districts will pose obstacles, yet it will allow implementing partners to continue their assistance activities and for COM personnel to adequately monitor and evaluate progress.

Risks

The difficult and complex Afghan environment harbors significant risks that may impact the achievement of U.S. national goals. In particular, gains in security, governance, rule of law, and socio-economic development may not be as robust as expected, or those gains may not be preserved when NATO and the international community presence declines. Also, there is a risk that strategic planning assumptions prove invalid and, subsequently, the USG has insufficient time and resources to adjust, especially given the end of the ISAF mission on December 31, 2014. If not mitigated, these risks increase the possibility of al-Qa'ida and its affiliates returning to Afghanistan and/or Afghanistan once again becoming a safe haven for international terrorists. Ultimately, these risks represent challenges that must be overcome by GIRoA and the people of Afghanistan as they exercise their sovereignty, with international support.

SECTION III: Main Framework

Security Foundation

Security is the foundation of the Framework; creating an environment that enables progress in governance, rule of law, and socio-economic development. As ISAF transitions full security responsibility to GIRoA, the significance of security within Afghanistan will not change, even though the USG role is changing.

Combined operations by the ANSF and ISAF have set the conditions for the transfer of full security responsibility from ISAF to GIRoA and its security institutions by the end of 2014. While achieving security gains, ISAF and ANSF have progressed from ISAF-led combat operations, to partnered combat operations, to our current state where ANSF is leading combat operations with ISAF supporting through the role of advisor and by providing enablers. The current campaign should degrade the insurgency to a level that can be neutralized by ANSF.

USG support to the ANSF is in consonance with Afghan strategic goals outlined in the ANSF-developed operational plan, OPLAN1392: defend national sovereignty, territorial integrity, independence, and national values as well as set conditions for security and law enforcement. In addition to the direct combat and policing activities of the ANSF, the Afghan strategy relies heavily on the reconciliation and reintegration process, as well as continued counter-narcotics efforts.

The transfer of security from NATO to GIRoA has been occurring in a series of five “tranches.” Each tranche includes provinces and districts where GIRoA and its security institutions are prepared to assume responsibility. The first tranche was announced and transition initiated in March 2011. The fifth and final tranche was announced in June 2013, indicating all districts in Afghanistan have entered the security transition process.

Going forward with ANSF in the lead for security operations at the national level, ISAF will continue supporting the development of an increasingly capable ANSF that can neutralize the insurgency, support national and provincial elections, and promote peace and stability. The sum of ISAF and ANSF security efforts will allow ANSF to become the supported organization with U.S. and coalition forces in a supporting role, setting the conditions for the USG to focus on governance and development in the Transformation Decade.

Governance Pillar

The USG support to governance in Afghanistan is designed to strengthen the Afghan people’s confidence in their government and enhance GIRoA’s legitimacy. A sovereign Afghan government with support of the Afghan people will allow the U.S. to have an effective partner in pursuit of our national goals. In order to embrace sovereignty, GIRoA must be capable of performing key governance functions. U.S. efforts to strengthen governance must be based on an assessment of the more limited U.S. resources available and recognition that Afghans must

take the lead in building their own democratic society. Working with our international partners, the USG's support for governance initiatives will lead to an Afghan government that is more representative, accountable, responsive, constitutionally limited, and increasingly capable of performing key functions.

Key Priorities:

1. Support constitutional succession through a credible, inclusive, and transparent Afghan presidential election in 2014.
2. Strengthen checks and balances within GIROA and independent institutions external to GIROA.
3. Strengthen governance architecture and functionality, revenue collection and budget prioritization, execution, and accountability at both the national and sub-national levels.
4. Stem corruption through support for more open and accountable government.

The first governance priority is to support constitutional succession through a credible, inclusive, and transparent Afghan presidential election in 2014. Without this peaceful transfer of political authority, Afghanistan jeopardizes both U.S. and international investment and support as well as increases the risk of GIROA losing legitimacy in the eyes of the people. The U.S. will not be directly involved in the election. The USG will provide indirect support to the election in the form of continued assistance to the ANSF, which will provide security, and funding to the Independent Elections Commission (IEC), which administers the election.

