

منتدى أمريكا والعالم الإسلامي

U.S.-ISLAMIC WORLD FORUM

DOHA, QATAR

Fragile States: Shared Challenges to Ensuring Regional Stability

The Doha Network
February 15, 2010

On February 15, the U.S.-Islamic World Forum hosted a public session entitled “Fragile States: Shared Challenges to Ensuring Regional Stability.” Moderated by Ken Pollack, Director of the Saban Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution, it featured three experts on nations with weak institutions in the Muslim World.



Ambassador Holbrooke converses with Ambassador Indyk (all photos by Ralph Alswang)

First, Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan at the State Department, spoke of what he sees as the urgent necessity for the United States to make and fulfill a long-term commitment to the development of Afghanistan. He likened what the United States is trying to do now to the American interventions in Bosnia and Kosovo in the 1990s, and was hopeful that similar success can be made in Afghanistan – but noted that after the expulsion of the Soviet military from Afghanistan in 1989, the United States ignored the need to focus on



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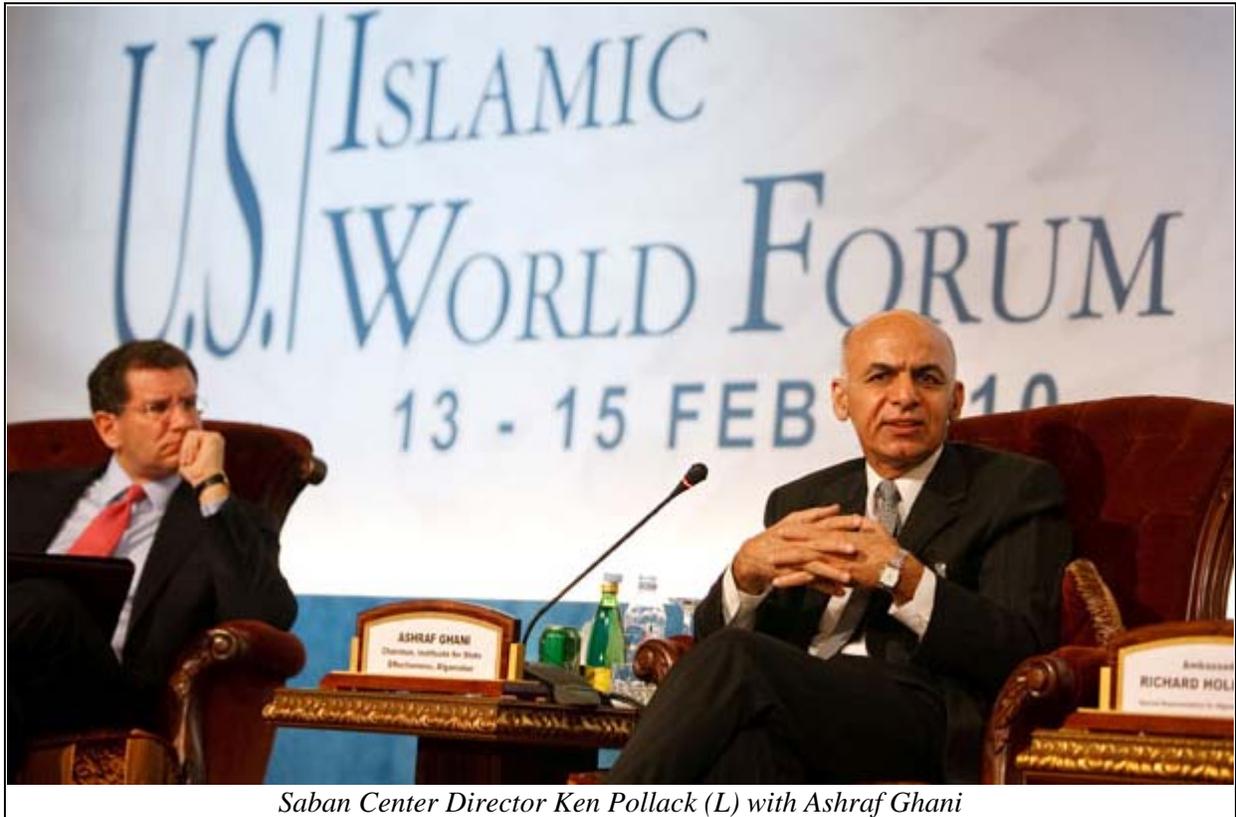
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institution-building. “Our civilian programs must be long-standing,” Holbrooke said. “We can't repeat the disastrous mistake of 1989.”



Saban Center Director Ken Pollack (L) with Ashraf Ghani

Ashraf Ghani, former Afghan presidential candidate, former finance minister, and current chairman of the Institute for State Effectiveness in Afghanistan, spoke next, praising President Obama and his rhetoric of a just war in Afghanistan followed by a just peace from his Nobel Peace Prize speech. He said that Obama's commitment to this war, in the face of a hostile political climate and looming congressional elections, is nothing short of courageous. On failed states in general, Ghani said that the traditional notion of effective sovereignty being defined by a monopoly of legitimate force within a set of geographical boundaries is obsolete in the 21st Century; rather, a nation will have no stability if the needs of its people for such principles as human rights and women's rights are not addressed – stability, he emphasized, cannot be attained by force alone. On Islam, he spoke of the history of the classical Islamic era, which he called a tolerant and worldly society whose values have been rejected by the “insecure” extremists who engage in violence in Islam's name today. “I am proud to be Muslim because I speak of a religion that has no insecurity, but those who speak from terror speak out of insecurity,” Ghani said. “We must reclaim Islam for the global

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ideology it is.”

Asha Haji Elmi, Chairperson of Save Somali Women and Children, also spoke on the panel, saying that the security needed in Somalia is not one so much one on a grand scale, but a simple security for people to live their daily lives. “The security that I'm talking about is not the traditional security; it is the human security, security that will permit the Somali mothers to go and buy their food from the market, that will allow the Somali children to go to school, that will allow the community to go and worship in the mosques,” she said. “The security that I am talking about is that basic human security.”



Asha Haji Elmi