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# MEMO TO THE PRESIDENT: EXPAND THE AGENDA IN PAKISTAN AND AFGHANISTAN

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. GORDON: Well, good morning, everybody. I'm Phil Gordon, a Senior Fellow here at Brookings. I'd like to welcome you all to Brookings and to this special event on Afghanistan and Pakistan.

You wouldn't be here if you didn't realize how important this set of issues was to the United States and to the rest of the world.

Between them, Afghanistan and Pakistan are, in some ways, poster children, you could say, for the 21st century challenges of economic development, of terrorism, nuclear weapons proliferation, counterinsurgency, and peace and stability across South Asia and Central Asia.

That's why these two countries are and must be at the very top of the agenda for the incoming administration, and it's also why Brookings has chosen to make it the focus of one of about a dozen issues that the institution has selected for special attention as part of a series of transition memos written for the incoming administration.

In this case, there's a really excellent memo written by Vanda Felbab-Brown, who will be one of our speakers, and who will present her conclusions as part of this discussion. These are, of course, public memos, but written and designed as if they were telling the administration how to think about some of the major public policy challenges that it will face.

Now it's a cliché at this point in the introduction to say that we couldn't have a better panel to discuss this set of issues, but I'm going

to say that we couldn't have a better panel to discuss this set of issues.

It’s just my job to introduce them and give them the floor. Another important aspect of my job is to remind people to turn off their cell phones and pagers and everything else so that that doesn't interrupt the flow of the discussion.

After I introduce the speakers, who will make brief presentations, we’ll then among us have a conversation up here, informally, and then open it up to the floor for your questions.

The first speaker will be Ambassador Lakhdar Brahimi, who I think is well-known to all of you. Ambassador Brahimi has been a special adviser to the U.N. Secretary General, and advised him on all sorts of issues having to do with conflict resolution and prevention.

He was the Special Representative to the U.N. Secretary General in Afghanistan, and the head of the U.N. Assistance Mission in Afghanistan from 2001 to 2004.

And he has also been a special envoy of the U.N. Secretary General to Afghanistan. And he is, of course, also well known for his role in the independent panel to review U.N. peacekeeping operations that led to the well-known set of recommendations in the Brahimi Report in 2000.

Following Lakhdar Brahimi will be Dr. Ashraf Ghani, again well known to everybody here, I think. He’s a non-Resident Senior Fellow at Brookings and the Chairman of the Institute of State Effectiveness, an organization he co-founded in January 2005 to promote the ability of states to serve their citizens.

He has also served as the Finance Minister of Afghanistan, from 2002 to 2004; and in 2002 was the Special Advisor to the U.N., assisting in the Bonn Framework.

He's also been a chancellor of Kabul University, and he worked at the World Bank for nearly a decade.

Then we will turn to the author of our transition memo, Vanda Felbab-Brown. Vanda's an expert on the interaction between illicit economies and military conflict and on the strategies for managing them.

She has written extensively on the topic and on Afghanistan since coming to Brookings. And she is the author of a forthcoming book, a marvelously titled forthcoming book -- is it really called shooting up?

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Yes.

MR. GORDON: Shooting Up: Illicit Economies and Military Conflict, published, I guess, in the coming year by Brookings institution Press?

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Correct.

MR. GORDON: And available for purchase across the hall.

Finally, we'll turn to Marvin Weinbaum, again known to all of you as one of the United States' leading experts on South Asia. He is a scholar in residence at the Middle East Institute, where he specializes in terrorism, development, and democratization in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Iran. He was for a number of years an Afghanistan-Pakistan analyst at the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research.

And he has written extensively and published extensively on

Afghanistan and Pakistan.

So, as I told you, we really couldn't have more qualified experts to discuss this nexus of issues. And with that, I will turn to Ambassador Brahimi for his opening remarks, and we will deliver his opening remarks seeded so that we can have and in formal discussion among ourselves.

Thank you very much. The floor is Ambassador Brahimi's.

MR. BRAHIMI: Thank you very, very much indeed. I'm really honored to be here and feel particularly privileged to share the platform with such a distinguished group of scholars and practitioners.

If I may single out one of them, Ashraf Ghani, for a few words.

I was -- it was really an experience to have worked with him in Afghanistan for two very, very long and full years.

And just before I left, I told a story about him. I said that, you know, there was this Bedouin trying to load his camel. And he was putting all sorts of things on the back of a camel, one after the other. And then he came with a big bag and said, I don't know whether I want to add it or not. And the camel turned to him and said, you go right ahead. I'm not getting up anyway.

But Ashraf was like that in Afghanistan, and he's still like that. The only difference is that he keeps getting up, and it's a real pleasure to be with him today.

Let me clarify that I have not been in Afghanistan since the

end of 2004, and I had actually relinquished by position in Kabul one year earlier, in the beginning of 2004; and left the United Nations at the end of 2005. So, that is three years that I haven't been dealing directly with Afghanistan.

I wanted to say this as a way of qualifying my contribution today and setting its limits.

Given the short time that we all have, I will use the opportunity of these preliminary remarks to raise and briefly discuss one issue and that has to do with the past rather than with the present and the future. But I hope you'll see that it's not unimportant to speak about those issues that I'm going to discuss in front of you about the past.

The question I'm asking is, I think like everybody else is, where did we all go wrong in Afghanistan?

And I know that we need to focus on the future, and I know that the past is very well-known to us, but I think that there are a few things that we have done or failed to do that are terribly important and have a bearing on where we are today and perhaps of what will happen tomorrow.

I shall, of course, be speaking only about the recent past, the one I knew that I was -- I'm familiar with, because I was there and because I participated in it.

Of this recent past, what I have called elsewhere the original sin was in Bonn, the conference of Bonn itself.

The 35 Afghans who met there under U.N. auspices were

not representative of Afghanistan and the rich diversity of its people. The Northern Alliance, who had been roundly beaten by the Taliban, were empowered again, thanks to their support of the U.S. military intervention.

They, who on the 10th of September 2001, were already packing up to leave Afghanistan and abandoned the little bit of Afghanistan they were controlling to the Taliban, were now again fully re-armed, re-funded, and they were given back the control over most of Afghanistan.

The Taliban, on the other hand, who, until then, had controlled 95 percent of the country, were not there.

And the fact that the Taliban were not there meant in the circumstances of Afghanistan that the Pashtun -- it will is -- is the largest community in Afghanistan -- was not properly represented in Bonn.

The other problem with Bonn was that we gathered too fast and concluded the conference in a hurry.

There, again, there was no other way. Once the U.S. has started its campaign and with the Northern Alliance re-armed and re-funded, they would soon get to the capital, and the longer a new peace process was in the making, the more entrenched the Rahbani government would be, and the more difficult it would be to undo the negative facts they would create on the ground.

One example to illustrate this point: in the short five or six weeks between his arrival in Kabul, around mid-November, and the installation of the Karzai and (inaudible) administration, on the 22nd of

December, President Rahbani and his aides had appointed 1,200 civil administration officers in the president's office alone.

And, of course, every one of his ministers did the same in his department.

At the end of the Bonn conference, I underlined to the participants -- Ashraf was a member -- that they were not sufficiently representative and that it was indispensable once we all reached Kabul to work hard at enlarging the popular base of the interim administration and of the whole Bonn process.

Unfortunately, not much was done in terms of national reconciliation. Any talk about reaching out to the Taliban or at least to those of them who might agree to join the Bonn process was unceremoniously dismissed.

The Taliban had been routed, we were told. And there was no going back.

But the Taliban had been routed indeed, but they were not defeated on the ground. They left Kabul and the major cities. But where did they go? How many were there? What were they thinking? These questions were not at all -- were either not raised were totally ignored.

By everybody, the Northern Alliance, the Americas, the Iranians, the Russians, the Indians -- nobody was interested in discussing such questions. I think it was a classical case of ignorance and arrogance that we are very, very often -- far too often guilty of when we deal with situations like Afghanistan.

Just to tell you what this ignorance and arrogance meme. Before 2001, I made several statements saying that the fighters on both sides -- the Taliban and Northern Alliance -- were maybe 50,000, no more. And that there were holding the people of Afghanistan hostage.