The second governance priority is to strengthen checks and balances within GIROA and independent institutions external to GIROA. The USG will continue to support the development of Afghanistan's legislative and judicial branches as effective checks and balances to the executive branch. In addition, the USG will bolster the role of independent institutions, civil society (including religious leaders), and the media as tools for holding GIROA accountable to the people. Transparency and accountability mechanisms will strengthen legitimate Afghan governance and support the emergence of a durable democratic society.

The third governance priority is to strengthen governance architecture and functionality, revenue collection and budget prioritization, execution, and accountability at both the national and sub-national levels, leading to more efficient, effective, and accountable service delivery for all Afghan citizens. USG support will focus on connecting the national and sub-national levels and assisting GIROA's executive and representative institutions, including provincial and municipal administrations, so they have the financial management capacity to set priorities, plan budgets, and execute programs effectively and transparently. The USG will assist GIROA to reinforce effective linkages between central authorities and sub-national government actors for improved communication, advocacy, and representation of sub-national interests.

The fourth governance priority is to stem corruption through support for open and accountable government, because GIROA's success will depend heavily on its ability to maintain the confidence of the Afghan people. Therefore, the USG will continue to support programs and

efforts that work with GIRoA officials to identify and reduce corruption, while concurrently supporting a government that is transparent and open in order to increase GIRoA's legitimacy in accordance with the governance indicators and commitments outlined in the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework. The USG will also continue its support to Afghan-led civil society organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) that are dedicated to pursuing transparency and accountability at all levels of government.

Governance in Transition: As we draw closer to the Transformation Decade, USG priorities and objectives will be impacted by changes in our presence and a shift in focus as resources and access to the field decline. When the Afghan presidential election is complete in 2014, the USG will shift to monitoring and reporting on the lead up to and conduct of the 2015 Afghan parliamentary elections. With a much reduced field presence, it will be critical that USG support is channeled away from parallel systems and towards strengthening GIRoA's central role in institutionalizing sub-national governance architecture, functionality, and processes for revenue collection, budget prioritization, execution, and accountability so that GIRoA is able to more effectively deliver services country-wide. USG efforts will also look to strengthen civil society organizations to advocate, monitor, and ensure government processes and future elections are transparent and accountable.

Rule of Law Pillar

The USG's support to rule of law in Afghanistan is designed to improve a legal structure that enhances stability in the forms of good governance, vibrant civil society, economic growth, and other characteristics of a strong nation. The USG, in conjunction with the international community and NGOs, will support efforts by GIRoA and civil society to provide meaningful access to fair, efficient, and transparent justice based on Afghan law and international obligations, and strengthen the linkages between formal and customary justice, while protecting women's rights and access to justice. The USG will also support GIRoA's efforts to target the culture of impunity and empower relevant law enforcement, prosecutorial, and judicial elements in order to reduce corruption and strengthen legitimacy of GIRoA.

Key Priorities:

1. Build capacity of the GIRoA justice and legal systems.
2. Combat corruption within Afghan government agencies and institutions.
3. Increase access and understanding of the formal justice and legal systems, in order to empower civil society and protect women's rights in accordance with Afghan law and international obligations.
4. Strengthen linkages between the formal and customary justice sectors.

The first rule of law priority is to build capacity of the GIRoA justice and legal systems. For over thirty years, the Afghan justice and legal systems have been subject to social and political upheavals, corruption, and technical and material deprivation. Consequently, Afghans have little

confidence in their governments' ability to provide fair, efficient, and transparent justice to all citizens. Additionally, the inadequate legal and justice systems stymie economic growth by deterring investment and licit business opportunities. Through rule of law capacity building efforts, the USG will seek to improve GIRoA legitimacy in the eyes of Afghans and the international community. USG capacity building efforts will focus on the following: a civilian-oriented police strategy; selection methods and ethical standards for the judiciary; prosecutorial selection, discipline, case management, and case prioritization; training and integration among law enforcement, prosecutorial, and judicial officials; legal education; commercial legal capacity; and alternative dispute resolution.

