



Civil-Military Strategic Framework

Kabul, March 2012



AN INTRODUCTORY MESSAGE FROM AMBASSADOR RYAN CROCKER AND GENERAL JOHN ALLEN

Kabul, March 2012

Dear Colleagues:

Please find attached the Mission's new Civil-Military Strategic Framework, which provides strategic guidance for all American service members and civilians serving in Afghanistan through the transition period – up until the end of 2014. It also includes a brief section on the desired post-2014 environment in Afghanistan.

The Framework strives to ensure that U.S. civilian and military efforts to achieve our national goals in Afghanistan are fully integrated and complementary. It provides a strategic framework for all ongoing and future U.S. initiatives in this campaign. The Framework is a product of the collective experience, lessons learned, insights, and perspectives of US military and civilian personnel, as well as international and Afghan colleagues, serving throughout Afghanistan. The document is intended to serve as a strategic guide and touchstone for our efforts as we move forward amidst a challenging and constantly shifting operational environment; it will help keep our collective efforts on the right path forward and directed towards the achievement of our key national strategic goals.

As you implement this Framework and turn it into reality on the ground, we remind you to continue to heed the principles that have been laid out in previous guidance. Remember, in particular, that transition is a process, not an end state. To be sure, there will be challenges ahead, even as we continue to realize considerable progress. Civil-military cohesion and collaboration will help us to overcome these challenges, to support our Afghan partners in establishing a more secure and hopeful Afghanistan, and to achieve the critically important U.S. national objectives.

Thank you for your service, your dedication, and your continued commitment to this vital mission.

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Civil Military Strategic Framework for the U.S. Mission in Afghanistan

SECTION I: U.S. Government Intent

Introduction, Purpose, and Scope

The U.S. Mission and U.S. Forces Afghanistan (USFOR-A), in collaboration with the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and the international community, have invested ten years building a more secure and stable Afghanistan. The achievements of the civilian and military surges have now set the stage for a durable and irreversible transition of security responsibility from ISAF to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA). Capable Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) will defend the independence, national sovereignty, and territorial integrity of Afghanistan against external threats and ensure internal security and public order. For the civilian U.S. Mission, “transition” means not only a shift in full security responsibility to the ANSF, but also a shift from counterinsurgency and stability operations toward a more traditional diplomatic and development model. Through December 31, 2014, the broader transition process will allow the United States Government (USG) to focus on supporting GIROA’s efforts to enhance its legitimacy and improve its capacity to deliver security, governance, development, and rule of law.

This Framework has two primary functions:

- To articulate the strategic vision guiding USG efforts to achieve U.S. National Goals in Afghanistan.
- To ensure that the U.S. civilian and military efforts in Afghanistan are fully integrated and complementary.

This Framework is meant to be adaptive in nature, 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. Adaptability is fundamental to the Framework’s effectiveness, allowing it to serve as a guide for the many discrete operational and tactical planning efforts underway in Afghanistan. Although this Framework is focused on USG efforts, its ultimate success will hinge on full cooperation with NATO, the international community, and, most importantly, GIROA.

U.S. National Goals in Afghanistan

Success in the next phase of our engagement with Afghanistan is essential if we are to protect the USG’s enduring interests in the region and promote the two overarching and intertwined national strategic goals in Afghanistan as expressed by President Obama in June 2011:

1. Disrupt, dismantle, and eventually defeat al-Qa’ida and its affiliates and prevent their return to Afghanistan.

2. Build a partnership with the Afghan people that ensures that the U.S. will be able to continue to target terrorists and support a sovereign Afghan government.

The United States, in partnership with the international community, will conduct this comprehensive and coordinated civil-military effort to support GIRoA. Gains in security, governance, the rule of law, and socio-economic development, together with progress in Afghan efforts to promote an inclusive political dialogue leading to national reconciliation should allow the USG to make very substantial progress towards national goals in Afghanistan by December 31, 2014. Investments in these four broad categories, three of which are identified as pillars throughout this document, will be implemented with sustainability, accountability, social inclusion, and partnership as driving principles. The foundation and pillars outlined below are aligned with ISAF's OPLAN. The pillars are outlined below and the priorities are expanded on in section III.

