

**Testimony Before the House Armed Services Committee
Hearing on “Transition in Afghanistan: Views of Outside Experts”**

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**“The Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition: *Establishing Real World Criteria
and Metrics*”**

Executive Summary

The effectiveness of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) are only one element of success in Afghanistan, but the various elements of the ANSF are critical to providing lasting security and stability and denying Afghanistan as a future base for international terrorism and extremism.

If the US and its allies are to succeed in Afghanistan, they must continue to support the ANSF and provide them with the capability to support a successful Transition to Afghan responsibility to security. However, for a successful Transition to occur the US must change the way in which it evaluates the ANSF’s prospects for success, be ready to provide the necessary resources, and focus on the actual ability to achieve security rather than force building and evaluation tools like the CMA and CUAT system.

Two key criteria two key criteria for success are external to the ANSF, and will require careful attention and support from the US. First, the ANSF cannot succeed without effective Afghan leadership and a reasonable degree of national unity following the 2014 election. Second, the ANSF cannot survive without adequate external funding through at least 2017.

These criteria, however, are only part of the issues that must be dealt with if key elements of the ANSF are to become effective enough to meet the new requirements that will be imposed by US and allied withdrawal over the coming two years.

- **The Real World ANSF That Emerges from Transition Will Be Far Different From today’s Force and Manpower Goals**

The US and its allies – including the US Congress – must also understand the challenges both US and ISAF trainers and partners face, and the challenges the Afghans face as well. The ANSF is driven by pressures that mean change major changes in its structure and force goals are inevitable as Transition occurs.

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These pressures include:

- A failure to meet initial US and ISAF military surge goals, implement the 2010 campaign plan, and back the US build-up with a viable civilian surge.
- Major shortfalls in providing the levels of Afghan governance and rule of law efforts in the field necessary to make ANSF efforts effective.
- The inability of the Afghan government to treat the real world impact of power brokers, corruption, narcotics, and criminal networks around and within the ANSF and to treat these problems as if they did not exist.
- The long history of underfunding and erratic funding by outside states and shortfalls in trainers and partners.
- Long periods in which salaries were not competitive and high levels of annual attrition and turnover took place.
- Steady rises in ANSF force goals based largely on arbitrary numbers and force goals accompanied by steady efforts to reduce the time available to achieve them.
- Ongoing reductions in US and allied force levels, often with limited warning and that are larger and sooner than previously anticipated.
- Reductions in outyear annual cost from some \$9 billion to \$6 billion to \$4.1 billion.
- Constant changes in performance standards and goals.

Creating an effective ANSF requires a new approach to assessing the development of Afghan forces that is based on a conditions-based net assessment of how given elements of the ANSF actually perform relative to insurgent factions, and one that is tied to a similar assessment of the relative success of the Afghan government, insurgents, power brokers, and other factions in winning support in given areas.

- **Measuring Effectiveness Needs to Be Based on Net Assessment of Performance relative to the Threat and Not On Meeting Manpower and Readiness Goals**

It means shifting from force building metrics based on largely arbitrary total manpower goals to a focus on what elements of the ANSF prove to be most effective as Transition occurs, and their performance in the field. It means focusing resources on the most effective force elements, rather than arbitrary manpower or readiness standards, and regularly assessing how given elements of the ANSF's order of battle perform relative to threat and militia forces.

Setting largely arbitrary force goals for all elements of the ANSF, regardless of their capability, value, and costs borders on military absurdity. So does assigning arbitrary resource levels like \$4.1 billion a year for the entire force regardless of merit.

- **A Focus on Total ANSF Manpower totals Like 352,000 is Absurd**

The key test of success from this campaign season onwards will be how key elements of the ANSF actually perform, What level of leadership and unity exists within the Afghan government, who wins public support in key provinces and districts, what level of

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resources are really required for valuable force elements, and what level of resources are actually available.

A focus on building every element up to 352,000 men at the highest level of capability, and then over when it should be reduced to an equally arbitrary 228,500 in the future borders on becoming a mindless waste of time.

- **The CM and CUAT System Is Useful Only For Force Generation And Is Already Going to Be Replaced by an Afghan Set of Standards**

This requires the US and ISAF to develop far more realistic and honest security reporting than it has made public to date. Measures like the CM and CUAT ratings will remain important to NTM-A and its successors. Even here, however, DoD has already announced that there will be a shift to Afghan developed metrics that are certain to evolve steadily with time, have to vary by element of the ANSF, and need to focus on actual performance in the field.

- **Success Will Depend on the ANA, AAF, ANCOPS, and ALP/Militias**

This means assessing each element of the ANSF separately and resourcing elements like the ANA and ANCOP that can actually perform the mission. Training, aid, and Afghan resources must concentrate on building up the force elements in given forces within the ANSF that can actually perform effectively in the field. It is both meaningless and actively misleading to focus on the total manning and size of the ANSF, rather than assess it by service.

The key elements of the force now include large parts of the Afghan National Army (ANA), which as a current force goal of some 172,005 – or some 49% of the present total manpower goal. The key issue for the success of the entire ANSF will be the performance of the ANA's of its seven corps in the field, the level of threat involved, the capability sustain and support these forces, and their future cost relative to future resources.

Another key element will be the ability to build up a meaningful Afghan air force during 2014-2017, where the present manpower goal is only 7,639 men or 2% of the 352,000-man force, but actual air capabilities in terms of combat sustainable aircraft will be critical.

The third key element will be the Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP), with a present manpower goal of 14,451 or only 4% of the 352,000, but which is the only fully effective paramilitary element of the ANP.

It is the actual performance of the most capable elements of these three forces – whose manpower goals make up a little over half of the current total of 352,000 – relative to the threat over time that will largely determine whether the entire ANSF can contain and defeat the insurgents during 2013-2014 and beyond.

The fourth set of key elements is not even included in the formal ANSF structure or manpower goal. Given historical experience, it is the capability in given areas of the better elements of the best elements of Afghan Local Police (ALP) and militias that

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support the government – some 30,000-40,000 -- men that will determine the government's ability to hold key rural areas. Yet these forces are not even included in the meaningless debate over total manning numbers like 352,000 or 228,500 and a theoretical debate over how to reduce the entire ANSF in the future.

- **Most Other Elements of the ANP Will Have Marginal Effectiveness, Remain Corrupt, Lack Adequate Support from Civil Governance, and the Other Elements of a Justice System, And Be Tied to Local Power Brokers,**

There are other elements of the Afghan National Police (ANP) – such as the Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP) and Afghan Border Police (ABP) – will have some utility. Most of these forces – which make up some 45% of the 352,000 total, however, will remain corrupt, have limited effectiveness, and lack support from effective governance in the field and from the other elements of a criminal justice system.

Barring far stronger Afghan leadership than now seems likely to emerge in 2014, many elements are also likely to revert to control by local power brokers or the highest bidder and much or most of the present NTM-A effort and goals will be replaced with Afghan solutions that allow the AUP and ABP to revert to force shaped by Afghan resources and standards and that have limited effectiveness.

- **Continued US Support for the Key Elements of the ANSF Will Be Needed for 3-4 Years After 2014**

The US and its allies need to recognize that many elements of even the ANA will not be fully ready for transition before 2016-2017, and that– if combat continues – they will require outside support in the form of airpower, trainers, intelligence, and sustainment. At the same time, current force development plans cannot survive engagement with reality. The Afghans must restructure their force development plans to do it their way, to cope with the problems posed by power brokers, ethnic and tribal factions, and corruption.

The US and its allies need to stop focusing on equally arbitrary and largely meaningless total manpower numbers and provide a clear explanation of what elements will stay in Afghanistan, what their mission will be, how they will be deployed and given security, and how they will advise, train, partner, and enable the ANA, ANCOPs and other critical elements of the ANSF. Talking in broad terms about US manning levels of up to 9,500 US troops and 6,000 allies has all the intellectual merit of debating how many angels can dance on the head of a pin. Afghan forces that have been rushed into being will need conditions-based support based on merit and not arbitrary outside manning and funding.

The mix of ANSF and outside forces that actually emerges over the next few years is almost certain to fall short of the current goals set by the US, ISAF and aid donors. This does not mean, however, that the force that actually does emerge cannot meet actual Afghan needs and provide an acceptable level of strategic success *if* the US, the Afghan government, and its other allies focus on conditions-based realities rather than nonsense numbers for total manning and arbitrary cost and resource levels.

- **Support Must Include Support for the Civil Sector and Economy**

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These conditions do, however, depend as much on Afghan leadership, governance, and economic stability as the capabilities of key elements of the ANSF. The level of employment and economic security that emerges during 2013-2014, and particularly in the critical post withdrawal period between 2013-2017 – will be at least as critical to Afghan stability and security.

Money will continue to be a critical issue at every level. Loyalty will often be for rent, an armed nation will unify divide according to its leadership and who controls the money, the men who leave the present ANSF along with the roughly 50,000-80,000 other armed men in the ALP, militias, PSCs, and APPF will remain critical wild cards. Any element the Afghan government cannot offer Afghan's armed young men a future will often either striker out on its own become a threat.

This means the US and its allies need workable and *realistic* plans and assessment that can deal with both the needs of the ANSF and civil aspect of afghan stability and security. These plans will need to be regularly updated and altered to deal with the conditions that actually emerge, but there must be some basis for cohesive and consistent action.

- **Afghan Leaders Must Be Told that Such US Support is Conditions-Based on the Effectiveness, Integrity, and Unity of Their Leadership or the US Will Leave**

That said, there is a critical caveat to be added about any effort to make the ANSF successful. “Conditions-based” does not mean open-ended or even continued support for the ANSF or any other aspect of the Afghan government. No one outside Afghanistan owes Afghanistan support it government fails to earn. At present, the lack of leadership, reliance on power brokering, and corruption in both the ANSF and civil side of Afghanistan are as much a threat as the insurgents.

If the Afghans cannot find a successful leader in 2014, produce a reasonable degree of unity and governance, reduce corruption and power brokering to more acceptable levels, and show they can make the ANSF effect, that US and its allies should react to the fact they have higher strategic priorities than Afghanistan and central Asia.

The US may need to continue its present public rhetoric about enduring strategic partnership. In practice, it should be honest in privately communicating to Afghan officials that it already has many incentives to leave Afghanistan and use its resources elsewhere. Moreover, it should remind them that the US has already shown it can largely walk away from Iraq – a country with far more strategic importance than Afghanistan, that it has many higher priority strategic priorities throughout the world, and that it has increasingly constrained resources to meet them.

In the case of the ANSF, the US and its allies should make it clear that they are prepared to cut support and funding for force elements that remain grossly corrupt, and serve power brokers in ways that do not provide stability or serve the people. If the effort to create “Afghan good enough” results in failed Afghan leadership, governance, or ANSF development; the US and its allies should regard an exit from Afghanistan as mandatory.

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	1
NATIONAL LEADERSHIP, POLITICS, AND UNITY OF EFFORT	1
THE IMPACT OF LEADERSHIP, POLITICAL ALIGNMENTS, AND CORRUPTION.....	1
KARZAI (AND HIS SUCCESSOR): WITH THE US OR TOO MUCH OF A BARRIER FOR SUCCESS?.....	3
Figure 1: Kabulstan vs. Afghanistan: Ethnic and Sectarian Divisions.....	5
FOCUSING ON THE REAL WORLD EFFECTIVENESS OF KEY ELEMENTS OF THE ANSF	7
Figure 2: The Power Structure of Afghan Forces During and After Transition in 2014 ...	7
A CAUTION ABOUT PEACE NEGOTIATIONS	10
MONEY AS A KEY CRITERIA AND METRIC FOR AFGHAN SUCCESS	10
A HISTORY OF ERRATIC RESOURCING	11
THE NEED TO FUND THE FUTURE.....	11
Figure 3: Projected US and Other Donor Support for the ANSF	12
Figure 4: Afghan Government Dependence on Outside Aid: 2006-2011	14
THE NEED FOR PREDICTABLE AND EFFECTIVE OUTSIDE SUPPORT FROM US AND ALLIED FORCES AND ADVISORS	15
US FORCE CUTS SET THE STAGE	15
Figure 5: Changes in US Troop Levels: 2003-2014.....	18
WITHDRAWAL WITH OR WITHOUT ADEQUATE ADVISORS, TRAINERS, PARTNERS, AND ENABLERS? .	18
THE NEED FOR CLEAR AND CREDIBLE PLANS FOR OUTSIDE SUPPORT.....	19
SECURITY AND TRANSITION	20
AN EXTREMELY UNCERTAIN LEVEL OF SECURITY IN SPITE OF THE “SURGE”	21
RELYING A LARGELY IRRELEVANT METRIC: ENEMY INITIATED ATTACKS	21
Figure 6: No Meaningful Improvement in Afghan Security Metrics: 2009-2012 Part One	22
Figure 6: No Meaningful Improvement in Afghan Security Metrics: 2009-2012 Part Two	23
OTHER METRICS SHOW NO CLEAR IMPROVEMENT IN SECURITY AS A RESULT OF THE “SURGE”	25
LIES BY OMISSION? DROPPING THE METRICS THAT MAY BE LESS FAVORABLE BUT ALSO COULD REFLECT ACTUAL ANSF PERFORMANCE	25
Figure 7: Insurgent Attacks by Province in Fourth Quarter 2012.....	27
TRANSITIONING DISTRICTS AND PROVINCES TO THE ANSF BY THE CALENDAR WITH NO CLEAR PICTURE OF ANSF CAPABILITY	27
Figure 9: Transitioning Provinces and Districts: Tranches 1-3.....	28
THE ANSF, SECURITY, AND POPULAR SUPPORT	31
BUILDING AND SUSTAINING AFGHAN FORCES	31
THE LIMITS TO CAPABILITY MILESTONE (CM) AND COMMANDERS UNIT ASSESSMENT TOOL (CUAT) RATINGS.....	33
BROAD METRICS OF NUMBERS OF OPERATIONS AND AFGHAN-LED OPERATIONS HAVE SOME VALUE	34
Figure 10: Levels of Contingency Operation and Trend in Partnered Operations.....	35
MEASURING PROGRESS IN FORCE GENERATION	36
Figure 11: ANSF Development – Institutional Metrics and Benchmarks.....	37
THE MOD AND THE MOI.....	38
FOCUS ON THE ANA	38
WORRY ABOUT THE AAF	39

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

ACCEPT MARGINAL SUCCESS WITH THE POLICE AND RULE OF LAW	39
FOCUS ON ALP AND FUTURE ROLE OF MILITIAS	40
Figure 12: Popular Perceptions of Corruption in the ANSF, Government, and Justice System.....	42
NARCOTICS, CRIMINAL NETWORKS, AND LEADERSHIP FLIGHT	43
GREEN ON BLUE AND GREEN ON GREEN ATTACKS.....	43
Figure 13: Insider Attacks on ISAF and ANSF Personnel: 2007-2012.....	45
REALITY-BASED ANSF DEVELOPMENT	46
SUPPORT MUST INCLUDE SUPPORT FOR THE CIVIL SECTOR AND ECONOMY	46
AFGHAN LEADERS MUST BE TOLD THAT SUCH US SUPPORT IS CONDITIONS-BASED ON THE EFFECTIVENESS, INTEGRITY, AND UNITY OF THEIR LEADERSHIP OR THE US WILL LEAVE.....	47

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

Introduction

Any real world assessment of the role of the ANSF in Transition must be based on the fact that the criteria for assessment have changed fundamentally in the course of the last two years. The issue is no longer the level of progress in generating new elements of the Afghan forces with only vague constraints on cost and time. It is whether an effective mix of Afghan forces can take over from the remaining elements of US and ISAF forces and related support by the end of 2014, and do so in support of an effective Afghan government with enough resources to survive.

This does not mean that past metrics are unimportant, but it does mean that many are at best of marginal value. Using rating systems to measure progress in creating, training, and equipping given unit elements or aspects of the force structure is not a measure of whether the ANSF will be effective or sustainable in a post Transition period. Neither, for that matter, is whether individual units are capable of operating independently or in the lead at some unstated level of performance and combat intensity.

The test of Afghan forces is not success in meeting some outside scoring system for force development. It lies in whether key elements of the force like the ANA and ANCOP can maintain or increase security in critical areas, actually assume responsibility for security, and contain or defeat insurgent movements like the Taliban and Haqqani Network. The issue is one of net assessment, not whether unit elements are “in the lead,” and it cannot be separated from the quality of the Afghan government and civil political, governance, and economic stability of the country.

In short, assessment of the ANSF should now be based on a net assessment of whether its key elements will be able to provide security over enough of the country to hold Afghanistan together, and do so with far more limited resources and outside aid. This involves a very different set of criteria, enablers, and metrics, and one that the US and ISAF urgently need to adopt.

National Leadership, Politics, and Unity of Effort

Given the past history of force building efforts in Vietnam, El Salvador, Columbia, the Balkans and Iraq; Afghanistan’s future leadership, political unity, and overall quality of governance in the field are likely to be most important criteria determining the effectiveness of the ANSF. No matter how well the ANSF is created, advised, and partnered, it cannot succeed with a weak leader in “Kabulstan” and/or the lack of some viable form of unity and governance outside it.

The Impact of Leadership, Political Alignments, and Corruption

The legitimacy of the election will be an important factor in determining whether the leader it produces has popular support. But the leadership qualities of next Afghan leader and the unity of the various ethnic and sectarian power brokers will be critical. Real legitimacy is never based on how a leader is chosen, but on the quality and popular perceptions of how well he leads.

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

This has already emerged as a high-risk area for transition and for the future of the ANSF. It is not clear that there is an effective replacement for Karzai. Creating honest and effective provincial and district governance remains a critical problem and one where recent SIGAR studies and Department of Defense reports indicate limited progress has been made little additional progress is likely as aid efforts are cut and withdrawn from the field during 2013-2014.

The real political and power structure of Afghanistan still consists of the Afghan president's ability to balance given factions, ethnic groups, power brokers and warlords – some of which are tied to criminal networks, some of which are deeply corrupt, and some of which have links to the insurgents.

The real effectiveness of the ANSF depends upon the leader's willingness to commit forces where they are most needed, manage and promote on the basis of merit, keep corruption to limited and popularly acceptable levels, and make effective use of tactics like night raids, air strikes, detentions, and other measures which require a careful balance between military effectiveness and the political and popular impact of the tactics involved. They depend on allocating resources for governance and the rest of the legal system in ways that build an effective mix of popular support and security, and on the willingness to both use and support the use of US and other ISAF forces where they are needed.

These are all areas where Karzai showed limited leadership ability, a tendency to focus on power brokering and winning short-term popular support, and created growing constraints on the effectiveness of US, other ISAF, and ANSF forces over time. They are also areas where Karzai's lack of support for other US and ISAF forces may have helped create serious problems in terms of green of blue attacks and popular resentment of foreign forces. They are all areas where Karzai made many promises to deal with corruption and either found symbolic scapegoats or use anti-corruption to enhance his own power.