The second rule of law priority is to combat corruption within Afghan government agencies and institutions. Addressing corruption within its ranks will improve GIRoA legitimacy and have a positive impact on socio-economic development in Afghanistan. Therefore, the USG will help build the technical capacity of key justice sector, other rule of law, and law enforcement institutions to receive and manage on-budget assistance, combat corruption through administrative reform, and fight the culture of impunity by pressing Afghan authorities to pursue convictions in high-profile cases of corruption. The USG will also support efforts to increase GIRoA's capacity to improve border regimes and customs collection, assist Afghans with implementing systems that help reduce corruption, advise and mentor relevant ministries and law enforcement agencies, and develop GIRoA legislation that targets corruption.

The third rule of law priority is to increase access to and understanding of the formal justice and legal systems, in order to empower civil society and protect women's rights. The Afghan citizenry, with its high rate of illiteracy, inadequate education system, and limited access to effective media, is generally unaware of its legal rights. The lack of awareness is particularly prevalent among women, given that their literacy rate is far below that of men. As a result, a large portion of the Afghan population, with limited access and understanding of the formal justice and legal systems, is exploited by the systems designed to protect their constitutional rights. The system's exploitation of society's most vulnerable members further delegitimizes GIRoA and makes harsh justice more acceptable to many Afghans. Therefore, the USG will support efforts to raise public awareness of legal rights, with particular emphasis on protecting the rights of women. In an effort to improve accessibility, the USG will encourage partnering of GIRoA with NGOs or private sector entities for the delivery of legal services.

The fourth rule of law priority is to strengthen linkages between formal and customary justice systems. Although the continued use of two justice systems limits GIRoA's ability to provide fair and consistent constitutional protection for all Afghans, the prevalence of customary justice in Afghan society, coupled with the limited resources and the obstacles of instituting a formal justice system throughout Afghanistan, necessitates a focus on strengthening the linkages between the formal and customary justice systems. Therefore, the USG will continue efforts to link customary justice processes to the formal system and encourage practices grounded in Afghan law, the Constitution, and consistent with human rights principles.

Rule of Law in Transition: As we draw closer to the Transformation Decade, USG priorities and objectives will be impacted by changes in our presence and a shift in focus as resources and access to the field decline. With a much reduced field presence, our focus will be on supporting GIRoA at the national level, while encouraging other organizations to continue development of rule of law and law enforcement capacity at locations outside of Kabul. Additionally, USG rule of law programs will coordinate with other initiatives to strengthen the capacity of civil society organizations. These organizations can stimulate popular demand for rule of law reforms and perform capacity development work in areas where foreign advisors may not have access or influence.

Socio-Economic Development Pillar

The USG's support for socio-economic development is designed to build a stronger Afghan economy by growing key industries, improving health and education, strengthening regional economic integration, developing key economic infrastructure, and building relevant GIRoA capacity. A stronger Afghan economy will lead to greater stability within Afghanistan and the broader region. In particular, an economy that provides jobs and an adequate tax base to fund government-provided services will enhance and strengthen the Afghan people's confidence in GIRoA. Healthy and educated Afghans with jobs are able to provide for their families, contribute to Afghan prosperity, and are less likely to participate in the insurgency. The USG will place particular emphasis on youth, women, and minorities, as well as small and medium size enterprises, in order to take full advantage of Afghanistan's economic potential.

Key Priorities:

1. Support economic growth through development of key industries, including agriculture, extractives, telecommunications, light manufacturing, and services.
2. Improve the health and education of Afghans through advice and assistance to GIRoA, as well as related investments in health and education.
3. Promote Afghanistan's regional economic integration through support and assistance to relevant GIRoA ministries.
4. Support economic growth through development of key economic infrastructure and strengthen GIRoA capacity to manage that infrastructure.