Key Pillars and Priorities

Security Foundation: The USG will continue to support the development of an increasingly capable ANSF that can partner with ISAF to neutralize the insurgency and promote stability, peace, and prosperity. This, in tandem with successful execution of the current counterinsurgency campaign, will degrade the insurgency to a level that denies it the ability to threaten the Afghan state, enabling the ANSF to assume full responsibility for security by the end of 2014. Continued, vigorous support for Afghan counternarcotics efforts will also bolster security and deprive the insurgency of resources. Security is the foundation of the Framework, creating an environment that allows progress on the three key pillars.



Governance Pillar: Working with the United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA) and allied partners, the USG will continue to support Afghan efforts to strengthen governance by facilitating efforts to ensure that government and its institutions are representative, accountable, responsive, constitutionally legitimate, and capable of performing key functions.

Rule of Law Pillar: The USG will continue to support Afghan efforts to offer meaningful access to fair, efficient, transparent justice based on Afghan law and to increase GIRoA's legitimacy among Afghans by promoting a culture that values the rule of law above powerful interests. These collective efforts will help develop Afghan capacity to effectively investigate and prosecute national security and major counternarcotics cases.

Socio-Economic Development Pillar: The USG will support sustainable, inclusive economic growth that will help Afghanistan to be increasingly integrated economically within the region. The USG will focus its assistance on the sectors and activities that are most likely to increase government revenue, promote economic integration, create jobs, and increase food security.

SECTION II: Context of Framework

“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...”¹

President Barack Obama, December 1, 2009

Strategic Narrative: Stability, Peace, and Prosperity

Years of conflict and war destroyed the fabric of Afghan society and shattered its institutions. But after ten years of international assistance, Afghanistan has reason for hope. GIRoA and its security forces are helping the Afghan people build a better and more prosperous future. The Afghan government has begun a process of security transition that will ultimately give the ANSF lead responsibility for security throughout the country.

For peace to prevail, the insurgents must choose to end their violent opposition to the Afghan government. The USG will continue to support GIRoA’s efforts to reintegrate insurgents and reconcile their leaders, 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 respect for women’s and minority rights. U.S. military and civilian operations and an increasingly sustainable and capable ANSF will protect the Afghan state, convince insurgents they cannot achieve a military victory, and provide essential leverage in encouraging the parties to engage in a political process to end the conflict.

The efforts of the ANSF and ISAF over the past ten years have laid a solid security foundation that supports the three key pillars of the USG’s strategic engagement with Afghanistan: governance, the rule of law, and socio-economic development. As security transition proceeds, USG assistance programs will increasingly shift from directly delivering services to providing technical assistance and building the capacity of GIRoA ministries and provincial governments. The goal is for GIRoA to use its own programs and institutions to provide essential services to the Afghan people. The USG will focus its efforts on the Afghan government’s development goals, including those identified through the Kabul Process. As

¹ 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 01, 2009.

President Obama has stated, it must be clear to the Afghan government and, more importantly, the Afghan people, that they bear ultimate responsibility for their own country.²

By the time security transition is complete at the end of 2014, all U.S. Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) and District Stabilization Teams (DSTs) will have closed and transferred their functions to GIROA and traditional development agencies. The mission of Coalition forces will have changed from combat to support operations, based on a shared commitment to peace. This will mark the beginning of a new, enduring strategic partnership with the people of Afghanistan and with an Afghan government that can protect its people, serve their interests, and offer them a more stable, prosperous future. Such a nation will never again be a safe haven for terrorists.

Assumptions: The following key planning assumptions support the Framework. If any of the assumptions prove false, then the Framework will require review and possible revision.

1. GIROA's strategic goals will remain generally congruent with U.S. goals in Afghanistan, allowing the USG and GIROA to conclude a Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) and initiate negotiations on a Bilateral Security Agreement that will define a long-term partnership.
2. The international community will maintain its support for Afghanistan throughout the transition process (through December 2014), but resources will decline. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) country program will remain in place and USG-funded assistance will continue, laying the groundwork for future economic growth and stability.³
3. GIROA revenue generation will not cover operating expenditures, including increased security spending, and development costs. The World Bank projects this financing gap at 25 percent of GDP (or \$7.2 billion in 2011 dollars) by 2021/22. Donor support short of this level will require a commensurate combination of reductions in GIROA spending and increases in revenue.
4. USG governance, rule of law, and socio-economic development support will transform from a stability operation to a traditional diplomatic and development model; mission transition activities will continue along the anticipated timeline leading to the closure of all PRTs and DSTs by the end of 2014.
5. The USG's relationships with Iran and Pakistan will remain tense. GIROA's relationships with its neighbors will also remain volatile as they seek to exert influence over Afghan political and security affairs to the detriment of USG objectives.
6. Inclusive, constitutional, and orderly Presidential elections will be held in 2014, allowing for a peaceful transfer of executive authority with an outcome that a majority of the Afghan people accept as legitimate.