As is discussed later, the polling data on corruption in the latest SIGAR report track closely with reports of groups like Transparency International that warn every element of Afghan governance – including the MoD, MoI, and most elements of the ANSF – is corrupt and perceived as corrupt by the Afghan people.¹ As bad as this current situation is, it is far from clear that the next leader will be able to balance various factions as well as Karzai, and the reemergence of a Northern Alliance is only one warning signal of the fact that the leadership that emerges out of the 2014 election will be critical to the future of both the ANSF and the ability of the US and outside powers to support it.

The February 2013 Quarterly Report by SIGAR, and work by Catherine Dale and Ken Katzman of the Congressional Research Service, warn that key elements of leadership and governance will be missing through at least 2014.² Effective governance is still lacking at the provincial, district, and local level in many areas, and so are the civil elements of a rule of law necessary to allow a police force to work and maintain its integrity. The ANSF cannot operate in a vacuum, and weak local governance can ensure its ineffectiveness, reinforce its corruption, and either empowers power brokers or the insurgents.

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Some senior Afghans have privately made it clear that they believe success will not depend on the election but on some new agreement among power brokers to make it through Transition. Others have made it clear that there is a real risk of Transition producing a mix of a weak “Kabulstan” and regions under power broker control, or even some form of coup within the ANA.

It is all too clear from examples like Iraq, that there is a risk of an ethnic leader effectively taking control of the military, a quick break up of the police into local ethnic and sectarian factions, and divisions within the Afghan Army along ethnic lines. The basic ethnic divisions in Afghanistan are shown in **Figure 1**, although this map does not distinguish important differences within the Pashtuns, and does not reflect critical tribal and geographic divisions within the structure of Afghan politics and power brokers. Much of the real world future of Transition will depend on the post-2014 alignment of tribal factions in the east and south both in terms of limiting insurgent influence in the border and less populated areas, and in determining to what level key power brokers in populated areas will align with the central government.

There are no metrics that make it possible to estimate the probabilities involved in some form of factional division of the country and ANSF, but it is striking that OSD reported in December 2012 that Tajiks made up some 40% of the officer and 41% of the NCO corps (p. 58), while Tajiks only make up roughly 27% of the population according to the CIA. Uzbeks, Hazara, and other ethnic/sectarian groups are badly underrepresented at the top while the Pashtuns are also over-represented.³

Karzai (and His Successor): With the US or Too Much of a Barrier for Success?

Moreover, both the current and future afghan leadership must show it is committed to either finding some successful peace settlement or actually prosecuting the war in ways that can win. The present Afghan leader’s support for an effective US and allied mission sometimes seems as uncertain as the support Iraq provided during US withdrawal.

President Karzai’s office did formally welcome the President’s announcement in a statement on February 13, 2013:⁴

Afghanistan welcomes the announcement by President Obama, who in his state of the union address said that the US would be pulling out another 34000 troops over the next year from Afghanistan. President Obama added, “This spring, our forces will move into a support role, while Afghan security forces take the lead...This is something Afghanistan has wanted for so long now. The withdrawal in spring of foreign forces from Afghan villages will definitely help in ensuring peace and full security in Afghanistan...As President Obama underscored America’s commitment to a unified and sovereign Afghanistan beyond 2014, we hope the bilateral relations and cooperation between the two countries could further expand.

However, President Karzai has never shown a serious interest in Afghan military development, has made it clear for several years that he wants to sharply constrain US and ISAF action, and has always focused on politics and power brokering. In many cases, he has been as much a problem in creating effective military forces as an enabler.

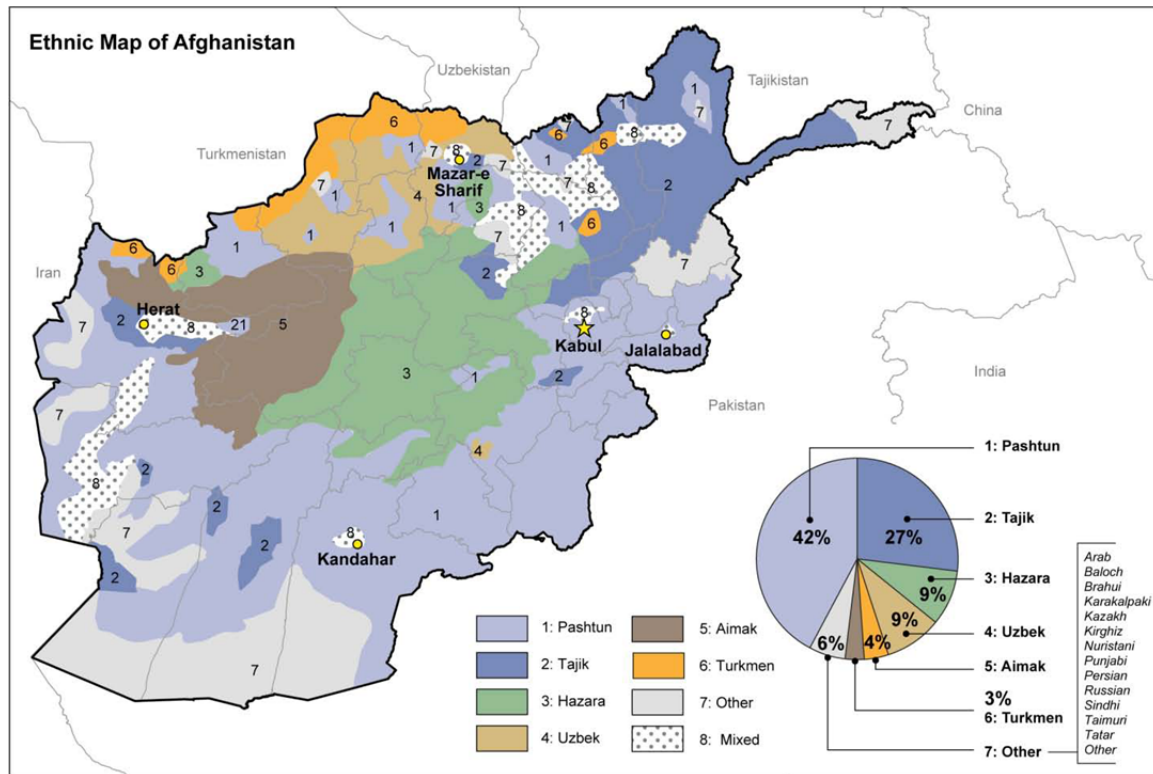
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No US and outside support effort can succeed if the Afghan leadership puts too many constraints on military operations that are both unpopular and necessary, and/or makes impossible demands regarding civilian casualties and collateral damage. Night raids, the use of air and UCAV strikes, the role of special forces and other US and allied units in other types of raids affecting civilians, detentions and interrogations are all areas where the US, other ISAF forces, and ANSF forces need to be extremely sensitive to popular attitudes and protection of the population. But, war is war. It cannot be fought by putting politics and personal influence first where this is not necessary and can cripple operations.

The present mix of uncertain leadership, weak central governance, weaker and divided governance in the field, real rule by local power broker and tribal faction, and corruption does not mean Afghanistan cannot function after Transition, but it does mean that the ANSF will be under intense, and potentially divisive political pressure. Key elements may divide along regional, ethnic, and power broker lines, the relative influence in Pashtun areas will be critical in checking the insurgents, and the next President risks becoming steadily more isolated in Kabul, tied to regional and ethnic factions, and/or forced to try to use the ANSF to preserve personal power. Saigon and Baghdad are practical examples of the potential extremes.

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Figure 1: Kabulstan vs. Afghanistan: Ethnic and Sectarian Divisions⁵



Source: GAO analysis of Central Intelligence Agency and National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency data; National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency and Map Resources (maps).

Ethnic Structure of ANA Q42012

	Pashtun	Tajik	Hazara	Uzbek	Others
Officer	43.1%	39.5%	7.4%	4.3%	5.8%
Officer Delta	-0.9%	14.5%	-2.6%	-3.7%	-7.2%
NCO	49.6%	41.3%	5.6%	2.0%	1.4%
Soldier	42.6%	30.9%	11.7%	8.2%	6.6%
Total Force	44.8%	35.2%	9.3%	5.8%	4.9%
Delta	0.8%	10.2%	-0.7%	-2.2%	-8.1%
ANA Ethnic Breakout Requirement	44%	25%	10%	8%	13%

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Focusing on the Real World Effectiveness of Key Elements of the ANSF

The future effectiveness of the ANSF has to be viewed in both political terms and by force element. **Figure 2** summarizes their current and probable post-Transition capabilities in these terms, and it should be clear that only two force elements – the ANA and ANCOPs – have a high probability of emerging as effective national forces. Even if fully staffed their peak-manning goal, they would only total some 186,503 men, or 53% of the goal of 352,000.

The differences between given elements of the ANSF, and the external forces shaping these differences, are described in more detail later in this analysis. They are summarized in **Figure 2**, and it is important to realize that even the ANA and ANCOP forces will have serious problems in their future performance without effective Afghan political leadership and unity. Additionally, many – if not most – of the various other elements of the Afghan National Police are likely to remain problematic in terms of integrity, loyalty, and effectiveness well beyond 2014 and indefinitely into the future.

Figure 2 also shows, however, that the 352,000-man goal does not include a goal of 30,000-40,000 Afghan Local Police, 11,000-23,000 Afghan Public Protection Force personnel, and an unknown number of independent militia(s) – some of which do receive some form of government support. If these now transitional and uncertain programs go forward to their present goals, they would total 41,000 to 63,000 men, and represent highly political wild cards in the ANSF. At present, however, there is no clear way to rate them and it seems unlikely that neither the ALP nor APPF will emerge at end-2014 in anything like their presently planned form.

Figure 2: The Power Structure of Afghan Forces During and After Transition in 2014⁶

Force Element	Manpower		Current and Future Status
	Goal	Total % of ANSF	
MOD	NA	NA	The Ministry of Defense (MoD) has a reasonable level of leadership integrity by Afghan standards, but is to subject political influence and problems with favoritism and corruption in promotions and contracting. Being rushed into premature readiness. End-2014 is too early a date of does not have continuing outside support. Future effectiveness will, depend far more on post-2014 election leadership than training and readiness to assume effective management of ANA.
ANA	172,055	49%	The Afghan National Army (ANA) had 174,645 personnel assigned in Q4 2012. It is a force that is still very much in transition with a growing number of effective combat elements (Kandaks = US battalions). It has seven corps the size of US divisions, a 12,525 man Special Operations Force, and 44,712 men (13% of entire ANSF) in support elements. Force development has been consistently rushed since 2009 and the goal of creating a

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mature force by end 2014 has been severely affected by problems in creating the MoD, a shortfall in the number of qualified trainers and partners, increases in the force goal levels and condensed timing for security transfer. The ANA has substantially less corruption than any element of ANSF other than ANCOP. But there are still problems and question about links of some elements to powerbrokers. Attrition and shortfalls in qualified officers and NCOs will remain problems through 2014. *May well be capable of forcing insurgents to stay out of critical populated areas, or at least marginalizing their influence if receive full funding, substantial US partnering and enabling during 2014-2017, if new Afghan president is effective leader, and if political and ethnic factions can achieve a working post2014 election modus vivendi.*

AAF 7,639 2%

The Afghan Air Force (AAF) had 5,872 personnel assigned in Q4 2012. It has had major problems with development and corruption. It is not intended to be ready of self-sufficient before the end of 2016 and even then will have limited combat capability. This may make continued US air support critical through at least 2017 – a requirement that will continue to raise issues over civilian casualties and collateral damage.

**ANA+AAF
Subtotal 195,000 55%**

MOI NA NA

A reasonable level of leadership integrity by Afghan standards, but far more subject to political influence, problems with favoritism, and corruption in promotions and contracting than the MoD. Being rushed into premature readiness. End-2014 is too early if the MOI does not have continuing outside support. Future effectiveness will, again depend far more on post-2014 election leadership than training and readiness to assume effective management of various elements of ANP, and the MoI will remain far more subject to outside political pressure than MoD.

ANCOP 14,451 4%

The Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP) is a relatively effective paramilitary force with 14,383 men assigned in Q4 2012. The ANCOP is the only element of ANP consistently capable of counterinsurgency operations. Currently loyal to central government, but has a high attrition rate and much depends on the next president.

AUP 110,279 31%

The Afghan Uniform Police (AUP) had 106,235 personnel assigned in Q4 2012. The AUP are a deeply divided force with some good elements and many corrupt and ineffective elements tied to powerbrokers. There are some elements with probable links to insurgents and criminal networks. Operations are often very limited in Districts with significant insurgent elements. Lacks support of effective local government and other elements of justice system in many areas. There are major shortages in advisors and partners and many elements of the ANSF are unrated by. There is an uncertain overall ability to sustain readiness and training levels, pay, and selection and promotion by merit if advisors phase down. Many elements likely to devolve to force elements tied to local

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

			power brokers, make deals with insurgents, or collapse after 2014.
ABP	23,090	7%	The Afghan Border Police (ABP) had 21,928 personnel assigned in Q4 2012. The force had some good elements, and others that were corrupt, but actively fought or resisted insurgents. However, there are many corrupt and ineffective elements operating as local power brokers or tied to powerbrokers. Often guilty of extortion in AOR or at checkpoints, and sometimes seizure of boys. Some elements with links to criminal networks and working arrangements with insurgents. Serious problem in terms of lost government revenues because of corruption. Many elements likely to devolve to force elements tied to local power brokers, make deals with insurgents, or collapse after 2014.
ANP Subtotal	157,000	45%	
CNPA	2,986?	0.8%	The Counter-Narcotics Police of Afghanistan are a small force that had 2,581 men assigned in Q4 2012. They are a small force charged with helping to implement a large program that has cost some \$6.1 billion since 2002. Their effectiveness is unclear, and as is the broader role of the ANSF – which often does not operate in key narcotic growing areas, or has tailored eradication to support given power brokers and respond to bribes. The overall effort has had little impact since 2010, although disease and drought have affected total production. UNDOC estimates that the area under cultivation increased from 131,000 hectares in 2011 to 154,000 in 2012, and major increases took place in southern areas under Taliban influence.
Total ANSF	352,000	100%	
ALP	30,000-40,000	NA	A force very much in development and manned at only 16,474 in December 2012 with enough problems and links to Taliban so that SOJTF was re-validated manning. However, it has shown that elements have been effective where Afghan, US, and other special forces or high quality trainers are present and efforts to improve local security <i>and</i> maintain links to the ANP/MoI are supported by governance and development activity like the Village Stability Operations. Recruiting and manning has largely tribal elements, many with ties to local power brokers and some with past ties to insurgent elements. Can potentially be a critical element in limiting insurgent presence or control, but can easily break up or change sides as outside advisors withdraw or if the central government lacks unity and leadership.
APPF	11,000-23,000	NA	In theory, the Afghan Public Protection Force (APPF) will replace private security companies (PSCs) with an 11,000-23,000man government run security force with 270-445 sites. The PSC do present major problems in terms of ties to power brokers, corruption, high cost, failure to provide effective security, and de facto deals with insurgents to permit movement and cargo transfers rather than providing actual security. The creation of the APPF, however, is more a Karzai power grab than a real security reform.

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

The APPF has fallen far behind the goal of replacing PSCs this year, future capability is highly uncertain, and is likely to be loyal to the highest bidder in a post-2014 environment.

Militias	NA	NA	There is no meaningful unclassified data on their number and strength, but they range from small local elements to significant forces and often play a key role in local security, or in supporting power brokers. Little or no real loyalty to government; and often exploit and abuse power, are corrupt, tied to criminal networks, or make deals with insurgents. As much of a threat to unity and effective governance as a check on insurgents.
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A Caution About Peace Negotiations

Peace negotiations are a further wild card affecting every aspect of leadership, politics, and unity of effort. It is important to realize that peace negotiations cannot be decoupled from plans for the ANSF. At least to date, the official Taliban or “Emirates” line is that the Afghan central government is a puppet regime, the ANSF are tools of the US, and any negotiation would require all US and outside forces to leave – presumably include trainers and advisors.

As cases like China, Vietnam and Nepal make clear, peace negotiations can easily be turned into an extension of war by other means, and particularly if outside powers use them to rush to the exits. Even good plans that separate opposing forces can easily become the focus of power struggles and civil conflict. The search for peace does not depend on preserving the current plans for the ANSF, but it must not be decoupled from clear plans for their future role and size. It is also clear that virtually any plan acceptable to the Taliban could mean drastic changes in both the current role and structure of the ANSF and outside funding and advisors.

Money as a Key Criteria and Metric for Afghan Success

History provides clear warnings that the continued availability of enough money to fund the ANSF, and the degree of honesty in distributing that money, will be another key criteria shaping the ANSF’s real world effectiveness. At present, there are no credible unclassified data on either the future costs involved or the level of funds that will really be made available.

There have been vague statements about future funding of the ANSF at \$4.1 billion a year, but with no definition of why the figure is \$4.1 billion, where the money will really go, or the cost of combat. This disguises the reality that it is more important to have the ability to consistently pay for the necessary mix of forces than having scoring systems that count equipment, manning, and training, or the level of independence of given units.

At present, neither ISAF nor DoD has presented any meaning public details on the project cost and detailed plan for the future development of the ANSF. SIGAR and GAO have, however, provided the kind of cost profiles shown in **Figure 3**.

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

A History of Erratic Resourcing

The SIGAR data for FY2005-FY2012 at the top of **Figure 3** include spending that accounts for roughly 90% of the total US *and* other outside funding of the ANSF. The data also show something that is all too easy to forget in evaluating both ANSF progress and the quality of the training and force building effort. Serious funding did not begin until FY2007, and quickly saturated a training and force development base that lacked the personnel to do the job. This led to a pause in FY2008, and consistent funding did not begin until FY2009.

Delays between authorization and disbursement meant that the ANSF force building effort only gathered full funding momentum in FY2010, and as of end FY2012, SIGAR calculated that only \$38.14 billion of \$55.37 billion in authorized funds for the Afghan Security Force Fund – the chief source of force building money– had actually been disbursed. Actually manning the training bases really only took place in FY2010 and is still seriously short qualified trainers.

The Need to Fund the Future

The key lesson for Congress, the Administration, and other donors should draw from this history – and from the collapse of ARVN forces in Vietnam and of Najibullah’s Afghan forces in the post-Soviet period –is that erratic funding resources for the ANSF and manning for trainer/partner roles are at best “force delayers” and at worst “force killers.” Resourcing the force is as important as shaping it and the same GAO report that provides the funding profile at the bottom of **Figure 3** warns that,⁷

Our analysis shows that projected Afghan domestic revenues will be insufficient to cover the cost of ANSF through fiscal year 2015. Our analysis of DOD data estimates that the cost of continuing to build and sustain ANSF will be at least \$25 billion for fiscal years 2013 through 2017. Multiple factors are expected to influence the final cost of sustaining ANSF, including the size of the force—which is expected to decline, according to a preliminary model, from 352,000 to 228,500 by 2017—as well as planned reductions in infrastructure and training costs by 2014. According to DOD, continuous efforts are made to adjust ANSF capabilities and requirements to achieve cost reductions, including the Afghan First (the purchase of goods and services from Afghan producers) and Afghan Right (building and procuring items according to Afghan specifications) initiatives.

