

**PERSPECTIVES ON RECONCILIATION
OPTIONS IN AFGHANISTAN**

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

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PERSPECTIVES ON RECONCILIATION OPTIONS IN AFGHANISTAN

TUESDAY, JULY 27, 2010

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:38 a.m., in room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. John F. Kerry (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senators Kerry, Cardin, Casey, Shaheen, Kaufman, Lugar, Corker, Isakson, Barrasso, and Wicker.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD G. LUGAR, U.S. SENATOR FROM INDIANA

Senator LUGAR [presiding]. The hearing will be called to order. The chairman will be here in a short while, but he has asked me to initiate the hearing, and we're delighted to have our distinguished witnesses and an enormous amount of interest in our topic this morning. I will initiate the hearing with my opening statement and then if the chairman arrives at that point he will follow, and then we'll have testimony by our witnesses.

I join Chairman Kerry in welcoming our witnesses, including Ryan Crocker, our former Ambassador to Iraq and Pakistan, and chargé in Kabul who reopened our long-dormant mission there in January 2002. His practical experience in the region and leadership in the implementation of complex civil-military policy in conflict areas is invaluable, especially as we discuss the necessity for a political resolution in Afghanistan.

While recognizing the valuable perspectives of all of our panelists in understanding the elements and dynamics of reconciliation and reintegration of belligerents in conflict-prone environments, we must acknowledge that the voice of Afghans themselves is missing. Our panel brings considerable Iraq experience with them, but all realize the situations are substantially different, beginning with the poor economic state of Afghanistan and its very limited institutional capacity.

Donors cannot remake Afghanistan through the near-term influx of billions in aid. The classified documents released this weekend, if they are deemed credible, attest to the special difficulties involved.

On the heels of last week's Kabul conference, the ninth international conference in Afghanistan since 2001, this hearing provides an opportunity to discuss a topic that received little attention at that conference—namely the prospect and means for reconcili-

ation in Afghanistan. This is a highly sensitive and complex undertaking.

I, for one, am interested in the degree to which our administration believes that reconciliation should be intrinsic to our objectives in Afghanistan. As I noted at our last hearing, with finite resources we must identify those roles and those missions that are indispensable to achieving our objectives and those that are not. If reconciliation is indispensable, we must resource it properly and provide focused high-level leadership to the task.

As Ambassador Holbrooke stated at our last hearing, some \$100 million has been allocated through the \$1 billion Commander's Emergency Response Program, or C-E-R-P, for General Petraeus to employ in assisting with Afghanistan's reconciliation plan. Specific additional resources, including from the Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund, must be identified and judiciously employed, rather than attempting wholesale Afghan political and economic redevelopment.

Unfortunately, much of the reconciliation program is still undetermined beyond the vague three-phase process suggested by President Karzai last week. At this moment, the effort appears to be left to the Afghan President, whose approach has been criticized as too narrow following his June Consultative Peace Jirga.

An interesting contradiction exists in that the international community has shown little confidence in almost every area of Afghan governance—except the entire reconciliation program. Reconciliation and reintegration will have to embody the will of the population that must absorb it, rather than the political elites alone. A narrow agreement will be unstable. It will require recognition that the component elements of the conflict are more than just the Taliban and its factions. They include neighbors and their proxies, terror groups and their allies, tribal and clan antagonists, ongoing local turf battles, as well as criminal networks and newly enriched brokers who prefer the opportunities afforded by the status quo.

This Kabul conference followed a familiar pattern, with prominent international officials descending on a beleaguered host country to hear its officials' claim a renewed commitment to productive development and a broad unifying effort. This conference was another appeal to a drifting international community to press for the outcome, at any cost, of a developed and modern Afghanistan, rather than aim toward a political resolution among a host of competing actors.

Beyond international press coverage, little headway was made in confronting the Taliban or al-Qaeda; winning over reconcilable insurgents; gaining ground on criminal and terror networks in Afghanistan and neighboring Pakistan provinces; or battling the endemic corruption that hobbles stabilization and development efforts in Afghanistan.

While donors in Kabul agreed to funnel more of their assistance through host government channels, their "steadfast commitments and support" for this effort clearly remains contingent upon significant improvements in existing Afghan governance and institutional capacity. As Secretary Clinton stated, "Our progress in the months and years ahead will largely depend on the people and the Government of Afghanistan."

I welcome President Karzai's statement that he intends to refocus international assistance efforts, "on a limited number of national programs and projects to transform the lives of (our) people, reinforce the social compact between state and citizens, and create mechanisms of mutual accountability between the state and (our) international partners."

We look forward to learning the specifics of these programs and concentrating international efforts on achievable objectives. One such critical objective is the fair conduct of the parliamentary elections scheduled for September. Success in this endeavor, and in others, is vital if the Afghanistan Government is to gain the confidence and trust of Afghans, their partners, and potential reconcilables.

I look forward very much to our panel's discussion of these and other issues concerning Afghanistan.

At this juncture, in the absence of Senator Kerry, I've been instructed to proceed with the witnesses. This is a genuine honor and pleasure. The order in which the witnesses have been listed in our program today is: first of all, the Honorable Ryan Crocker, dean and executive professor, George Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M University; Ms. Zainab Salbi, founder and CEO of Women for Women International; and finally, Dr. David Kilcullen, nonresident senior fellow, Center for a New American Security in Washington, DC.

If you will please proceed, Ambassador Crocker, we would appreciate your testimony.

STATEMENT OF HON. RYAN C. CROCKER, DEAN AND EXECUTIVE PROFESSOR, GEORGE BUSH SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC SERVICE, TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY, COLLEGE STATION, TX

Ambassador CROCKER. Thank you, Senator Lugar, members of the committee. It's an honor to be here before you today. The topic of this hearing is reconciliation, but reconciliation is something that must be considered in a larger context. I had the privilege of testifying before this committee last fall when the administration was reviewing its policy toward Afghanistan. At that time I said that we faced a determined strategic enemy in al-Qaeda and its Taliban supporters, an enemy who seeks to outlast us and regain the operational space they used to plan the 9/11 attacks.

The administration wisely decided to step forward in Afghanistan and deny our enemies a fresh opportunity to shift the war from their territory to ours. We have said that our core goal in Afghanistan and Pakistan is to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al-Qaeda. I agree. But in my view, this requires denying them a secure operating environment, and that means a successful counterinsurgency campaign in Afghanistan and Pakistan. We will not prevail over our adversaries any other way. That requires time and patience, commodities generally in short supply among Americans.

General Petraeus and I used to talk about the difference between the Washington clock and the Baghdad clock. Now it's between the Washington clock and the tribal areas in Pakistan and Afghanistan, where there are no clocks. We have a history in that region.

In the 1980s we were deeply engaged in Afghanistan and Pakistan fighting the Soviet occupation. We were successful. But once the Soviets withdrew, we also disengaged, even though we could foresee the violence that would wrack Afghanistan as the various factions of the mujahideen, united only by a Soviet enemy, tore the country apart. We also withdrew from Pakistan, which went from being the most allied of America's allies to the most sanctioned of adversaries in the space of a year.

Our lack of strategic patience at the beginning of the 1990s paved the way to 9/11 a decade later. Both our allies and our adversaries in the region remember that history. Our friends are unsure of our commitment and hedge their bets. Our enemies think they can outlast us. We need to make it clear to both that our determination is equal to theirs.

With respect to reconciliation, General Petraeus and I said repeatedly when we were in Iraq that you can't kill your way out of an insurgency. The internationally resourced integration program is an important initiative, as was President Karzai's Consultative Peace Jirga. At the same time, our experience in Iraq demonstrated that in order to take apart an insurgency you need to change your enemy's calculations. Reconciliation and reintegration become possible on a large scale when insurgents no longer are so sure they're winning. That was one of the critical results of the surge in Iraq, as it must be in Afghanistan. You simply don't get cracks and fissures in a rock until you bring a hammer down on it.

Another lesson I learned in Iraq is the importance of being prepared to talk to anyone who is ready to talk without limiting ourselves through an elaborate set of preconditions. We talked to a host of extremely unpleasant people in Iraq. Some switched sides. Some simply dropped out of the fight. Others could be used to create dissension within the insurgency. In the end, there will be a certain number of the enemy who will have to be killed or captured. Our goal has to be to make that number as small as possible.

Again, successful reconciliation and reintegration in my view can only occur within a successful counterinsurgency. There are many moving parts. It must be Afghan-led and that means we have to find a way to work productively with President Karzai. We have to work with the Pakistan that has confidence in us as a long-term strategic partner and in whom we have confidence. And here I would note that the Kerry-Lugar-Berman legislation has been a critical step in that direction. And Pakistan and Afghanistan have to be able to work together. There are also, as you noted, Senator Lugar, other regional and international dimensions of a very complex process.

None of this will be quick or easy. The problems we confront in both Pakistan and Afghanistan have been decades in the making and some of the responsibility for those problems is ours because of our inconsistency and lack of strategic patience in the past.

Since 9/11 I believe we have followed a consistent policy of engagement in Pakistan and Afghanistan, but impatience is on the rise again in this country. Before we give way to it, we owe ourselves a serious consideration of the alternatives. The road to 9/11 shows us what happens when we decide disengagement is better

than engagement. That is what our adversaries are counting on now and what our allies fear.

There are other alternatives being advanced in search of the quick, cheap fix. There isn't one. A successful counterterror strategy and successful reconciliation can only rest in my view on a successful counterinsurgency, and this will be a long, hard fight. But the consequences of abandoning that fight could be far more costly.

And we have to be honest with ourselves over the grim consequences for Afghans, especially women and minorities, if we once again leave the field to Islamic militants. We would be held responsible for those consequences.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Crocker follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF RYAN C. CROCKER, DEAN AND EXECUTIVE PROFESSOR, GEORGE BUSH SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC SERVICE, TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY, COLLEGE STATION, TX

Mr. Chairman, Senator Lugar, members of the committee, thank you for the honor of appearing before you today. I had the privilege of testifying before this committee last fall, when the administration was reviewing its policy toward Afghanistan. At that time, I said that we faced a determined strategic enemy in al-Qaeda and its Taliban supporters, an enemy who seeks to outlast us and regain the operational space they used to plan the 9/11 attacks. The administration wisely decided to step forward in Afghanistan and deny our enemies a fresh opportunity to shift the war from their territory back to ours. We have said that our core goal in Afghanistan and Pakistan is to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al-Qaeda. I agree. In my view, this requires denying them a secure operating environment, and that means a successful counterinsurgency campaign in Afghanistan and Pakistan. We will not prevail over our adversaries any other way. And that requires time and patience, commodities generally in short supply among Americans. General Petraeus and I used to talk about the difference between the Washington clock and the Baghdad clock. Now it's between the Washington clock and the tribal areas in Pakistan and Afghanistan where there are no clocks.