² President Barack Obama, Remarks by the President on the Afghanistan-Pakistan Annual Review, December 16, 2010.

³ *The Kabul International Conference on Afghanistan*, 20 July 2010.

7. GIRoA, the USG, and the international community will continue to support an Afghan peace process. Improved security, along with advances in governance, the rule of law, and socio-economic development, will convince a growing number of insurgents to reintegrate.
8. The security environment in population centers and key terrain districts will allow implementing partners to continue their assistance activities.
9. GIRoA and the ANSF will be increasingly capable of protecting Afghanistan's sovereignty and territorial integrity. The international community will adhere to commitments made in Lisbon to generate, advise, and assist the ANSF and ensure that it is funded and supported sufficiently to reach its authorized personnel strength.
10. The current Military Technical Agreement (MTA) will serve as the legal framework for U.S. military operations within Afghanistan throughout the current U.S. mandate at the end of 2014.

Strategic Risks and Mitigating Factors. There are a number of strategic risks that could threaten the achievement of U.S. national goals in Afghanistan. In many cases, the USG's ability to mitigate these risks depends on the actions of others. While the following list is not all-inclusive, some key risks and mitigating factors include:

Strategic Risk	Mitigating Factor
Economic growth slows with a decline in international assistance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on the sustainability of program support across all pillars. Ensure that projects are designed to be operated and maintained by Afghans beyond 2014. • Support the GIRoA-owned and led development strategy as laid out by the Kabul Process and at the Bonn Conference. • Support GIRoA's ability to capture and manage revenue.
Donor nation and international organization resources diminish at a faster rate than expected.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate efforts and encourage support from the international community, leveraging existing mechanisms such as the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund. • Establish realistic conditionality requirements and benchmarks for donor assistance, including for on-budget support. • Focus on the sustainability of program support across all pillars. Ensure that projects are designed to be operated and be maintained by Afghans beyond 2014.
Lack of funding and support for continued ANSF development post-2014 threatens the cohesion and capacity of the ANSF to provide security.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on the principles agreed to at Bonn, ahead of the Chicago Summit, to ensure robust international commitment to support the development and professionalization of ANSF post-2014.⁴ • Secure Agreement among NATO allies and ISAF partners at the Chicago Summit on post-2104 ANSF funding.
Lack of political will to contribute the necessary resources weakens coalition cohesion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate efforts with and encourage support from the international community, leveraging existing donor coordination mechanisms such as the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund.

⁴ Second Bonn Conference Communiqué, para. 13, 5 December 2011.