But after that, we discovered that the Taliban alone had more than 100,000 fighters, plus they were able to recruit 70,000 to 100,000 for major fighting.

The foreigners, we thought that there were maybe all in all 5,000; 3,000 Pakistanis; 2,000 Arabs, and some Central Asians and so on. We discovered that the Pakistanis alone were more than 10,000. The Arabs were more than 5,000.

So you see how ignorant we were, and we were taking decisions on the basis of this very, very incomplete and distorted information that we had.

The other issue of importance, I think, in Bonn, we created ISAF, the International Security Assistance Force, as a multinational force. And it was only 5,000 soldiers, which, as it was formed of very rich countries, which means that no more than 850 to 1,000 people in the streets. The others were what I called the cooks, you know, and all the support staff that they needed.

And that -- they would only in Kabul and its immediate surroundings. But immediately we arrived, we saw how they were welcomed with open arms. And everybody in Afghanistan was telling us please, send us also some troops. We begged the international

community to give us 5,000 to 10,000 troops, no more, and that was consistently refused.

I am absolutely certain today that if we had had those troops that if we had reached out to the Taliban, the situation in Afghanistan would be totally different today.

So I think it's terribly important to talk about the past and these terms, because there is a lot to learn from the things that we have done and the things we haven't done.

One other issue that is also important. I think the -- a lot of people have been saying that actually if ISAF was not expanded in numbers and out of Kabul it was because of the U.N. insistence that we should be in Afghanistan with the so-called light footprint. But the light footprint -- I am partly responsible for this expression in the idea behind it -- was about U.N. bureaucracy.

What you were saying is that the United Nations, which is used to throw people at problems, should not do that; that we should send only the people that were needed and no more; not about, you know, the military presence.

And we who had put out this idea of the light footprint were begging for more troops. So, you know, this is -- this is, I think, terribly important. And what is important is to see that one of the -- one of our failures is that our aid has been dilapidated, wasted in a scandalous manner. I think you probably -- I'm sure that most of you are aware of this report of Oxfam a year or so ago that said that 40 percent of all the aid

returned to the donors in the form of salaries for their so-called experts and consultants. And the rest, of course was -- much of the rest was dilapidated by all of us and also went to fuel the local corruption.

The performance of President Karzai government equally at the central and at the regional or local of both was extremely poor indeed.

If I may be personal for a moment here, you know the -- Ashraf remembers that when we were preparing his mission, a lot of people were saying what we need is to have a direct administration, a U.N. direct administration.

But I think happily this view did not prevail, and we insisted that it should be the Afghans in the driving seat and that the internationalists should be generous, should be there, should stay the course, and so on. But they should be helping the people of Afghanistan to build their country and not replace them.

Another point here is the arrival of NATO on the scene in 2003. It was welcomed by many as a strong commitment of its members not to abandon Afghanistan as they had done before. It was seen also as a clear message to the Taliban and everyone else inside Afghanistan, but also to Pakistan, Iran, and others in the region and beyond that the mighty NATO and its members and behind them -- the quasi-totality of the international community would stay the course and will help achieve the stabilization of Afghanistan, the rebuilding of its institutions, and the return of genuine peace to the entire country.

I saw NATO's arrival with a very similar lens, and was

particularly encouraged when Lord Robertson, its Secretary General in those days, said that NATO shall be here for the duration because failure is simply not an option for us. I'm afraid that NATO has been a terrible disappointment. Their performance hasn't been good. And frankly, sometimes one wonders whether NATO exists in Afghanistan.

The countries that are members of NATO are fighting their different wars, and one wonders whether they speak to one another at all.

I'm now wondering -- this is a point which you and I wish to discuss later on. I don't think it has been said before. I am now really wondering more and more if it was really necessary to have allowed the coexistence of two separate international missions in Afghanistan. On the one hand, the international assistance built, at least theoretically, a round the United Nations and the legitimacy it provides; and on the other, the U.S.-led and gradually dominated so-called Enduring Freedom, which I think was not much more than a military campaign aimed at hunting Osama bin Laden and his Al Qaeda network, and seen as the centerpiece of the so-called Global War on Terror.

What I am venturing to say here, the question I am trying to ask is this: would it not have been better to establish one single mission, and, for me, that would have been UNAMA, with a wider mandate, rather than the two missions we had?

Let me try to explain: it's no secret that the U.S. administration went to Afghanistan not -- went to Afghanistan primarily to seek revenge on those who had attacked it so brutally, killed so many of

its innocent citizens, and inflicted so much material damage on its economy. They wanted to kill or capture Osama bin Laden and his associates.

I suspect that most in Washington those days and elsewhere thought that such an objective, capturing or killing bin Laden and his associates, would be achieved in a matter of weeks, perhaps even days, certainly not more than a few months.

I further suspect that from day one, the prize sought by the Americans was Baghdad, and that Kabul was seen as a mere distraction. And it was considered that the earlier the job in Afghanistan was finished, the better.

We thought that the United Nations were -- with the United States were our main partner in Afghanistan. But for two years they were not. Their eyes, their thinking, they are -- everything was in Iraq already, not in Afghanistan.

Because another point here -- because Al Qaeda was so much more important than Afghanistan for the Americans, the Americans were reasonably happy that Pakistan handed over to them a couple of Arabs every so often. What the Afghans and many others were saying about Pakistani support to the Taliban was not hurt in Washington simply because Washington was not really interested in what happened in or to Afghanistan.

We know what the results of this have been. The Taliban and others such as (inaudible) have been able to recruit, train, and arm

and get ready to what they have been these past three or for years.

So I think that if we had had one mission, one U.N. mission, with a strong commitment from the United States, it would have done better in every field including in the field of fighting terrorism and Al Qaeda.

And so, I think if we just say a couple of words about the future -- I think that, you know, in just three or four bullet points: the Global War on Terror has not been a success in either its concept or its implementation, and the international community should organize these still indispensable international cooperation against terrorism in a totally different manner.

Two, the problems of Afghanistan and those of the international community in Afghanistan will not be solved unless and until the needs and aspirations of the people of Afghanistan are put at the center of the common effort in and around that country.

Three, there is an urgent need for a new strategy; no, for a strategy, because there isn't a strategy for the moment, as I don't think there had been one for the past few years.

That strategy must be the fruit of a common deliberation built around the government and people of Afghanistan, and with the participation of all those who can help.

That must now include not only Pakistan and Iran, but also India. In addition to all other stakeholders naturally, to underline this point further, the strategy cannot be elaborated in one capital and submitted to

everyone else for support. This approach has not worked in the past and will not work in the future.

Four, there are two issues that such strategy cannot ignore or deal with superficially or halfheartedly. They are A, what role for Pakistan in the strategy and how to deal with the immense problems Pakistan itself now faces. Dealing with Pakistan necessarily involves dealing with the problem of its relations with India as well.

And B, what to do about the Taliban and the insurgency more generally. They cannot defeat NATO militarily, not at all. But could they be defeated militarily? NATO and its generals on the ground seem to say no. How to deal with them then?

You cannot avoid this question.

Five, none of these issues can be dealt separately, including the issue of an increase or on the contrary a draw-down of the foreign forces in Afghanistan; and also the problem of the presidential election in Afghanistan. Only when a strategy has been agreed on would these and all other specific problems find their logical and hopefully positive answers. Thank you very much.

MR. GORDON: Thank you very much, Lakhdar.

(APPLAUSE)

MR. GORDON: Thank you for --

MR. BRAHIMI: Sorry, I took a bit too long.

MR. GORDON: -- no, no, that was terrific. Thank you for being so frank with us and so clear and for sharing your insights from your

own experience.

We will certainly want to pick your brain about some of that, not least on the issue of what lessons you draw from those insights for what might be possible now. I mean, just for example, the issue of not reaching out to the Pashtuns or the Taliban. You said that was a mistake then, raising the question of whether there's still time to do it. But let's hold off on that, because we could talk about that for the full hour, and instead hear from some of our other speakers, and then we'll come back to all of these issues.