At the Chicago Summit, the Afghan government pledged to devote at least \$500 million in 2015 and annually thereafter to funding ANSF, which is about 14 percent of its 2015 projected domestic revenues. However, even if the Afghan government committed 100percent of its projected domestic revenues to funding ANSF, this amount would cover only about 75 percent of the cost of supporting security forces in fiscal year 2015 and would leave the Afghan government no revenues to cover any non-security-related programs, such as public health.

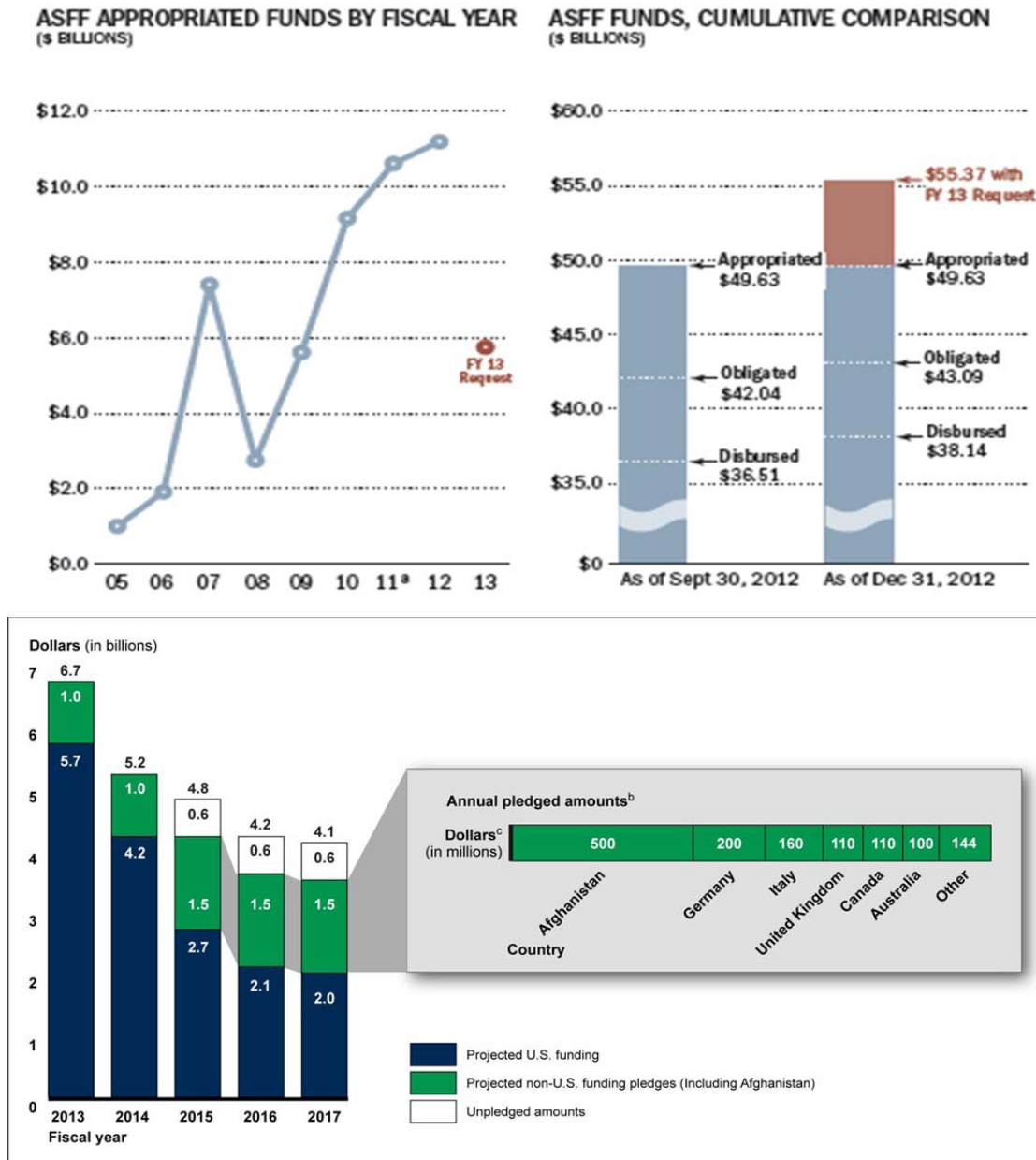
At the Chicago Summit, the United States and its allies laid out a plan for future funding for ANSF; the U.S. annual contribution is projected to decline over time but still cover the majority of the costs. Our analysis shows that donors funded about 95 percent (\$33.7 billion) of Afghanistan’s total security expenditures, with the United States funding approximately 91 percent (\$32.4 billion) of that amount from 2006 through 2011.

On the basis of projections of U.S. and other donor support for ANSF for fiscal years 2012 through 2017, we estimate that there will be a gap each year from 2015 through 2017 between ANSF costs and donor pledges if additional contributions are not made (see fig. 7). According to

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

State, excluding Afghan and U.S. funds, the international community has pledged over \$1 billion annually to support ANSF from 2015 through 2017.

Figure 3: Projected US and Other Donor Support for the ANSF⁸



If the US wants the ANSF to be successful, it must be prepared to pay what it takes on a contingency basis for as long as it takes. This does not mean agreeing to an arbitrary \$4.1 billion a year, but it does mean agreeing to fund a credible Afghan force plan and being

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

willing to adjust that funding at conditions-based levels. Moreover, funding the ANSF will be pointless if the US does not also ensure that enough civil aid will be available to keep the civil economy from gravely weakening or imploding as aid funds and outside military spending in country is cut.

Economic realism is as critical as realism about the future capabilities of the ANSF. The absurd claims that State, USAID, and UNAMA have made about the progress Afghanistan has made in terms of increases in GDP and per capita income in past years may well come back to haunt the ANSF as well as the Afghan government's ability to function and every aspect of Afghan stability.

Experts like Ken Katzman may overstate dependence on outside funding when they say it accounts for some 95% of the GDP.⁹ However, even low end estimates from officials in the EXIM Bank indicate it must account for over 40%, and that almost all of the growth in the GDP as defined in market terms has been driven by outside expenditures and not development. And even if there was a credible statistical base for an estimate of the total Afghan GDP in either market or PPP terms, it still would be meaningless to quote per capita income statistics when sources like the Afghan Central Statistics Organization, CIA, State, World Bank, IMF, and UN produce estimates of the population varying between 26 and 36 million.

The key role of money in shaping the ANSF's future is further illustrated by the limited ability of the Afghan government to fund *both* the ANSF and all its other needs over at least the period through 2020. The present limits to Afghanistan's ability to fund its own expenses are summarized in **Figure 4**, and the GAO reports that,¹⁰

...the U.S. government could not fully determine the overall extent to which its efforts had improved the Afghan government's public financial management capacity because (1) U.S. agencies have reported mixed results; and (2) weaknesses in USAID's performance management frameworks, such as lack of performance targets and data, prevent reliable assessments of its results (p. 27).

Afghanistan's domestic revenues funded about 10 percent of its estimated total public expenditures from 2006 to 2011. Domestic revenue grew from \$0.6 billion to \$2.0 billion from 2006 to 2011 (see fig. 9), an increase of over 230 percent. At the same time, Afghanistan's estimated total public expenditures grew from \$5.8 billion to \$17.4 billion, an increase of over 200 percent, maintaining a gap between revenues and expenditures.

Donors funded approximately 90 percent of Afghanistan's estimated total public expenditures from 2006 to 2011, with the United States providing 64 percent of that amount...The United States funded an estimated 91 percent of Afghanistan's total security expenditures and about 37 percent of Afghanistan's total nonsecurity expenditures between 2006 to 2011. In numerous reports and congressional briefings, we have raised concerns about Afghanistan's inability to fund planned government expenditures without foreign assistance and raised questions about the sustainability of U.S.-funded road, agriculture, and water infrastructure development projects, as well as Afghanistan's ability to sustain its national security forces.

Donors funded, on average, 56 percent of Afghanistan's on-budget expenditures and 100 percent of its off-budget expenditures. Between 2006 and 2011 about 79 percent of Afghanistan's estimated \$73 billion in total public expenditures were "off-budget"—that is, funded by the international community outside of the Afghan national budget, such as equipment for Afghan National Security Forces. The remaining expenditures were "on-budget"—that is, within the government's budget and funded by domestic revenues and donor contributions. As a result, a

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

majority of Afghanistan's total public expenditures were outside the direct control of the Afghan government.

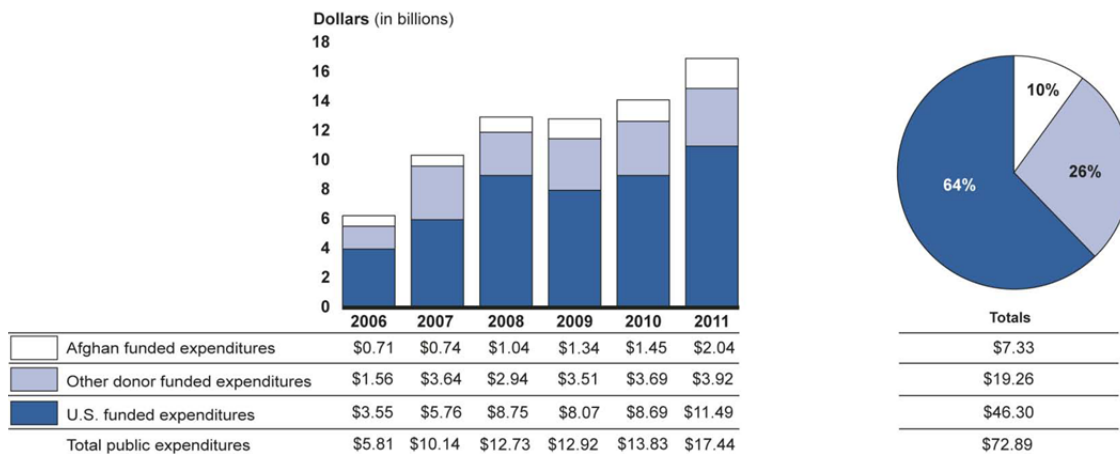
The international community has pledged to continue to support Afghanistan through 2017 if certain metrics regarding reform in Afghanistan are met. Given Afghanistan's future revenue generation projections and expenditures, the country will likely continue to be reliant on the donor community through at least 2024. In July 2012, the international community committed to providing over \$16 billion for Afghanistan's economic development through 2015.

As Transition proceeds, the outside money that has driven past GDP increases will largely disappear, the poverty level will rise for about one-third of the population, malnutrition and food supply problems will grow, paying for a massive trade deficit will become much more difficult, more money will flow out of the country, and dependence on the narcotics sector will rise. Moreover, narcotics, criminal activity, and corruption will become an even more important part of the domestic Afghan economy.¹¹

Vietnam did not collapse because of force quality. Najibullah did not fall because the Afghan forces supporting him lacked training, equipment, and sustainability – or had a poor CM or CUAT rating. He fell because he could no longer pay for the military and payoff tribal militias.¹² US willingness to bear most of the cost of the ANSF well beyond 2014 will probably be the second most important test of the ANSF – after leadership and unity – as will the ability of the Afghan government to raise its share of the money and distribute it with some degree of honesty and integrity.

Contrasting withdrawal from Afghanistan from withdrawal from Iraq provides a warning of the dangers that corruption will pose for the funding of the ANSF and its ability to operate with suitable civil governance and popular support. An oil rich Iraq could keep funding enough of its forces to hold them together. Recent SIGAR reporting indicates that a grossly corrupt Afghan government may see ANSF money disappear or leave the country even if the US does keep providing the necessary funds.¹³

Figure 4: Afghan Government Dependence on Outside Aid: 2006-2011¹⁴



Source: GAO analysis of Afghan, U.S. agencies, and other donor data.

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

These problems will be especially severe during 2013-2016 because of the “bow wave effect” of past aid funding. Total authorization of US aid funding during rose from \$39.59 billion in FY2006 to \$98.15 billion (if one includes the FY2013 request), and averaged around \$16 billion a year from FY2010 to FY2012 – before dropping to \$9.66 billion in FY2013. No one in the US government has the faintest idea of how much of this money actually reached the Afghan economy in any form, although it is unlikely to have exceeded 30-40%.

The sharp lag between authorization and disbursement means that the flow of US civil and economic aid that actually reaches the country is peaking at a time when Afghanistan has to adapt to a coming crash in economic aid since the international community has pledged a total of only \$16 billion for 2012-2015.¹⁵ This creates a major incentive for Afghan officials to take as much money as possible during what SIGAR calls the “golden hour” and leave the country (the EXIM Bank has estimated that at least \$3 to \$6 billion has flowed out of Afghanistan in recent years).

Other problems include the fact that SIGAR and the GAO have found that measures to control the integrity of spending and contracting have not been effective, and most PRTs and field efforts to control and evaluate the follow of money will be withdrawn well before the end of 2014. With less than to years to go before the end of 2014, the Afghan, the US, and our allies need to establish a far more a credible basis for planning for outside financial support. What has been made public is a largely meaningless set of numbers for total US and allied manning.

The Need for Predictable and Effective Outside Support from US and Allied Forces and Advisors

Outside money, however, is only one aspect of the need for outside support. Another key criteria and metric for success will be to provide a predictable level of outside support in terms of US and allied forces, enabler, trainers and partners.

US Force Cuts Set the Stage

So far, even the plans for US and allied withdrawal are unclear. The broad trends in US forces – which along with Britain have dominated the fighting – are shown in **Figure 5**. Most allied forces are likely to follow a similar pattern in terms of reductions, shifts away from combat roles, and/or new national constraints on combat. For obvious security reasons, most civil aid elements in the field will have to be withdrawn during the course of 2013 and early 2014, and some estimates indicate that the US alone will have cut back from some 90 US-controlled posts and positions in Afghanistan in mid-2012 to a total of only three to five by the end of 2014.

The White House described new US force cut plans, and US goals for Transition and the ANSF, in a statement it issued after President Obama’s State of the Union Address on February 12, 2013:¹⁶

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

In his State of the Union address, the President announced that the United States will withdraw 34,000 American troops from Afghanistan by this time next year, decreasing the number of U.S. troops in Afghanistan by half – the next step to responsibly bringing this war to a close.

- **Afghans in the Lead:** Beginning in the spring of 2013, Afghan forces will assume the lead across the country. Even as our troops draw down, they will continue to train, advise and assist Afghan forces. In that capacity, we will no longer be leading combat operations, but a sizeable number of U.S. forces will provide support for two additional fighting seasons before Afghan forces are fully responsible for their own security.
- **Planning for post-2014:** We are continuing discussions with the Afghan government about how we can carry out two basic missions beyond 2014: training, advising and equipping Afghan forces, and continued counter-terrorism missions against al Qaeda and their affiliates.

The Security Transition Process

At the 2010 NATO Summit in Lisbon, the United States, our International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) partners, and the Afghan Government agreed to transfer full responsibility for Afghanistan's security to the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) by the end of 2014. This transition process allows the international community to responsibly draw down our forces in Afghanistan, while preserving hard-won gains and setting the stage to achieve our core objectives – defeating al Qaeda and ensuring it can never again use Afghanistan as a launching pad for attacks against us.

At the Chicago NATO Summit in May 2012, leaders reaffirmed this framework for transition and agreed on an interim milestone in 2013 to mark our progress. This milestone will mark the beginning of the ANSF's assumption of the lead for combat operations across the country. When we reach that milestone this spring, ISAF's main effort will shift from combat to supporting the ANSF. As international forces shift our primary focus to training, advising, and assisting, we will ensure that the Afghans have the support they need as they adjust to their new responsibilities.

Today, Afghan forces are already leading nearly 90 percent of operations, and by spring 2013, they will be moving into the operational lead across the country. These forces are currently at a surge strength of 352,000, where they will remain for at least three more years, to allow continued progress toward a secure environment in Afghanistan.

As the international community's role shifts and Afghan forces continue to grow in capabilities, coalition troop numbers will continue to decrease in a planned, coordinated, and responsible manner. By the end of 2014, transition will be complete and Afghan Security Forces will be fully responsible for the security of their country.

The United States believes that Afghan-led peace and reconciliation is ultimately necessary to end violence and ensure lasting stability of Afghanistan and the region. As the President has said, the United States will support initiatives that bring Afghans together with other Afghans to discuss the future of their country. The United States and the Afghan Government have called upon the Taliban to join a political process, including by taking those steps necessary to open a Taliban office in Qatar. We have been clear that the outcomes of any peace and reconciliation process must be for the Taliban and other armed opposition groups to end violence, break ties with Al Qaeda, and accept Afghanistan's constitution, including its protections for the rights of all Afghan citizens.

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

The Afghan Government will be holding presidential and provincial council elections in April 2014 and the United States intends to provide technical assistance and funding to support a fair and inclusive process.

The U.S. Role After 2014

In May 2012, President Obama and President Karzai signed a Strategic Partnership Agreement to cement our long-term relationship in the areas of social and economic development, security, and regional cooperation. The United States remains fully committed to a long-term strategic partnership with the Afghan Government and the Afghan people. The steps we are taking now are intended to normalize our relationship, including withdrawing troops in a way that strengthens Afghan sovereignty and the Afghan state, rather than abandoning it, as the international community did in the 1980's and 90's.

While it is too soon to make decisions about the number of forces that could remain in Afghanistan after 2014, any presence would be at the invitation of the Afghan Government and focused on two distinct missions: training, advising and equipping Afghan forces, and continued counter-terrorism missions against al Qaeda and their affiliates. As we move towards decisions about a long-term presence, we will continue to assess the situation on the ground in Afghanistan, assess the capabilities of the Afghan National Security Forces, and consult with our Afghan and international partners. We also continue negotiations on a Bilateral Security Agreement with the Afghan Government that would provide the protections we must have for any U.S. military presence after 2014. We hope that agreement can be completed as soon as possible.

Consistent with our goal of ensuring that al Qaeda never again threatens the United States from Afghan soil, the United States has committed to seek funds annually to support training, equipping, advising, and sustaining the ANSF. Helping to fund the ANSF is the best way to protect the investment we all have made to strengthen Afghanistan and insulate it from international terrorist groups.

Strengthening Afghan governance and economic development is also key to achieving our core objective. We've made significant economic and development progress in the past decade, but Afghanistan will require substantial international assistance through the next decade to grow its private sector and promote its integration in greater South Asia's thriving economy. The United States has committed to seek, on a yearly basis, funding for social and economic assistance to Afghanistan. At the July 2012 Tokyo Conference, the international community and Afghanistan agreed on a long-term economic partnership, based on the principle of mutual accountability. We expect Afghan progress in fighting corruption, carrying out reform, and providing good governance as the international community provides support after 2014.

The practical problem with these statements is that the US is clearly accelerating the pace of its overall withdrawal at a time when our allies are either doing the same or changing their rules of engagement in ways that have a similar effect. The Administration has not, however, announced any clear plans for the forces it will retain through 2014 or after its formal combat mission ends.