Strategic Risk	Mitigating Factor
Diminishing international leverage over GIRoA places legal, political, and economic gains at risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conclude a Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) that transitions the USG’s relationship with GIRoA into a more traditional diplomatic relationship with clearly defined political commitments by both sides.
Early withdrawal of U.S. or coalition forces before ANSF units are ready to replace them reverses security gains.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustain a U.S. and coalition military presence structured to support ANSF-led operations. • NATO and ISAF partners at Chicago reaffirm their commitments to the Lisbon timeline.
Continued exploitation of the Afghan people by insurgents, criminal patronage networks, criminal and narcotics networks, and local powerbrokers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain USG rule of law and governance program support to target criminal networks, enhance the rule of law, tackle government corruption, and improve GIRoA’s ability to deliver basic services. • Establish transparency rules and regulations on donor funding mechanisms to prevent international assistance dollars from fueling corruption or the insurgency. • Continue to support GIRoA-led counternarcotics efforts and reduce narcotics funding to the insurgency.
GIRoA corruption and capacity shortfalls in all pillars reverses the security gains won by ISAF and the ANSF.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain USG rule of law and governance program support to target criminal networks, enhance the rule of law, tackle government corruption, and improve GIRoA’s ability to deliver basic services. • Establish realistic conditionality requirements and benchmarks for donor assistance, including for on-budget support.
Former Taliban or other insurgent actors gain power and repeal or roll back the basic rights and freedoms of all Afghans, but especially of women and minority groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue efforts to support the reintegration of rank-and-file fighters. Gains in the economy, combined with improved governance and security will help to marginalize extremist actors. • Support Afghan reconciliation efforts based on the Bonn Statement’s three necessary outcomes.
Afghan national cohesion disintegrates as political discourse and participation are mired in ethnic, tribal, and regional loyalties, hindering the development of political parties and civil society organizations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support initiatives that build capacity for budget prioritization and execution at the sub-national level, to build GIRoA capacity to deliver basic services and respond to citizen’s needs. • Engage civil society, including men and women from all ethnic groups and a range of organizations and coalitions, through policies and programs that reiterate the importance of independent institutions and their role in providing a check on government power.
Election results are seen as illegitimate by key Afghan political players or significant portions of the Afghan population.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Afghan constitutional succession through credible and inclusive presidential elections, encourage inclusive national dialogues ahead of the elections, and continue to provide technical support to the Independent Elections Commission.
The Government of Pakistan’s failure to apply pressure to safe havens allows insurgent leaders to retain effective command and control and regenerate their organizations. Political instability in Pakistan spills over the border and impacts USG and NATO/ISAF efforts in Afghanistan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue efforts to influence and encourage the Government of Pakistan to cooperate in reducing or eliminating safe havens and controlling extremists along the common border. • Continue to encourage closer bilateral ties between Afghanistan and Pakistan, including resumption of their bilateral Joint Peace and Reconciliation Commission, and more effective border cooperation.

SECTION III: Main Framework

Security Foundation

Since 2009, partnered operations by the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) and ISAF have achieved important security gains across large regions of Afghanistan, facilitating improvements in governance, the rule of law, and socio-economic development and setting the conditions for future efforts. The USG will continue to support the development of an increasingly capable ANSF that can partner with ISAF to neutralize the insurgency and promote stability, peace, and prosperity. The current counterinsurgency campaign, especially if coupled with progress targeting insurgent safe-havens in Pakistan, will help degrade the insurgency to a level that the ANSF can neutralize as it assumes full responsibility for security in Afghanistan by the end of 2014. Counterinsurgency operations will escalate pressure on the insurgency, incentivizing insurgent leaders and fighters to look for alternatives to violence. The Afghan peace process will continue to take fighters off the battlefield, pursue high-level talks with insurgent leaders, and seek to build a national consensus on peace and reconciliation. Through 2014, U.S. civilian and military elements must closely align their efforts across all three strategic pillars to support Afghan peace and reintegration processes that encourage political resolution of the insurgency at both the local and national levels. Continued, vigorous support for Afghan counternarcotics efforts will also bolster security and deprive the insurgency of resources.

Governance Pillar

Working with UNAMA and allied partners, the USG's support for governance initiatives is designed to ensure that the Afghan government and its institutions are more representative, accountable, responsive, constitutionally limited, and increasingly capable of performing key functions.

Key Priorities:

1. Support constitutional succession through credible and inclusive presidential elections.
2. Strengthen checks and balances and independent institutions.
3. Strengthen revenue collection and budget prioritization, execution, and accountability at both the national and sub-national levels.
4. Stem corruption through support for open and accountable government.

Efforts to strengthen governance must be based on a realistic assessment of the limited resources available to do so, recognizing that Afghans must take the lead in building their own democratic society. The first governance priority is to support an inclusive, constitutional, and orderly succession of Presidential authority in 2014. Support for the Independent Elections Commission (IEC) is essential, since an empowered IEC can contribute to the credibility of future elections. Elections will continue to be a primary vehicle for popular expression of political views and leadership changes.

The second governance priority is to strengthen independent institutions. Successful transition in Afghanistan will require stronger, more resilient independent governance institutions and civil society actors. The USG continues to support the development of Afghanistan's legislative and judicial branches as effective checks and balances to the executive branch. The judicial branch is heavily influenced by the executive branch and currently lacks independence and legitimacy. Bolstering the role of independent institutions, civil society, and the media is essential to strengthening legitimate Afghan governance and supporting the emergence of a transparent and durable democratic society.