But thank you for that frank and sobering presentation. Ashraf.

DR. GHANI: Thank you, Phil. It's a pleasure to be with you, and particularly to again be on the panel with the best of Brahimi. We refer to him as the uncle of the nation, because of the wisdom and guidance that he's continuously provided, and he's the only one who's been honored with a (inaudible) so his perspective.

I am going to take the view of an analyst, not an actor, so that the discussion can be focused in that regard.

The first proposition that I'd like to put is we had an open moment in Afghanistan in 2002 that we could have created stability and prosperity. We lost it.

Now is a second open moment: the coming of the Obama administration provides the ground for hope. But this is a much shorter window of opportunity because forces on the ground have been

unleashed, one; and second, the trust of the Afghan population has to be won. The Afghan population today does not trust either its own government or the international actors.

Justice is the foundation of order in our worldview. And today the people of Afghanistan feel that justice is not where we're going. We are not creating a just order. And part of this is a lot of people are going to focus on governance in Afghanistan.

The governance of the international community is equally a problem. Without getting the governance of the international component right, we are not going to make progress. One example.

There are currently 26,000 U.S. contracts in Afghanistan without anybody coordinating these contracts. The award of these contracts is an enormous source of conflict and tension and a source of revenue actually for the insurgency.

So we have to get both sides of the equation right. It is not that a functioning international system and a functioning aid system is facing a dysfunctional environment. A dysfunctional international system is combining with a dysfunctional national system. And unless we get both right, we're not going to make progress.

The critical question to the United States is, what kind of Afghanistan is in the U.S. interest? That question has not been answered yet.

The story of war on terror is not going to rally the population of Afghanistan. The population of Afghanistan is going to rally to a

narrative of building a legitimate state, a state that performs core functions for its citizens and ensures the equality of all citizens of Afghanistan regarding language, ethnic city, or gender.

That is the equation that would rally people. And the basis of this is the General Assembly resolution of 2001 that Ambassador Brahimi steered and responded to.

Now, in terms of knowledge, our knowledge has to be based on both the experience of the past. In the past eight years in Afghanistan, the wrong tool box has been used.

The more the problems have developed, the more they've thrown at it solutions that they knew at the capital or at the U.N., not what was required on the ground.

The critical shift has come with formulation of the counterinsurgency doctrine. Why? Because this doctrine, for the first time, recognizes what Ambassador Brahimi highlighted. People are at the center. Without addressing the people, one is not going to find the problem. And two, it's 80 percent political, 20 percent military.

Three, it is multiplicative, not additive. If one component of a coherent strategy does not work, the results become zero; not that you get one thing in addition to the other.

Because of this, if we do not have a multi-pronged strategy were civilian and military and political science cohere to provide a vision of an Afghanistan that (inaudible) can buy into, it's not going to bring stability.

And, of course, there's a lot of knowledge that has been ignored: Marshall Plan, Korea, Taiwan, other places. The United States needs to go back to its own successful experiments, not work to a dysfunctional USAID or a dysfunctional series of contracts.

Those contracts do not bring about stability in Afghanistan and are not likely. Illustration: $6 billion has been on the Afghan police. Not one unit of the police is ready. What kind of supervision mechanism exists? Afghans could have done that with $200 million.

Now how do we put Afghan people at the center?

First, we remove our perceptions that have dominated. There is a perception that this is a tribal society, in 16th century, et cetera. It is not.

First, at least 10 million people are living in cities.

Two, 65 percent of the population is under 25. The people who are going to vote next year in the presidential elections, a significant number of them were not born when the Soviet Union left Afghanistan. Why are we insisting in seeing Afghanistan through the perspective of the 1980s?

There's a group of individuals who keep writing and talking about Afghanistan whose formation was in the middle of the anti-Soviet struggle, and they have not woken up to the reality of a new Afghanistan.

Women, youth, the younger generation, the most significant -- I've been talking to thousands of people since July in Kabul in the Northern Province and other provinces.

What do I hear? A thirst for law and order. A thirst for a place in the world. And from the young generation, a place in globalization.

But what have we done? We have not invested in a single university to make a single university function, despite the fact that the aid community spent $2 billion on technical assistance.

And meanwhile, Afghanistan dropped from 116 on transparency international index to 176, one of the fastest declines. There surely must be a relationship between $2 billion of expenditure and expansion of corruption?

So in terms of the future, the first issue is the instruments of national and international power have to be brought into alignment around a coherent strategy.

There is no strategy for Afghanistan. But more significantly, when between 2002 and 2004, there was an Afghan strategy, the international community did not partner with us to build that strategy that we were pushing forward. It actively undermined the reforms that we were pursuing.

So the instruments of national and international power have to come in common issue.

Fourth is a necessary, but it is not sufficient. And unless we appreciate the full implication of that, we are not going to find the use. If force is projected, what it is the political and a projection of force? What future is it going to open?

Related to this, of course, is the regional dimension. Afghanistan and Pakistan have been treated as though they were two islands. There has been an Afghan policy. There has been a Pakistani policy. And there has been no regional coordination of a regional approach that is cohesive -- incoherent.

So a regional approach is essential to this. And that regional approach must be based on full appreciation of facts and not denial.

For three years, there was denial in Washington in terms of what was happening on the ground, and any critique, any facts to the opposite were outright dismissed. So we have to have the mentality that we at least create the mechanisms that appreciation of the facts in (inaudible) is something that we can objectively agree on rather than engage in.

In terms of if one builds on a distinction that was made on paper write up by Michael, first order things and second and third order things.

First order in Afghanistan is not security. Its governance. Other problems emanate from that governance. And unless this is put, if the center in institution building becomes the key mechanism, we are again likely to get things wrong.

Don't get into the discussions of what is an (inaudible). You will not understand its complexity.

Afghanistan is not Iraq. There are not intact tribes in Afghanistan like the Anbar Province.

So transfer of experience needs to be done in the light of context.

Two other observations to conclude: One, implementation matters. Don't arrive at policies in capitals that you think are going to be automatically implemented unless the design of the implementation is revisited. Fragmentation of Afghanistan today in terms of rule of law is the result of the presence of the international community.

I used to joke that I was one of the five Finance Ministers of Afghanistan. It's now become even more sad and tragic.

And here appreciate the full criminalization of the economy that has taken place. The insurgency, in my estimate, is either the same level of income of the Afghan government or double that income.

And unless this is understood and its implications are fully explored, we are not going to get movement. So implementation matters.

And lastly, a choice has to be made: is Afghanistan going to belong to Afghans? Or is the international community taking the ownership of Afghanistan? If the direction is towards international management, then come clear and get a U.N. resolution to administer the country directly.

But if the objective is that the Afghans should own Afghanistan be and in charge of, then the international community is best in the role of a catalyst and a co-producer and a partner in a very real sense. That means arriving again with a strategy, the central focus of which is to help the Afghan people become stakeholders.

Today, one fact again should remind us: narcotics provides the basis both of the insurgency and of the massive corruption of the government. Yet, there is no anger or cultural development strategy for Afghanistan. Agriculture has actually gone back 40 years. Is that the way to get coherence?

So we need to bring coherence. Afghanistan is difficult. There's no question about it. But it's by no means impossible. The issue -- why is it not impossible? Because the Afghan people want order, what legitimacy, one lives as anybody else.

If those aspirations are responded to, people buy it. But if those aspirations are not responded to, people will withdraw, and the insurgency will increase rather than decrease. Thank you.

(APPLAUSE)

MR. GORDON: Ashraf, thank you for another terrific presentation; again, one that raises all sorts of food for discussion, which we will turn to in a minute.

Our first speakers have analyzed a very challenging situation.

We'll next turn to Vanda, who, as I mentioned previously, is the author of a transition memo that, I believe, is available out front and also on the Brookings website and I encourage people to read for a very concise analysis of the challenge, but also, and even more importantly, I think, for this context, a suggestion of a potential policy approach for the administration. And now we'll ask Vanda to share with us some of her

thoughts from that perspective.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Thank you. Ambassador Brahimi's very cogently outlined the background and context of the situation in Afghanistan and South Asia. And Dr. Ghani then highlighted some of the crucial issues that Afghanistan is facing and that the new incoming administration will be facing in Afghanistan.