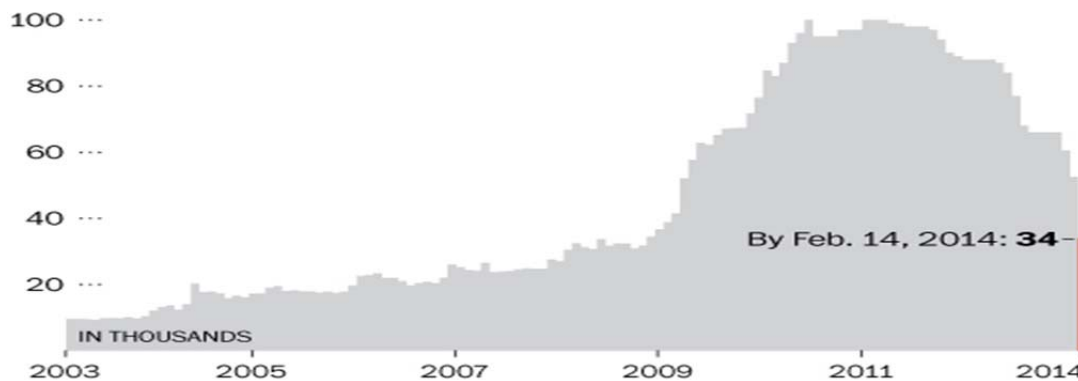
It is not clear what combat resources will actually remain, what level of training and partnering will exist, or what allied capabilities – if any – will continue. It is unclear what the mission of any remain forces will be, how they will support given elements of the ANSF, their ROEs, basing, or any other element of their capability. Conceptual

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

rhetoric is little more than a smoke and mirrors exercise for covering up the lack of any substantive detail.

This approach cannot deal with the fact that many elements of the ANSF will not be fully ready for transition before 2016-2017, and that– if combat continues – they will require outside support in the form of airpower, trainers, intelligence, and sustainment. At the same time, current force development plans cannot survive engagement with reality. The Afghans must restructure their force development plans to do it their way, to cope with the problems posed by power brokers, ethnic and tribal factions, and corruption.

Figure 5: Changes in US Troop Levels: 2003-2014¹⁷



- Cut from 66,000 in January 2013 to 60,500 by the end of May 2013. By the end of November, the number will be down to 52,000. By the end of February 2014, the troop level is to be around 32,000-34,000.
- No force level announcements for rest of 2014 except withdraw all combat forces by end 2014.
- US force plans for post-2014 not announced. NYT estimate below 9,000.
- No details on future trainers, partners, enablers, combat forces.

Withdrawal With or Without Adequate Advisors, Trainers, Partners, and Enablers?

One key example of the problems involved is the uncertain level of US and allied training and combat support will provide for key elements of the ANSF will have in the future. All that is now clear, however, is that the existing number of trainers and partners has not fully corrected the major shortfalls in personnel – much less qualified trainers – that have existed throughout the ANSF force generation effort. DoD reporting indicated that NTM-A had 1,752 trainers in place at the end of 2012 or 67% of a requirement of 2,612 (which had been downsized from a requirement of 2,778 in March 2012). No data were provided on how many of these trainers were qualified.¹⁸

These shortfalls were partly compensated for by rushing the training of Afghan trainers. The ANA had 2,552 of 2,709 required Afghan trainers in place at the end of 2012, but it

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

was unclear how qualified these personnel really were. Moreover, the ANP only had 805 trained instructors to meet a requirement of 1,504 or 46.5%.¹⁹

The data are less clear on the shortfall in partners to ANSF units. DoD reported in December 2012, that 118 of 295 ANA units were being advised and 91 more were partnered. This left a total of 58 units of the ANA that needed outside support or assessment that were not receiving either, and another 28 units where NTM-A reported that assessment was not necessary. Once again, the shortfalls for the ANP were far more severe. A total of 118 of 609 ANP units were advised and 145 more were partnered. This left a total of 143 units of the ANP that needed outside support but had not received support or assessment. Another 201 units did not require assessment according to reporting by the NTM-A. Once again, the shortfalls for the ANP were far more severe.²⁰

There is no way to assess these shortfalls. It is clear from past reports that the present training and partnering process is being rushed, and that the ANSF will have far less US and other ISAF support than was originally planned both before and after 2014. It can be argued the forcing the ANA and ANP to rely on their own resources has a positive as well as a negative effect. However, it is also clear that fewer and fewer units will have outside trainers and partners in 2013 and 2014, and that fewer and fewer units will be independently rated.²¹ The ANSF cannot survive force reductions in these areas that are tailored largely to meet political timing in an effort to rush to the exits, and one that is not tied to the security conditions on the ground.

The Need for Clear and Credible Plans for Outside Support

A February 22, 2013 article by Thom Shanker in the *New York Times* is a red flag to anyone who pay the slightest attention to the fact that there are less than two years before the end of 2014,²²

NATO defense ministers meeting here on Friday said they had made progress toward planning a military assistance mission in [Afghanistan](#) after the alliance's combat role expires at the end of 2014, with some partner nations already offering to participate.

A draft proposal discussed here for possible NATO operations in Afghanistan after 2014 envisions a force of up to 9,500 American troops and up to 6,000 more from other coalition nations, according to alliance officials, who stressed that no final decisions had been made. Other NATO officials said the combined American and allied force would be smaller, falling in a range of 8,000 to 12,000 troops.

George Little, the Pentagon spokesman, said reports that the United States had told its allies, it was considering 8,000 to 12,000 of its own troops were wrong. "A range of 8-12,000 troops was discussed as the possible size of the overall NATO mission, not the U.S. contribution," Mr. Little said. "The president is still reviewing options and has not made a decision about the size of a possible U.S. presence after 2014."

In official comments, NATO's secretary general, [Anders Fogh Rasmussen](#), said the session included serious discussion on "preparing a new and different NATO-led mission after 2014 to train, advise and assist Afghan Security Forces."

Mr. Rasmussen added that "many partners have already offered to join us and are working with us to plan the new mission," but he provided no details.

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

Officials stressed that troop numbers remain for planning only, and that any enduring NATO military presence in Afghanistan would be possible only through successful negotiations with the Afghan government and contributor nations. That presence would focus on supporting and training Afghan Army and national police forces, as well as on a narrower counterterrorism mission specifically hunting for high-value adversary leaders.

Really? Some 22 months to go and this is the best the US, ISAF, and NATO can do? The only aspect of US planning that seems more meaningless is the USAID effort to plan for the economic side of transition -- which is to be “completed” in the spring of 2014. Have a plan in mid-election, as any economic crisis is developing, and after the US has already submitted its budget requests for the last fiscal years before transition is not going to be worth the paper it is written on.

It is all too easy to formally transfer responsibility for security to the ANSF and quite another thing to have them actually achieve the level of security that is needed in Afghanistan. Vague promises and good intentions are not a concrete plan for action, and it is still unclear what posture the US or any other ISAF nations will maintain during 2014 or after 2014. Moreover, USAID has circulated graphs showing how rapidly real world funding has been cut in past crises, even concrete pledges are often forgotten, and vague commitments are even easier to forget.

The US and its allies need to stop focusing on providing largely arbitrary and meaningless total manpower numbers for their future presence and provide a clear explanation of what elements will stay in Afghanistan, what their mission will be, how they will be deployed and given security, and how they will advise, train, partner, and enable the ANA, ANCPs and other critical elements of the ANSF.

Talking in broad terms about US manning levels of up to 9,500 US troops and 6,000 allies has all the intellectual merit of debating how many angels can dance on the head of a pin. Afghan forces that have been rushed into being will need conditions-based support based on merit and not arbitrary outside manning and funding.

Security and Transition

A fourth key criteria and set of metrics for evaluating the ANSF is the level of security that can be established and maintained in given areas and in the country. Here again, the key to meaningful measurement of the effectiveness of the ANSF does not lie in the metrics that are most useful in building up individual ANSF capabilities and force elements. For a successful Transition, there must be an overall net assessment of the present level of security and if the ANSF is likely to be able to maintain and improve that security in the face of restricted US and ISAF operations and the withdrawing of combat forces over the 2013-2014 time period.

A combination of the ANA, ANCP, and better elements of the AUP, ABP, and ALP may be able to establish such a level of security during 2013-2017 with suitable outside funding and support. Much depends, however, on whether the US and other outside states actually meet their pledges and provide sustained support, and provide unclassified data on the trends in security that have not been driven by politics and spin and actually provide a meaningful basis for assessment.

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

An Extremely Uncertain Level of Security In Spite of the “Surge”

Regardless of how the CM, CUAT, or some other set of force building scores are used to measure force building progress for the MoD, MoI, and given force elements of the ANSF, the real test of ANSF success will be the level of security provided on a threat basis that incorporates power brokers, criminal networks, insurgents, and other groups that are not affiliated with the government or anti-insurgent forces.

It is also largely meaningless to assess ANSF units based on generic descriptions of how many force elements are in some form of the lead on a national level, or are rated as effective on the basis of training, manning, equipment, facilities, and bureaucratic capabilities rather than actual security performance. It is already all too clear – as it has been in cases ranging from in Vietnam and Iraq – that it is pointless to talk about units as being in the lead without any explanation of what being in the lead actually means in the field, what missions and level of combat are involved, and what is their impact on security in key districts and populated areas.

Moreover, unclassified ISAF reporting on security has become so weak and politicized that it cannot be trusted. ISAF has focused on enemy initiated attacks at a time the insurgents still have secure sanctuaries in Pakistan, can largely avoid direct combat and still infiltrate into new areas, maintain influence in old areas, and even expand their role in areas like narcotics.²³

Relying a Largely Irrelevant Metric: Enemy Initiated Attacks

ISAF reporting – and a great deal of US reporting as well – has come to focus on one set of criteria: Enemy Initiated Attacks or EIAs, and on the period between 2010 and 2012. They have done this because it presents the most favorable set of statistical trends regardless of its lack of military and political meaning.

Trends in EIAs revert to the same kinetic focus on tactical victories in regular combat that characterized a great deal of US and ISAF reporting before the insurgency reached the crisis level in 2008, and in ways strikingly similar to pre-Tet assessments in Vietnam. The result is reporting that focuses on the areas where US, ISAF, and the best ANA forces have a decisive tactical advantage.

Focusing on EIAs ignores the fact that groups like the Taliban are fighting a political war of attrition against US and other ISAF forces that have already largely eliminated insurgents' offensive combat activity but who will be gone at the end of 2014. It ignores that fact the insurgency cannot be defeated by winning tactical clashes, and makes it remarkably difficult to assess either ISAF success or the challenges the ANSF face.

It is also unclear that there have been meaningful positive trends even in EIAs since 2011. ISAF and DoD reporting does indicate that EIA attacks did drop between 2010 and 2011, but also indicates they did not drop meaningfully in 2012 and remain far higher than in 2009.²⁴ This reporting also shows EIA numbers remained significant in the Kandahar and

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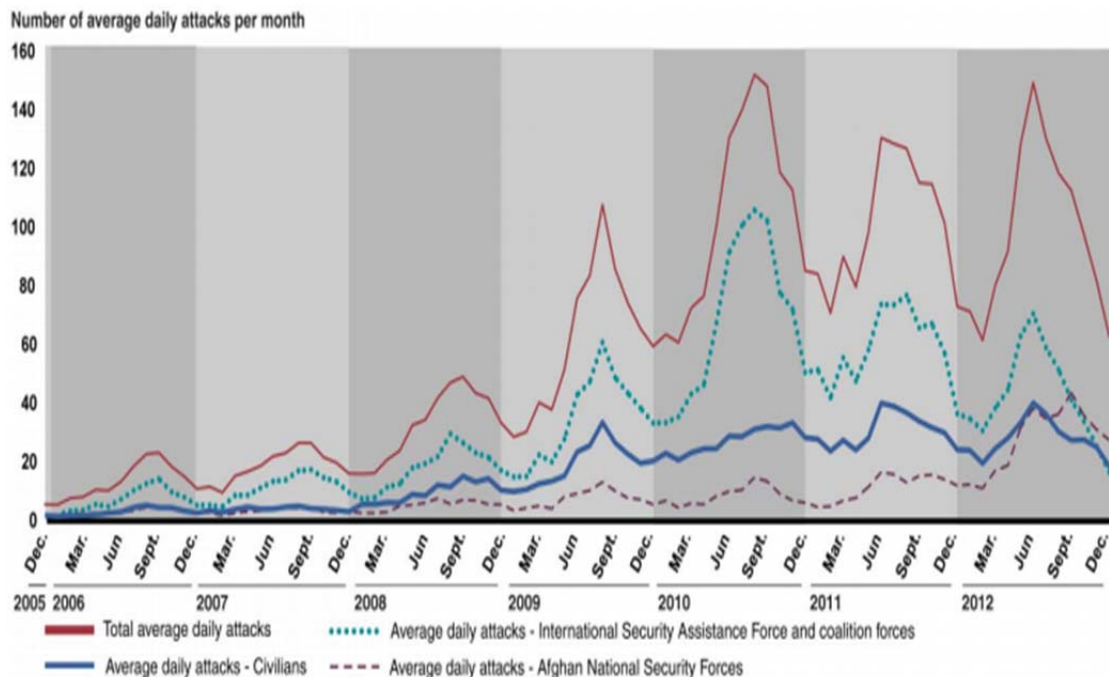
Northern Helmand River Valley in 2012, and the proportion of national EIAs in populated areas – which had declined significantly in 2010-2011 – did not decline significantly in 2011-2012.²⁵

A more detailed breakout of the trend in EIAs by GAO is shown in **Figure 6**. It not only shows no significant progress when 2010 is compared to 2012, it also shows that the insurgents kept up the pace of their attacks by shifting away from ISAF targets and focusing on ANSF and civilian targets.²⁶

In short, the Taliban, Haqqani Network, and other insurgents have little reason to directly challenge far superior ISAF forces or the best ANSF forces when they can wait out the departure of most ISAF forces, concentrate on building influence, carry out political high profile attacks designed to push ISAF out of country and intimidate Afghans, and focus on softer Afghan government and ANSF targets. They are fighting a political war, not a conventional kinetic one, and this is the war the ANSF will have to fight after the US and ISAF essentially end major combat action following the 2013 campaign season.

Figure 6: No Meaningful Improvement in Afghan Security Metrics: 2009-2012 Part One

Average Daily Enemy-Initiated Attacks Reported by Type in Afghanistan, December 2005 through December 2012²⁷



Pattern No Better in Terms of Significant Incidents: The Key Metric Used in Iraq War²⁸

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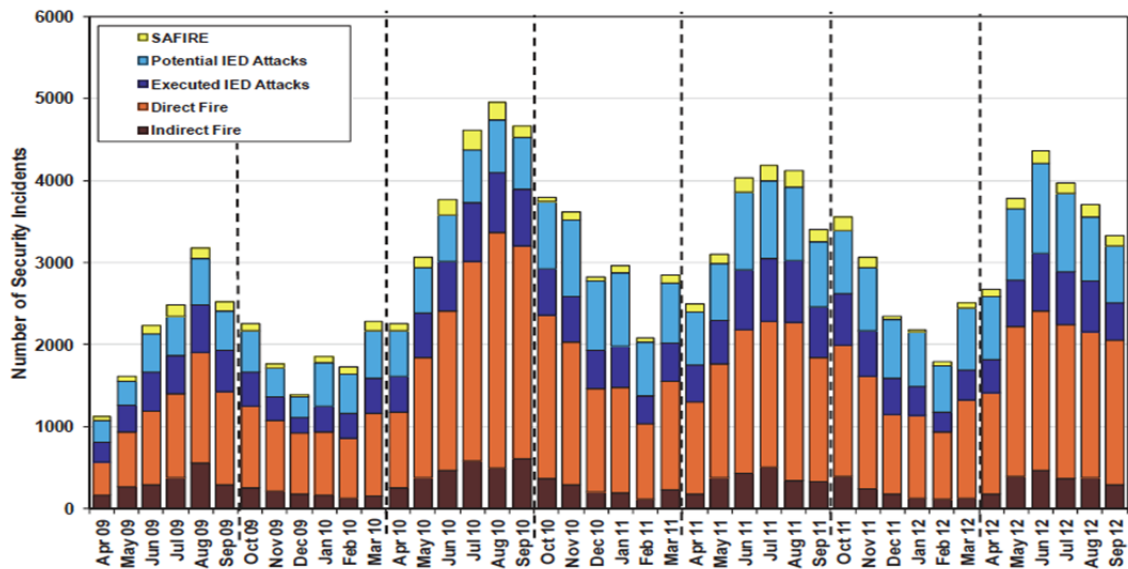
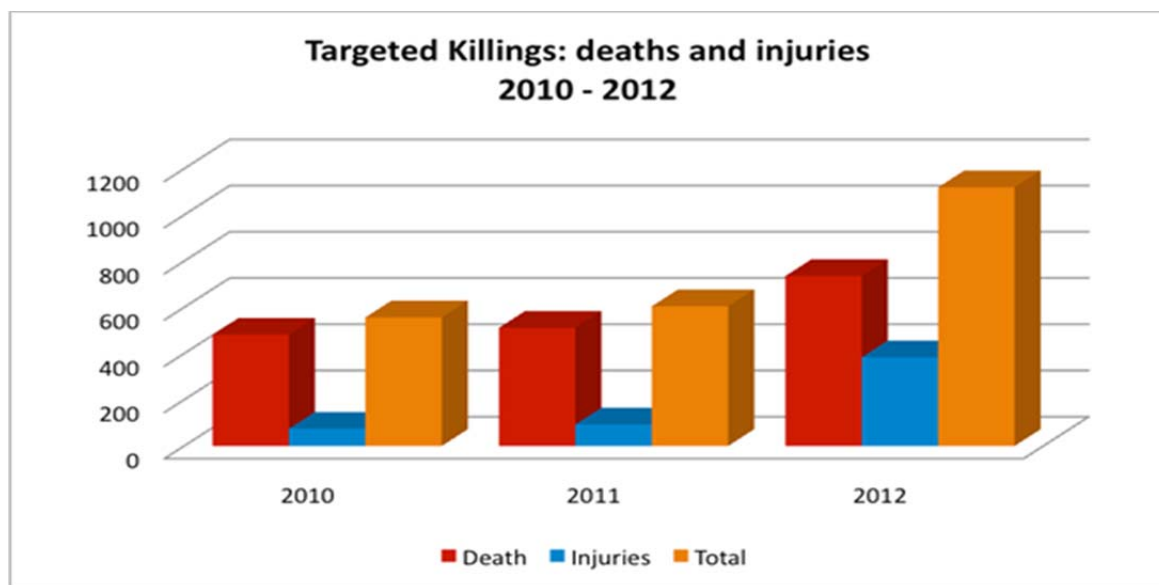


Figure 6: No Meaningful Improvement in Afghan Security Metrics: 2009-2012 Part Two