The third governance priority is building GIRoA capacity for budget prioritization and execution at the national and sub-national levels and, resources permitting, in Afghanistan's key urban areas (Kabul, Kandahar, Herat, Mazar-e Sharif, and Jalalabad). Sustainable governance requires the capacity to make decisions about how to use finite resources in an efficient and accountable manner and then implement those decisions. This capacity must be further developed across GIRoA's executive and representative institutions, at both the national and sub-national levels. More effective linkages between national and sub-national institutions, coupled with active participatory oversight, will ensure that resources are distributed to the provincial and local levels in a more equitable, responsive, and transparent manner. Capacity building must include efforts to ensure that Afghan and U.S. funds and materials do not fall into the hands of insurgents or criminal networks.

The fourth governance priority is to stem corruption through support for open and accountable government. GIRoA's success as a functional, capable government will depend heavily on its ability to maintain the confidence of the Afghan people. This confidence can only be maintained if government corruption at every level is visibly and effectively addressed. The USG will continue to support programs and efforts to work with GIRoA officials to identify and effectively reduce corruption, while concurrently supporting government that is transparent and open. The USG will also continue its support to Afghan-led civil society organizations that are dedicated to pursuing transparency and accountability in government at any and all levels, whether nationally or subnationally. While efforts to combat corruption are historically difficult and slow to develop, they must be maintained with rigor and vigilance to position GIRoA for success in the post-transition period.

Rule of Law Pillar

The USG's support for the rule of law in Afghanistan focuses on efforts to provide Afghans with meaningful access to fair, efficient, and transparent justice. Such justice must be based on Afghan law and must increase GIRoA's legitimacy among Afghans by promoting a culture that values the rule of law above powerful interests. These collective efforts will help develop Afghan capacity to effectively investigate and prosecute national security and major counternarcotics cases.

Key Priorities:

1. Improve and expand access to the formal justice sector by increasing capacity and reducing corruption in key state justice institutions.
2. Partner with GIRoA to increase its capacity to manage its correctional facilities, thereby promoting a safe, secure, and humane corrections system that does not encourage the radicalization of prisoners.
3. Assist Afghan efforts to regularize the traditional justice system and develop linkages between it and the formal justice system.
4. Strengthen the leadership capacity of GIRoA's justice sector institutions and civil society organizations.

Efforts to improve and expand access to the formal justice sector by increasing capacity and reducing corruption are crucial to GIRoA's development of a rule of law sector that serves the Afghan people. A fully functioning justice sector with the capacity to investigate, prosecute, and adjudicate national security and major counternarcotics cases would be a viable partner for the USG in targeting terrorists and denying them safe haven. Support for Afghan anti- and countercorruption activities encourages Afghan leaders to promote improved transparency and accountability, thereby strengthening GIRoA's legitimacy as a sovereign government.

The second rule of law priority is to partner with GIRoA to increase its capacity to manage its correctional facilities, thereby promoting a safe, secure, and humane corrections system that does not encourage the radicalization of prisoners. For GIRoA to establish an effectively functioning corrections system it must support programs for rehabilitation and skills training, show progress in developing and implementing a prisoner classification system, assume responsibility and authority for detention facilities, and ensure proper maintenance of newly renovated and constructed prisons.

The third rule of law priority is to support Afghan efforts to regularize the traditional justice system and develop linkages between it and the formal justice system. The USG will bolster the efforts of informal dispute resolution "shuras" (councils) to encourage a dispute resolution process that is legitimate, credible, grounded in Afghan law, and meets the needs of communities; this will reduce the influence of the Taliban justice system. Linkages developed between the formal and informal justice systems will make settlements more durable by ensuring that decisions and resolutions reached by either system are recognized by both.

The final priority for rule of law is to strengthen the leadership capacity of GIRoA's justice sector institutions and civil society organizations in order to promote a functioning, sustainable judicial system. By emphasizing the development of leadership capacity within GIRoA, the USG will forge strong partnerships with Afghan government officials that can help achieve enduring U.S. national goals in Afghanistan. This will require the USG to encourage GIRoA to hire and promote qualified and vetted leaders and support Afghan legal organizations.