We have a history in that region. In the 1980s, we were deeply engaged in Afghanistan and Pakistan, fighting the Soviet occupation. We were successful. Once the Soviets withdrew, we also disengaged even though we could foresee the violence that would wrack Afghanistan as the various factions of the mujahiddin, united only by the Soviet enemy, tore the country apart. We also withdrew from Pakistan which went from being the most allied of America's allies to the most sanctioned of adversaries in the space of a year. Our lack of strategic patience at the beginning of the 1990s paved the way to 9/11 a decade later. Both our allies and our adversaries in the region remember that history. Our friends are unsure of our commitment and hedge their bets; our enemies think they can outlast us. We need to make it clear to both that our determination is equal to theirs.

It is a long war, Mr. Chairman, fought on multiple fronts; there are no shortcuts or easy fixes. In Iraq, more than 7 years on, it's still the beginning of the story where regional adversaries and enemies inside Iraq hope to outlast us. In Lebanon, our ill-considered engagement and swift disengagement more than a quarter of a century ago left a legacy we struggle with today in the form of Hezbollah. I am a veteran of both those campaigns, as well as service in Pakistan and Afghanistan. I offer a few thoughts on our current challenges based on those experiences.

Support Your Allies: When I arrived in Kabul in January 2002 to reopen the U.S. Embassy, Hamid Karzai had been chairman of the Afghan Interim Authority for about 10 days. In those early months I worked with him as he wrestled with issues from the design of the Afghan flag to preparations for the first post-liberation Loya Jirga. Eight and a half years later, he is still doing what may be the roughest job in the world. We need to work with him, not against him. Only our common enemies can benefit from public controversy, and I am pleased to see that the tenor of our partnership is much improved. This does not mean we will agree on everything—far from it. Nor did we with Prime Minister al-Maliki in Iraq. But it does mean remembering that we are on the same side in a tough fight. It also doesn't mean backing only the central authority in Afghanistan, at the expense of local governance initiatives. We can and must do both, as we did in Iraq. Our goal, in coordination with our national and local partners, is not a shining city on a hill, but what

Afghanistan scholar Clare Lockhart calls “good enough governance”—a government that can meet the basic needs of its citizens and over time insure their security.

Reintegration and Reconciliation: Commenting on Iraq, General Petraeus and I both said repeatedly that you can’t kill your way out of an insurgency. The internationally resourced reintegration program is an important initiative, as was President Karzai’s Consultative Peace Jirga. At the same time, our experience in Iraq demonstrated that in order to take apart an insurgency, you need to change your enemy’s calculations. Reconciliation and reintegration become possible on a large scale when insurgents no longer feel they are winning. That was one of the critical results of the surge in Iraq, as it must be in Afghanistan. You don’t get cracks and fissures in a rock until you bring a hammer down on it. Another lesson I learned in Iraq is the importance of being prepared to talk to anyone who is ready to talk to us without limiting ourselves through an elaborate set of preconditions. We talked to a host of extremely unpleasant people in Iraq. Some switched sides. Some simply dropped out of the fight. Others could be used to create dissension within the insurgency. In the end, there will be a certain number of the enemy who will have to be killed or captured. Our goal has to be to make that number as small as possible.

Structuring the Future: I am pleased that the administration is committed to negotiating a Strategic Partnership with Afghanistan. I hope this will be a process similar to the Strategic Framework Agreement that we negotiated with Iraq—a comprehensive understanding on all aspects of a bilateral relationship with a long-term ally. The agreement with Iraq covers cooperation in diplomacy, trade, economics, education, science, and technology. Both nations have a sense of where the relationship is going and what the value is of going forward. In Iraq, we are moving from a predominantly security-based relationship to a long-term, multifaceted strategic partnership. We are some ways away from that in Afghanistan, but I believe that it is time now for the Afghan people to see that the U.S. commitment is long term with strong incentives for a return to normalcy.

The International Dimension: The Kabul Conference has just concluded a historic gathering of Foreign Ministers from around the world. The international dimension is a key element in Afghanistan’s long-term stability and development, and it is important to continue to institutionalize and consolidate this support. Other mechanisms such as the Six Plus Two and the Geneva Group should be explored, not least because of the presence of both the U.S. and Iran in both of these forums.

The role of the United Nations is extremely important. The Special Representative of the Secretary General in Afghanistan, Steffan de Mistura, is doing excellent work on behalf of the international community. He also can be highly effective in an expanded regional role, working with Iraq’s neighbors, including Iran, to formulate and implement understandings that support stability in Afghanistan.

Unity of Effort: Our system does not provide for unity of command among military and civilians, but we must have unity of effort. General Petraeus and I worked very hard to achieve this in Iraq. It is equally critical in Afghanistan. Simply put, we cannot win the big war if we are fighting small ones among ourselves. It is already clear to me that Ambassador Eikenberry and General Petraeus are working to forge that unity of effort between themselves and their staffs.

Pakistan: Mr. Chairman, we cannot bring Afghanistan to a better place without a long-term, strategic relationship with Pakistan. There are about as many Pashtuns in Pakistan as there are Afghans of all ethnicities in Afghanistan. The tribal areas of Pakistan have never been under central authority—not that of Alexander the Great, the Moghuls, the British Raj or of Pakistan since 1948. The need for sustained and systematic development in those areas and throughout Pakistan is critical. The Pakistani state and the Pakistani people need to see that the United States is a reliable ally in the country’s long-term economic and social development as well as in the war on terror. That is why the legislation you sponsored, Mr. Chairman, in coordination with Senator Lugar and Chairman Berman, is so important. Our \$7.5 billion commitment to Pakistan over 5 years is a powerful signal that after the turbulence of the past, the United States is a reliable and committed partner. At the same time, we have to be careful not to overcondition our assistance. Congress and the American people have the right to demand accountability, but too much conditionality evokes memories of the Pressler amendment in Pakistan and can be counterproductive to our efforts to develop a sense of strategic partnership.

Our policy of engagement with Pakistan is not new. It began after 9/11 based on a calculation of our vital national security interests that remains valid today. The Bush administration restarted significant economic and security assistance, suspended for more than a decade because of sanctions. During my tenure as Ambassador from 2004 to 2007, we established what was then the largest government-financed Fulbright program in the world—funded by both the U.S. and Pakistani

governments. In the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), the United States began constructing schools in 2002, the first many children in the area had ever seen. And the massive, U.S.-led earthquake relief effort in 2005–06 was the largest and longest airborne humanitarian mission since the Berlin Airlift.

In 2006, we began a substantial, multiyear commitment to comprehensive development in the FATA. You have built considerably on these initiatives, Mr. Chairman. And yet there is much unfinished business. Over 5 years ago as Ambassador to Pakistan, I put forward a proposal for the establishment of Reconstruction Opportunity Zones (ROZs) in the Northwest Frontier and Baluchistan from which manufactured goods would have preferential entry into U.S. markets. Implementing legislation still has not been passed by Congress. We need to act now in defense of our own strategic interest in the economic development of these regions, and we need to include textiles.

Partnership, of course, is a two-way street, and we have the right to expect cooperation from Pakistan. They need to do more against a common enemy. And we need to understand that the best way to achieve that is through quiet dialogue and not public remonstrations. Ultimately, this comes down to a judgment as to whether the United States and Pakistan share the same basic goals. Based on my experience in Pakistan, I believe we do, although we differ on tactics and timelines. I know many of Pakistan's civilian and military leaders, and I believe we share a common vision. The extension of General Kiyani as Chief of Army Staff for an additional 3 years is a positive development in view of the strong working relationship Admiral Mullen and General Petraeus have forged with him.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, there is the critical relationship between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Just as the United States must find common strategic ground with our partners in both countries, they must find it with each other. This is something we worked very hard on during my time as Ambassador. There is a dialogue between Kabul and Islamabad, and the signing of the Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement was a historic step forward. I hope we will continue to help both of our allies build on this achievement and overcome a legacy of mistrust and suspicion that dates back to the founding of the Pakistani state more than 60 years ago.

Mr. Chairman, none of this will be quick or easy. The problems we confront in both Pakistan and Afghanistan have been decades in the making, and some of the responsibility for those problems is ours because of our inconsistency and lack of strategic patience in the past. Since 9/11, I believe we have followed a consistent policy of engagement in Pakistan and Afghanistan. But impatience is on the rise again in this country. Before we give way to it, we owe ourselves and our people a serious consideration of the alternatives. The road to 9/11 shows us what happens when we decide disengagement is better than engagement. That is what our adversaries are counting on now, and what our allies fear. There are other alternatives being advanced, in search of the quick, cheap fix. There isn't one. A successful counterterrorism strategy can only rest on a successful counterinsurgency, and this will be a long, hard fight. But consequences of abandoning that fight could be far more costly, and we have to be honest with ourselves about the grim consequences for Afghans, especially women, if we once again leave the field to Islamic militants. The human rights abuses would be appalling, and we would be responsible for those consequences.

Mr. Chairman, we have our best people forward in this fight—Ambassador Eikenberry and General Petraeus in Afghanistan and Ambassador Patterson in Pakistan. Before contemplating dramatically different courses of action, I hope this committee will ask to hear the views of the men and women in the field, as it did of General Petraeus and me on Iraq a few years ago.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN F. KERRY,
U.S. SENATOR FROM MASSACHUSETTS**

The CHAIRMAN [presiding]. Thank you very much, Mr. Ambassador, and I apologize to you and the committee for being a little late. I came in from Boston this morning and with the best intentions landed, I thought on time. But unfortunately there was a funeral procession at Arlington and then we got slowed up. I apologize to all for being a little late.