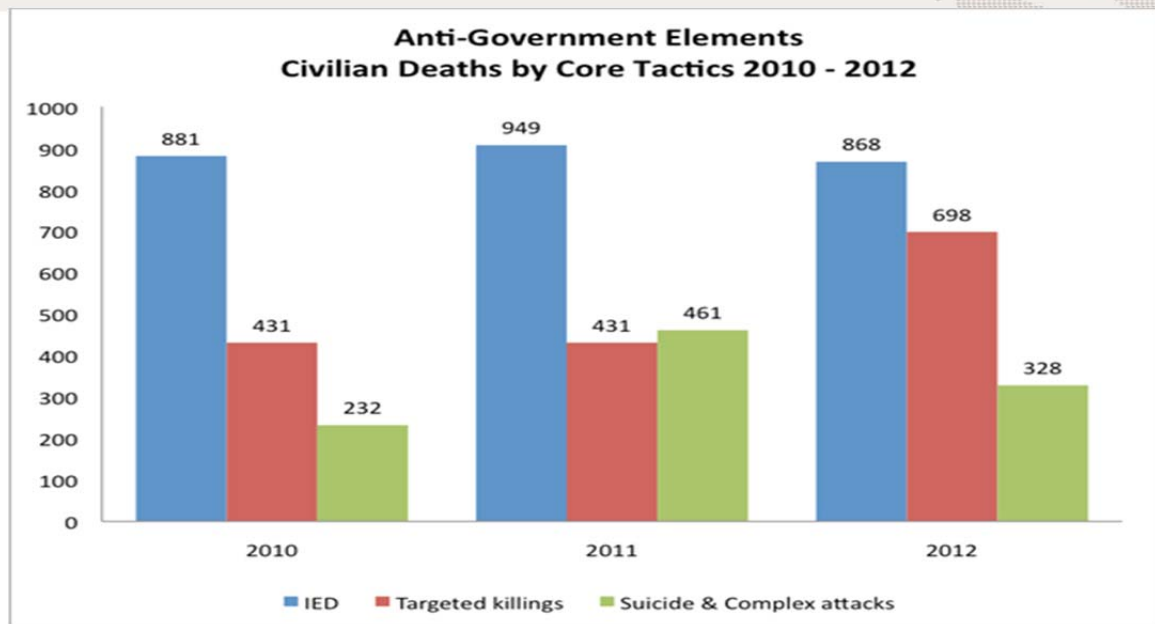
Targeted Killings – Key Measure of Insurgent Activity – Are Way Up²⁹

UNAMA documented 1,077 civilian casualties (698 civilian deaths and 379 civilian injuries in 565 incidents of targeted killings by Anti-Government Elements in 2012. This represents a 108 percent increase in civilian casualties from this tactic compared with 2011. The number of attack on Afghan government official rose by 700% during 2011-2012.³⁰



No Meaningful Improvement in IEDs, Targeted Killings, or Complex Attacks³¹

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13



Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

Other Metrics Show No Clear Improvement in Security as A Result of the “Surge”

Several non-ISAF sources warn that the ANSF will face far more serious challenges than both current ISAF reporting and the pro forma transfers of responsibility for security now taking place would indicate.

If one looks at the reporting on other – non EIA – metrics of security set forth in the US Department of Defense December 2012 semi-annual report to Congress, there is little indication that the “surge” has produced lasting security benefits relative to the pre-surge period in 2009 for the ANSF to build upon:

- Little progress, if any, was made at the nationwide level in formal combat metrics between 2011 and 2012. EIAs actually rose by 1%. High profile attacks rose by 2%, direct fire incident rose by 10%, total IED events dropped by 3%, IED and mine explosions went down by 12%, and indirect fire dropped by 5%.³²
- Monthly civilian deaths – caused almost exclusively by insurgent forces as ISAF cut its civilian casualties – rose in 2012 relative to 2010 and 2011, although they were lower than during their peak in August and September 2009.³³
- Green on Blue or Insider Attacks on ISAF personnel rose from 6 in 2009 to 11 in 2010, 20 in 2011, and 37 in 2012 – six times higher in 2012 than 2009. Green on Green or Insider Attacks on ANSF personnel rose from 7 in 2009 to 19 in 2010, 26 in 2011, and 29 in 2012 – four times higher in 2012 than 2009. While the numbers were limited, they have a major political impact and raise serious issues regarding the protection of military and civilian advisors in the field during 2014 onwards.³⁴ They also raise issue about the level of alienation within the ANSF, and infiltration and influence by the Taliban and other insurgents that have been met largely through unsubstantiated denials as to the scale of the problem.
- High profile attacks – ones that have major political impact and help the Taliban and other insurgents achieve their goal in pushing outside force and aid out of the country – have continued to have a major impact, and given the Taliban and other insurgents major tactical victories in strategic communications even when they have little or no real military effect.
- Insurgent reintegree numbers remained very limited during 2011-2012 and almost all within the North and West where insurgent influence is very limited. Almost no reintegrees came from high combat, high Taliban influence areas in the south and southwest.³⁵
- Total Nationwide Monthly Security Incidents (*the key metric used to assess progress in the Iraq War*) declined slightly during 2010-2011, but remained constant during 2011-2012 and were far higher than in 2009 – the year when the rise in insurgent violence triggered the “surge.”³⁶

Lies by Omission? Dropping the Metrics that May Be Less Favorable but Also Could Reflect Actual ANSF Performance

What may be even more significant is that even the Department of Defense report – the one major official report in the course of the war – has quietly dropped virtually every metric that shows progress in substantive terms. Maps showing progress in governance and security by province and district have been deleted, as have maps showing perceptions of progress in aid.

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

All references and maps relating to the original campaign plan are gone, along with any reference to progress in the populated 81 Critical Districts Interest and more than 40 additional Districts of Interest that were the focus of ISAF objectives in 2009 through early 2011. All references to an active campaign in Eastern Afghanistan and to second efforts in the center and north have also been dropped.

No effort is made to assess the growing impact of criminal narcotics or the resurgence of narcotics growing in insurgent areas in the south during 2011-2012. Moreover, no attempt is now made to provide unclassified maps of the areas of insurgent influence, and show how they relate to the areas of ANSF influence or control. There is no picture of where the Afghan government now actually exerts meaningful governance outside “Kabulstan,” has a functioning justice system, and the ANA and AUP actually maintain security. No one discusses the scale of insurgent ratlines, shadow governments, checkpoints and local activity, or lower – but critical – levels of violence like threats, extortion, kidnappings, and individual killings.

Here it is interesting to look an independent assessment of the challenge the ANSF now faces and the overall security situation in Afghanistan. The Afghan NGO Security Office (ANSO) is an NGO organization with a well-established history of making security assessments based on NGO perceptions of violence. It has its own biases and obviously does not have to collection capabilities of a government or ISAF.

Figure 7 is still useful, however, in showing that ANSO has a different perception of the current security situation than ISAF. Where ISAF tends to focus on the worse kinetic cases, ANSO sees risk in terms any significant volume of attacks – a measurement that may provide a clearer picture of what Afghanistan could be like after US and troops leave.³⁷

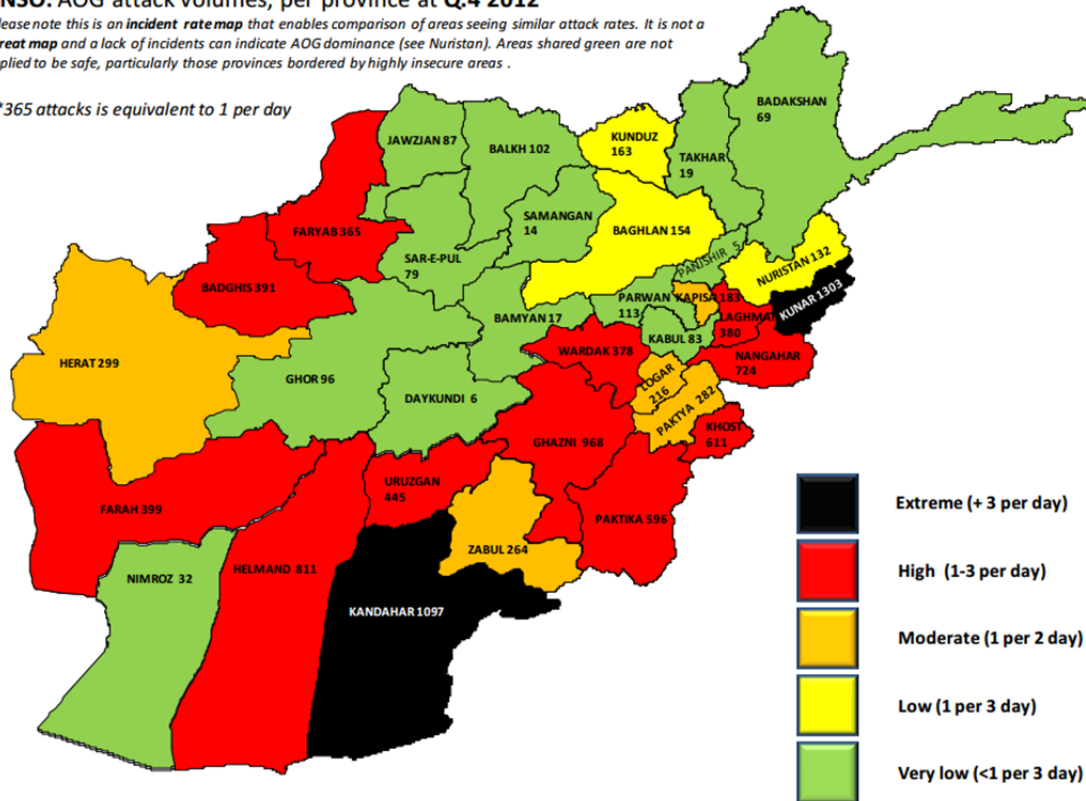
Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

Figure 7: Insurgent Attacks by Province in Fourth Quarter 2012

ANSO: AOG attack volumes, per province at Q.4 2012

(Please note this is an **incident rate map** that enables comparison of areas seeing similar attack rates. It is not a **threat map** and a lack of incidents can indicate AOG dominance (see Nuristan). Areas shared green are not implied to be safe, particularly those provinces bordered by highly insecure areas.

*365 attacks is equivalent to 1 per day



Transitioning Districts and Provinces to the ANSF by the Calendar with No Clear Picture of ANSF Capability

The broad transition plan for giving ANSF forces responsibility for given provinces and districts is shown in **Figure 8**. This figure is based on DoD data, and it makes an interesting comparison to **Figure 7**, since transfers in tranches 1-3 were supposed to be in the most secure areas but ANSO clearly assesses security in different terms.

Figure 8 shows that 261 of some 405 districts have already been formally transferred to the ANSF, along with some 76% of the population and all provincial capitals and major transportation corridors. The GAO reports that transfers are supposed to be based on four factors:³⁸

1. The capability of ANSF to take on additional security tasks with less assistance from ISAF;
2. The level of security needed to allow the population to pursue routine daily activities;
3. The degree of development of local governance; and

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

4. Whether ISAF is properly positioned to withdraw as ANSF capabilities increase and threat levels diminish.

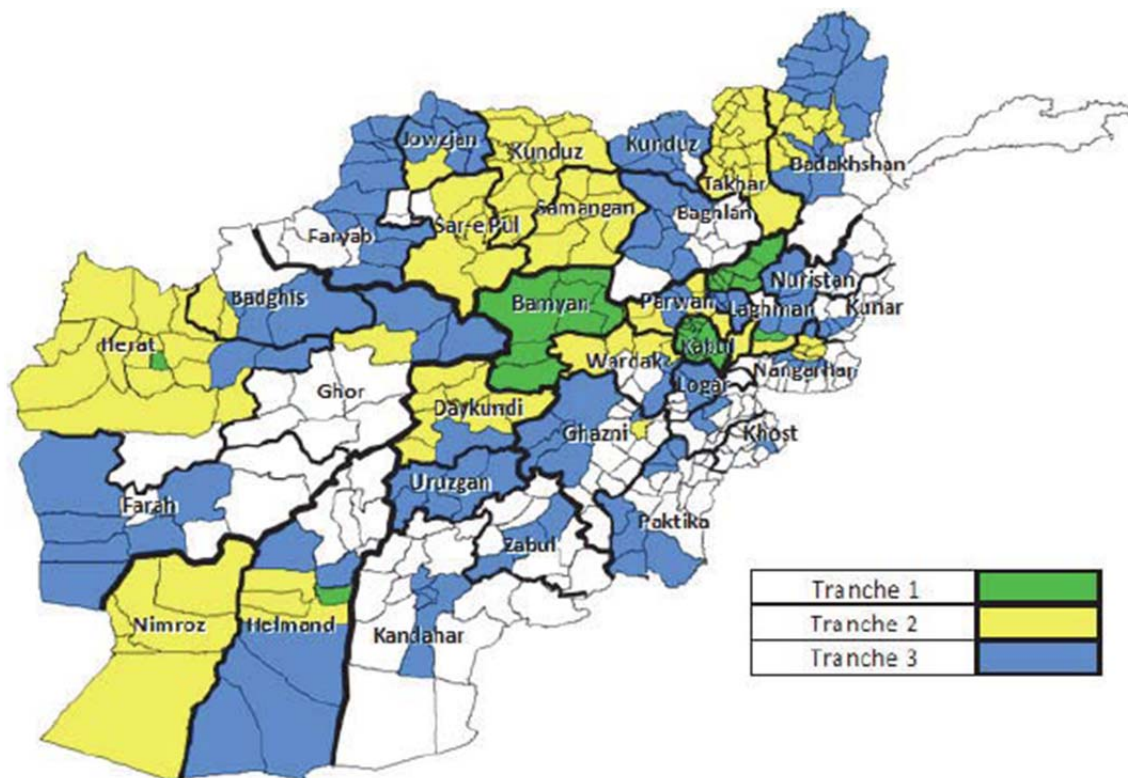
The GAO also reports even wider coverage of the population,³⁹

The transition for each geographic area is a multiphased process, with ISAF tracking progress through metrics, such as security and governance. The areas (provinces, districts, and/or cities) are grouped into one of five tranches for transition. As of December 2012, the transition of four of the five tranches had been announced, and over 87 percent of the Afghan population was living in areas under Afghan lead security with the military support of U.S. and coalition partners. By mid-2013, it is expected that all areas will have entered the transition process and that by December 2014 the transition will be complete.

According to ISAF, ANSF would need to be under effective Afghan civilian control and fully capable of addressing security challenges on a sustainable and irreversible basis for the transition to be successful.

However, the readiness of the Afghan government to sustain ANSF has been questioned.

Figure 9: Transitioning Provinces and Districts: Tranches 1-3⁴⁰



There is no clear way to know the degree to which Afghan forces have actually assumed responsibility in the field or their effectiveness. There is also no way to know what areas are under real central government control, dominated by local power brokers, or have serious insurgent or criminal influence. In broad terms, the transfers to date have been in

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

areas assessed as having a low to relatively low threat – at least in terms of EIAs. DoD does, however, report that the actual level of ANSF control is mixed:⁴¹

ISAF's mission focus remains to protect the people of Afghanistan by supporting the sovereign government in the development of a national security force capable of assuming the lead responsibility for security operations. Upon entry into Transition, the ANSF assume lead security responsibility for that area and become the supported command, with ISAF becoming the supporting command. During the Transition process, staff functions are steadily transferred to the ANSF as their capability increases. ISAF often retains military assets in that area, and when required, engages in combat operations alongside the ANSF. As the ANSF take on more responsibility and become capable of more independent operations, ISAF support is reduced, and authority to provide additional support migrates upwards to the Commander IJC (COMIJC) and then to the Commander ISAF (COMISAF). Areas proceed through Transition on different timelines based upon demonstrated improvement in security, governance, and rule of law, and to the increased proficiency of the ANSF. At completion, the ANSF assume full security responsibility.

The DoD assessment of actual progress in security and ANSF performance in this mission is the closest thing to an unclassified assessment of ANSF capability in the field that do exist, but it is important to note that it seems to be largely based on EIAs, rather than meaningful counterinsurgency criteria, and still raises important questions about ANSF performance:⁴²

The increasing capability of the ANSF has expanded security gains in many Transitioning areas. Tranche 1 and 2 areas (138 districts in 20 provinces) continue to be the most secure areas in Afghanistan, both in terms of objective measures and Afghan population perceptions. As U.S. and Coalition Forces draw down and re-posture, the ANSF are progressively taking the lead in transition areas and helping to expand Afghan government influence, most notably in RC-N, where the Coalition will withdraw all of its forces from the eastern- and western-most districts toward the end of 2012.

Additionally, there has been evidence of the ANSF independently expanding security in areas where ISAF does not have an established presence, showing the initiative and capability to establish security in areas before they have formally entered the Transition process, including Nuristan and other districts in the north. Improving and maintaining security in Tranche 3 will be more challenging than in the first two tranches because several areas entered Transition at lower readiness levels. Additionally, later tranches may also be challenged by successful operations in Tranches 1, 2, and 3 that have caused some insurgent forces to migrate into less secure areas, largely outside of the population centers.

The DoD report does repeat ISAF's largely irrelevant focus on EIA in discussing progress to date:⁴³

Notably, during the reporting period, EIAs declined in two of the three Transition Tranches, although this reduction was variable by geographic area with some transition areas still facing challenges. EIAs declined in transitioning areas overall by four percent, with Tranches 1 and 3 experiencing nine and seven percent decreases, respectively, compared to the same period last year. EIAs in Tranche 2 went up four percent. In districts that have not yet entered Transition, there was a six percent increase in the number of EIAs over 2011. Tranches 1 and 2 continue to be the most secure areas in Afghanistan by objective measures and Afghan perceptions, although the most drastic reductions in EIA-related violence in transitioning areas occurred in RC-SW and RC-S.

EIAs say nothing about the level of insurgent influence, the level of support for the government in "Kabulstan," the overall level of security in the field, or the effectiveness

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

of ANSF forces in maintaining and expanding security coverage in their area of operation. It borders on being a nonsense metric. The DoD report does, however, go on to say that.

Although these security gains were significant, progress was uneven across the country and within regions, with some Transition areas still facing challenges and occasionally regressing insecurity. Transitioning areas with the greatest reduction in attacks were Helmand, around the southern Helmand River Valley, and Kandahar, particularly Kandahar City and Uruzgan, where combined operations were focused over the summer. Additionally, in Kabul, where the ANSF have full security lead, security incidents have stayed at minimal levels, with HPAs declining significantly since last year.

EIA trends in Transition areas in the east were mixed. Many districts in Wardak and Kapisa saw considerable reductions in EIAs, while much of Logar and Ghazni experienced sizable increases, likely due to the preponderance of ANSF/ISAF operations those areas and the introduction of an additional Coalition brigade in Ghazni. The ANSF conducted unilateral operations in southern Paktika, establishing security and accepting responsibility for security lead.