Let me follow in this vein, and underscore and reiterate some of these points and focus little bit on what are key aspects of the strategy that the new administration will have to approach.

The Obama administration inherits a very dangerous and complex situation in South Asia, of which Afghanistan is the centerpiece, but the complexity and crisis facing the region really goes beyond Afghanistan and even beyond Pakistan.

The war in Afghanistan is not being won. Al Qaeda has once again built strongholds in the mountains of Afghanistan and Pakistan, and is once again conducting global operations from this area.

The horrific attacks in Mumbai are a reminder to all of us just how dangerous global jihadist terrorism is, not only to the region, but, in fact, globally.

And, in fact, as a result of these attacks, the tensions between India and Pakistan, two nuclear armed countries that have fought four wars, are very high.

Fortunately, the tensions have been managed and have not yet spilled over into any military confrontation, such as we saw after the

attacks on the Indian Parliament in 2001. But the potential still remains there, especially should we see another terrorist attack.

And there is also the potential for a proxy war between the two countries, one that they have engaged in before, whether it will be in Kashmir or very perniciously in Afghanistan.

So the administration will have to face several interrelated aspects of the crisis. As Ashraf has already mentioned, the security situation in Afghanistan is not good. And perhaps that's a euphemism.

Now indeed, Afghanistan is a very complex country, and our differences between the regions. Nonetheless, in the south and east, the areas where Pashtuns are an important and strong group, have seen levels of security that have brought economic development in large areas to a standstill, frustrating the aspirations of the people with respect to governance and progress; where international advisers, more importantly Afghan government officials or even district chiefs no longer dare to travel many of the districts.

At the same time, Afghanistan is still one of the poorest, most underdeveloped countries in the world. Despite progress in many areas of the socioeconomic dimension, legal opportunities for many are still meager.

Again, Dr. Ghani talked about the drug trade. It is fueling the Taliban insurgency, it is fueling corruption. And yet, at the same time, it is one-third at least of this country's GDP.

It is truly unprecedented in the history of the drug trade, at

least since World War II. We have never seen it anywhere in Peru, Colombia, or Bolivia.

And the Afghan people are increasingly questioning the performance of their government as well as other the international community. They are frustrated by the meager economic opportunities, by the insecurity, by the threats to their lives, by the rise of criminality that is linked to the drug economy, but goes way beyond the drug economy.

And at the same time, across the border in Pakistan, the Fatah area as an increasingly the large enormous frontier province have become a cauldron of insecurity of various jihadist groups, of which the Afghan Taliban is only one group.

Many of these groups have links to the Pakistan intelligence services. But new threats have emerged that are now increasingly threatening the very security of Pakistan itself. And Pakistan itself has become a victim of terrorism, facing many terrorist attacks, and, in fact, very large-scale terrorist attacks, such as the bombing of the Marriott a few months back.

Pakistan is a fragile and failing state in many dimensions. It has a history of weak civilian government, periodically replaced by military coups. At the same time, when the civilian government is frequently in power, it is not able to address the many profound challenges facing the country.

And today, it's also facing a major economic meltdown.

Yet, despite these dire circumstances and the negative

trends facing the country, the Obama administration will face several important opportunities.

One is domestic support in the United States for the focus on Afghanistan. And this is coupled with an increasing recognition in the United States that South Asia and Afghanistan are, in fact, a critical -- should be a critical focus of the administration and are a critical forefront of the war on terrorism, but as well as a symbol of U.S. commitment to help countries develop economically and achieve political stability.

The same way our NATO partners and non-NATO partners are looking toward the new administration to help develop a strategy that will be based on the aspirations of the Afghan people and that will have the support of the international community. And this strategy also needs to incorporate a multilateral engagement, multilateral framework for Pakistan.

Most critically I would argue the Afghan people still reject the Taliban. Their aspiration still is an Afghanistan that is free of oppressive armed groups, warlords, and criminals, and that is capable of satisfying their elemental economic needs.

So what has been some of the key elements of a strategy that the Obama campaign articulated during the campaign that will be the basis for developing a strategy?

One is focus on the military situation. Indeed, that is absolutely critical. No doubt that governance is the key element of a strategy to build a nation and to incorporate the aspiration and will of the

people. Yet, the level of insecurity is so large right now in major parts of the country that economic development, social development is not taking place.

So addressing the military situation is critical.

One element of that strategy is an increase in U.S. troops. This was endorsed during the campaign by Mr. Obama and is, in fact, happening. We'll see at least 20 more -- 20,000 more troops heading to Afghanistan, though at what rate yet remains to be seen.

That is important. We have to ask ourselves, however, whether this mini-surge, as some are calling it, is, in fact, sufficient to address the insecurity.

And since there is the recognition of the limits the surge will have, there is also increasing focus on increasing the Afghan national army.

Again, that is important because ultimately the Afghan national army needs to provide for the security of its own country, with its own people.

Yet, again, it's a very complex task. Can we increase the army fast enough? If we increase it to some levels, will be Afghan government be able to pay for it? Very complex, difficult challenges.

So the third element of it, of the military approach at least, has become focused on tribes. And the travel option, whether one calls it bottom-up (inaudible) development approaches or lashkars or arbakis is, to some extent, modeled on the seeming success of the Anbar Awakening

in Iraq.

But it also has precedent in Afghanistan's own history, where many frustrated great powers at some point sought to rely on tribes to provide security that their forces have failed to provide.

And we -- as Dr. Ghani said, we need to be very careful about bringing in false analogies. The tribes in Afghanistan are weak, fractured, caught up in a myriad of local disputes and not necessarily representative of the population.

Will they be able to stand up to the Taliban in the same way that the Suni tribes could stand up to Al Qaeda? Is their antagonism to the Taliban the same that the antagonism was of the Suni tribes to Al Qaeda in Iraq? W

And finally, if even -- if they can accomplish the tactical military goal, is this vision compatible with the vision of a unitary Afghanistan? One of the greatest successes of what has been achieved in Afghanistan is the disarmament of the militias. And this goes directly to the sense of justice that the Afghan people are craving for. Are we going to undermine the desire for justice and show the ineffectiveness of the international community and the Afghan government in providing justice by once again arming local groups? Or will we be able to disarm them somehow later?

We can talk in the Q&A about the drug trade, the socioeconomic aspects of the development. Let me just conclude here by focusing on the regional frameworks.

Many have urged that the new administration critically focuses on Kashmir as a way to help India and Pakistan reduce the tensions, and as a way to get Pakistan to generally embrace the focus on the western frontier with Afghanistan; abandon its connections to the various armed groups there, and indeed genuinely embrace the War on Terror.

The Mumbai attacks has perhaps seriously derailed the strategy. But, at the same time, the Mumbai attacks, as were horrific as they are, might provide an injection, a sense of urgency to local-regional stakeholders as well as the global community that these issues are, in fact, multi-related and that terrorism today is a threat to all the actors there and provide a platform for cooperation in the regional framework that ultimately will be good for the region as well is good for Afghanistan.

MR. GORDON: Great. Thank you, Vanda. Thank you.

(APPLAUSE)

MR. GORDON: And in particular for introducing the regional dimension to this, which is another thing I definitely want to come back to, and I suspect that Marvin will also come back to, given his extensive work on the entire region.

Marvin, the floor is yours, with also a reminder that we do want to make sure we have ample time.

MR. WEINBAUM: Yes.

MR. GORDON: You drew the shortest straw (inaudible).

MR. WEINBAUM: Thank you, Phil. Right.

Now the incoming administration is getting lots of advice on what to do with Afghanistan and Pakistan. But in the 10 minutes or so allotted to me this morning, permit me to list 10 don’ts for policy towards Afghanistan and Pakistan. And I offer them in no particular a sending or descending order.

First of all, don’t let policy choices in one of these countries drive the other. Yes, we do need to recognize the interconnectedness between Afghanistan and Pakistan. But it's also important that these countries be addressed on their own terms.