If I could just—I would like to make a few opening comments and then we'll proceed with each of the other witnesses if I can. Let me begin just by thanking you for coming today to talk to the

committee. I think you can see from the membership that's here today, obviously an important issue to the country and to the Congress, and there are a lot of questions, which is entirely appropriate.

Today's hearing is really to try to focus on the issue of reconciliation and see what role that might play in achieving a political solution in the end. I think we have a very thoughtful panel to consider those issues.

I might just comment that this is the 12th hearing of the committee on Afghanistan in the past 18 months, and it reflects our recognition of the critical role that this issue plays, the unbelievable expense of our human treasure, our sons and daughters who are there, and the monetary cost, obviously, is also enormous.

I want to just say a couple words about the leaked documents relating to Afghanistan and Pakistan yesterday. I think it's important not to overhype or get excessively excited about the meaning of those documents. Certainly, to those of us who lived through the Pentagon Papers in a different period there is no relationship whatsoever to that event or to those documents. In fact, these documents in many cases reflect a very different pattern of involvement by the U.S. Government from that period of time.

For all of us, the release of any classified information—I think this needs to be stated—is unacceptable. It breaks the law and, equally importantly, it potentially compromises the efforts of our troops in the field and has the potential of putting people in harm's way. These documents appear to be primarily raw intelligence reports from the field, and as such anybody who's dealt with those kinds of reports knows some of them are completely dismissable, some of them are completely unreliable, some of them are very reliable. But raw intelligence needs to be processed properly, and generally by people who have a context within which to put it. So I think people need to be very careful in evaluating what they do read there.

I also want to emphasize, the events covered in those documents almost without exception, I think perhaps even without exception, occurred before last December, when the President announced a new Afghanistan strategy clearly designed to address some of the very issues that are raised by those documents.

Obviously, in many cases many of us have raised the issues in those documents with the Pakistanis, with the Afghans, and I'll say a word more about that in a moment. All of us, however, are concerned that, after nearly 9 years of war, more than 1,000 American casualties, and billions of U.S. taxpayer dollars, the Taliban appear to be as strong as they have been. And to successfully reverse that trend, it is going to be very important for us to be able to depend on our partners in Afghanistan and in Pakistan.

That's why the most disturbing thing that was reiterated in those documents and with greater color than is usually given it are the allegations about ties between extremists and Pakistan's intelligence agency. These are not new allegations. It's important for everybody to understand that. We have been wrestling with these allegations, and we have made some progress. General Kiyani, General Pasha, and others have been over here. We've had a number of meetings. We've been over there. This is not a revelation of

a topic. This is something we have been dealing with and many people believe are making some progress, particularly when measured against the offensives that the Pakistanis themselves have taken in Swat, in South Waziristan, elsewhere, with great political difficulty and at great risk to themselves.

Now, I've joined a lot of top administration officials in raising these very concerns with the Pakistan leaders and in making the point again and again that the battle against the extremists is in the interests of Pakistan as well as the United States. I think that when those extremists crossed over the Indus River last year, that became apparent to Islamabad and to the rest of Pakistan. I think the people have now recognized that the threat posed by home-grown extremists and their government and military have responded.

We're here this morning to discuss a key aspect of how we stay together with our allies and move forward in a most effective way. The question before the committee and before the country is what role does reconciliation play in reaching a political solution that allows our troops to leave Afghanistan consistent with our core national security interests.

It is inescapable that if Afghanistan were simply to tumble into anarchy or to fall as an existing government and the Taliban were to return, there's no question in any quarter of our intelligence or national security community that the consequence of that would be to give a free rein and even some exultation to al-Qaeda. It would certainly provide a greater ability to organize.

The question for us is, What does it take to prevent that from happening? Does it require the full measure of what we are doing today? Could something different do it? That's really I think the most important question for all of us to be examining.

As we do, I'm convinced personally that Pakistan remains as central as we have said it is over the course of the last months and perhaps holds the key even to resolving this, because it will not be resolved on the battlefield. So we have to figure out which insurgent groups can be part of a reconciliation process, what are the appropriate conditions, how would they be enforced? Is the time correct for approaching this? Who would be in charge of those negotiations, the Karzai government, the United States, United Nations? What is the role of Pakistan in that reconciliation process? None of these are easy questions to answer, but I assure you, and I think the panel will agree, they are critical to any outcome.

In the past, the United States has supported reintegration in Afghanistan aimed at winning over low-level insurgency commanders and fighters. We have not yet supported the broader concept of reconciliation, which would involve talks with leaders of the insurgency. There are those who say this is not the time to talk. Some of them argue that we have to weaken the Taliban militarily so that they come to the bargaining table willing to cut a deal. Others contend that we should start reconciliation negotiations now, while we still have the time to exert military pressure.

This is the first congressional hearing that I know of that is dedicated to this issue of reconciliation. It comes at a timely moment. Last week representatives from 65 countries gathered in Kabul for a conference to debate security, development, and reconciliation.

This conference was a good step forward in showing the world that Afghanistan wants to run its own affairs. But many steps need to be taken by the Afghan Government national coalition to make this a reality.

During the Kabul conference, President Karzai repeated his commitment that any dialogue with insurgents is contingent on their willingness to accept the Afghan Constitution and renounce al-Qaeda. Secretary of State Clinton went further, stressing that any peace deal with the Taliban cannot come at the expense of women and civil society.

Reconciliation must also address the anxieties of Afghanistan's minorities, the Tajiks, Hazaras, Uzbeks, who fear being left out of a Pashtun-only deal. And Pashtuns too must also feel included in the process. Any reconciliation agreement is going to have to be genuinely national, not the precursor to another civil war.

You can see the complexity. This is a major diplomatic negotiating lift, and any talks are also going to have to take into account the interests of regional players—Iran, Saudi Arabia, China, Russia, and perhaps most importantly, Pakistan and India.

Any successful political solution is going to have to take into account the power struggles that are under way in the region and the very real concerns of Afghanistan's neighbors. There is going to be a necessary recognition that there are actors other than the Quetta Shura Taliban that have to be considered in that process. Chief among them are the insurgent groups led by Jalaludin Haqqani and Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, both of which are continuing to target U.S. forces in Afghanistan.

So today, to help us search for these answers we have Ambassador Ryan Crocker, familiar with both Afghanistan and the challenges of quelling an insurgency through diplomacy. He was the first U.S. chargé in Kabul after September 11 and Ambassador to Pakistan, and he was the U.S. Ambassador in Baghdad when the tide turned in favor of stability there. So we welcome you back, Ambassador.

And David Kilcullen is a former Australian Army officer and an expert in counterinsurgency who helped engineer the Sons of Iraq program, also known as the Sunni Awakening, when he was on the civilian staff of General Petraeus. He's also familiar with the challenges that General Petraeus and our civilian leaders face in Afghanistan today.

Zainab Salbi is the founder and CEO of Women for Women International, a grassroots humanitarian and development organization. She's been a leading voice on civilian security in Afghanistan.

A final comment I'd make as we go back to our panel is, I really believe that, given the amount of space we're trying to operate in in Afghanistan and the numbers of troops we have, even allied together, there are just some inherent limits, which the Taliban have come to understand better perhaps than others. Clearly, we have to operate within this political reality. I can't say it enough times. I believe Pakistan is perhaps more critical to the outcome of what happens in Afghanistan than what happens in many cases in Afghanistan itself. I think that remains true today.

Who is next? I don't know who's going to go?

Ms. Salbi.

**STATEMENT OF ZAINAB SALBI, FOUNDER AND CEO, WOMEN
FOR WOMEN INTERNATIONAL WASHINGTON, DC**

Ms. SALBI. Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, it's an honor and a privilege to be in your company here.

I'd actually like to start my comments with Pakistan, because I would argue, I would urge you to reconsider the role of Pakistan as not necessarily the only available partner for the United States. I actually would argue that we would consider other Muslim-dominated countries, such as Turkey, that is playing a major leadership role in the Muslim world, and to create a coalition with Turkey's leadership among Muslim-dominated countries, such as Indonesia and Malaysia, which provides alternatives, viable alternatives, to the views of Islam and the practice and implementation of Islam within an Islamic context.

I would actually argue that Turkey and some of these other countries—and you can include Saudi Arabia, but I would not give the leadership to Saudi Arabia; I would give the leadership to the ones who are really playing leadership in the Muslim world, which is Turkey at the moment, leadership to build a coalition, and for the United States and the international community to support that coalition and have that coalition be the one that is moderating the discussion between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

I think we change the players, we have different views, we have more moderate views that are not tied to Pakistani or Afghans' views of Islam, because there are definitely a lot of variables and versions of Islam that we should consider for the Afghanistan region.

So that's for me my first urge, to consider changing the players or adding new dynamics to the game or to the discussion vis-a-vis Pakistan. If you believe that Pakistan is the only viable alternative to lead the partnership with the United States, then there are a few things to be considered. One is Pakistan needs to be held accountable for their treatment of, or their views of, Afghanistan. You have to understand there's a bad history out there and there's a lot of suspicion and lack of trust between Afghans and Pakistanis. So that's one.

There's also a history of not same, equal treatment. Pakistan cannot tolerate and may not tolerate the treatment of women in Afghanistan in one way, in ways that I think everyone knows historically; yet in its own country, women are running for elections and are Prime Ministers. So there has to be a consistency in Pakistan's treatment of Afghanistan and their own vision and treatment of Afghan politics and society.

Within that framework, if we are to talk with the Taliban and engage them in negotiations and discussions and reconciliation with the Taliban, then there are a few things that I would urge you to consider. One, there isn't such a sense of one Taliban. Within what's framed as there's one Taliban, there's actually a lot of factions, as you know, and a lot of militias. Some of them are incredibly extremist and should not be talked with, and some of them are interested and want to be engaged in a discussion.

Mr. Chairman, you mentioned Julaladin Haqqani. I think his atrocities against so many civilians and United States officials and the Afghan Government should not be allowed—it closes the door

for discussion with him. Mullah Omar, on the other hand, has a lot of actually members that are moderates, that are interested in getting jobs and stabilizing their lives and yes, there is a lot of alternatives to have discussions with them. We should consider talking with the moderate members within that faction of Taliban.