The first socio-economic priority is to support economic growth through development of key Afghan industries, including agriculture, extractives, telecommunications, light manufacturing, and services. Afghanistan must create jobs and expand its economic base, which, in turn, will result in more tax revenue for GIRoA that translates into government-provided services. Both the creation of jobs and the provision of government services are stabilizing forces, which reinforce Afghan sovereignty and contribute to Afghanistan's economic transition. The USG will support Afghanistan's economic transition, including the development of commercial legislation, encouraging fair practices and investment in the private sector. With regard to agriculture, the USG will focus on improving techniques and education that expand production

and, subsequently, increase food security and agricultural exports. With regard to extractives, the USG will advise GIRoA on legal and regulatory reforms including passage of international standards mining legislation, support capacity building at the Ministry of Mines for effective tender and concession management, support the Afghan Geological Survey and the Afghan National Environment Protection Agency, and support technical and vocational training. With regard to telecommunications, the USG will advise GIRoA on the expansion of fiber, satellite, and mobile telecom services. Finally, with regard to light manufacturing and services, the USG will engage in activities that expand the job-creation capacity of these industries by improving productivity and innovation through technical and vocational training.

The second socio-economic priority is to improve the health and education of Afghans through advice and assistance to GIRoA, as well as related investments in health and education. A healthier and better educated Afghan populace, including women and minorities, will expand the depth and breadth of Afghanistan's economic potential, thus setting the conditions for further economic growth and stabilization. To this end, the USG will provide on-budget assistance to relevant GIRoA ministries to strengthen the government's capacity to provide better health and education, and conduct educational campaigns that promote better health practices.

The third socio-economic priority is to promote Afghanistan's regional economic integration through support and assistance to relevant GIRoA ministries, which strengthen Afghanistan's economy and lead to more positive relations with Afghanistan's neighboring countries. The USG will support trade policy liberalization, commercial law development, customs process reform, removal of barriers to cross-border trade, and adherence to World Trade Organization membership policies and protocols. USG efforts to foster regional economic integration will be aligned with the New Silk Road Initiative and the Istanbul Process.⁴

The fourth socio-economic priority is to support economic growth through development of key economic infrastructure – power, water, and transportation – and by strengthening GIRoA capacity to manage (operate, maintain, and monitor) that infrastructure. The USG will provide capacity-building and on-budget assistance with a focus on three areas critical to the sustainability of infrastructure investments: 1) building the policy and regulatory environment, including the set-up of key entities such as the civil aviation authority and independent road authority; 2) building human capacity to operate and maintain key infrastructure; and 3) establishing clear, transparent, and accountable procedures to generate revenue that pays for operations and maintenance.

Socio-Economic Development in Transition: As we draw closer to the Transformation Decade, USG priorities and objectives will be impacted by changes in our presence and a shift in focus as resources and access to the field decline. With these changes, there will be a general shift in USG socio-economic development away from capital-intensive development activities and toward a focus on providing advice and assistance to GIRoA. Our change in policy means that

⁴ The New Silk Road Initiative and the Istanbul Process represent international commitments to security and economic integration between Afghanistan and its neighbors.

the USG will not build new infrastructure. Instead, the USG will maintain efforts to strengthen GIRoA capacity to manage existing infrastructure, maintain gains in health and education, support an enabling environment that fosters the development of the private sector, and improve regional economic integration.

Cross Cutting Efforts

The security foundation and three pillars of U.S. engagement in Afghanistan –governance, the rule of law, and socio-economic development – are augmented by several cross cutting efforts. These efforts will remain an important focus of the USG for some time.

Political Reconciliation and Reintegration: The USG recognizes and supports the Afghan political reconciliation process, which is the solution to ending the war in Afghanistan. To this end, the USG will pursue high-level diplomatic engagement, which seeks a broad-based political reconciliation that includes leadership elements of the insurgency. Additionally, the USG recognizes and supports the GIRoA-led program to peacefully reintegrate insurgents into Afghan society. For this purpose, the USG will provide support to the reintegration program, which takes insurgents off the battlefield, reintegrates them into society, and promotes social stability at the local level. The reconciliation process and reintegration program are supported by the Afghan Peace and Reintegration Program (APRP), which serves to strengthen Afghan sovereignty and weaken the insurgency.