For too long, we allowed the requirements in Afghanistan, the military requirements in Afghanistan, to dictate the way we saw Pakistan. As a result, we failed to pursue policies that reflected Pakistan's changing political realities, often knowingly undermining its democratic forces and subordinating our supposedly cherished non-proliferation goals.

At the same time, in our preoccupation with enlisting Pakistan in counterterrorism, and dealing with counterterrorism -- dealing with terrorism in Pakistan, we failed to appreciate how an Afghan insurgency could be kindled by our lack of urgency in addressing the country's severe development and governance deficits.

Secondly, don't build your policy around a single individual. Avoid conveying the impression that Hamid Karzai is indispensable or that President Asif Zardari is our man.

Don’t impede in any way a political process that might result

in removing Karzai and lead perhaps to constitutional reforms and more effective leadership. And don't make the same mistakes with Zardari that we did with Pervez Musharraf by clinging to a leader in a period of political transition.

In building relationships with the leaders of either country, it's critical not to ignore or underestimate the constraints imposed by popular forces. And in reaching out to broader publics, it matters less what you think you're doing with your programs and your statements and more by the way they're being perceived.

Third, as research these days for new approaches, don't forget that the best of strategies are worthless if we've not also thought through how they can be implemented.

As former Ambassador Ron Newman reminds us, strategy is a process as well as a policy direction.

Strategies have to be linked to means, including whether we'll have the political will to see them through. Too often, our plans have failed because of disjointed coordination among those charged with implementation.

Don't adopt strategies without asking what the probabilities are that they will achieve their stated goals.

Fourth, don't formulate your policies without considering what might be the unintended consequences. In both Afghanistan and Pakistan, supporting the formation of local -- armed local militias to contest the Taliban needs to weighed against what long-term challenges it poses

to the authority of the state.

And past experiences drawn from both countries should suggest caution in building a large, professionalized Afghan army in a weak state. There will almost certainly be clamor for the new administration to get tough about drugs in Afghanistan. But don't expect that you can avoid exacerbating the insurgency with eradication programs unless you're also prepared to address circumstances that lead to poppy production.

DR. GHANI: You see, you caused it.

MR. GORDON: I think we have to -- I think we have to get out of here.

MR. GORDON: Let's assemble out front, and, hopefully, it gets cleared up in the next few minutes, so we can come right back in, because we still have six things that we must not do in --

DR. GHANI: And the four (inaudible) – 58:26).

MR. GORDON: We have to --

DR. GHANI: We have to unhook ourselves or are they going to unhook us?

MR. GORDON: Yeah, just, just --

DR. GHANI: Ambassador --

DR. GHANI: I just want to make sure.

MR. BRAHIMI: Thank you very much.

DR. GHANI: Yeah, thank you. I just want to make sure.

MR. GORDON: No, no. You're fine.

DR. GHANI: I know.

SPEAKER: It wasn't you guys.

SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR. GORDON: Ah, right down here.

SPEAKER: Thank you very much.

MR. GORDON: No problem.

SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR. GORDON: What number were you on, Marvin?

MR. WEINBAUM: I was on five actually. I was halfway there.

MR. GORDON: Yeah.

MR. BRAHIMI: Yeah, I don't if (inaudible) has that.

MR. GORDON: Yeah.

MR. BRAHIMI: I don't know -- (inaudible) as that.

MR. GORDON: Yeah. I think that they're going to resume.

Okay. Well, thanks to -- apologies for that unexpected interruption, but thanks for coming back, those of you who are here. We also -- let me remind people we have a wider audience on C-SPAN, which is resuming its coverage. And apologies to people watching. We had a little fire alarm here and had to break, but we will resume.

Marvin has five more things, I think, to tell us what not to do, and then we can open it up for a discussion of what we might do.

But, Marvin, please.

MR. WEINBAUM: I'll try to abbreviate within that list as well.

The fifth item I had here was that don't imagine that you can transfer very much from Iraq, Anbar and the Suni tribes aside from suggesting a bottom-up strategy. The tribes, as we often acknowledge, are far more complex and cohesive in Afghanistan. And don't expect to gain ascendance against the insurgency in either country through training and equipping counterinsurgency forces if it's predicated on a tribal structure and traditional leadership that may not exist or is far too weak.

But a community outreach approach, I believe, does offer promise, but only if it's culturally sensitive, resourced, and more comprehensive than just a military strategy.

Six, don't oppose Kabul's reconciliation with insurgents and attempts to draw them into a political process. Similarly, don't dissuade Pakistan's leadership in their belief that a political common development approach can pay dividends in taming the tribal extremists.

But at the same time, neither course is very likely -- neither is very likely to succeed because they happen to reflect domestic realities in both countries.

Meaningful compromise with the body of Pakistan and Afghan Taliban is probably impossible because of the essentially transitional strategies that they are based on and can't compete with the adversaries' larger ideological agenda.

Let me move quickly here. Don't cede the countryside to the Taliban and its allies. Insufficient troop levels may suggest a strategy of gravitating security forces towards population concentrations, especially in

the South and south of Kabul Province.

This is, you will recall, though, was the Soviet strategy with disaster -- and ended, of course, with disastrous results. Only if the strategy is combined with a quick response mobile force to keep the insurgency off balance can it be justified.

I might mention here also that, as we also look at the same subject, that a strategy must be used if it's going to be in a concentrating on around the population centers and providing time and space for injecting resources into those cities and towns in dealing, of course, with criminality.

The security force, that is, the police, should not be used for counterinsurgency. They should be used for traditional policing.

And as we've heard already here today, ensuring justice through better governance is probably the most important component of counterinsurgency.

Seventh, the administration is going to be asked to do something about Pakistan. It's going to be high on the agenda. It will undoubtedly be seeking new ways to pressure Islamabad to halt the flow of assistance into Afghanistan, close off the sanctuaries.

Pakistan is always ready to give us marginal satisfaction with the actions it takes against extremists and terrorists, but our leverage over the country will always be limited by its own sense of political and national survival.

Don't put too much stock into succeeding on our own with

military muscle in the border areas. We must weigh the gains against the probable cause -- costs.

Continuing Predator strikes and the fallout of attacks in Mumbai have left Pakistan in a bruised, defensive mode -- mood. This fragile government and often besieged military are walking a fine line, unable to appear to be bending either to the will of New Delhi or Washington.

Unfortunately, the public in Pakistan seems no closer to linking the threats posed to Afghanistan for militants in the frontier with its own domestic challenges from extremism.

Eight, a comprehensive strategy should be addressed, one that engages all the neighbors -- this is long overdue. But don't expect to succeed without including Iran and engaging India and Saudi Arabia in more constructive roles in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

A regional strategy ensures that all parties -- assumes rather, that all parties would be better off with a stable and prospering Afghanistan. But not expecting it, they are all, and especially Pakistan, positioned for retaining influence in a fragmented Afghanistan.

Ninth, in general, we should not set our expectations too high for what can be accomplished and how quickly.

In Afghanistan, reasonable political stability and what Ashraf, I believe, has at one time referred to as just becoming a normal low-income country may have to suffice.

Those who would hope that a liberal -- a largely liberal

constitution and regularly scheduled elections in Afghanistan would ensure a democratic path will be frustrated. And many human rights -- and the human rights community will understandably be disappointed.

A greater willingness to accede to the use of traditional institutions to bring about progressive ends may bring higher returns.

In Pakistan, we may have to get used to an unsettled political situation for some time and be prepared for a patently more Islam in government. Don't continue to marginalize Nour Sharif. Very likely, before too long, we're going to have to work with him and he with us.

Now if I can -- lastly, don't entertain the idea that there can be an early easy exit from the region. Too much of our, you know, much of our repetition about the being in Afghanistan in partnership with Pakistan has been about counterterrorism and destroying Al Qaeda. And, of course, this reinforces the notion that once again we are in it only for our immediate interests.

Why, then, should Afghanistan -- those in Afghanistan not find it more prudent to align with the Taliban. And in Pakistan, how can we hope to discourage Islamabad from retaining its Pashtun-Taliban card?