I guess the message here is that there is not one Taliban; there are lots of different Talibans and we need to distinguish the definitions with them, and how the societies and, most importantly, Afghan society is seeing them.

There are a few options that have been discussed that I'd like to comment on. One is the division of the country. I think this is—my summary is it leads to civil war. If we are dividing the country to protect the minorities in the country, then the minorities are distributed among the whole country. We will go back to colonial history that is very vibrant and very alive in a lot of the third world countries, particularly Afghanistan, and I think would not leave a good legacy for America vis-a-vis our history with Afghanistan.

If we are talking about arming militias, then I would warn of not repeating the same mistake that the United States did in the 1980s with arming the militias, that led to a lot of the civil war in Afghanistan and a lot of the militias.

So we should engage in reconciliation, distinguish who are the members we can engage with, the phases in which we can engage with, but dividing the country or arming militias I would say are things that should be out of the question for the viability of alternatives, available alternatives for Afghanistan.

Last but not least, and I will stop with this point, is I know that there are issues that are considered—women and minorities—that may be considered a soft issue. I also know the treatments of women in Afghanistan and minorities have been one of the reasons in which the United States claimed why it's going to war with Afghanistan. We cannot abandon that. We cannot abandon that for U.S. credibility and leadership in the international community.

Abandoning that does not mean simply the protection of women and minorities such as the Hazaras, the Uzbeks, and the Tajiks, but it's their inclusion in the negotiating table in serious and real ways. They are the ones who are most impacted, first of all. They provide information that may not be provided by political elites in Afghanistan. And they are the ones who have the most interest in protecting whatever peace agreement there is for their own personal security.

I look at what's happening to women in Afghanistan as not a women's issue, as not some marginal issue that happens to Muslim women. I look at it as actually an indicator for the direction of that country. The first acts of violence that the Taliban have committed were against women, and for years the international community tolerated it. We all said it's Islam, it's Taliban, it's their culture. Eventually that violence went to all Afghan men and children and women, and eventually I would argue it came and hit the United States itself and it impacted the whole international political arena.

We need to see women, what happens to women, the violence that happens and the treatment of women, as an indicator for the

direction of the society, as a bellwether that tells us much more about national security than we may have considered in the past.

Last but not least—and I am originally from Iraq, so I have a lot of the Iraq background in here—at the end of the day, the legacy is not a military one, it’s a civilian one. Whatever solution has to be presented at the table must be impacted by the civilian population and felt and seen very immediate. This is yet to happen in Afghanistan. There is far more discussion and resource allocations focused on military solutions, far less on the civilian solutions. Unless we win the hearts and minds of the civilian population, both in their inclusion in the discussions and the reconciliation as well as in the investment in them in more serious ways than it has been, I don’t see how we can have a viable alternative for peace and stability in Afghanistan.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Salbi follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ZAINAB SALBI, FOUNDER AND CEO, WOMEN FOR WOMEN INTERNATIONAL, WASHINGTON, DC

First of all I’d like to extend my deepest thanks to Chairman Kerry and Ranking Member Lugar for the opportunity to provide testimony on the critical issue with which the committee concerns itself today. The title of today’s hearing, “Perspectives on Reconciliation Options in Afghanistan,” reminds us that we are here together to explore all options. Some of these options may be from voices in Afghanistan who may not have been heard, and whose views may shed light on viable alternatives for Afghanistan that may not have been considered in the past.

It has been my experience that women, civilians at the grassroots level, and those who are the most politically and economically excluded are impacted the most directly by the consequences of high-level policies and are therefore the ones who present viable and tangible propositions for sustainable solutions. I hope that I manage to represent these voices with the most accuracy and integrity for the utmost benefit of this discussion.

So, what are the options for reconciliation in today’s Afghanistan? America considers this question at a time when it has incurred great expense in terms of human and financial resources. It is looking for an exit strategy; the question is what compromises we have to make as we leave. So as we consider Afghanistan’s reconciliation options we also consider this in the context of the impending American departure from Afghanistan.

Of course we do not want to make any compromises for America’s security, so we will not allow the Taliban to come back with al-Qaeda to Afghanistan. But that is about the only national security concern we have identified to date. No one is discussing how to protect the rights of the minorities or women, because that is not a major security concern for the major powers. Now that is not inevitable—it doesn’t have to be. Women’s rights are indicators for the direction of the society. Violation, extremism is often first visible when it is directed against women. The Taliban started their oppression and violence with women, but we didn’t intervene until their violence manifested itself on our soil September 11 of 2001.

Hence we cannot afford to compromise on women’s rights in Afghanistan. We need to see what is happening to women as not a marginal issue but as a national issue that is telling about the direction for the society, as an indicator of our success or failure to achieve stability in a country and a region of great strategic importance. Women’s rights in Afghanistan is an issue of national security. Perhaps not in the short term, but it is definitely in the long run, as we saw that September morning almost 9 years ago.

Bearing this in mind, I invite you to consider the importance of the perspective of grassroots people—women, ethnic minorities, the poor—as we debate the issue of reconciliation today. We know the importance of the people’s perspective: America’s Founding Fathers established this country with the words “We the people.” I’d like to use my time here today to bring you the perspective of the Afghan people, the “real” Afghans, like my colleague Sweeta Noori and the more than 23,000 Afghan women I have worked with since 2002. Today I bring you their recommendations, based on decades of lived experience witnessing the coming and going of a number of political leaders and foreign powers these many years, based on the survival of

the violence and instability associated with decades of war. The Afghan people have managed to preserve the hope of Afghanistan's future, and it is to them that I encourage you to look as you determine the best course for their country and our own.

The guiding question that should frame our discussion on the issue of reconciliation is one that is as yet unanswered: "With whom are we reconciling?" This is a point that has yet to be defined in any meaningful way. The Karzai government has euphemized the Taliban as "angry brothers" who must agree to renounce violence, uphold the constitution and renounce al-Qaeda in order to participate in reconciliation. Here in Washington, the United States Government uses the term "Taliban," but this is an opaque and misunderstood generalization, one that lumps together as one many distinct groups that each have associated nuances and challenges for reconciliation. Allow me to elaborate on some of the complexities within this group called Taliban:

1. First, there are the followers of Jalaludin Haqani. These are the hardliners, fundamentalist Taliban, who are purely tribal in identity and associated with the ISI in Pakistan. They have killed members of the government, as well as thousands of people from other tribes. Haqani is a war criminal who uses Islam to fight the Government of Afghanistan, the United States and NATO. He is not only dangerous—he's, to use a word Ambassador Holbrooke has used, an "irreconcilable." If reconciliation were offered to this faction, the other tribes—principally the Uzbeks and the Tajiks of the North—would remember his brutality would revolt. Reconciling with this level of criminal no matter what pledge might be made to uphold the constitution or renounce violence—would spell tribal war in Afghanistan.

2. Second, there are the followers of Mullah Omar. There are two camps in this group: the moderate Taliban with no relation to al-Qaeda, Afghans who are for the most part willing to accept women's rights, democratic governance, and abide by established preconditions. All they require to make this transition is the guarantee of job and the safety to live their lives. Also within this group there are the fundamentalists who do have links to al-Qaeda. These are also irreconcilables.

3. Finally you have the followers of Gulbadin Hekmatyar. He is incredibly powerful, and a number of people from his party have posts in the Karzai government, all the way up to the level of minister. Hekmatyar is only interested in one thing: power. Within this camp, there are some who want power enough to accept democracy, human rights, and other preconditions so long as they exist in an Islamic government. But then there are others within his party who would be considered fundamentalists and who would not accept these conditions, who are irreconcilables.

What lesson should we take away from these three distinct sides of a complex triangle of Taliban? That we should disabuse ourselves of the notion that there is one Taliban, and hence move forward very carefully. As within any group, there are moderates and there are fundamentalists. Within the Taliban, there are indeed some people who are fed up with fighting, and all they want is the guarantee that in a new government they will be able to live their lives peacefully, able to enjoy having a job and security. If the Afghan Government, the U.S. Government, or NATO can provide this, they will reconcile. There have already been talks with these Taliban, but these talks are stalled because no one—not the Afghan Government, nor the U.S., nor NATO—could give them this guarantee.

On the other end of the spectrum, fundamentalists are fighting for an idea, not for any strategic or economic reason. They will keep fighting for that idea forever if they must. They will not accept preconditions. We have made much in the U.S., last month, of Afghanistan becoming the longest war in American history, surpassing Vietnam. Military leaders as high as General Petraeus have said there is not a military solution in Afghanistan. For these fighters, this is true, because there is no war that is long enough to outlast an idea.

Because of this, the talks must happen. All wars end in talks. Not having reconciliation discussions is regarded by some as an option. But I do not see that as an option, because without talks this war will never end.

I must admit, it is not easy for me as a women's rights advocate to recommend that reconciliation talks must take place. The Taliban were and still are notorious for extreme mistreatment of women in all areas they have touched, from public beatings to the imprisonment in the home to the fear of going to work, to school, and to move about without a male escort to the public executions for crimes of "honor." The human rights violations of women and other ethnic minorities such as the Uzbeks, the Hazaras, the Tajiks—who faced similar mistreatment to that of women—is inexcusable, unforgettable, and should never be tolerated. I think we all recall the great sadness with which the world watched the Taliban explode the sixth century Buddhas in the Hazara community for being un-Islamic. This hatred of the "other" extended arbitrarily to numerous groups. There were killings just for being the wrong tribe.

The question is how one can reconcile between severe oppression imposed on ethnic minorities and women in Afghanistan and between the need to take all steps possible to end the war and create peace and stability in the country. Thus the how we do this becomes equally relevant and important as what we need to do for reconciliation in Afghanistan.

I propose an arrangement that honors those ideals while framing them in a context of our shared reality of loss, oppression, and exclusion, using that common experience to sketch a common future where these crimes never take place again. This is the common experience of real Afghans, and it must be strongly represented at any negotiating table that takes up the task of determining the future of Afghanistan. No solution will be accepted and embraced by the larger society if it repeats the same power structures and the same players that led to the destructions and oppression of the country. Thus, we must ensure societal acceptance of the process that transcends beyond the political elite of Kabul and into the rest of the country. We must craft a participatory approach that has the buy-in of those at the grassroots level (for, after all, it is people at the grassroots who will be the critical group in upholding any agreement, informing on its violations and will be most impacted by its consequences). Let us ensure that these peace negotiations are truly representative talks that include all members of the society, and not the same old power structure.