Role of Women in Society: Women must be able to participate in society and contribute fully to it, which requires that their social, political, and economic rights be protected and promoted. Peace and prosperity is best sustained when society treats women as equal partners with their lives protected and voices heard. Therefore, the USG will support policies and programs that continue to advance the essential role of women in society, including increased access for women to justice, health care, education, and economic and political leadership opportunities. USG policy and programs will seek to engage all aspects of the Afghan population on the positive impacts of women’s development and empowerment. In particular, the USG will continue to support GIRoA’s implementation of the Elimination of Violence Against Women law (EVAW) and the National Action Plan for Women in Afghanistan (NAPWA).

Borders: The integrity of Afghanistan’s border and the transparency and accountability of its customs regime are crucial to Afghan security, as well as fiscal sustainability and credibility of GIRoA. Therefore, the USG will support GIRoA efforts to improve its border management practices; consistently apply the rule of law; and increase efforts to interdict cross border movement of terrorist, insurgent, and drug trafficking and other criminal networks. The USG will also help Afghanistan develop the institutional capacity to facilitate legitimate trade, enhance revenue collection, and engage productively with its neighbors to promote regional integration. In particular, enhancing revenue collection and countering related corruption are vital USG efforts because customs duties make up a major portion of GIRoA revenue and corrupt networks undermine security.

Information Initiatives: Strategic communications and public access to information are vital to establishing a stable, inclusive political process that reinforces gains in security, governance, the rule of law, and socio-economic development. Given such, the USG will pursue information initiatives that support the advancement of women, enable credible and inclusive elections, promote GIRoA's legitimacy, counter violent extremism, and facilitate transition.⁵ The USG will also support an independent Afghan media sector, encourage religious leader involvement, and develop channels for Afghan citizens to convey their concerns to the government and, in turn, have them acknowledged. Importantly, these efforts will facilitate the rise of a more informed population that can make educated decisions and hold its leaders accountable.

Regional Cooperation: For the purpose of bringing greater stability to Afghanistan and the broader region, the U.S. is committed to supporting the cooperative efforts of the Heart of Asia countries as outlined in the Istanbul Process and echoed in the Kabul Conference and Almaty Ministerial Conference. In demonstrating our commitment, as agreed in the Enduring Strategic Partnership Agreement between the United States of America and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (SPA), the USG is reinforcing security and cooperation in the region on a range of threats, from narcotics trafficking and criminal networks to the common threat posed by international terrorists. Additionally, the USG is cooperating on a variety of socio-economic initiatives, including opportunities to expand transport and energy linkages. Going forward, the USG will continue cooperative efforts through the Bilateral Commission and other associated implementation mechanisms under the SPA.

⁵ For information on countering violent extremism: DoS Cable 13 KABUL 1006, Mission Afghanistan Aligning CVE Efforts with Key Policy Objectives.

SECTION IV: Transition Partnership with GIRoA

By the end of 2014, Afghanistan will complete the shift from international-led to Afghan-led security. The process leading up to this shift is called transition. All USG efforts during transition should allow GIRoA to take the lead gradually in the critical areas of security, governance, rule of law, and socio-economic development, and take advantage of the opportunity to exercise sovereignty with the international community in support. Our collective efforts should build the confidence of Afghans in their government.

Success in all elements of transition is vital to U.S. national interests and to the shared goals expressed in the SPA. To that end, the USG and GIRoA should view each other as partners in transition where both governments work collaboratively to enable a responsible drawdown of combat forces, posture follow-on mission forces, and continue support of GIRoA's sovereignty. U.S. civilian and military efforts through the end of 2014 will build this transition partnership and position Afghans to exploit the opportunities that will be available to them during the Transformation Decade. Among our highest priorities during transition are maintaining security and development gains and continuing to prepare the Afghans—in terms of capacity, institutions, and resource management—for a reduced U.S. presence post-2014.