Don't try to embrace either too tightly, either. Any renewed talk of long-term strategic relationship with Kabul is a sure-fire way of drawing criticism that we seek to be an occupying force like the Soviets.

Similarly, in Pakistan, meddling has backfired.

Now I've mentioned many more than 10 don'ts in the course of my remarks, and you will rightly say this list is incomplete. I've

mentioned nothing here about Kashmir, nor about American assistance programs. There are lots of don’ts there as well.

More positively then in conclusion, there is a great deal we can do that will gain the respect again for the United States in this region, and, at the same time, indicate our respect for Afghanistan and Pakistan.

We have to accept the fact that their national interests and our own will not always be the same.

The task for a new administration is to make a better case for how these interests do, in fact, converge. Thank you.

MR. GORDON: Thank you, Marvin.

(APPLAUSE)

MR. GORDON: Thanks to you and all of the speakers for really terrific presentations.

They have also -- the speakers have also kindly agreed to stay on a few minutes. It’s almost 11:30 a.m. now, but if we could just extend this to make up for lost time. I know you have a lot of questions, and I have a lot of questions, too.

I will permit myself to just ask a couple, to follow up on a couple of the issues that were raised here, and then we will open up the floor to questions.

Let me also tell our speakers that they should feel free at any time to jump in and react to something they heard from the others, because we do want to generate a bit of a discussion up here. So please feel free to do that. K

The place I would like to begin -- I flagged this earlier to Ambassador Brahimi -- is this question of -- and anyone is welcome to react to this, but I'll start with you -- you said, in drawing the lessons of our earlier experience, that one of the big mistakes was completely excluding the Taliban and ignoring the Pashtun or at least not giving them their due, and, as a consequence for that, they have sort of turned against the system.

My question to you and others is, is it now too late? We hear this idea out now, but it is necessary to have a sort of dialogue with the Taliban. And if that is, indeed, what you implied, that it's not too late and we still need to think about how to engage the Taliban and the Pashtun, to sort of provoke you, many would argue that they have the perception that they're winning, so why should they talk to us?

And if that's their attitude, what on earth do we have to talk to them about?

MR. BRAHIMI: Well, you know, I think what I was trying to say is that we made a terrible mistake. The Taliban were not in Bonn and that is understandable.

It was not possible to invite them, and if they had been invited, they wouldn't have come. But coming into Kabul, I think at the time when they were demoralized, they were, you know, scattered all over the place, they would have appreciated and responded to any approach, and a discussion with them may have had very good results in bringing some of them, most of them, all of them back into the fold.

Now it is much more difficult, because you're absolutely right, they think they are winning. And they think that any negotiations there -- I think that they are willing to negotiate. They would be willing to negotiate, but they think they will negotiate on their terms.

So the price will be too high.

What I'm saying really is -- you know, I've been away for far too long to be certain of anything -- but I am telling the people who are dealing with these issues you cannot ignore this problem. You cannot just sweep it under the carpet. It is there, and it's not going to go away. You have got to address it. What do we do about the Taliban and al-Qaeda and Hekmatyar? Do we talk to them? Do we fight them?

Both things are possible, but there is a logic. Once you have made the choice, there are consequences. If you want to fight a war, that's great. You go and fight a war. But then there are consequences: how long are you going to be there? How convincing you were going to be in telling people who are going to fight a war to the finish?

And if you choose to talk to them, there are also consequences there, and you have got to accept them.

What I'm saying is that, you know, there is no strategy for the moment. We need that strategy, and that strategy has to be built around the needs and aspirations of the people of Afghanistan. If you want -- if you are thinking of how the Americans get out of this mess, that's very easy: just leave, and you will be out of this mess.

But there, again, there are consequences, to your country, to

the rest of the world.

So I think you've got now to face the reality as it is and take responsible decisions with the consequences that go with those decisions.

MR. GORDON: I'm sure you have.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Phil?

MR. GORDON: Yep.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: If I can get on this, I think it's important that we don't allow anyone to decide the Taliban is synonymous with the Pashtun people. They are not and they should not be allowed to become. So regardless on whether we engage with the Taliban, as there have been very sealers in America and elsewhere, how we engage with them and what the opportunities in this engagement, in fact, are, we should have an outreach program to the Pashtun people. They are an important segment of the Afghan population. They need to be included, and we should not allow the Taliban to somehow claim a monopoly on representing the aspirations of the Pashtun populations.

I would also add that one further complication with engaging the Taliban, apart from their stated goals and sense of momentum, and, in fact, the Ketashura has repeatedly said that the only thing they're willing to talk with us about is how quickly all foreign forces will leave -- is the fact that the Taliban and the various groups are quite fractured. There are very many actors. There is Hakani, Hekmatyar, but it's not even obvious that in the Afghan Taliban, the Ketashura is, in fact, now the stronger -- perhaps the dominant voice, but it's questionable to what extent they can

control the various aspects of the group.

This might be bad for negotiations, strategic-level negotiations, but it might also present opportunities for engaging with at least some elements and bringing them out.

And I think that's something that should be pursued. It's worthwhile pursuing, but it should not be confused with hiring them in the same way that we hired some of the sons of Iraq who have defected from the Iraqi insurgency.

MR. GORDON: Ashraf?

DR. GHANI: Yes, thank you. First, let's go back slightly to history. Why is it that between 2002 and 2005, there were no suicides, there was no revolt, there was no insurgency?

And it is because the rank and file of people who identified with the Taliban actually hoped that good governance would prevail.

It is the failure of the international community in terms of the partnerships that it developed -- get a first-hand description from Sarah Chase regarding what happened in Qatar, regarding the type of decisions that drove people towards insurgency.

Afghanistan was viewed as a country of warlords, and the accommodation that was arrived at was with the warlords. The policymakers in this country did not read, did not understand, did not appreciate who constitutes the Afghans.

So that's the first lesson.

The ordinary Afghans vote with their minds and with their

feelings. If their trust is not retained, you are not going to establish trust.

Two, this is an Afghan problem. It's not a Pashtun problem. What province in the north or the center has become a model of good governance?

So, if people in Helmat are asked what lay off their arms, what would they look to? Towards Bamyan? Towards Dikundi? Towards Batrice?

We have to come to an understanding that northern Afghanistan is the calm before the storm. A total focus on the south at the expense of the country, again, is going to backfire. We need to have an Afghan-wide strategy that is coherent and developmental, so we can say how are we dealing with this.

Three, there's a lot of mythology that is circulating around the Pashtuns. And we really need to be acquiring a bit more humility regarding reading the past history from translation of colonial documents.

The 13 Pashtun provinces today have no governance. There are no judges. Why are Taliban and preventing in certain areas? Because they're providing a cheaper justice. And we need to understand this fundamental issue that the choice -- that the government is not the agents of good governance in Afghanistan.

What is the predictor of a PRTs' approach? Who the colonel is and who the governor is. There is no coherent approach to how these PRTs are functioning in Afghanistan. That's the negative side.

The positive is associational life is thriving. The number of

women's associations in Host, the heart of Pashtun territory just across from Waziristan is unbelievable.

There are 30 journals that are being published in Host alone. Pashto is having a renaissance that it has not witnessed in the last 400 years. The capability to articulate a vision -- evil are coming together, articulating. It's these voices that need to be appreciated as important.

Who defines the agenda? Because if a reading takes place from Washington that there is the Taliban and the Taliban are equal to Pashtun, then we are getting to one equation.

But if you are coming to a wider appreciation of who the other stakeholders are that are immersed in the (inaudible) that is significant.

The issue of negotiation has to be a national approach. And without winning the rank and file, no negotiation is going to succeed. Why? Because of the youth, particularly in the last six months, have taken to becoming gangsters.

They are neither obeying Lalmat nor Halkani, nor anybody else. And if we think that a negotiated process is going to end the violence today, I don't think so.

So the law and order problem is a larger problem that we still need to have an approach. Because of this, it really matters, as Ambassador Brahimi so wisely again said, what is the terrain, what is the objective in terms of which we want to proceed? Because it is once that objective is defined, then that an entire series of consequences follows

from that objective, both regarding how to realize that and what outcomes.