Full and meaningful inclusion of women in this process is one proven method of achieving this kind of representative dialogue that adequately reflects the concerns of the country's citizens. Women have insight on the practical implications of high-level policies and negotiations. They know the intricate patchwork that is the daily lives of communities at the grassroots level in ways that may not be reflected when only talking with political elite. The richness of their perspective has a definite impact on the content of negotiation and the nature of any agreement. For instance, a 2009 survey Women for Women International conducted in Afghanistan found that survey respondents considered that political instability and incompetence of politicians were the biggest political problems they faced at both the national and local levels, followed by corruption. Taliban presence was third in order of importance. This finding points to not only women's interest in negotiating peace with all Afghans, including Taliban, but also reflects popular distrust of processes that are purely managed by the government.

Records from the peace negotiations experience of other countries also shows that that when women are more included in peace negotiation and peace maintenance, there is a higher chance of those agreements having real impact. Women must be included at the negotiating table in no less than 30 percent representation, following U.N. Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. This is a chance for the U.S. to take the lead in creating model negotiations that are representative, inclusive, and address the role of women in contributing to and upholding peace negotiations for lasting impact.

Similarly, ethnic minorities such as the Uzbeks, Tajiks, and Hazaras must also be represented. Their contributions to the discussion and buy-in to the results are critical for the longevity of whatever peace is agreed. Their voices also bring a balance of power and other elements to the discussion that can not be insured in talks that are exclusively Taliban-Afghan Government.

Changing the dynamics of negotiation with the inclusion of women and ethnic minorities can give an upper hand to the U.S. and Afghan Government in ensuring accountability, credibility, and sustainability of whatever agreement is ultimately negotiated. It is time that these perspectives be taken in serious consideration, beyond symbolic representation of women's voices and into real, equal, and respected representation that reflects the importance of their role vis-a-vis keeping hope and building prosperity and sustainable solutions in Afghan Society.

It is apparent that reconciliation will proceed, with or without the United States. What is key is that the U.S. play a leadership role in ensuring that the process is representative, constructive, and that it operates effectively, within clearly defined parameters or "redlines," without sacrificing our American ideals of democracy, human rights, rule of law, justice and equality for all.

How do we do this? The U.S. can support reconciliation, but it must do so the right way. And the right way requires a great deal of prudence and courage. The U.S. must enter into this debate with its sense of history and commitment to its core values close at hand. It must draw clear redlines around the scenarios in which it will support reconciliation, and be prepared to back them up with clear consequences if those boundaries are crossed.

I invite you to envision the following scenarios:

1. Clear boundaries are not defined around who is eligible for reconciliation, which leads to false reconciliation with the “irreconcilables.” This is the scenario in which hardliners like Haqani are brought into government, which as I explored earlier would result in civil war. Afghanistan is a decentralized country where people outside the capital have seen that the government cannot protect them and have hence turned to local tribes for protection. In this scenario, the central government would be incapacitated by infighting between representatives of warring tribes. Without sounding too alarmist, I warn you that this option could lead to tribal war. At last week’s Kabul Conference, Karzai proposed empowering local militias. Please don’t misunderstand—“local militias” are “tribal” militias. Empowering local militias is empowering opposing tribes that already do not get along and now have an elevated means of disagreeing—through more violence. As students of history, we remember that this was tried once in Afghanistan, with the decision to empower the Dostum militia under the Najib government, 20 years ago. Najib empowered this militia and it ultimately used its new power to wage war against him. Empowering local militias means civil war.

It is important to recognize that if there had been a vetting process to answer that important question of “with whom shall we reconcile?”—if there had been women and many tribes at the table, they would have been able to distinguish between the reconcilable and the irreconcilables. But without appropriate vetting, without a clear understanding of our answer to our guiding question, it does not work.

Bottom line: The U.S. leaves, blanket reconciliation with no relevant vetting mechanism causes Afghanistan to descend into tribal war, and the country remains a regional and international security threat. Whatever the outcome of this peace reconciliation, it’s sure not to be peace.

2. A second option that has been increasingly discussed in the media and even in some influential political circles in Washington is the approach of “de facto separation”—that is, forgoing reconciliation and essentially ceding the south to the Taliban and concentrating U.S. efforts at promoting peace and development in the North, dividing Afghanistan into two. From the Afghan perspective, this is not an option, as the society is not as neatly laid out as this scenario would have it. In the North there are some Pashtuns, in addition to the Tajiks and Uzbeks. In the south there are some Tajiks and Uzbeks, in addition to the Pashtuns. Afghanistan is a multiethnic society and attempting to divide it into two perfectly separate parts is impossible. This would only spark infighting within each of the parts, leaving neither part happy nor stable, not to mention what would happen to human rights of minorities like women and ethnic minorities.

Bottom line: The U.S. makes things worse than they were to begin with. In an attempt to salvage the North by sacrificing the South the U.S. will lose both, with strong potential for civil war.

3. Bring the moderates to the table through an appropriate vetting mechanism, but without effective enforcement of the redlines. This is an improvement, which doesn’t immediately ignite revolt, but it is still insufficient. With relevant preconditions for participation there is the opportunity for constructive talks, but it is important to note that these preconditions are insufficient in their current form: “renounce violence, renounce al-Qaeda, embrace the constitution” is not enough. We’ve seen the standing government trample the principles enshrined in the constitution; what reassurance do we have that the insurgents wouldn’t do the same? For instance:

- a. In February, national police were complicit in the public beating of two women.
- b. Not 1 month ago, a provincial governor publicly slaughtered a member of the national police.
- c. Last year, Karzai himself shunned the constitution when he signed into law a measure severely curtailing the rights of women of the Shia minority, prompting outcry at home and internationally.

All three cases indicate the level of seriousness with which members of the current government consider the tenets of the constitution. This is not democracy, it’s tuggery. It is the same sort of behavior for which we malign the Taliban. Given this apparent disrespect for the constitution, what assurances do we have that promises to renounce al-Qaeda would be given any more credence?

It is apparent that not only must our preconditions for reconciliation be expanded to include explicit language about the values we hold most dear and Secretary Clinton’s remarks at the Kabul Conference last week gave an excellent indication that women’s rights are among them—but additionally, it is clear that we must go one step further: we must back them up by tying our preconditions to firm enforcement mechanisms that we are prepared to exercise.

Bottom line: The U.S. leaves without ensuring appropriate enforcement mechanisms of its stated preconditions and only a cosmetic peace is achieved in the face of an established political culture of impunity for broken promises where the values of democracy and justice and the principles enshrined in the constitution are concerned. A corrupt regime presides over a population who has little faith in it, laying the foundation for future unrest.

4. The fourth scenario is the only viable option. In it, the U.S. supports reconciliation, but only through a clearly defined vetting process that is conducted by a representative sample of the Afghan population, according to established parameters around who is and is not eligible for reconciliation (these should eliminate from candidacy war criminals and individuals with a history of human and women's rights abuses, and all participants should explicitly pledge to uphold the rights of women, minorities, and all Afghans to enjoy social, economic, and political participation), tied to real enforcement mechanisms that will hold these pledges to account. This means setting a tone of gravity when drawing redlines by vowing, for example, to withdraw assistance if they are crossed. If the Afghan Government starts prohibiting girls from going to school or women from running for office; if rule of law is sacrificed for thug-style enforcement; if individuals are harassed or killed for being a minority, then the U.S. needs to be prepared to reinforce its standards with real consequences. Additionally, the U.S. must bear in mind the considerable challenges associated with this option—it will require considerable enforcement on the ground as well. In its current state, Afghanistan does not have the capacity to enforce these preconditions. The justice sector not only lacks the capacity to process the numerous human rights abuses and other legal infractions that exist, it is also considered the most corrupt by Afghans. There are few female lawyers, and the ones that do exist are threatened or attacked for doing their jobs. Given this ground zero of the justice sector, holding Afghanistan to stated standards is going to require America to help build the domestic capacity to carry them out. This is neither an easy nor a quick task, but it is essential to the success of reconciliation efforts.

This is a discussion of U.S. national interest and practical and moral leadership in Afghanistan today and in the future. This is about the creation of a U.S. legacy that changes the patterns of past experience in Afghanistan. We need not abandon women in thinking there are only two options: either Taliban or Wahhabi sufi action. We must consider as a real possibility that there is a third option available to Afghanistan, one that honors Muslim perspectives and that is consistent with Afghan culture, history, and religion. And this is where we can use to our advantage those Muslim-majority countries that have been allied with the U.S., whose interpretation of Islam and politics are consistent with international human rights standards.

If we must cut a deal with Pakistan, and we may have to, what we have to make it clear that Afghan women cannot have lesser rights than women in Pakistan. Pakistan may be given no leeway to getting away with promoting a regime that would perform human rights and women's rights violations of the sort that it would not be tolerated in Pakistan itself.

Second, the U.S. should consider working with other more moderate Muslim-majority countries than Pakistan, such as Turkey. Turkey is already building schools and contributing in troops in Afghanistan. Turkey provides a much better model for an Islamic solution for Afghanistan rather than does Pakistan. Turkish leadership would be critical in forming a coalition of Muslim-majority countries (such as Malaysia and Indonesia) to provide a solution for Afghanistan where protection of women and minorities is enshrined.

In sum, this is an issue about the American legacy in a region of geopolitical and strategic importance. It is about honoring the American ideals of justice, equality, democracy, and freedom, in a land where the institutions that would uphold these ideals are fledgling and under severe attack. It is about showing Americans, Afghans and the world what 9 years of war, of tremendous loss of life for Afghans and for American troops, of incredible expense, was intended to accomplish: the creation of a state that can and does honor and protect the rights of liberty and justice by the people and for the people. This can be achieved through a careful reconciliation process in which we are clear about our goals and our redlines, and where we look to leadership of internationally agreed human rights standards and model Muslim-majority countries to achieve an inclusive and sustainable peace that will be palatable to the people it most concerns: Afghans themselves. Let us not lose sight of that now.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.
Dr. Kilcullen.