Socio-Economic Development Pillar

The USG's focus on socio-economic development in Afghanistan is to support sustainable, inclusive economic growth in an Afghanistan that is increasingly integrated within the region and is food secure. Investments in the economic sector will be implemented with sustainability, accountability, social inclusion, and partnership as driving principles.

Key Priorities:

1. Support private sector investment, job creation, and food security, focusing on the following sectors: agriculture, small and medium size enterprises, extractive industries, light manufacturing, and services.
2. Improve Afghanistan's economic integration into the region through the New Silk Road Initiative, which will improve Afghanistan's ability to access foreign markets and supply its domestic market.
3. Strengthen capacity within GIRoA as an important enabler of sustainable private sector participation in the economy, regulatory reform, public revenue generation, and improved flow of resources from Kabul to the provinces.

The USG will focus its assistance on the sectors and activities most likely to create jobs, support agricultural development, and generate government revenue. Continued development of the agricultural sector, which approximately 75 percent of Afghans depend on directly or indirectly for their livelihoods, is a promising means of providing reliable employment for the greatest number of people. Agriculture can be a source of economic stability for which infrastructure and regional markets can be developed. Improving agricultural techniques and education will expand production, increase food security, and reduce the economic incentives for poppy cultivation.

Development of minerals and hydrocarbons is Afghanistan's best chance to draw foreign investment and reduce its dependence on foreign assistance. In the long term, the extractive industries, including access to mineral deposits and hydrocarbons, will increase demand for the construction of regional rail, road, and energy networks that can generate significant revenue and create jobs. However, it will take at least five to ten years for GIRoA to begin to realize revenue from its significant mineral deposits. The near term focus should therefore be on legal and regulatory reform, capacity building at the Ministry of Mines, support for the Afghan Geological Survey and the Afghan National Environment Protection Agency, and development of smaller projects in gold, lithium, and hydrocarbons. The USG will encourage U.S. investments in this strategic and commercially promising extractive sector.

At the December 2011 Bonn Conference, the international community agreed to support, in principle, Afghanistan's economic transition strategy and its vision of enhanced trade connectivity along historical trade routes. In coordination with international partners, the USG

will support priority efforts that can serve as anchors for broader regional integration. There are opportunities to attract large-scale private sector investment (both foreign and domestic) in agribusiness, exports by small and medium enterprises, and the extractive industry. Such projects could contribute to stability, encourage greater regional cooperation, create jobs, and enhance economic growth. Completing priority infrastructure projects in three high-impact sectors – transportation, power, and water – is another important way to promote economic growth, attract private sector investment, and support sustainable trade and commerce while integrating Afghanistan into the regional economy.

Fundamental to this effort will be improving GIRoA capacity to maintain and sustain investments in infrastructure. Infrastructure programs are increasingly supported through capacity-building and on-budget assistance. The key to unlocking the potential of the Afghan economy is improved governance and capable institutions that can generate and utilize revenue effectively. This focus will help to build a capable workforce and maintain, rather than expand gains in the health and education sectors. Fulfillment of GIRoA commitments to impose greater accountability and make significant improvements in capacity related to financial management and project execution will facilitate efforts to channel at least 50 percent of development aid through GIRoA's core budget, another important avenue for ensuring sustainability.

Cross Cutting Issues

The main pillars of U.S. engagement in Afghanistan – Security, Governance, the Rule of Law, and Socio-Economic Development – are impacted by several cross cutting issues.

- **Gender:** Improved circumstances for Afghan women are fundamental to Afghanistan's security, governance, and development well beyond 2015. 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. The United States will encourage improved access for women to health care, education, economic and leadership opportunities, and justice. USG policy and programs should engage men and boys, as well as women and girls, of all ethnic groups on issues that affect gender equity. The USG should continue to mainstream gender concerns into policies and programs so that decreases in USG funding and presence in Afghanistan do not disproportionately affect women.
- **Borders:** Along rugged and remote borders, GIRoA faces the challenge of developing the capability to stem the flow of people and materials that facilitate terrorist, insurgent, and criminal activity, while promoting growth in trade and revenue necessary to reduce dependence on foreign assistance. The USG will support GIRoA to improve its understanding of border management principles, application of the rule of law, and efforts to interdict cross border movement of terrorist, insurgent, and criminal networks, reducing the flow of their personnel, equipment, and supplies. USG efforts will also help Afghanistan develop the institutional capacity to facilitate trade, enhance revenue collection, and engage

productively with its neighbors to promote regional integration. Streamlining customs procedures, increasing security, transparency, and predictability at ports of entry, and reducing corruption will help fuel economic growth and increase Afghan government revenue.