Although attacks rose slightly in Transition areas in the west, it was not statistically significant, and much of the increase occurred in the southern-most and least-populated provinces of Farah and Ghor – likely a result of spillover from operations in northern Helmand. Similarly, in the north, there was a slight increase in insurgent-related violence but the overwhelming majority was concentrated in the ethnic Pashtun pockets of the Kunduz-Baghlan corridor.

In general, the ANSF are displaying increased capability and sophistication in transitioning areas, particularly in RC-E and RC-S, where they are planning and conducting large-scale, multiday operations and showing increased coordination and integration across military and police pillars. Kabul remains the safest area in the country under ANSF-led security.

However, lack of coordination between ANA and AUP in general continues to be one of the major challenges in transitioning areas, along with attacks along access routes to major population centers and government ineffectiveness. Governance and development tend to lag behind security and will require continued assistance through the Decade of Transformation

This latter assessment has a certain amount of public relations spin, and other groups like ANSO have drawn different conclusions about the impact of transfer of responsibility, even in the relatively secure areas involved in Tranches 1-3. ANSO found that six of the 11 provinces transferred to date in Tranches 1-3 recorded an increase in insurgent activity during 2010-2011, while three of the six provinces where insurgent activity increased also saw a decrease in ANSF activity. It found that Uruzgan was the only province that experienced an increase in ANSF activity.⁴⁴

ANSO found that overall, insurgent activity declined by 7% in the transitioned provinces in 2010-2011, but it declined by 25% in the non-transitioned provinces. In short, ANSO found that the provinces not transitioned to ANSF control did better in terms of violence than those who were not – evidently because of the superior military and security capabilities of ISAF. ANSO concluded that, “This leaves us with the conclusion that there is no clear correlation between Transition, reduced AOG (insurgent) activity, and increased ANSF activity.”⁴⁵

ANSO may or may not be correct, but it should be clear that simply stating responsibility has been transferred is in no way a measure of merit. Failing to show that transfer is effective and lasting – rather than driven by cost, time, and withdrawal deadlines – may

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

pave the way to the exit but it is in no way an honest assessment of the ANSF's performance.

The ANSF, Security, and Popular Support

More broadly, Afghan security will be shaped by popular support for the government – a critical metric in measuring real world ANSF capability and particularly that of the police. The issue in net assessment is not simply the strength of the insurgency relative to the ANSF and the level of governance in the field; it is the strength or weakness of popular support.

The Department of Defense report has ceased to report on surveys of popular support for the government. However, the SIGAR quarterly report for January 2013 did show the results of an Asia Foundation poll that indicated that 32% of Afghans saw corruption as the government's most serious failing followed by 23% that saw the key problem as security, 18% that focused on the lack of job opportunities, 11% that feared suicide attacks, 9% that focused on weak government, and 8% that focused on the failure to remove the Taliban.⁴⁶

SIGAR also showed the results of polls that showed a rise in popular perceptions of corruption at the local, provincial and national government level during 2006-2012, and that nearly 80% of Afghans saw corruption at the national level as a serious problem in 2012.⁴⁷

What is missing from such surveys is any indication of how the ANSF is now perceived, although past surveys indicated that the ANA had won growing respect and that the high levels of corruption in the police were at least tolerated. Equally important, what is lacking are popular opinion polls to assess how security, governance, and key elements of the ANSF are perceived in key districts and high risk areas, and their popularity relative to power brokers and the insurgents. Generic nation-wide polling is no substitute for meaningful focus on the areas where Transition presents the most import challenges.

Building and Sustaining Afghan Forces

Given this background, it should be clear that many of the metrics used by NTM-A are important to the force building, but do not provide a meaningful picture of whether the ANSF can be successful in actually taking over responsibility for security.

Creating an effective ANSF requires a new approach to assessing the development of Afghan forces that is based on a conditions-based net assessment of how given elements of the ANSF actually perform relative to insurgent factions, and one that is tied to a similar assessment of the relative success of the Afghan government, insurgents, power brokers, and other factions in winning support in given areas.

It means shifting from force building metrics based on largely arbitrary total manpower goals to a focus on what elements of the ANSF prove to be most effective as Transition occurs, and their performance in the field. It means focusing resources on the most effective force elements, rather than arbitrary manpower or readiness standards, and

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

regularly assessing how given elements of the ANSF's order of battle perform relative to threat and militia forces.

Setting largely arbitrary force goals for all elements of the ANSF, regardless of their capability, value, and costs borders on military absurdity. So does assigning arbitrary resource levels like \$4.1 billion a year for the entire force regardless of merit.

The key test of success from this campaign season onwards will be how key elements of the ANSF actually perform, What level of leadership and unity exists within the Afghan government, who wins public support in key provinces and districts, what level of resources are really required for valuable force elements, and what level of resources are actually available.

A focus on building every element up to 352,000 men at the highest level of capability, and then over when it should be reduced to an equally arbitrary 228,500 in the future borders on becoming a mindless waste of time.

This requires the US and ISAF to develop far more realistic and honest security reporting than it has made public to date. Measures like the CM and CUAT ratings will remain important to NTM-A and its successors. Even here, however, DoD has already announced that there will be a shift to Afghan developed metrics that are certain to evolve steadily with time, have to vary by element of the ANSF, and need to focus on actual performance in the field.

This means assessing each element of the ANSF separately and resourcing elements like the ANA and ANCOP that can actually perform the mission. Training, aid, and Afghan resources must concentrate on building up the force elements in given forces within the ANSF that can actually perform effectively in the field. It is both meaningless and actively misleading to focus on the total manning and size of the ANSF, rather than assess it by service.

The key elements of the force now include large parts of the Afghan National Army (ANA), which as a current force goal of some 172,005 – or some 49% of the present total manpower goal. The key issue for the success of the entire ANSF will be the performance of the ANA's of its seven corps in the field, the level of threat involved, the capability sustain and support these forces, and their future cost relative to future resources.

Another key element will be the ability to build up a meaningful Afghan air force during 2014-2017, where the present manpower goal is only 7,639 men or 2% of the 352,000-man force, but actual air capabilities in terms of combat sustainable aircraft will be critical.

The third key element will be the Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP), with a present manpower goal of 14,451 or only 4% of the 352,000, but which is the only fully effective paramilitary element of the ANP.

It is the actual performance of the most capable elements of these three forces – whose manpower goals make up a little over half of the current total of 352,000 – relative to the threat over time that will largely determine whether the entire ANSF can contain and defeat the insurgents during 2013-2014 and beyond.

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

The fourth set of key elements is not even included in the formal ANSF structure or manpower goal. Given historical experience, it is the capability in given areas of the better elements of the best elements of Afghan Local Police (ALP) and militias that support the government – some 30,000-40,000 -- men that will determine the government's ability to hold key rural areas. Yet these forces are not even included in the meaningless debate over total manning numbers like 352,000 or 228,500 and a theoretical debate over how to reduce the entire ANSF in the future.

There are other elements of the Afghan National Police (ANP) – such as the Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP) and Afghan Border Police (ABP) – will have some utility. Most of these forces – which make up some 45% of the 352,000 total, however, will remain corrupt, have limited effectiveness, and lack support from effective governance in the field and from the other elements of a criminal justice system.

Barring far stronger Afghan leadership than now seems likely to emerge in 2014, many elements are also likely to revert to control by local power brokers or the highest bidder and much or most of the present NTM-A effort and goals will be replaced with afghan solutions that allow the AUP and ABP to revert to force shaped by Afghan resources and standards and that have limited effectiveness.

The Limits to Capability Milestone (CM) and Commanders Unit Assessment Tool (CUAT) Ratings

One key to understanding these requirements is to understand the difference between setting goals for force building and supporting an active force in the field that must largely replace US and all other allies forces by the end of 2014, and where the MoD and MoI will take over virtually all of the force planning and building mission, and do things their way to meet their assessment of condition – rather than implement some current plan.

As **Figure 2** has made clear, Capability Milestone (CM) and Commanders Unit Assessment Tool (CUAT) ratings of individual force elements and groups within the MoD and MoI are useful to force building and partner operations, but do not provide a basis for evaluating success in the field and only cover part of the force.

Moreover, the standards for assessment keep changing, which makes it impossible to use either CM or CUAT effectiveness ratings to analyze trends in readiness and effectiveness even by force generation standards. Even if “in the lead” was somehow related to what and where, a narrow focus on how many units have top rating in this metric and are said to be in the lead in some form has little value except to the trainer and partner.

SIGAR notes the scale of such problems in its January 2013 report, and its comments are broadly supported in the December 2012 reporting by DoD:⁴⁸

In 2010, SIGAR audited the previous assessment tool—the Capability Milestone (CM) rating system which had been in use since 2005—and found that it did not provide reliable or consistent assessments of ANSF capabilities. During the course of that audit, DoD and NATO began using a new system, the CUAT, to rate the ANSF. In May 2010, the ISAF Joint Command (IJC) issued an

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

order to implement the new system which would “provide users the specific rating criteria for each [ANSF] element to be reported by the CUAT including leader/commander considerations, operations conducted, intelligence gathering capability, logistics and sustainment, equipping, partnering, personnel readiness, maintenance, communications, unit training and individual education, as well as the partner unit or advisor team’s overall assessment.”

Since the implementation of the CUAT, the titles of the various rating levels have changed, as shown in Table 3.3. In July 2012, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) raised concerns that the change of the title of the highest rating level from “independent” to “independent with advisors” was, in part, responsible for an increase in the number of ANSF units rated at the highest level. GAO also noted that, “the change lowered the standard for unit personnel and equipment levels from ‘not less than 85’ to ‘not less than 75’ percent of authorized levels.” In a response to SIGAR last quarter, the IJC disagreed with GAO’s assessment, saying a change in title does not “equal a change in definition.” Since last quarter, the IJC has initiated a CUAT Refinement Working Group to standardize inputs and outputs in the areas covered by the assessments.

This quarter, IJC included all units that had been reported in previous assessments in the category “not assessed.” In prior quarters, only units that were required to be assessed (but were not assessed) were included in that category. This may, in part, have contributed to a rise in the total number of ANA units from 267 to 292 and the number of units “not assessed” from 51 to 81, as shown in Figure 3.24. For the ANP, the total number of units rose from 408 to 536 and the number “not assessed” from 131 to 301.

Because not every unit is reported in every CUAT cycle, the IJC used the most recent assessment (within the last 18 months) to “enable cycle to cycle comparisons.” When compared this way, 19 more ANA units were “independent with advisors” since last quarter; three more were “effective with advisors.” For the ANP, 31 more units were “independent with advisors” and 10 fewer units were “effective with advisors.”

Broad Metrics of Numbers of Operations and Afghan-Led Operations Have Some Value

It should be noted, however, that the Department of Defense does some additional other metrics that are more useful in assessing actual performance in the field. DoD’s December 2012 semi-annual does report on the level of contingency operations – which is a security and war fighting metric rather than a force generation metric. It also now reports the actual level of ISAF vs. ANSF-led operations – although it makes no attempt tie them to its scoring system for the difficulty of the operation, which element of the ANSF was involved at what level of force, the level of risk, the location of the operation, or its impact on security. These data are shown in **Figure 10**. They do show that the ANSF is making progress toward independence, and they at least make a start toward some form of meaningful measurement of ANSF capability.

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

Figure 10: Levels of Contingency Operation and Trend in Partnered Operations⁴⁹

Levels of Risk

Level R (Routine)	Routine operations that do not involve entries into compounds (i.e., operations other than level 0, 1, or 2). Not expected to have political consequences.
Level 0 (Low Risk)	Day-time deliberate pre-planned forced entry required (progressive "soft-knock" and "hard-knock"). Political consequences offer minimum potential of prejudicial IO, media, or political impact.
Level 1 (Medium Risk)	Operations involving entry into houses or compounds at night to include deliberate pre-planned forced entry required (progressive "soft-knock" and "hard-knock") May have minor to moderate unfavorable regional media impact, detrimental IO and/or undesirable political consequences, manageable at the regional level.
Level 2 (High Risk)	Pre-planned kinetic operations within 10km of border with Pakistan or Iran. SOF conducting deliberate operations with company size force or greater within 1km of border with Pakistan, or 10km of border with Iran. Arrest, apprehension, or detainment of any current or prominent former Afghan Government appointed official. Potential for collateral damage, unfavorable media impact, severely detrimental IO, and/or undesirable political consequences.

Conventional Partnered Operations

Operational Category	Jun-12	Jul-12	Aug-12	Sep-12
ISAF Unilateral	601	734	525	748
ISAF Led - Partnered	1,359	1,033	790	428
ANSF Led - Partnered	240	278	287	194
ANSF Led - Advised	125	161	113	139
ANSF Unilateral	5,322	7,136	5,994	6,225
Total ISAF-Led OPS	1,960	1,767	1,315	1,176
Total ANSF Led OPS	5,687	7,575	6,394	6,558
Total OPS	7,647	9,342	7,709	7,734
% of Total OPS That are ISAF Led	26%	19%	17%	15%
% of Total OPS That Are ANSF Led	74%	81%	83%	85%

Special Forces Partnered Operations

ISAF SOF & ANSF SOF	April-12	May-12	June-12	July-12	August-12	September-12
ANSF-Led Partnered SOF Ops	173	199	250	301	195	250
ISAF-led Partnered SOF Ops	123	139	73	73	90	60
ISAF SOF Advised Ops / ANSF in lead	30	69	40	36	46	52
Total Partnered or Advised SOF Ops	326	407	363	410	331	362
ANSF SOF Unilateral Ops	18	10	21	20	64	52
ISAF SOF Unilateral Ops	6	11	4	13	40	20
Total Unilateral SOF Ops	24	21	25	33	104	72
Total SOF Ops	350	428	388	443	435	434
% of Total SOF Ops that are Partnered	93%	95%	94%	93%	76%	83%
% of Partnered SOF Ops that are ANSF-Led	62%	66%	80%	82%	73%	83%

In any case, the Department of Defense reports that the present rating systems will be replaced by an Afghan system, and almost regardless of what the US and ISAF want,

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

such a system will become one dominated by Afghan standards, values, and accuracy of reporting.⁵⁰

The ISAF Joint Command (IJC) is currently developing a proposed self-assessment capability to be used by the ANSF. The proportion of ANSF units that are partnered or advised will decline as the number of ISAF personnel in theater decreases and as more ANSF units are fielded. As ISAF starts receiving fewer and fewer CUAT reports, it will require an additional system to inform leadership and the international community on progress within the ANSF. Additionally, the ANSF itself will need an Afghan-run self-assessment system after transition. This ANSF self-assessment capability is not meant to be an entirely new system, rather it is intended to augment and improve Afghan reporting systems currently used by the ANA and ANP. The existing systems are the Readiness Reporting System (RRS) used by the ANA, and the Force Readiness Report (FRR) used by the ANP. As they are currently designed, neither of these systems is sufficient to replace the CUAT because neither system provides an extensive enough assessment of the operational capabilities of the ANSF. IJC is also working to augment the existing ANSF capability to validate these assessments – a crucial part of any honest assessment system. The systems under development by IJC are intended to enhance the existing systems. These enhancements to the existing ANSF reporting systems require Afghan assistance to be fully developed and require the support of senior MoD and MoI leadership to ensure successful implementation.

Measuring Progress in Force Generation

More broadly, it is time to accept the fact that whatever emerges in 2015 will not be based on the kind of detailed force generation plans that exist today. NTM-A and US and ISAF partners and advisors have long faced an extremely difficult mission, and the more than the US and its allies reduce their forces and efforts, the more the Afghans actually do take responsibility (or fail to do so) and the more the actual Afghan force structure will change.

The present force generation exercise is being driven by pressures that mean further change is inevitable:

- A failure to meet initial US and ISAF military surge goals, implement the 2010 campaign plan, and back the US build-up with a viable civilian surge.
- Major shortfalls in providing the levels of Afghan governance and rule of law efforts in the field necessary to make ANSF efforts effective.
- The inability of the Afghan government to treat the real world impact of power brokers, corruption, narcotics, and criminal networks around and within the ANSF and to treat these problems as if they did not exist.
- The long history of underfunding and erratic funding by outside states and shortfalls in trainers and partners.
- Long periods in which salaries were not competitive and high levels of annual attrition and turnover took place.
- Steady rises in ANSF force goals based largely on arbitrary numbers and force goals accompanied by steady efforts to reduced the time available to achieve them.
- Ongoing reductions in US and allied force levels, often with limited warning that are larger and sooner than previously anticipated.
- Reductions in outyear annual cost from some \$9 billion to \$6 billion to \$4.1 billion.

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

- Constant changes in CMA and CUAT performance standards and goals to be followed by new Afghan systems.

What is striking in view of these pressures is not the fact the ANSF is far from perfect and will have serious weaknesses and flaws well beyond, but rather how much progress has actually been made in force generation to date. **Figure 11** summarizes this progress in terms of manpower, units, and equipment, and it is clear that although many key specialties and elements of sustainment are still lacking even within the ANA, there may be enough resources for the Afghan government to maintain security in some form through and after Transition. But this will depend on if it has effective leadership, enough outside aid, and a sufficient number of US enablers to give key elements of the ANSF enough time to become effective.

Figure 11: ANSF Development – Institutional Metrics and Benchmarks

Category	Metric	Sep-11	Feb-12	Mar-12	Aug-12	Sep-12
Recruit	ANSF End Strength	305,000	330,014	332,750	337,187	349,000
Train	ANA trained in specialty	10%	35%	30%	39%	40%
	ANP patrolmen trained	67%	76%	75%	75%	90%
	AAF Courses	C-27 IQT Started	Basic RW & FW Start 18 Feb	Basic RW & FW course	Mi-17 IQT started on 15 Sep 12	Mi-17 IQT
Fielding	New ANA unit manning	80%	87%	85%	92%	90%
	CS Kandaks fielded	68%	82%	86%	92%	100%
	MP Coys** fielded		64%	79%	100%	100%
	Engineer Kandaks fielded		-		-	14%
	RCCs fielded	82%	92%	95%	92%	100%
	Signal (Coys) fielded		14%	14%	-	29%
	MI Kandaks fielded		-		-	
Equip the Force	MSF Kandaks fielded		-		29%	20%
	ANA Fielded unit equipment fill	80%	84%	83%	90%	86%
	ANP Unit & District equipment fill	70%	71%	80%	89%	90%
Develop the Force	ANSF Level 1 Literacy		61%	57%	73%	65%
	ANA Instructors assigned & trained (T2I)	20%	63%	65%	80%	
	ANP Assistant Instructor and Instructor positions filled	40%	50%	45%	54%	50%
Leader Development	New ANA officers with Branch School training	15%	100%	52%	100%	
	Junior NCOs trained	72%	67%	67%	75%	75%
	AAF officer & NCO positions filled	88%	68%	68%	75%	74%
	ANP NCO Positions Filled	60%	74%	65%	80%	70%
	MoD and GS ministerial departments at CM-1B*		9%	23%	16%	30%
Transition the Force	MoI ministerial departments at CM-1B*		2	2	2	9
	ANA training institutions transitioned		-	9%	38%	42%
	ANP training institutions transitioned		-		15%	25%
	ANA Regional Logistics Support Commands at FOC		6 IOC	6 IOC	6 IOC	

* Data as of June 30. CM ratings are assessed quarterly, with the next assessment to be conducted at the end of September.