STATEMENT OF DR. DAVID KILCULLEN, NONRESIDENT SENIOR FELLOW, CENTER FOR A NEW AMERICAN SECURITY, WASHINGTON, DC

Dr. KILCULLEN. Mr. Chairman, Senator Lugar, members of the committee, thank you for having me today to talk to you.

I'd like to back off a little bit from the detail of Afghanistan to start with, and then come back to the issue of Afghanistan from the standpoint of what the broader historical record of counter-insurgency tells us about how negotiations normally play out. There have been approximately 385 examples of insurgencies and civil wars since the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815. So that gives us a fairly substantial body of data to look at and to understand what the general patterns are.

I was personally involved in seven of those campaigns, including the war in Iraq, where I served under Ambassador Crocker's leadership in his embassy, and I just want to take a minute to acknowledge the outstanding leadership of both him and General Petraeus in Iraq in a situation that was in some ways rather similar to the situation in Afghanistan.

If you look at that big body of data—and the 385 examples are about 83 percent of total conflicts worldwide since the start of the 19th century—what you find is that the government usually wins in a counterinsurgency environment. In about 80 percent of cases, the insurgents lose and the government succeeds.

But if you look at the examples where the government wins, there are usually two factors present. First, the government is fighting in its own country; and second, it is willing to negotiate. And if you are fighting in your own country and you're willing to make a serious effort to negotiate on the underlying political factors that drive the insurgency, then you have an extremely good chance of success, around 80 percent.

If you're fighting in somebody else's country and you are not willing to negotiate, your chance of success is somewhere around 20 percent. I'm not saying that's how it will be in Afghanistan. I'm just saying that's what the data tends to suggest as the most probable outcome.

Since we're not fighting in our own country, the closest thing we can have to substitute for that is a viable local partner in the Afghan Government. So without a partner, without a negotiation plan, we don't have a very good chance of success. If we just negotiate but we don't have a viable partner, we also don't have a particularly good chance of success. We need both.

There are normally two patterns in which the negotiation process plays out at the end of an insurgency. The first one we may call the Good Friday model, after the Good Friday Accords which ended the war in Northern Ireland. The basic outline of that kind of negotiated solution is that the insurgent agrees to put the weapon down and rejoin the peaceful political process and no longer engage in violence, in return for a seat at the negotiating table and a role in that political process. So in the Good Friday Accords the IRA agreed to put their weapons out of reach, refrain from any future violence, and in return received a lot of recognition of their political leadership and seats at the table and literally in Parliament as part of that result.

That is one of the examples or one of the typical models. The other typical model is where a negotiation process results in a split in the enemy, where the government offers something to the insurgency which only some insurgents are willing to accept and others are not, and it results in a breakup of unity amongst the insurgents, which is probably a good result from the government's standpoint.

Again, there's an Irish example of this in 1920, when the British finished their war against the Irish and offered a solution which some members of the IRA accepted and others did not, and this resulted in the Irish civil war.

So there's nothing necessarily wrong with negotiating. The historical record makes it pretty clear that that's how you win these things. But you have to know what you're doing, what kind of solution are you looking for. Are you in the early stages of just trying to hive off small, perhaps less committed, elements from the enemy's group, or are you in the final stages of seeking some kind of grand bargain?

Most importantly, you must be negotiating from a position of strength. I want to echo what Ambassador Crocker said, that if we are not in a military position of strength, where the Taliban believe that they have more to gain from talking to us than from continuing to fight, it's very unlikely that we're going to get a solution that lasts.

But a position of strength isn't just a military position of strength. The corruption, the criminality, bad governance, bad behavior by Afghan Government officials also weakens our position, because we're asking people to make a deal with our local partner as well as with us. So anticorruption and reform to governance, human rights, the behavior of local officials, the court system, all those issues that may not necessarily seem to be directly related to reconciliation are actually critical in terms of getting ourselves into a strong position.

I'd like to allow plenty of time for commentary by members of the committee, but let me just finish with a couple of observations about the current situation. Many of you probably know Amrullah Saleh, the former head of the Afghan Intelligence Service. He and I were having a conversation about 2 years ago in Kabul during the time when two British officials were expelled for negotiating with the Taliban. Amrullah said to me: If you negotiate with the Taliban without us in the room, you reduce the Afghan Government to the level of a faction, and we can't tolerate that. I think the point that he was making is the Afghan Government needs to be part of any negotiation.

He also said to me last year: If you leave, we will keep fighting. I think in that conversation he was talking from the standpoint of Ahmad Shah Mahsoud former deputy head of intelligence, a significant Tajik leader, and a very important member of the Northern Alliance.

I want to echo what you said, Mr. Chairman, about the need to not forget the Northern Alliance in this negotiation process. If indeed we do get to the point where we're ready to make some kind of deal with the Pashtun Taliban, you can expect the Northern Alliance to get extremely uncomfortable and nervous about that proc-

ess. In fact, the way this campaign goes south, if it does, is not that the Taliban marches on Kabul and captures the capital city; it's that the Northern Alliance decides to go back to fighting the Taliban and we end up in a civil war, north-south ethnic civil war, which looks a lot like Iraq in 2006. I think that's the real concern here, that we need to ensure the Taliban are not the only people that are part of any future solution, but that also the ethnic groups, the Northern Alliance, the Parliament, the other major players, are part of that negotiation process.

I also want to echo what Ms. Zainab said about the importance of regional actors. I would include Iran in this process. It's uncomfortable and unpleasant to think about it, but if you talk to Afghans most of them will tell you that the Iranians have an extremely significant influence in a lot of the insurgency that's happening in the western part of the country, and I think it's almost a Gordian knot problem that we need to look at the Iranian role in both Iraq and Afghanistan before we can come to a solution here.

The other really important player in my view is the Chinese, who are already playing quite a positive role with the Pakistanis because of their extremely strong economic interest in the stability of Pakistan. I think that we do have significant common interests with the Chinese in this respect.

I would also agree that we should not be negotiating with the Haqqani network, although perhaps for a slightly different reason. I don't disagree that the human rights record of the Haqqani network is terrible, but I also think that they're not acting on their own initiative. If you negotiate with the organ grinder's monkey, you may as well negotiate with the organ grinder himself, and in the case of the Haqqani network I think there's someone who stands behind those people that needs to be involved in any negotiation.

A final, sort of cultural point, and I know many of you have been to Afghanistan, but Afghans have frequently said to me: We don't stop fighting when we start talking; we talk and fight at the same time. The Afghan way of war accommodates talking and fighting simultaneously. It's very, very common for Afghan community elders to call the Taliban at night after a big firefight and say: Hey, we kicked your ass today, or let's talk tomorrow.

That combination of talking and fighting is in fact normal. It's not how we do business. We fight, then we stop fighting, then we start talking. They do both at the same time, and I think we need to get our heads around the idea that fighting and talking are not necessarily opposites in the Afghan way of war.

So to summarize and defer to your questions, I think we do need to negotiate. There's nothing wrong with that. But we need to get ourselves in a position of strength both in governance terms and military terms before that becomes likely to result in a sustainable outcome. And we need to take into account the realities of the Afghan way of war in that process.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Kilcullen follows:]

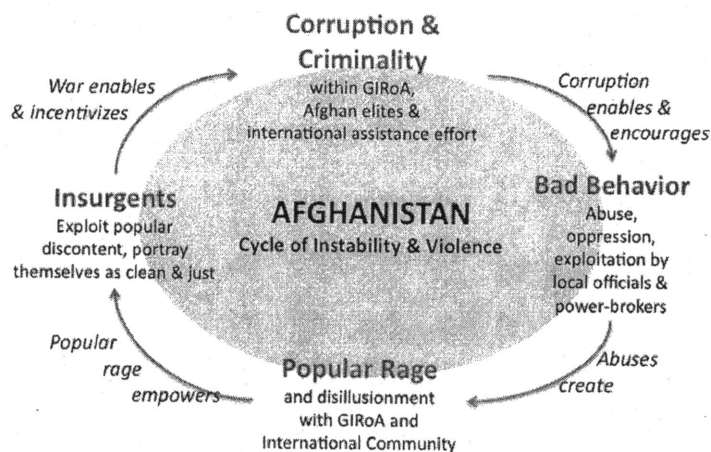
PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. DAVID J. KILCULLEN, NONRESIDENT SENIOR FELLOW,
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Mr. Chairman, Senator Lugar, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today on the situation in Afghanistan.

I would like to make a brief opening comment about three issues: the campaign in context, the current state of the campaign, and some new developments of relevance to the committee's consideration today.

THE AFGHAN CAMPAIGN IN CONTEXT

The first thing to realize about Afghanistan, in the context of counterinsurgency, is that it isn't one. To be sure, an insurgency is one component of our problem in Afghanistan today, and therefore a counterinsurgency response is one necessary component of our effort there. But the effort is much broader than counterinsurgency. In my opinion it is best understood as a stability operation: the insurgents matter primarily because they destabilize Afghanistan, and they are only one of several things that destabilize the country. Bad behavior by government officials, corruption and abuse by officials and by local power brokers as well as within the international aid effort, deliberate destabilization by Afghanistan's neighbors, and a thriving illicit drug trade are also critically important destabilizing factors.



If the Taliban were to disappear tomorrow, and these other issues were not addressed, then a new Taliban would emerge within months to take the place of the old, as the underlying drivers of conflict—corruption, abuse and foreign destabilization—would not have been addressed. This, in fact, has actually happened twice already in Afghanistan. The international community defeated the Taliban in 2001 and again in 2003–04 only to see the movement reinvigorate and spread once again. In my judgment, what is driving the conflict is a cycle of instability, which we could summarize as follows:

Afghanistan is experiencing a cycle of increasing instability and violence, with four key drivers:

- (1) Corruption and criminality in the government, societal elites and the international assistance effort, which enables and encourages;
- (2) Bad behavior by government officials and power brokers, which in turn creates;
- (3) Popular rage and disillusionment, which empowers the insurgency;
- (4) The war against the insurgents creates opportunities and incentives for corruption and criminality, driving the cycle onward.