- **Information Initiatives:** Effective use of strategic communications is crucial to countering extremism and promoting GIRoA's legitimacy. Developing channels for Afghan citizens to convey their concerns to the government and have them acknowledged is also vital to establishing a stable, inclusive political process that will reinforce gains in security, governance, the rule of law, and socio-economic development and sustain them after 2014. GIRoA's goals, priorities, successes, and inevitable missteps need to be credibly communicated, and extremist disinformation must be countered. Public access to communications and an open media will facilitate the rise of a more informed population that can make educated decisions and hold its leaders accountable.
- **Reconciliation and Reintegration:** The United States will continue to support GIRoA efforts to reintegrate rank-and-file insurgents and reach a national, inclusive political reconciliation with all Afghan stakeholders, including reconcilable insurgent leaders. Irreversible transition will confirm Afghan sovereignty, while progress in taking insurgent fighters off the battlefield would help weaken the insurgency. Improvements in governance, the rule of law, and socio-economic development, combined with sustainable shifts in security, will help motivate more insurgents to seek reintegration and reconciliation. Combining reintegration support with development opportunities should encourage communities to support reintegration by providing them with practical economic and development assistance.

Engaging GIRoA on USG Priorities

Afghan ownership of the strategic pillars and cross cutting issues is essential to success. Working closely with Afghan partners on their own programs and activities will have a major impact over a sustained period of time. Many of the priorities outlined in the governance, rule of law, and socio-economic development pillars are reflected programmatically in various elements of GIRoA's National Priority Programs (NPP). Directing U.S. assistance funding to GIRoA institutions and programs, when and where appropriate, is therefore critical to USG efforts. Regular consultations on the NPPs offer opportunities for the USG to engage the international community and Afghan officials at both the political and technical level, as well as monitor performance and assess progress. This approach will also help to achieve the overarching transition goal of improving Afghan leadership and capacity.

Measuring Progress

Regular strategic assessments of progress will inform future revisions of this strategy by recognizing areas of success and indentifying others that have stagnated or are backsliding. The

primary purpose of regular assessments is to provide USG leadership in Afghanistan with reliable information needed to strategically prioritize and adjust the allocation of resources and efforts. They also serve to inform Washington decision-makers about changes in the operational environment. The U.S. Mission and the ISAF Afghan Assessments Group (AAG) will collaboratively assess qualitative and quantitative metrics from the U.S. Department of State's Afghanistan-Pakistan Regional Stabilization Strategy, ISAF documents, and the U.S. Mission's Performance Management Plan (PMP). The seven national-level civil-military working groups will be responsible for further development, monitoring, and assessment of their respective sectors.⁵

In addition to coordinating national-level strategic assessments, the Assistant Chief of Mission, Coordinating Director for Development and Economic Affairs (CDDEA), and Coordinating Director for Rule of Law/Law Enforcement (CDROLLE) also coordinate programmatic planning and assessments conducted by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) section, the Interagency Rule of Law (IROL) section, the Public Affairs section (PAS), and other USG entities. The Interagency Provincial Affairs (IPA) section coordinates sub-national reporting on specific issues, including governance, elections, and reintegration. IPA, supported by USAID and the Political-Military Affairs section's Civil Military Plans and Assessments (CMPASS) team, also advises the Regional Platforms on assessing progress toward the USG priorities and their regional plans.