Guiding Principles for Transition

Align efforts with Afghan national priorities. Many of the priorities outlined in the Framework's pillars are reflected in various elements of the Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS) and GIRoA's NPPs, as well as the SPA. Therefore, directing USG funding to GIRoA institutions and programs, when mutually beneficial to the U.S. and Afghanistan, supports USG goals. Regular consultations on the NPPs offer opportunities for the USG to engage the international community and Afghan officials at the political and technical levels to align efforts and priorities, as well as monitor performance and assess progress. Our support for achieving Afghan priorities will also help achieve our overarching transition goal of improving Afghan leadership and capacity, while strengthening the U.S.-Afghan partnership.

Counter the fear of abandonment. Unprecedented improvements in government and military capacity over the last decade have prepared Afghans to take the lead; this fact should be reinforced. Civilian, military, and Afghan public messaging must work in concert to build confidence and recognition of the progress Afghans have made and their lead responsibility for protecting and advancing what has been achieved, including safeguards for women.

Preserve gains. Substantial gains have been made in security, governance, rule of law, and socio-economic development. These gains are the result of donor investment that must be maintained by GIRoA, which will be challenged by capacity shortfalls, including budget planning. Therefore, existing projects should be at a level that can be maintained by GIRoA. Moreover, any new U.S. projects will be limited to those that can be supported by GIRoA or assistance organizations, including USAID, post-2014.

Focus on sustainability. USG assistance and programs will be focused on sustainable solutions, structures, and systems, which are implemented and maintained by GIRoA. A strong focus on sustainability will lead to greater efficiency and effectiveness of U.S. and GIRoA resources.

Reorganize and reposture responsibly. The U.S. civilian and military presence will diminish across Afghanistan in line with the conclusion of the ISAF mission and in support of a long term partnership with Afghanistan into the Transformation Decade. As we transition to a more traditional diplomatic and development model, we must be mindful that how we do so will leave a lasting impression with the people of Afghanistan and influence the future tenor of the U.S.-Afghanistan strategic partnership. Therefore, the USG will work through existing civil-military transition-focused working groups and organizations in support of a disciplined and transparent retrograde process that balances USG requirements, our partnership with GIRoA, and maintains goodwill among the people of Afghanistan.

Facilitate Afghan civil-military cooperation. The U.S. benefits immeasurably from close civil-military cooperation and partnership. In the remaining months of the ISAF mission, it is important that we facilitate the development of similarly effective Afghan civil-military cooperation between security and non-security ministries. As Afghans take the lead and our presence decreases, the USG civilian and military personnel engaging with GIRoA should coordinate closely and focus on the utilization and improvement of Afghan systems and processes that maximize effectiveness of Afghan officials and build cooperation across GIRoA.

Maintain contact with the field. Since 2001, we have developed close relationships with countless Afghan government officials and citizens. Maintaining those contacts is critical to the sustainability of our programs. Engagement strategies that address the issue of maintaining contacts in the field, through technical and other means, will allow us to retain connectivity and support linking Afghans at all levels of GIRoA even in areas where we no longer maintain a physical presence. These strategies will take field mobility and our remaining locations into consideration, allowing us to maintain contact and momentum with key Afghan partners.

Reinforce our strategic partnership with GIRoA. The SPA between the U.S. and Afghanistan describes our partnership with Afghanistan and must be reinforced at every opportunity: “Cooperation between Afghanistan and the United States is based on mutual respect and shared interests – most notably, a common desire for peace and to strengthen collective efforts to achieve a region that is economically integrated, and no longer a safe haven for al-Qaeda and its affiliates. Afghanistan and the United States go forward in this partnership with confidence because they are committed to seeking a future of justice, peace, security, and opportunity for the Afghan people.”