Because this is a cycle, each element in the problem must be addressed concurrently, not in sequence. This implies that extremely strenuous efforts at government reform, countering corruption and improving accountability are, or should be, key components of the campaign, alongside efforts to counter the insurgency. The problem is not the insurgents alone, it is the instability they create, along with the other drivers of instability. We need to address that instability directly, if we ever hope to make the country stable enough so that we can leave without thereby destabilizing the broader region.

STATE OF THE CAMPAIGN

We are currently experiencing four major problems in Afghanistan, most of which are well-known and of long standing.

At the political level, our most critical problem is the credibility, viability, and legitimacy of the Afghan Government. In this form of warfare you are only as good as the government you are supporting, and this is a government which lacks credibility in the eyes of many Afghans, lacks legitimacy in the eyes of many in the international community, and therefore needs extremely substantial reform if it is to be a viable partner.

At the strategic level, the critical problem is the timeline—the anticipated July 2011 deadline to begin handing over control for security to the Afghan Government. This deadline makes every other problem a crisis, it prompts the Afghan population to sit on the fence because they believe we are leaving and they fear being targeted by the Taliban once we leave, it undermines confidence on the part of the Karzai government and so encourages disunity and the seeking of peace terms with the Taliban, it creates a fear of abandonment on the part of the Northern Alliance commanders which may encourage thoughts of civil war or secession, it encourages us to continue seeking short-term, quick-fix solutions, and it is deeply damaging to economic confidence.

At the operational level, the key problem is the continuing active safe haven in Pakistan for the Afghan Taliban. Unless this safe haven begins to be seriously addressed, the Taliban can survive tactical defeat in Afghanistan, retreat to their safe haven and await a favorable opportunity to return to the fight once we leave. At the tactical level, the key problem remains lack of resources: the lack of sufficient troop numbers (especially Afghan troop numbers) to provide permanent security presence to the bulk of the population, the lack of good-quality police, the lack of local civilian officials who are both competent and locally legitimate, lack of certain key military enablers and civilian specialists.

All these problems must be addressed as a matter of extreme urgency if we wish to turn the campaign around. All these problems, with the exception of the timeline, are longstanding issues in the campaign. And all these problems will require congressional leadership of a very high order.

RELEVANT NEW DEVELOPMENTS

I would like to conclude by drawing the committee's attention to certain new developments that may influence your deliberations.

First, at last week's Kabul conference, there was significant discussion of a 2014 timeline for the Afghan Government to assume complete security responsibility. I believe this is a positive development as it extends the timeline into somewhat more realistic territory—but the damage to Afghan public confidence created by last year's announcement of the July 2011 deadline will remain unless specifically addressed.

Second, the District Stabilization Framework now being pursued by USAID and the U.S. military represents a significant development—focusing on stability in its own right, at the local level, and applying a concerted effort to target sources of instability.

Third, the committee should note that the Afghan parliamentary elections are currently scheduled for 18 September 2010, with approximately 2,500 candidates running (roughly 405 of them women). Candidates are already experiencing intimidation and targeted killing from the Taliban, and from corrupt power brokers—this is an important inflection point in the campaign, especially in the light of last year's disputed Presidential elections, and thus getting it right is extremely important. This will require resources and strong pressure for accountability and security.

Fourth, although civilian casualties remain a very troubling aspect of any counterinsurgency campaign, the committee should note that significant progress was made in some aspects of this problem under General McChrystal's leadership. In the 12 months to June 2010, 94 Afghan civilians were killed in coalition airstrikes, compared to 226 in the preceding 12 months. Several thousand innocent civilians were killed by the Taliban in the same period.

Finally, the committee may wish to consider the issue of negotiations with certain key leadership elements of the insurgency. There is nothing necessarily wrong with talking to the enemy as such—most successful counterinsurgencies end in a negotiated solution, after all—but it is critically important that we talk from a position of strength, and I do not believe we are in such a position of strength, given the problems in the campaign that I already outlined. A focus on reconciliation/reintegration at the local level, as distinct from a “grand bargain” with Taliban leadership, is more appropriate at this stage.

CONCLUSION

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to comment on this complex and vexing set of issues. I wish you well in your deliberations, and am happy to discuss any aspect of my testimony in more detail as needed.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much. Thank you, all of you, for your interesting testimony.

Dr. Kilcullen, do you want to say more about the organ grinder behind the Haqqani?

Dr. KILCULLEN. In an open session, Mr. Chairman, I think we should probably just say that they're not necessarily acting on their own behalf and that we've seen considerable collusion between them and, I wouldn't say the Pakistani state, but elements within some parts of the national security establishment in Pakistan. I would obviously defer to Ambassador Crocker on this because he was the Ambassador to Islamabad. But I do think that it's important for us to consider that not all insurgent groups in Afghanistan are necessarily acting on their own behalf and not necessarily in a position to negotiate a solution.

The CHAIRMAN. I agree with that, and it is part of the complication. But what is it that you think—both you and Ambassador Crocker have focused on this issue of strength, that you've got to have some capacity. Leon Panetta, the Director of the CIA, in June of this year, just about a month ago actually, said, "We really have not seen any firm intelligence that there is real interest among the Taliban, the militant allies of al-Qaeda, al-Qaeda itself, the network of Jalaludin Haqqani, Pakistan-based Tariq-e-Taliban, TTP, other militant groups. We've seen no evidence that they are truly interested in reconciliation, where they would surrender their arms, where they would denounce al-Qaeda, where they would really try to become part of that society. We've seen no evidence of that and, very frankly, my view is that, with regards to reconciliation, unless they are convinced that the United States is going to win and that they're going to be defeated, I think it's very difficult to proceed with a reconciliation that's going to be meaningful."

Could you both comment on that, or all of you? Ambassador Crocker.

Ambassador CROCKER. I think that tracks very closely with what Dr. Kilcullen and I just said, that certainly what we saw in Iraq, that there has to be a change in calculations on the part of an adversary, where he comes to the point that he does not believe that he is going to necessarily outlast us and prevail militarily.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you agree with that, Dr. Kilcullen?

Dr. KILCULLEN. I would just add the issue of the timeline.

The CHAIRMAN. I was about to ask you. So that comes to the big question, what does the timeline do to that?

Ambassador CROCKER. It's a great question, Mr. Chairman. I think that the comments that have been made by senior administration officials made clear, at least to me as an outside observer, that the July 2011 does not mean that the United States is backing out of Afghanistan at full flank speed, that there is a lot of nuance and consideration that will be given.

What I worry about is how our adversary is reading that timeline. I'm not in a position to evaluate that. But I am concerned that they simply see July 2011 as a date on a calendar, the point

that they have to hold out to, and then they're OK. It's why we resisted so strongly in 2007 setting any kind of timelines in Iraq. Yet in 2008 we were negotiating just that. As Dr. Kilcullen says, timing is everything, not just timelines.

But I am worried about what the impact of this particular time line, however nuanced it may be in the American context, is on the adversary.

The CHAIRMAN. Let me, if I can—I'm sorry, I didn't mean to—

Dr. KILCULLEN. Sir, I just wanted to say that I was in Afghanistan a few days after the President's speech last December. I spent considerable time talking to Afghans who are aligned with the Taliban, not actual members of the Taliban but people who are very sympathetic to the Taliban. Their impression I would say reinforces what Ambassador Crocker just said. They believe that we had stated a date certain, that we were going to leave in the summer of 2011, and they immediately went out and spoke to the population and said: The Americans are leaving in 18 months, as it was then; what are you doing on the 19th month? Who are you backing, because we'll still be there and they won't be.

I think we have to not only say that we're going to broaden that time consideration to say that it's going to be much more conditions-based; we also have to very clearly communicate that message to the Taliban and to the Afghan population, or it won't sink in. I'm afraid that primarily the way we're going to communicate to the Taliban is significant combat action.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I have to say that in the visits I've made to both places I found considerable feedback, kickback, pushback, on those very points. I'll say more about that at another time, but I understand what you're saying.

So let's come back then to this question of, accepting what you've just said, what is the best way in your judgment to be able to show the kind of strength that you think is necessary to turn this without getting sucked into an interminable set of military ops or an even deeper kind of commitment that you can't get out of? Where's the strength going to come from here?

Could it come, conceivably, through a network of alliances not dissimilar to what Ms. Salbi was talking about, that if suddenly Pakistan were engaged in a different way, if you had Iran—and I know this may be apostasy to some people, but if Iran were suddenly in a different dialogue, could you pressure things and change them without having to necessarily engage in strength through military operations?

Ambassador CROCKER. I think it is a complex process, Mr. Chairman, that has to involve all of these things. But the sine qua non in my view is changing the calculus on the battlefield. That as I understand it is the point of the surge. We still don't have the full surge contingent in place yet. This will take some time to play out. Obviously, General Petraeus is hard at work in figuring out how best to proceed in changing that calculus.

At the same time, I think it makes a great deal of sense, building on the Kabul conference, to engage the region. The United Nations, I think, can be very helpful here through the Special Representative of the Secretary General Stefan de Mistura, also a veteran of

Iraq, and who of course can talk to Iran in a way that we can't. So I think that becomes part of it.

Our ongoing dialogue with Pakistan, as you have said, is absolutely vital. General Kiyani has now been extended for an additional 3 years. Admiral Mullen, General Petraeus, have developed a relationship with him. I think we've got to pursue that dynamic. And we have to do all of these things simultaneously.

The CHAIRMAN. Dr. Kilcullen, as you answer it—and then I'll turn to Senator Lugar—would you just comment on the absence of the Sons of Iraq that you had the opportunity to work with and the sectarian divide? There seems to be no similar capacity within Afghanistan, and how does that affect this ability to do what Ambassador Crocker just said?

Dr. KILCULLEN. Yes, Mr. Chairman. I do think it is possible to map out a very rough timeline. I agree with the Ambassador, I think the first thing we ought to do is to stop talking about 2011 and start talking about 2014, which is the timeline that the Karzai government brought up last week in the conference.

The second thing we need is a big tactical hit on the Taliban. We need to do some very significant damage to the Quetta Shura Taliban structure, the Haqqani network structure, and groups like HIG and some of the others that are wavering. We need to kill a lot of Taliban and we need to disrupt their organization. It's unpleasant, but it is just unavoidable. You have to do that kind of damage to a terrorist organization before it becomes willing to talk.