And here, again, one point again. I'm delighted Marvin picked -- agreed with the same point: implementation.

In Afghanistan, often the international unity has gone towards the most difficult possible way of eating food. Instead of bringing it straight to the mouth, we circle it three times around, because of the slicing. You know, every dollar that is allocated by Washington goes through a salami slicing that on the ground it becomes $.20 and now $.10 of it is security. We need to come to a different approach to be able to -- and in that regard, I'm -- in 2004, Ambassador Brahimi would recall, I was very pessimistic.

We had achieved a lot, but I warned, as did the Ambassador, regarding the obstacles that were there.

Today, on the contrary, I'm optimistic despite all these difficulties, because the fundamental issues that the ordinary Afghans know exactly how to judge the situation. They want lives that are stable.

If one group of people around the world are tired of violence and want a sense of order, if the Afghans. In the past, the ordinary Afghans were a block to reformist efforts. Today, it's the governance system that is enough to go to the realization of our aspiration. So if we can connect, bottom-up, and bring the process top-down to bring coherence, I think the goal of stabilization can be achieved.

But again, one has to be realistic. Within three years, you could gain control of 60 percent of the territory of Afghanistan and reverse

the direction. Be clear as to what is the objective and what is the resource and what's the time requirement of that. Then one can really arrive at an understanding of how to do it.

MR. GORDON: Briefly, Marvin?

MR. WEINBAUM: Yes, very briefly. When the Taliban were defeated, or I should say were evicted from Afghanistan, many people who had sympathized them and had appreciated the fact that they brought a large measure of order and stability to the country rejected them primarily for the reason that after 25 years, then, of fighting, they were looking for recovery. They had concluded that the Taliban could not bring them this.

And when, after 9/11 and the military action against the Taliban and Al Qaeda, they saw the international community arriving with what was conceived to be its largess for the country, and a new government which would bring at least some order, but especially improve people's lives. This won them over.

The failure now to keep faith with these people in a post-Taliban dividend in terms of improving their lives has really been, I think, as much as anything at the heart of especially where we find ourselves in the south and in the east, and that is we failed to deliver. The government failed to deliver.

So, along with bringing about better order, ending criminality, the fact is that we also have to be concerned with the hardship that the people are facing now. And unless we can address this, no government is

going to be able to succeed for very long.

MR. GORDON: Thanks. I have a long list of things I would like to pursue, but I can see that you do as well. And I don't want to deprive you of the opportunity to do so.

So let me suggest that we do turn to the audience now. A microphone will arrive to you. And I will ask that you -- we'll start in the third row -- that you introduce yourself and be specific with your question, and will gather through four questions before we turn back to the panel.

MS. DALOGLU: Thank you so much. This is Tulin Daloglu with the Washington Times.

My question is to Ambassador Brahimi. Thank you so much for the thoughtful presentation. You have categorically described the failure of the international community, in particular the United States and NATO.

But I'm curious to know how do you see U.N. as playing its role in Afghanistan? Would you also say that the U.N. has a specific approach in dealing with the matters in Afghanistan or not? Thank you.

MR. GORDON: Thank you. The second person -- (inaudible) a couple of rows back.

MR. MALIK: Thanks. Hyder Malik. I'm a fellow at Joint Special Operations University. The distinguished panel did a great job highlighting the main failures, policy failures of the past, what went wrong. I'm just interested in what went right, if anything did -- policies, strategies that could be continued. Thank you.

MR. GORDON: Thank you. And then in the back, just in front of that camera, the gentleman who's standing up. Yeah.

MR. QUINLAN: Excuse me. Kevin Quinlan from the Royal United Services Institute.

Several of you mentioned the problems with counter-narcotics strategy. And I was curious if you could -- if I could ask you to say a little more about that. What do you think a coherent strategy would entail, and if you could say something about the tensions that exist between counter-insurgency, and counter-narcotics strategy and how to resolve it?

MR. GORDON: I don't want to overburden, but let's take a couple of more. The gentleman in the blue tie.

MR. AMIR: My name is Amir. I'm from Pakistani University.

MR. BRAHIMI: No, closer. Closer to your mouth.

MR. AMIR: Yes. A solution of a problem always depends upon the correct analysis. This should be only correct but complete. It's a buzzword, the flavor of Washington that Pakistan is behind the turmoil in Afghanistan. Do the people know Pakistan's concerns about infiltration from Kumar Province, Uzbek, Chechnya, and Arabs -- is it by default or by design?

The analysts in Washington are they aware of Pakistan's concerns and strategic (inaudible)) by inclusion of other regional forces in Afghanistan? Pakistan is being lectured to reduce its forces from conventional to expeditionary. I mean, such lecture doesn't take into

account the strategic threats it is facing today? Do the people realize the sentiments of Pakistan, the concern about the turmoil in Balujistan and Fata and an array of Indian consulates in (inaudible)?

The question is whether people really sincere in addressing these concerns before evolving a solution?

MR. GORDON: Thank you. That's a big and important question, so maybe we'll come to the panel to take whichever ones you like, and we'll just do it in the order of the speakers.

Ambassador Brahimi? And I'll come back one more time for another round.

MR. BRAHIMI: I'm a little bit biased about the U.N. But I think that the U.N. has a lot to offer. And, in my view, the future strategy has got to give a very, very important role to the United Nations, because the United Nations brings that, you know, added ingredient of international legitimacy. And that is needed in Afghanistan.

The U.N. has certainly discredited itself in many ways, in Afghanistan and elsewhere, but, if I may say so, perhaps a little less than others.

And I think that any new strategy should help the United Nations to regain some of that legitimacy and be used.

My dream, when I spoke about the fact that Enduring Freedom was a mistake, my dream would be a U.N. mission with very strong support from the United States, because there is absolutely no contradiction between the aims of the United States and the United

Nations in a country like Afghanistan.

There are differences in Iraq, but not in Afghanistan. And if we can have the two sides work together better than they did in the past, I think that will help a great deal.

DR. GHANI: First, to express absolute appreciation for the political role of the U.N. Not only Ambassador Brahimi, but when Sean Arnault succeeded Ambassador Brahimi, they were very, very big shoes to fill. He did a very credible job.

The U.N. politically is indispensable, because you cannot have international legitimacy without the U.N. And this is the critical difference. The pairing of Iraq and Afghanistan has to be broken.

Iraq was an act of war of choice by this government, carried unilaterally. Afghanistan was an act of international legitimacy.

And the ambassador was critical in getting the judgment of the General Assembly. There wasn't any opposition. So that phase of legitimacy is to be appreciated.

I have practically no use for U.N. agencies. And the Ambassador --

MR. BRAHIMI: I remember that.

DR. GHANI: -- has been aware of my views. $2.6 billion is gone. Not a single account has been given to the Afghan people. This is not what we expect from the United Nations.

They have to be model of transparency and accountability. But having said this, the United States is not invested in the U.N. for close

to two decades. This new administration has an opportunity to invest in the U.N. properly. The U.N. requires an investment, a massive investment to make it relevant, because ultimately when all the global issues come, they have to come back through the U.N.

So it is important to differentiate failures and the need that it fulfills. You will not get an agreement on the charter today.

And it is one of the key legacies of mid-20th-century accomplishment that is to be built upon, rather than destroyed.

On the question of accomplishments, national programs, a series of very successful programs were launched. One of these is called National Solidarity. We managed to provide block grants of $10,000 to $60,000 to Afghan villages. Over 96 percent of the Afghan villages have been covered by this program.

And the effectiveness -- it's been evaluated left, right, and center -- compared to all others is remarkable. Until very recently, the Taliban did not attack them. And actually there are stories when they were asking that the program be fast extended to their village as part of their discussions, because it gives the decision rights to the people and said, you decided your priorities. These are the mechanisms of cooperation.

Telecom, again. We went from 100 mobile phones now 7.5 million by proper award of contracts. The national army is another example where the militia was de-mobilized very successfully. That model was not taken to police.

So there are a lot of these examples. The reason I'm saying there's grounds for hope is that each time the needs and aspirations of the Afghan people have been addressed through a rule of law approach and through an approach of real partnership and transferring of decision rights, it has succeeded.