SECTION V: The Transformation Decade (2015-2024)

The Transformation Decade will be a defining period for Afghanistan as GIRoA works toward its long-term goals of reducing dependence on international assistance, improving delivery of government services, and promoting fundamental freedoms and human rights. The United States will continue partnering with Afghanistan well into the Transformation Decade as the people of Afghanistan embrace sovereignty and implement their vision for the future. Within this partnership, USG efforts will focus on supporting governance and development while also seeking to preserve the hard fought gains of the past decade. The U.S. commitment represents a long-term investment and partnership with GIRoA and the people of Afghanistan that supports Afghan sovereignty and long-term stability.

Even with a strong partnership between the U.S. and Afghanistan, the Transformation Decade will be fraught with challenges. USG support will require constant evaluation and prioritization. Under the best of circumstances, Afghanistan will continue to be in the category of “least developed nations” with high levels of poverty, unemployment, and illiteracy, as well as underdeveloped infrastructure. Additionally, non-state actors will continue to threaten stability and challenge GIRoA’s capacity to govern and deliver services.

Afghan National Goals

GIRoA has outlined its vision for the Transformation Decade in “Towards Self Reliance.” This strategy identifies the following milestones:

By 2015, Afghanistan will have taken over full operational responsibility for its own security and will be leading development initiatives to build on foundational investments and good governance that will pave the way to economic growth, fiscal sustainability, and sustainable human development.

By 2025, Afghanistan will have reduced its dependence on international assistance in non-security sectors to levels consistent with other least developed nations. Peace and stability will be consolidated in the country through effective development, improved delivery of government services, and the promotion of fundamental freedoms and human rights.

By 2030, achievements in development and governance will allow Afghanistan to emerge as a model of a developing democratic Islamic nation.

U.S. National Goals

U.S. national goals during the Transformation Decade are to support GIRoA so that together we can defeat al-Qa’ida and prevent Afghanistan from slipping into chaos. To best meet these goals, the USG will focus on governance and socio-economic development; training, advising, and assisting the ASI and ANSF; and strategically posturing to continue counterterrorism efforts.

The BSA will further define the USG's security partnership with Afghanistan, to include support for U.S. efforts to defeat al-Qa'ida and its affiliates.

The USG is also committed to Afghan national goals through the Transformation Decade. According to commitments made under the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework, financial pledges by the U.S. and other donors during the Transformation Decade will remain contingent upon satisfactory GIRoA progress. However, it is expected that the U.S. and other international donors will reduce their financial commitment as the Transformation Decade progresses.

U.S. Civilian Presence and Activities

The U.S. Chief of Mission will have primary responsibility for guiding U.S. efforts in the Transformation Decade. Accordingly, the U.S. Mission will shift towards a traditional diplomacy and development presence.

The U.S. Mission will reposture significantly prior to 2015, eliminating PRTs and DSTs throughout Afghanistan and reducing the presence in Kabul. The USG footprint in Afghanistan will consist of the U.S. Embassy in Kabul and additional representation at other locations as security and resources allow. This profile "signals our commitment to the Afghan people, supports effective diplomacy and development, and avoids the perception of regional favoritism."⁶

Recognizing the numerous challenges that will endure into the Transformation Decade, the USG will need to adapt its strategic approach and priorities. In particular, USAID has drafted a new strategy for development assistance to Afghanistan focusing on three priorities: supporting sustainable economic growth; assisting GIRoA in maintaining achievements made in critical areas such as education, health, and the rights of women; and improving the legitimacy and effectiveness of the government by fostering linkages between GIRoA and the Afghan people.

NATO's Post-ISAF Mission

As the NATO ISAF mission concludes and GIRoA and its security forces assume full responsibility for security operations, the international community, at the invitation of GIRoA, will maintain sufficient forces to improve the capabilities of the ASI and ANSF and strengthen the sovereignty of Afghanistan. The NATO Train, Advise, and Assist mission will form the bedrock of our military support to Afghanistan and help secure the hard-fought security gains of the past decade.

⁶ U.S. Enduring Presence in Afghanistan Post-2014 Concept of Operations.