** Coys are the Afghan equivalent of Companies

IOC – Initial Operational Capability

FOC– Full Operational Capability

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

The MoD and the MoI

That said there are certain realities about the future force generation effort that the US, its allies, and the Afghan government will have to accept. One is that the current goals for developing the MoD and MoI are both too ambitious and too Western-oriented to survive engagement with reality, both Ministries will remain highly political, will be caught up in Afghan power politics, and significant levels of corruption will take place.

The realities involved are already outlined in Department of Defense and SIGAR reporting.⁵¹ The more the US phases forces and advisors out, and the more Afghan politics become caught up in the full impact of Transition, the more Afghans will do it their way. As the key continuing source of funds and advisors, the US must be ready to accept this, and it must judge success on the basis of the level of security and stability the ANSF can prove and not by either US standards or whether the MoD and MoI come to operate as currently planned.

Focus on the ANA

Success will not be determined by the overall level of progress in the ANSF but – as **Figure 2** has indicated – by the effectiveness of the ANA and ANCOP forces, and by the alignments of the ALP and militias. Resources need to be concentrated on the force elements that can actually deal with serious insurgent threats, and on at least trying to create local security forces with some ties to the government in “Kabulstan” and that can deter or contain extremist element in the field.

This means the US and its allies must be prepared to support the ANA and ANCOP forces where they still have serious shortfalls in areas like sustainment and intelligence after Transition. The US must also tolerate the fact that whatever emerges by way of local forces will often come under power broker and tribal control, and be justified more on the basis of being better than the Taliban and Haqqani Network than any approaching the kind of force that the US might desire under more ideal circumstances.

Here, it is important to note that DoD reports the ANA still has serious problems that deserve attention in terms of management by exception. One is the lack of adequate intelligence and sustainment capability; another is relatively high levels of attrition (roughly 3% per month) and AWOL rates, and a shortfall of some 7,100 NCOs. The ANA also faces the problem that the AAF will not be ready or capable by end 2014.⁵²

Accordingly, it is almost certainly far more important for anyone assessing the probable success of the ANSF in broad terms to focus on the key areas where there are measured shortfalls that have an obvious impact on security levels rather than scoring of unit elements using systems like the CMA and CUAT systems.

Furthermore, the success or failure of the ANA and every element of the ANSF will become sharply more dependent on the Afghans ability to depart from many aspects of the current US-ISAF developed plan as more forces are cut, money and advisors are cut, and Afghan truly adapt to doing thing on their own and find ways to do it their way. Sticking with the plan is not a meaningful objective. Help the Afghans as they adapt to doing it their way is.

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

Worry About the AAF

Success will also be determined by the ability to build up a meaningful Afghan air force during 2014-2017. The present manpower goal is only 7,639 men or 2% of the 352,000-man force, but actual air capabilities in terms of combat sustainable aircraft will be critical. So will eliminating the past level of corruption. The AAF also is not intended to be ready before 2016. This not only leave the ANA and other combat capable elements heavily dependent on US and allied airpower, and this could be critical if fixed wing, rotary wing, and UAV airpower is needed in given areas to make up for a lack of adequate ground forces – a capability that has proved absolutely critical for ISAF ground forces that have gotten in trouble in the field, particularly during 2006 -2009.

Accept Marginal Success with the Police and Rule of Law

There will be capable elements of the ANP and parts of its order of battle will prove capable in meeting Afghan needs. But, it is essential to be realistic about the limits to these forces. Official reporting on the various elements of the ANP has long disguised a largely corrupt, failed force, that is actively involved in power brokering at every level and has little over counterinsurgency capability, alienates many Afghans, and is not supported by the necessary elements of governance other parts of the justice system in much – if not most – of Afghanistan. Corruption and incompetence are major problems in Kabul as well as most areas.⁵³

Both most current indicators, and historical experience in past efforts to build regular police efforts in wartime like Iraq, warn that the bulk of the Afghan police will at best have limited effectiveness and will be corrupt. Nothing can be done from the outside that will determine the relative post-Transition strength of the Central Government versus to local power brokers in controlling the police, or the rise of local police leaders that become the equivalent of mini-warlords. The question is not how good the AUP and ABP will become as Transition proceeds, but how bad?

The answer is that the best elements of the police will continue to support the central government and the MOI, but that most much of the police are likely to remain what they now are, other elements will become tied to local power brokers, and still other elements will become passive or reach a modus vivendi with any insurgent or hostile group that threatens them. The Western dream of creating an effective civil police force will not survive Transition and engagement with reality in much, if not most, of the country.⁵⁴

The end result will often be corrupt or passive elements tied to local leaders or who cooperate with insurgents. This will be the result of problems within key elements of the police force. However, it will also be the result of a lack of effective civil governance and the other elements of the rule of law in the field. A police force cannot be an effective civil police force without the support and control of effective local governance and all of the other elements of the rule of law. The failure to tie the assessment of police development to these other two criteria for success has made current effectiveness ratings

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

of the ANP largely meaningless – a problem compounded by deliberately ignoring the scale of corruption.

The scale of the problems in the rule of law effort are summarized in recent SIGAR and DOD reporting as described below:⁵⁵

Insecurity has continued to impede expansion of rule of law, especially at the district level. Prolonged dispute resolutions in the formal justice system have led many rural Afghans to view it as ineffective and inaccessible. In addition, widespread corruption and inadequate transparency continue to stifle development of a self-sustaining rule of law system. Furthermore, DoD noted that the Afghan government's lack of political will to operate and maintain justice programs and facilities has hindered justice development.

USAID noted that the judiciary has also not had sufficient political will to establish genuine independence from the executive branch. Rule of law activities will need to be included in the overall transition effort and will be most successful in the areas where capable governance has followed stabilization, according to DoD.

Although the Afghan government and the international community have identified “law and justice for all” as an NPP, they have not agreed on program specifics that would lay out a clear and verifiable roadmap to improve the Afghan justice system. This quarter, donor dissatisfaction at the continued failure to finalize the justice program led the European Union to indicate that it will put on hold its future funding for the sector until the program has been endorsed. All of the NPPs were supposed to be endorsed by July 2011. The UN Secretary-General noted that the program's complexity and wide scope presented challenges, although there was hope for an endorsement of the NPP in early 2013.

Weaknesses within both the formal and informal justice systems, along with ineffective linkages between the two systems, continue to lead many Afghans to go to the Taliban for dispute resolution. The Taliban process is based on stern religious precepts, but is also rapid, enforced, and often considered by Afghans as less corrupt than the formal system.

The broad scale of the problem of corruption in the police – placed in the context of a UN survey of Afghan popular perceptions of corruption in the government and other elements of the rule of law – is shown in **Figure 12**. The good news is that perceptions of police corruption – while still high – has dropped. The bad news is that it has not improved significantly in the rest of the justice system, and the problem of corruption is much higher in the south and east where the insurgents present the most serious threat. It is also that the UN found that,⁵⁶

Some 50 per cent of employees in both the National Police and the Border Police admitted to receiving ... help in their recruitment, as did roughly half of all provincial, district and municipal officers. Approximately 6 per cent of these officials also acknowledged having paid bribes during their recruitment...Of particular concern is the recruitment of school teachers, during which over half received assistance and more than 21 per cent also conceded to the payment of bribes. Furthermore, while between 24 and 30 per cent of prosecutors, Hoqooq and Ministry of Justice officers stated that they received assistance during recruitment, a smaller percentage of officials in the judicial sector admitted having paid a bribe in order to secure their job in the civil service.

Focus on ALP and Future Role of Militias

Local forces may well prove to provide a better level of security in less populated areas where insurgents are active than the ANA or ANP. They have marginal or no cost, can

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

provide significant security with small arms and little – if any – outside logistic support, and have a clear motive to defend their own interests.

The Afghan Local Police have so far done a good job in the areas where they have had US or Afghan SOF advisors and partners – although they have been subject local feuds, power brokers, and exploiting the population. Militias – sometimes with de facto Afghan government or covert US support – have played the same role in other areas, although they have been guilty of more serious abuses, and are far more subject to influence from local power brokers, narcotraffickers/criminal networks, and warlords.⁵⁷

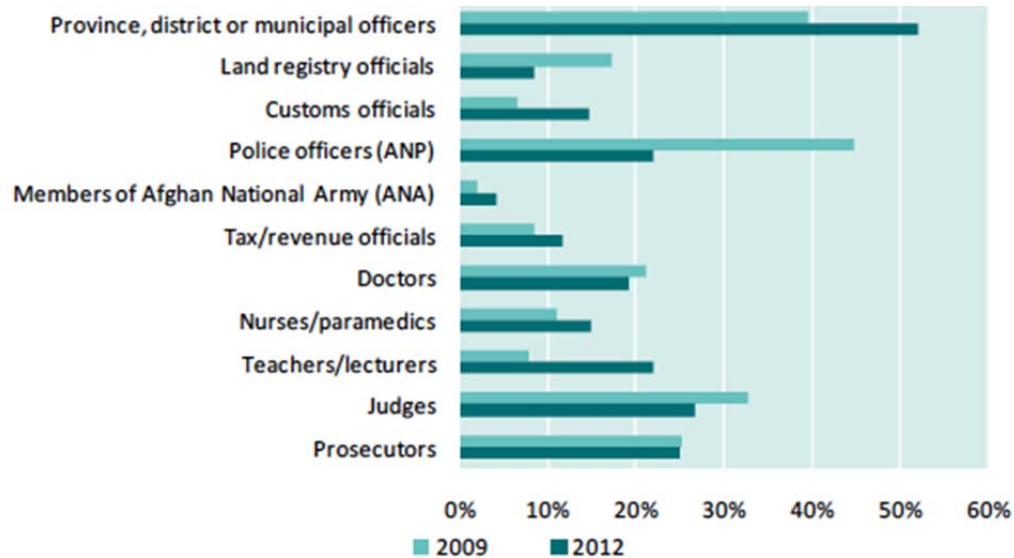
The practical problem is that central government from Kabulstan will be uncertain at best, and diminish the moment outside advisors are gone and in any areas where governance and the ANP are weak or corrupt. Any divisions by regional or ethnic group will also tend to move local forces into the dominant faction in a given area.

In practice, this will often mean relying on a necessary evil, particularly since the remaining level of US and other ISAF forces and advisors is likely to be so limited, and their influence will decline sharply as withdrawal proceeds. The frank answer may be that government money will be just as much the key as under Najibullah. Force loyalty, capability and restraint will often depend largely on the size of the fee or bribe

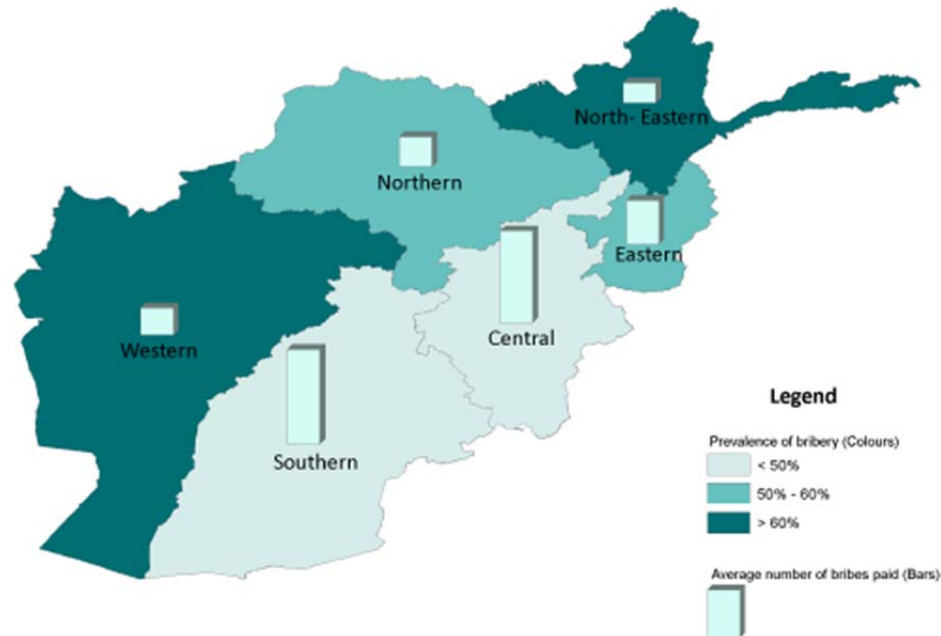
Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

Figure 12: Popular Perceptions of Corruption in the ANSF, Government, and Justice System⁵⁸

Percentage of bribe-payers who paid a bribe to selected types of public official, Afghanistan (2009 and 2012)



Prevalence of bribery and average number of bribes paid, by region, Afghanistan (2012)



Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

Narcotics, Criminal Networks, and Leadership Flight

The problems in dealing with the AUP and ABP are likely to be particularly serious if the Afghan government and outside aid do not deal effectively with the economic impact of cuts in outside military spending and aid. The failure to assess the impact of corruption on progress in the ANP – and to a lesser degree the ANA – is only part of the problem. Some studies of Afghanistan indicate that as much as 40% of the GNP was dependent on opium at the time of the Taliban. Current studies put the percentage at anywhere from 3% to 10% of the GDP, but do not explain any aspect of the calculation. Moreover, opium is only one of Afghanistan's drug crops and drugs are only a part of the activity of its criminal networks.

As noted earlier, UNDOC stated in a November 20, 2012 press release that,⁵⁹

“Opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan covered 154,000 hectares (ha) in 2012, 18 per cent higher than the 131,000 recorded the previous year.... Cultivation increased despite a significant 154 per cent increase in Government eradication efforts (over 9,600 ha eradicated in 2012 compared with just over 3,800 in 2011).

The number of poppy-free provinces remains unchanged at 17 but Ghor province in the west lost that status in 2012 while Faryab province in the north regained it. This year saw 95 per cent of cultivation concentrated in the southern and western provinces where insecurity and organized crime are present: 72 per cent in Hilmand, Kandahar, Uruzgan, Day Kundi and Zabul provinces in the south, and 23 per cent in Farah, Hirat, and Nimroz provinces to the west. This confirms the link between insecurity and opium cultivation observed since 2007...Cultivation rose 19 per cent in Hilmand, which, with over 75,100 hectares, accounted for around half the cultivation taking place in Afghanistan.

...Looking at the eastern region, cultivation rose significantly in Kunar (121 per cent), Kapisa (60 per cent) and Laghman (41 per cent). However, the eastern provinces contributed only 4 per cent to the national total of opium production in 2012. In the north, opium cultivation increased by 10 per cent in Baghlan despite the eradication of 252 hectares in 2012. Badakhshan was the only northeastern province to see cultivation rise (13 per cent) in spite of a sizeable 1,700 ha eradicated. In Kabul, the central region's only poppy-growing province, cultivation decreased by 45 per cent.”

It makes no sense to analyze the role of the ANSF in transition – or any other aspect of Transition – by acting as if Afghanistan's main domestic source of income was not dependent on a narco-economy, that criminal networks were not as serious a problem as corruption, that Transition will not lead to capital and personal flight out of the country, and that the ANP or any other element of the ANSF can be treated on a business as usual basis.

Green on Blue and Green on Green Attacks

Finally, the US and any ally that plans to stay in Afghanistan through 2014 or beyond must accept the risks of “insider attacks” and the risks of relying largely on being embedded in friendly Afghan forces force security. Even under the best conditions, this will mean further casualties from “friendly” forces. **Figure 13** shows a DoD estimate of the trends in attacks by members of the ANSF on US/ISAF (Green on Blue) and ANSF on ANSF (Green on Green) during 2002-2012.

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

No one can disregard the costs of such attacks, and that the coming withdrawals will increasingly expose US military and civil aid advisors to an extent that various elements of the ANSF cannot protect them. If the US wants to succeed in Transition, however, it cannot both blow their impact out of proportion and stay in Afghanistan.

The peak numbers to date are small and may well remain so as the US withdraws most of its personnel. The wild cards the US will have to accept are: the risk that withdrawal will anger some Afghans, dependence on a stream of new Afghan recruits (many rural Pashtuns) which may be less loyal to the ANSF, increased insurgent efforts to make political statements and use insider attacks to level the US out of the country and keep the ANSF bottled up, and Afghan resentment of a different set of cultural and religious values come to increase the volume of such attacks.

The DoD noted in a December 2012 report that,⁶⁰

The Taliban has adapted its propaganda, hoping to inspire attacks through themes of praise, revenge, and provision of support and sanctuary. For example, in Taliban supreme leader Mullah Omar's August 2012 Eid al-Fitr address, he praised ANSF members who conduct insider attacks and urged other ANSF to do as "your brave friends have done." Taliban statements have promoted the protection and facilitation of attackers out of Afghanistan, and projected a willingness to support those committing insider attacks, even those without prior Taliban affiliation. As part of this messaging, the Taliban claims attacks they did not engineer and exaggerates ISAF casualty numbers for attacks that do occur.

The DoD also, however, described a wide range of steps being taken to reduce the risk in the future.⁶¹ These steps cannot guarantee protection, and many depend on the US having enough presence with most elements of ANSF forces to be certain they are effective. They depend on good relations between the ANSF and US and other ISAF personnel and advisors. Furthermore, **Figure 13** warns that this is not a Green on Blue problem in the sense that the ANSF does not face nearly the same threat as the US and other ISAF forces

Nevertheless, the Taliban and other insurgents will have every incentive to use cooption, infiltration, impersonation, and personal motives to keep up insider attacks on both US/ISAF and ANSF targets as the US and ISAF withdraw troops and close the facilities they secure for themselves. Tragic as the resulting casualties may be, however, they are the price of success in both Afghanistan and in any future cases of this kind. The US and its allies must accept this, and make it clear to media and legislators why they are unavoidable, to succeed in staying in country.

Moreover, it is now impossible to estimate the level of popular and ANSF support the US and other advisory and aid elements will have during and after transition, how many US and combat and enabling forces will remain, how exposed US and other advisors and trainers will be, how much elements of the ANSF will be able to stand on their own, and how active insurgent elements will be in attacking US and ISAF forces as they withdraw, the elements to stay in country, and ANSF forces. All that is clear at this point is (i) public opinion polls and news reports do indicate a drop in Afghan support for US and ISAF forces, (ii) no meaningful US or allied plans have been announced for the number of forces and aid workers that will remain in the field from 2014 onwards, and (iii) the ANSF will steadily evolve so every element develop Afghan solutions to future

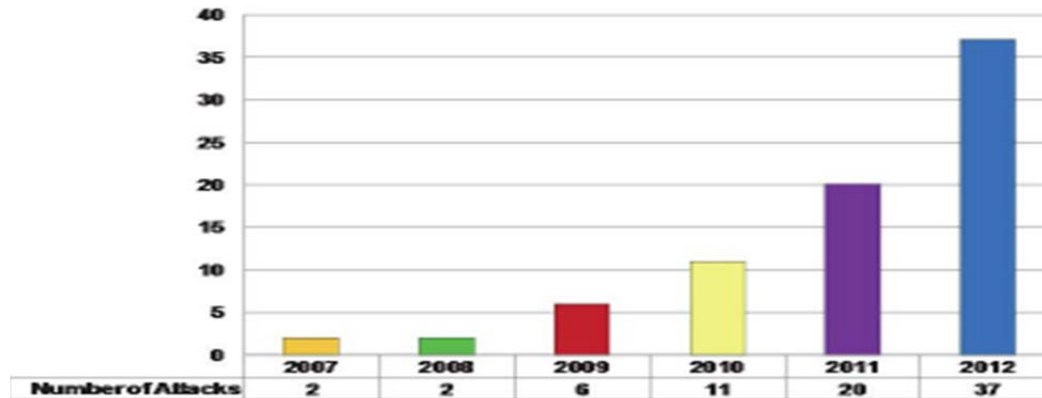
Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

operations in ways that currently cannot be predicted and will ensure much of the present force building program is changes or never fully implemented.