Related Plans

This Framework supports a host of strategic, operational, and tactical documents by providing overarching guidance to integrate and harmonize civilian and military lines of effort, including:

- DoS Cable, Implementing Our Economic Strategy: Prioritizing Assistance and Moving Forward on Engagement (January 2012)
- DoS Cable, Establishing Enduring Presence (November 2011)
- AF-PAK Stabilization Strategy Update (October 2011)
- ISAF OPLAN rev. 6 (October 2011)
- IPA Field Guidance (October 2011)
- Strengthening Governance to Support Transition in Afghanistan (September 2011)
- Integrated Civ-Mil Transition Plan (June 2011)
- DoS Cable, Refining our Governance Orientation in Light of Transition (December 2010)
- U.S. Government Rule of Law Strategy for Afghanistan (2009)

⁵ The national-level working groups cover: Security, Governance, the Rule of Law, Economics and Development, Gender, Information Initiatives, and Border Initiatives. Attendees include personnel from sections across the U.S. Embassy, USFOR-A, and ISAF.

SECTION IV: Desired Environment Post 2014

Moving Forward

The security transition process that will conclude by the end of 2014 is intended to establish “the conditions for a sustainable and irreversible transition of security responsibility to the Afghan government.”⁶ For the security transition to be irreversible the ANSF must be a competent professional force and the insurgency must be degraded to the point that the ANSF is capable of preventing insurgents from threatening the Afghan state. Even after 2014, security will remain the foundation for the governance, rule of law, and socio-economic pillars. This foundation’s strength will be maintained by continued Coalition advice and support to the ANSF. The future SPA and Bilateral Security Agreement will define the USG’s long-term partnership with Afghanistan, including the intent to support counterterrorism operations. Finally, future military operations by the ANSF will improve security conditions in ways that directly support civilian-led development activities.

For a decade, USG efforts in Afghanistan have been decisively shaped by a large U.S. military presence. By 2015, Embassy Kabul will have primary responsibility for the USG’s contribution to the Transformation Decade (2015-2024).⁷ During the Transformation Decade, Afghanistan will consolidate its sovereignty by building and strengthening a fully functioning, sustainable state that serves its people and by pursuing an economic development strategy that leads to fiscal self-sufficiency. GIROA’s long-term economic strategy, with support from the international community, will ideally result in GIROA no longer needing significant fiscal or budgetary support. The United States may have a development mission in Afghanistan for decades to come, but not one that fills GIROA budgetary gaps as it does today.

GIROA’s vision is of an Afghanistan that is a stable, sustainable, functioning democracy aligned with Islamic values and able to contribute to regional and international peace and security, with an economy capable of generating sufficient revenue to gradually decrease reliance on donor assistance.⁸ The United States shares this vision of an increasingly self-sufficient Afghanistan that can assume its rightful place among sovereign nations and is integrated into a stable region where international terrorism never again finds sanctuary.

Significant changes in the U.S. Mission’s size, scope, and priorities will characterize this major shift in emphasis and new operating paradigm. The U.S. commitment in Afghanistan, described as an “Enduring Presence,” represents a long-term investment and pledge to GIROA and the people of Afghanistan that we will support Afghanistan’s self-reliance, self-sufficiency,

⁶ Testimony of Ambassador Ryan C. Crocker before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Nomination Hearing for Afghanistan, June 8, 2011.

⁷ At the Bonn Conference it was determined that the end of 2014 should be followed by a “Decade of Transformation,” with all five countries in attendance making firm commitments to support development and capacity building efforts in Afghanistan through 2024.

⁸ Secretary of State Clinton, *Read-Out of Bonn Conference on Afghanistan*, State 121992, para 7, 9 December 2011.

and sustainable stability. The U.S. Mission will downsize significantly by 2015; no longer will there be PRTs and DSTs throughout Afghanistan. Instead, the Embassy will have evolved into a Mission modeled more on traditional development and diplomacy. The USG footprint in the country will consist of the U.S. Embassy in Kabul and four Enduring field platforms in Kandahar, Herat, Mazar-e Sharif, and Jalalabad that will “signal the USG commitment to the Afghan people, let us conduct diplomacy and development effectively, and avoid the perception of regional favoritism.”⁹ As the U.S. effort takes an ever-more supporting role in Afghanistan, it will be with the full knowledge that GIRoA’s capability will still be limited. The U.S. Mission will endeavor to help Afghanistan to develop its capacity to govern itself and become self-sustaining while making a concerted effort to decrease GIRoA reliance on USG and donor nation support.

⁹ U.S. Enduring Presence in Afghanistan Post-2014 Concept of Operations.