SECTION VI: Civil-Military Coordination

The U.S. Embassy supports implementation of the Framework by coordinating and integrating strategic, mission-wide civil-military efforts that inform national decision-making through an existing civil-military coordination structure consisting of senior to working level groups. The Embassy's Political-Military Affairs Section (Pol-Mil), in cooperation with the COMISAF Liaison to the Embassy (L/EMB), monitors these forums and reacts to changes by adapting or revising the Framework. In addition to monitoring the working groups, Pol-Mil conducts visits to the regional platforms to solicit feedback on the Framework from the field, coordinates closely on transition efforts through the Transition Working Group and U.S. Embassy Transition Task Force, and regularly participates in ongoing ISAF military planning efforts with ISAF and USFOR-A partners. These efforts are mirrored by our military counterparts, who regularly participate in the working groups to provide input and represent the military perspective to the COM. In this way, civil-military guidance and activities are mutually agreed and coordinated by both the COM and COMUSFOR-A.

Civil-military coordination begins with a principals-level group that includes the COM and COMUSFOR-A for high-level coordination, problem solving, and decision making. There is also a deputies-level Executive Working Group (EWG) led by leadership at both the U.S. Embassy and USFOR-A for decision making, identifying issues to be raised to senior leadership, and discussing issues raised by National-Level Working Groups. The National-Level Working Groups have been established to coordinate efforts according to the pillars and cross-cutting efforts identified in the Framework.⁷ These groups manage implementation of the priorities outlined in the Framework as well as monitor progress and develop additional strategies as necessary.

Related Plans, Strategies, and Guidance

This Framework bridges a host of strategic, operational, and tactical documents by providing overarching guidance to integrate and harmonize civilian and military lines of effort. Many of the documents that direct, inform, and unify the Framework are listed below.

Guidance	
DoS Cable 13 KABUL 1006, Mission Afghanistan Aligning CVE Efforts with Key Policy Objectives	March 2013
DoS Cable 13 KABUL 726, Transition Strategy: Preserving and Pursuing Priorities	March 2013
DoS Cable, 13 KABUL 50, Afghanistan: 2013 - The Real Transition Year	January 2013

⁷ The national-level working groups cover: Governance, the Rule of Law, Economics and Development, Gender, Health and Education, Infrastructure, Agriculture, and Border Initiatives. Attendees include personnel from sections across the U.S. Embassy, USFOR-A, and ISAF.

Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework	July 2012
DoS Cable 12 KABUL 2764, Afghanistan: Mutual Accountability in the Context of Tokyo	May 2012
Enduring Strategic Partnership Agreement between the United States of America and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan	May 2012
DoS Cable 12 KABUL 7, Implementing Our Economic Strategy: Prioritizing Assistance and Moving Forward on Engagement	January 2012
DoS Cable 11 KABUL 3363, Establishing Enduring Presence	November 2011
Strengthening Governance to Support Transition in Afghanistan	September 2011
DoS Cable 11 KABUL 742, Implementing a New Governance Orientation	February 2011
DoS Cable 10 KABUL 4017, Refining our Governance Orientation in Light of Transition	December 2010
Strategies and Plans	
USAID Strategy for Transformation	June 2013
U.S. Government Sub-national Governance Strategy	February 2013
Towards Self Reliance: Strategic Vision for the Transformation Decade	July 2012
NATO Strategic Plan for Afghanistan	May 2012
ISAF OPLAN rev. 6.2	September 2012
AF-PAK Stabilization Strategy Update	October 2011
U.S. Counternarcotics Strategy for Afghanistan	March 2010
Declarations and Policy Statements	
Tokyo Declaration	July 2012
Secretary Clinton's Remarks on Afghanistan's Designation as a Major Non-NATO Ally	July 2012
Deputy Secretary Burns Intervention in the Kabul Ministerial	July 2012
Heart of Asia Ministerial Conference Declaration	June 2012
G8 Declaration	May 2012
Declaration of the Istanbul Process on Regional Security and Cooperation for a Secure and Stable Afghanistan	November 2011
Remarks at the New Silk Road Ministerial Meeting	September 2011