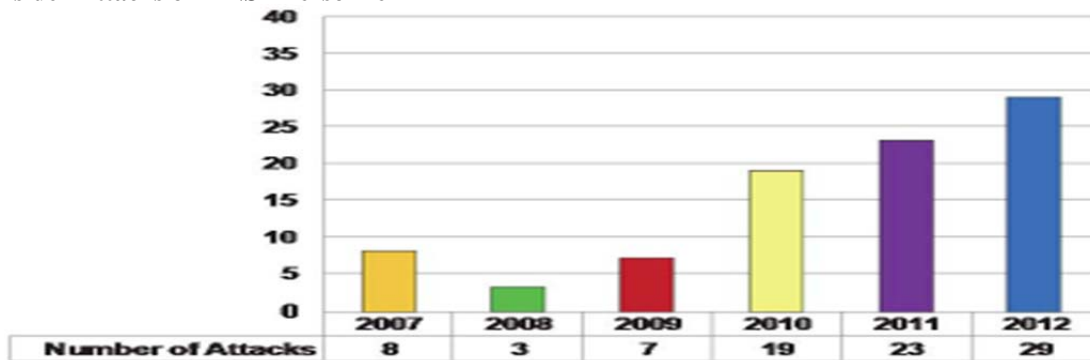
Figure 13: Insider Attacks on ISAF and ANSF Personnel: 2007-2012⁶²

(Attacks Per Year)

Insider attacks on ISAF Personnel



Insider Attacks on ANSF Personnel



Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

Reality-Based ANSF Development

The US and its allies need to recognize that many elements of even the ANA will not be fully ready for transition before 2016-2017, and that— if combat continues — they will require outside support in the form of airpower, trainers, intelligence, and sustainment. At the same time, current force development plans cannot survive engagement with reality. The Afghans must restructure their force development plans to do it their way, to cope with the problems posed by power brokers, ethnic and tribal factions, and corruption.

The US and its allies need to stop focusing on equally arbitrary and largely meaningless total manpower numbers and provide a clear explanation of what elements will stay in Afghanistan, what their mission will be, how they will be deployed and given security, and how they will advise, train, partner, and enable the ANA, ANCOs and other critical elements of the ANSF. Talking in broad terms about US manning levels of up to 9,500 US troops and 6,000 allies has all the intellectual merit of debating how many angels can dance on the head of a pin. Afghan forces that have been rushed into being will need conditions-based support based on merit and not arbitrary outside manning and funding.

The mix of ANSF and outside forces that actually emerges over the next few years is almost certain to fall short of the current goals set by the US, ISAF and aid donors. This does not mean, however, that the force that actually does emerge cannot meet actual Afghan needs and provide an acceptable level of strategic success *if* the US, the Afghan government, and its other allies focus on conditions-based realities rather than nonsense numbers for total manning and arbitrary cost and resource levels.

Support Must Include Support for the Civil Sector and Economy

These conditions do, however, depend as much on Afghan leadership, governance, and economic stability as the capabilities of key elements of the ANSF. The level of employment and economic security that emerges during 2013-2014, and particularly in the critical post withdrawal period between 2013-2017 — will be at least as critical to Afghan stability and security.

Money will continue to be a critical issue at every level. Loyalty will often be for rent, an armed nation will unify divide according to its leadership and who controls the money, the men who leave the present ANSF along with the roughly 50,000-80,000 other armed men in the ALP, militias, PSCs, and APPF will remain critical wild cards. Any element the Afghan government cannot offer Afghan's armed young men a future will often either strike out on its own become a threat.

This means the US and its allies need workable and *realistic* plans and assessment that can deal with both the needs of the ANSF and civil aspect of afghan stability and security. These plans will need to be regularly updated and altered to deal with the conditions that actually emerge, but there must be some basis for cohesive and consistent action.

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

***Afghan Leaders Must Be Told that Such US
Support is Conditions-Based on the Effectiveness,
Integrity, and Unity of Their Leadership or the
US Will Leave***

That said, there is another critical caveat to be added to any effort to make the ANSF successful. “Conditions-based” does not mean open-ended or even continued support for the ANSF or any other aspect of the Afghan government. No one outside Afghanistan owes Afghanistan support it government fails to earn. At present, the lack of leadership, reliance on power brokering, and corruption in both the ANSF and civil side of Afghanistan are as much a threat as the insurgents.

If the Afghans cannot find a successful leader in 2014, produce a reasonable degree of unity and governance, reduce corruption and power brokering to more acceptable levels, and show they can make the ANSF effect, that US and its allies should react to the fact they have higher strategic priorities than Afghanistan and central Asia.

The US may need to continue its present public rhetoric about enduring strategic partnership. In practice, it should be honest in privately communicating to Afghan officials that it already has many incentives to leave Afghanistan and use its resources elsewhere. Moreover, it should remind them that the US has already shown it can largely walk away from Iraq – a country with far more strategic importance than Afghanistan, that it has many higher priority strategic priorities throughout the world, and that it has increasingly constrained resources to meet them.

In the case of the ANSF, the US and its allies should make it clear that they are prepared to cut support and funding for force elements that remain grossly corrupt, and serve power brokers in ways that do not provide stability or serve the people. If the effort to create “Afghan good enough” results in failed Afghan leadership, governance, or ANSF development; the US and its allies should regard an exit from Afghanistan as mandatory.

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

¹In December 2012, Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index again rated Afghanistan with Somalia, and North Korea as the most corrupt countries in the world. Afghanistan was ranked 174th out of 176 countries. "Countries at the bottom of our corruption indices remain largely failed states with repression of human rights, social chaos and continued poverty. Afghanistan is one such country. Sufficient evidence suggests that corruption in Afghanistan is getting rampant. According to President Karzai himself, the phenomenon is now at a level "never before seen... corruption manifests itself in Afghan society: widespread charges of fraud and election-rigging; a judiciary subservient to the government and officials engaging in arbitrary arrest and detention, torture, extortion, and extrajudicial killings....Corruption is also present in daily life and stands out in public surveys. According to Integrity Watch Afghanistan, one Afghan in seven paid a bribe in 2010 and the average bribe is equal to one third of the average Afghan salary....Corruption in Afghanistan also impacts the international community, who need to start thinking long-term. According to an article from Huguette earlier this year, as much as \$1 billion of the \$8 billion donated in the past eight years has been lost to corruption. As much as US\$ 60 billion of military contracts have been lost to fraud and waste. The country receives \$70 billion in foreign military assistance and development aid annually. Afghan government revenue was \$1.3 billion in 2009. The country's future depends on tackling corruption more than almost any other. A Transparency International report last year warned: Corruption, weak institutions and a lack of economic development pose a fatal threat to the viability of Afghanistan." (See <http://www.transparency.org/cpi2012/results> and <http://blog.transparency.org/2012/12/03/corruption-perceptions-index-2012-will-demand-a-new-tack-in-afghanistan/>)

²Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction (SIGAR) *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress, January 30, 2013*, pp. 99-120. Also see Catherine Dale, *Next Steps in the War in Afghanistan? Issues for Congress*, CRS Ken Katzman, *Afghanistan: Post Taliban Governance, Security, and US Policy*, January 4, 2013, CRS RL30588, pp. 9-13, 21-32, 62-67; and *Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance*, November 30, 2012, CRS21922, especially pp. 36-52. Key issues in governance are also raised in Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, p. 103-129

³Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, p. 58.

⁴News Unit, Office of the Spokesperson to the President of Afghanistan, Presidential Palace (Arg), Kabul, February 13, 2013.

⁵GAO, *Afghanistan, Key Oversight Issues*, February 2013, GAO-13-218SP p. 36; Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 58...

⁶The manning totals are taken from Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction (SIGAR) *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress, January 30, 2013*, pp. 79, 84, 87 and show authorized totals as of Q4 2012.

⁷GAO, *Afghanistan, Key Oversight Issues*, February 2013, GAO-13-218SP pp. 21-22. The GAO notes that, "Although DOD has developed ANSF cost estimates beyond 2014, it has not provided its long-term cost estimates for sustaining ANSF in its semiannual reports to Congress. Our analysis of DOD data estimates the cost of continuing to support ANSF from 2013 through 2017 over \$25 billion, raising concerns about the sustainability of ANSF. We previously recommended, and Congress mandated, that DOD report to Congress about the long-term cost to sustain ANSF. While DOD's semiannual reports issued to date include information on current or upcoming fiscal year funding requirements for ANSF and donor contributions, estimates for long-term costs are absent. DOD stated that because the long-term ANSF cost estimates depend on a constantly changing operational environment, it provides cost information to Congress through briefings and testimony, as appropriate. This mechanism, however, does not allow for independent assessment of DOD's estimates to assist Congress as it considers future budget decisions."

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

⁸Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction (SIGAR) *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress, January 30, 2013*, pp. 58-59. GAO, *Afghanistan, Key Oversight Issues*, February 2013, GAO-13-218SP pp. 21-22.

⁹ See Ken Katzman, *Afghanistan: Post Taliban governance, Security, and US Policy*, January 4, 2013, CRS RL30588, p. 62. His estimate is based on a report by the National Security Staff released in December 2, 201, and mandated by the national Defense Authorization Act for FY 2011 (Section 1535 of P.L. 111-338).

¹⁰GAO, *Afghanistan, Key Oversight Issues*, February 2013, GAO-13-218SP pp. 25-27.

¹¹ There are no reliable statistics, but the figures in the CIA World Factbook for Afghanistan seem broadly correct in illustrating the scale of the problem. For the growing scale of the drug problem even before aid cuts begin, see the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNDOC) annual surveys for Opium and Cannabis growing in Afghanistan. The UNDOC survey for 2012 found a 7% annual growth in the total area under cultivation. There was little correlation between area of drug cultivation and combat in south. Helmand dropped by only % during the surge, while Kandahar rose by 5% and Nimroz by 22%. The Taliban's ties to narcotics effectively moved out of the lower Helmand River Valley into upper areas and into different provinces. (see the 2012 UNDOC report, p. 29, http://www.unodc.org/documents/crop-monitoring/Afghanistan/ORAS_report_2012.pdf.)

¹² The total size of the Afghan forces under the Soviet occupation and Najibullah was then 25,000-40,000 regular military supplemented by about 20,000 militia and paramilitary forces. Ken Katzman, *Afghanistan: Post Taliban governance, Security, and US Policy*, January 4, 2013, CRS RL30588, p. 2.

¹³ Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction (SIGAR) *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress, January 30, 2013*, pp. 99-115. A different report by UNDOC found that, "the total corruption cost has increased by some 40 per cent over the last three years (2010-2012) to reach \$3.9 billion. Moreover, in 2012, half of Afghan citizens paid a bribe while requesting a public service...See UNDOC, *Corruption in Afghanistan, Recent Patterns and trends*, December 2012, http://www.unodc.org/documents/frontpage/Corruption_in_Afghanistan_FINAL.pdf.

¹⁴ GAO, *Afghanistan, Key Oversight Issues*, February 2013, GAO-13-218SP p. 26.

¹⁵ GAO, *Afghanistan, Key Oversight Issues*, February 2013, GAO-13-218SP p. 26.

¹⁶ The White House, "Fact Sheet: Afghanistan," Office of the Press Secretary, February 12, 2013. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/02/12/fact-sheet-afghanistan>

¹⁷ Adapted from the Washington Post, February 13, 2013, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/us-troops-in-afghanistan/2013/02/12/e9a14926-757e-11e2-95e4-6148e45d7adb_graphic.html; and Michael R. Gordon and Mark Landler, *Decision on Afghan Troop Levels Calculates Political and Military Interests*, New York Times, February 13, 2013, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/13/us/politics/obama-to-announce-troops-return.html?ref=world&_r=0&pagewanted=print.

¹⁸ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 52-53.

¹⁹ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 52-53.

²⁰ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 88-89.

²¹ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 88-89.

²² Thom Shanker, "NATO in Talks on Scale of Afghan Role After 2014 Deadline," *New York Times*, February 22, 2013,

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

²³ UNDOC noted in a November 20, 2012 press release that, “Opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan covered 154,000 hectares (ha) in 2012, 18 per cent higher than the 131,000 recorded the previous year....Cultivation increased despite a significant 154 per cent increase in Government eradication efforts (over 9,600 ha eradicated in 2012 compared with just over 3,800 in 2011). See UNDOC, *Opium-crop cultivation rises in Afghanistan, prices remain high*, <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/press/releases/2012/November/opium-crop-cultivation-rises-in-afghanistan-prices-remain-high.html>

²⁴ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 152-153.

²⁵ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 162-164.

²⁶ GAO, *Afghanistan, Key Oversight Issues*, February 2013, GAO-13-218SP p. 17.

²⁷ GAO, *Afghanistan, Key Oversight Issues*, February 2013, GAO-13-218SP p. 17.

²⁸ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 23.

²⁹ UNAMA, *Afghanistan: Annual Report 2012, Protection of Civilians in armed Conflict*, Kabul, Afghanistan 2012, pp. 22-23.

³⁰ Within the 1,077 civilian casualties from overall targeted killings, the deliberate targeting of Government employees increased by almost 700 percent. In 2012, UNAMA documented 47 separate incidents of targeted killings of civilian Government workers which killed 107 civilians and injured 148. In 2011, UNAMA documented 23 of the same type of targeted killing incidents which killed 23 and injured 11 civilians. UNAMA, *Afghanistan: Annual Report 2012, Protection of Civilians in armed Conflict*, Kabul, Afghanistan 2012, pp. 21-22.

³¹ UNAMA, *Afghanistan: Annual Report 2012, Protection of Civilians in armed Conflict*, Kabul, Afghanistan 2012, pp. 28-29.

³² Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, p. 20.

³³ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, p. 33.

³⁴ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 34-36.

³⁵ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 40-41.

³⁶ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 28-30.

³⁷ ANSO Quarterly Data Report, Q4, 2012, <http://www.ngosafety.org/index.php?pageid=88>, p. 15.

³⁸ GAO, *Afghanistan, Key Oversight Issues*, February 2013, GAO-13-218SP p. 19.

³⁹ GAO, *Afghanistan, Key Oversight Issues*, February 2013, GAO-13-218SP p. 19.

⁴⁰ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, p. 151.

⁴¹ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, p. 28.

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

⁴² Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 29-31.

⁴³ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 29-31.

⁴⁴ ANSO Quarterly Data Report, Q4, 2012, <http://www.ngosafety.org/index.php?pageid=88>, p. 17

⁴⁵ ANSO Quarterly Data Report, Q4, 2012, <http://www.ngosafety.org/index.php?pageid=88>, p. 17

⁴⁶ Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction (SIGAR) *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress, January 30, 2013*, pp. 99 and 116.

⁴⁷ Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction (SIGAR) *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress, January 30, 2013*, pp. 99 and 116.

⁴⁸ Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction (SIGAR) *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress, January 30, 2013*, pp. 76-78. Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 89-95.

HISTORY OF CHANGES TO CUAT RATING LEVEL TITLES, APRIL 2010–PRESENT

April 2010	July 2010	September 2010 ^a	October 2010	August 2011
Effective with Advisors	Independent	Independent	Independent	Independent with Advisors
Effective with Assistance	Effective with Advisors	Effective with Advisors	Effective with Advisors	Effective with Advisors
Dependent on CF for Success	Effective with Assistance	Effective with Assistance	Effective with Assistance	Effective with Partners
Barely Effective	Dependent on CF for Success	Dependent on CF for Success	Developing	Developing with Partners
Ineffective	Ineffective	Ineffective	Established	Established
Not Assessed	Not Assessed	Not Assessed	Not Assessed	Not Assessed

^a The CUAT report includes color coding for each rating level; the difference between July and September 2010 was changes to the color coding for the ratings. "CF" = coalition forces.

Source: IJC, response to SIGAR data call, 12/20/2012.

⁴⁹ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 90-91.

⁵⁰ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 91-92.

⁵¹ Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction (SIGAR) *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress, January 30, 2013*, pp. 78-79. Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 47-52.

⁵² The key problems in the ANA are summarized in Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 55-57, 60.

⁵³ For recent, on-the-scene reporting, see Azam Ahmed, "In Kabul's 'Car Guantánamo,' Autos Languish and Trust Dies," *New York Times*, February 19, 2013; Kevin Sieff, "To cut Afghan red tape, bribery is the norm," *Washington Post*, February 19, 2013. Also see, UNDP, *Police Perception Survey – 2011: The Afghan Perspective*, Afghan Center for Socio-Economic and Opinion Research (ACSOR) Surveys, Kabul, Langer Research Associates, December 2011; UNDOC, *Corruption in Afghanistan, Recent Patterns and trends*, December 2012, http://www.unodc.org/documents/frontpage/Corruption_in_Afghanistan_FINAL.pdf, pp. 7-21.

⁵⁴ The scale of the problems involved in the ANP is laid out in Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 67-76; and Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction (SIGAR) *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress, January 30, 2013*, pp. 84-87.

Cordesman: Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition Revised 2/26/13

⁵⁵Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction (SIGAR) *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress, January 30, 2013*, p. 111.

⁵⁶United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNDOC), *Corruption in Afghanistan: Recent Patterns and trends*, 2012, pp. 8 & 10.

⁵⁷Some criticism of the ALP has been unfair and confused real ALP, without meaningful outside or ANSF training and ties to the MoI, with militias or “ALP” that have designated themselves as ALP. There is, however, a range of legitimate criticism of even well-advised and supported units, just as there is of the abusive use of force by some elements of the ANA and ANP. See UNAMA, *Afghanistan: Annual Report 2012, Protection of Civilians in armed Conflict*, Kabul, Afghanistan 2012, pp. 35-56.

⁵⁸United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNDOC), *Corruption in Afghanistan: Recent Patterns and trends*, 2012, p. 20.

⁵⁹UNDOC, *Opium-crop cultivation rises in Afghanistan, prices remain high*, <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/press/releases/2012/November/opium-crop-cultivation-rises-in-afghanistan-prices-remain-high.html>

⁶⁰Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, p. 35.

⁶¹Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 23-39.

⁶²Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 34-35.