Second, on the narcotics. The first issue is to begin with trade. You have to go from a dollar a day to four to five dollars a day of income. That's when the threshold is crossed.

Without getting to four to five dollars a day, the labor will be there. I brought it to your attention that 65 percent of the country is under 25. Unemployment within this group is 40 to 60 percent.

That is the reserve army, both for violence at large and for the narcotics. So job creation becomes the key in here. The role of Europe in particular is really important.

Market access. European markets have to open up to Afghanistan. And you have to begin from market access and work the value chains down to the ground. Northern Afghanistan is simply goat, but it's gone back 40 years.

There are no major investment approaches. The second component is, of course, naming and shaming. It's only newspapers that have made allegations. What is a credible mechanism of establishing of who is participating? And this, let's understand it, is a global network. It's not Afghans that are getting the heroin to London or to San Francisco now. It is a global criminal network.

What is a strategy for containing these global criminal networks? Afghanistan has no comparative advantage in producing poppy if poppy were legal in OECD countries. Arizona, thank you very much, will compete very well with Afghanistan.

So the problem has been created from your policies, because it's a middle-class habit that the political establishment in your countries is not willing to confront.

If that is the constraint, then we need to come to an approach that truly dismantles the global networks and brings about a set of measures that we can deal with this issue with the level of detail that it requires.

Last observation: one percent of territory of Afghanistan is producing all the heroin, so just legalizing -- and Afghanistan is buying the crops -- is not a feasible approach, because that, you know, has been tried in Turkey and in Pakistan and the data -- they were much, much smaller. We need to have a really coherent approach to this. And that then will enable us both to tackle the problem of corruption within the government and the problem of the financial basis of the insurgency.

MR. GORDON: Thank you. Vanda?

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Oh, let me add a few remarks to the question of narcotics and maybe touch on India and the role of India in Pakistan and the regional issues

What if your narcotics -- is narcotics is (inaudiblein terms of governance and having a very large legal economy. It’s inaudible)) is far

larger than we have seen elsewhere in countries that are caught in the grips of illegal economies, a legal drug economy and insurgency.

The other issue is how this counter-narcotics policy relates to counter-insurgency.

And more and more, as we are frustrated with the growth of the Taliban insurgency, we are focusing on the fact that the Taliban is so immensely profiting from the drug trade. This is a correct observation, but it does not necessarily apply then that the conclusion should be that we destroy the legal economy in order to bankrupt than to see the Taliban.

And more and more, various analysts are pointing to that. They frequently (inaudible) Colombia as a model where this has worked. I don't think that's a correct reading of what has happened in Colombia. But I am certain that it would be very counter-productive in Afghanistan. But, yes, it is true that the Taliban is making money on the drug trade. But it is equally true that so is a very large segment of the population.

And consequently, massive eradication that doesn't take into account the local conditions, the fundamental dependence of many segments of the population on opium will only antagonize those people from the national government, from the local governments, and easily push them into the hands of the Taliban.

In many areas of the south, increasingly the east, the Taliban is precisely mobilizing on a strategy that offers to provide protection of the fields against eradication, which is not to say that no eradication should or can take place, but it needs to be carefully measured

by asking whether there are resources available for legal livelihoods, whether there's on-farm income in agriculture, where there are significant opportunities, or off-farm income.

Finally, I want to just highlight something that Ashraf said. The drug trade is a global trade. And we have been sometimes successful in suppressing in particular areas. But we have been spectacularly unsuccessful in suppressing it on the global level. The trade simply shifts elsewhere.

And unless we address demand -- and it's not simply demand in the West. It's increasingly demand in Pakistan, Iran, Brazil. These are very robust secondary markets that now absorb a large amount of illegal drugs, whether cocaine or opiates, for use worldwide -- you will not be successful.

And when we simply focus on quick fixes, like massive eradication, we simply shift the problem elsewhere.

And one area where we could easily shift it is Pakistan, the border areas, Fata, Nuristan Province.

After all, the drug trade, poppy cultivation was very robust there in the 1980s. Is this something that we want to do?

So I don't think we can escape from addressing the court, which is demand.

On India, and you're concerned that Pakistan is singled out. And I think it's important to realize that the Taliban insurgency is now internally sustainable in Afghanistan. At the same time, the safe havens in

Pakistan cannot be diminished.

But in my talk, I tried to argue that many of the jihadist groups there now threaten Pakistan itself. And Pakistan needs to come to the realization -- Pakistani people, Pakistani government -- that these groups are a threat to it, and need to be dealt with.

And, yes, the regional framework is important, whether over Kashmir and the tensions with India, and we need to make sure that regional actors don't play a pernicious role. At the same time, I don't think it's realistic to expect that regional actors will deny their own legitimate interests. There are good reasons why India should have robust trade relations with Afghanistan.

Pakistan should not be threatened into thinking of those as a threat and inevitably. But that's why it's important to establish a regional framework that will accommodate the critical interests of all players.

MR. GORDON: Yeah. Ambassador Brahimi has a brief comment on Pakistan, and then I'm going to give Marvin what will have to be the last word, because our speakers have other obligations. But first a point on Pakistan.

MR. BRAHIMI: Well, just to say that you're absolutely right, that Pakistan has both interests and concerns. And it is the fate of Afghanistan that if Pakistan decides that there should be no peace in Afghanistan, then there will be no peace in Afghanistan.

Pakistan has always played a very important role and will continue to play an important role. But I think our Pakistani friends have

got to accept that they have tried to play God, and that it hasn't worked very well for them or for Afghanistan.

I don't think that it is a secret or that it is denied by anybody that the Taliban, after they were routed in Afghanistan, went to Qweta and other places, and that they were given a lot of help and support and encouragement. This is a fact.

That Pakistan is worried about what India does in Afghanistan, I think that is understandable and partly at least justified. That is why it is terribly important that the -- in the regional framework, India and Pakistan have got to talk to each other and others to address the problems in Afghanistan and also now the problems that are spilling over into Pakistan and India.

MR. GORDON: Thanks. Marvin, a final word?

MR. WEINBAUM: One of the questions had to do with what are we doing right. I assume that the questioner was referring to American policy. It's a tough one, given everything we've said.

But at the moment at least, I think the very fact that we are leading a refocusing of the international community on this part of the world is an enormous contribution. It's obviously been long overdue, to recognize the significance of what's happening in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the region.

With respect to Pakistan, I think our one greatest accomplishment in recent years has been to prevent conflict between India and Pakistan. Certainly, in 2002, I think we were instrumental in

avoiding what could have been a catastrophic military exchange.

Also, I think that we ought to be -- belatedly take some credit here now for supporting democracy in Pakistan. It's very important now, and I think we're seeing it now that we recognize that Pakistan be given another opportunity and supported another opportunity to pursue a democratic route.

This is still in process obviously.

With respect to Afghanistan, I know everyone points to more schools, more health clinics. This is very real, and we don't want to, in any way, diminish the importance of this.

Our objective in Afghanistan when we first went there in 2001 was not regime change, at least not initially. It was to get rid of Al Qaeda, to capture bin Laden, and so on.

But what we did in the process was to provide Afghanistan with some opportunities that it would not have under the Taliban, a chance now not only to recover from many years of conflict, but also an opportunity here now to get another chance to govern itself and to realize the aspirations of its people after so many years of being in a state of conflict.

That remains the case. That opportunity, the one that Ashraf is reasonably optimistic about, still is there. We can’t lose heart that it's not only in their best interests that the international community be there to help them in the ways that are best suited for them, but it's in our interests obviously. We cannot allow now this part of the world to -- we can't lose

sight of it, and we can't allow it again to go back to the conditions that existed some 10 years ago.

MR. GORDON: On that relatively optimistic note, let me thank you all for coming and for staying, and let me ask you to join me in thanking our speakers for their really terrific presentations. To be continued.

(APPLAUSE)

MR. BRAHIMI: Thank you very much.

MR. GORDON: Thank you.

DR. GHANI: Thanks.

MR. GORDON: Great. Thanks very much.

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