Once they've been successfully set back on their heels, then we can make a bit of a push on local reintegration, which is not again talking to the leadership; it's sucking away the weak elements of their coalition. Then they become exposed, weakened, they've suffered a lot of damage, and they're ready to talk. So you're essentially shaping them, as the military says, to be ready to conduct those operations.

I think that's a process that's going to take us a very substantial amount of time, at least a couple of years. So I think we need to sort of—it's good that we're having this conversation now because we're thinking ahead. We need to not necessarily rush to negotiation. We need to shape them before we can do that.

In terms of the Sahawa, the Awakening in Anbar, we didn't do that. The tribes did it. The Abu Mahals started it and it cascaded down through Anbar on their initiative, and it was the leadership of various key leaders, like Sheik Sattar of the Abu Rishawi and a variety of other tribal leaders, who got that thing off the ground.

The CHAIRMAN. I tried hard to convince George Bush of that in 2004, but it didn't work.

Dr. KILCULLEN. I'm going to leave that one there, sir.

But tribes in Iraq—I'm not sure we should be using the term "tribe" to describe both Pashtun tribes and Arab tribes. They are structured very differently. The difference is not that the Iraqis hated al-Qaeda and the Afghans don't hate the Taliban. There's 83 Lashgars in Pakistan today already fighting the Pakistani Taliban. There's a lot of individual groups fighting against the Taliban. The issue is taking that individual initiative and spreading it into a broader, cascading wave of development like we saw in Iraq.

I think that the basis for Afghan solidarity is usually the district rather than the tribe, and so a locality-based approach like we see in the village stabilization program is possible. I think we also need to recognize that a lot of the tribal elders in Afghanistan have been deliberately killed off by the Taliban over the past several years, so that it's a weaker structure.

Combined Action, which is one of the initiatives of ISAF right now, and the village stabilization program are probably the closest thing we have to the start of some kind of an Awakening.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Lugar, I apologize for going over a bit.

Senator LUGAR. Let me recapitulate my understanding of the testimony. It would appear that each of you are saying in a different way that we must negotiate, but negotiate from strength, which necessitates the presence of all the Afghan partners at the table, so there's not a lack of representation as it pertains to the interests of the north or the south, Pashtun or Tajik or others. Additionally, Ms. Salbi points out the potential need for representatives of other countries, the neighbors, in these negotiations. And as you pointed out, Dr. Kilcullen, we must get used to the fact that this may be occurring even while we are fighting, that the tradition in Afghanistan is not simply that everybody stops fighting when negotiations begin, but instead involves ongoing negotiations proceeding while fighting continues. And in that fighting, for the negotiation to be successful, we have to demonstrate strength. You've suggested, Dr. Kilcullen, that critical to this end, as bloody as it sounds, is that we kill a lot of Taliban, that there is a rather significant casualty toll, which is recognized by all the parties, including the Taliban and anybody else that we're interested in negotiating with, and that such operations are proceeding while negotiations are going on.

Now, let me just ask first of all, as a practical measure, how all the parties are pulled together. In other words, who invites all the parties to the table or insists that they come, because somebody probably needs to take the lead. This could be the United States. It could be the United States plus the Afghan Government.

But whether everybody will respond to those calls and for what reason is a part of my question. How do we actually get the different parties facing each other, granted that fighting is going on, strength is being exemplified, and people are still being killed while this is all proceeding?

And in the event that the fighting is proceeding, we've talked about the surge that's coming up in Kandahar and the fact we don't want to impose too tight a timeline on that. In any event, the President is going to have an evaluation in December detailing what is occurring on the ground. But what if, somehow or other, despite our calculations, fighting begins somewhere else? We're always surprised in these hearings to find out how diverse the provinces of Afghanistan are, and how many different tribes and loci of authority exist, with respect not only to just so-called warlords, but the chieftains, as well. We assume there's a north and a south and some basic coalitions, but then we find out that this is not exactly the entire case. The north and west have very diverse personalities, and they have different relationships historically

with Pakistan or maybe other neighbors, as has been suggested, with Iran.

So I'm just simply curious. Let's say we get all of this under way. Then it depends upon our killing enough Taliban to impress them enough that they are prepared, apparently, to finally stop fighting, although they won't necessarily stop before the negotiations begin. Is this a reasonable outline? But then, if so, can anyone furnish an idea, Dr. Kilcullen or Ambassador Crocker, as to how we get the parties to the table under these circumstances? And is the killing of the Taliban consistent with some of the testimony that we hear, the better part of which suggests to the effectiveness of trying to chase the Taliban out, scare them, and come into the village and work to get some police trained there, liaise with some of the village elders, and then hope that they can manage. But then, unfortunately, after our efforts cease, the Taliban tend to creep back in.

Where are the Taliban supposed to fight? Where do we find them? How do we get into this killing operation that leads to decisive military action, when the enemy appears to be all over the place and unwilling to fight us on any particular battleground that we find useful?

Could you start with some comment, doctor?

Dr. KILCULLEN. Yes, sir. I think the military term that we're looking for here is "counternetwork operations." Within counterinsurgency, one of the components is security operations, which is the kind of village protection that you were talking about, and the police and all those sorts of things. That's important. It goes on. It's very important for making people feel safe and making them feel confident enough to support the process.

What I'm talking about is a different component of the operation, and it is essentially to take apart the enemy's network top to bottom with a fairly high tempo of a rolling series of intelligence and strike operations. People often look at what happened in Iraq in 2007 and think that peace just broke out. It did not. A lot of people had to be removed from the streets one way or another, by negotiation, reconciliation, capture, or ultimately by being killed, before we could get to the point where most people were willing to reconcile.

So I think that it's important to understand that we're talking about a relatively small number of people here. We're talking about the critical facilitators, the operational planners, the bombmakers, the guys who run the suicide bombers, those kind of critical nodes in the network. I would argue—again, we're in an open hearing, but this is happening now. We're already doing it, but we need to potentially ramp that up and focus a lot of effort on the political outcome that we're looking for. We're not just doing this to disrupt the enemy. We're doing it to get them to a position where they feel like the best solution is a negotiated solution. So it has to work hand in glove with an appropriate communications strategy to that same bunch of leaders.

Again, if you want to we can talk about historical precedents. There's a lot of examples of where this has worked and other examples where it hasn't.

The only other point I would make is that talking while fighting not only is common to Afghans; it's already happened several times in the Afghan war to date. The 2008 Mecca process which the

Afghan Government ran with the Taliban was exactly that, and there are negotiations happening in the Maldives as we speak. So it's not unusual for people to do this. It's a question of, as you said, who you want to have at the table.

I want to defer to Ambassador Crocker, but also to Ms. Salbi about that, because of her idea about Turkey.

Senator LUGAR. Ambassador Crocker, how do we get them to the table?

Ambassador CROCKER. It's an excellent question, Senator Lugar.

I think the most important organizational aspect is on the Afghan Government side. For all I know, there may be something like this already in train, but I would envision an Afghan reconciliation committee that is carefully and broadly composed to ensure that minorities are represented, the Northern Alliance, and others, that serves as the central coordinating body for all contacts with insurgents or adversaries, and into which the United States and other outside players also feed and coordinate.

Because at this stage I certainly would not suggest that it makes sense to imagine a large formal negotiating process. I think it's a question of individual contacts, with a committee sorting out who is best positioned to make contact with whom, to what end, and serve as a repository for the information that's gleaned.

And while both Dr. Kilcullen and I have said it's important to negotiate from a position of strength, I don't at all mean to imply that we should not be having any contacts with Taliban, big "T", little "t", whatever. I'd like to assume we're already doing that. This would be an informational phase. Who's out there? What are their motivations? What are they seeking? How can they be dealt with one way or the other?

So that's the process I would conceive organizationally. This may be a process in which there is never a large peace conference, unless it's after the deal or deals are already made. I think, though, having an Afghan-based coordinating mechanism that broadly represents the communities and political elements of Afghanistan is the central starting point.

Senator LUGAR. Who invites the women to come into the conference?

Ambassador CROCKER. Clearly, in I think a properly constructed committee, reconciliation committee, there would be substantial representation by Afghan women.

Senator SALBI. May I? I want to take a stab at that. As in the military context, there can't be a disconnection between the military and what the military does and what's in the negotiations for the civilian population, because you can fight and kill as many Taliban as you can, but if they go back to the village and they are the ones who are talking with the villagers and they are the ones who are, whatever, dominating the village discussion, then we can't—it's not sustainable.

It has to be a parallel operation and much more than what's happening right now, which is the military getting engaged with the civilian population.

The CHAIRMAN. It has to be a—what operation?

Ms. SALBI. A much more comprehensive process. Right now the military does engage with the villagers in diplomatic discussions, not enough and not good enough. So that's one thing.

The second thing is who calls the negotiation, I would argue actually change the dynamics. I would argue have the Muslim coalition countries call the negotiations, in which America could be playing whatever role it can, but change the dynamics. We are stuck in the dynamics of discussing one form of Islam, one extreme form of Islam, vis-a-vis one extreme form of Islam, Wahabiism versus Salafism, and we need to change the dynamics. It's in Iran's best interests to come, and Iran is a moderate Islam in this context. It is—the Taliban or Afghanis more likely will respond more positively to a Muslim-dominated coalition which is coming from Turkey or other countries than the U.N. Frankly, I don't think the U.N. will actually be able to pull these negotiations out. Or the United States, frankly, because it is seen as an outsider and as an occupier.

So bring others who are allies of the United States. Yes, Iran is very important and we have to figure out how to do it. But change the dynamics in which you relax the context of it and you don't limit it to only one form of extremism to another form of extremism. And Pakistan provides that form of extremism.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Cardin.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me thank all three of our witnesses. I find your observations extremely helpful. Ms. Salbi, I want to get—I just really want to underscore your point about a country that mistreats its women is an indicator of a dangerous country, well beyond those who've been victimized.

Dr. Kilcullen, you point out that we need to have a reliable partner if we are the outside force, in order to negotiate with the insurgents. And you bring up good governance.

I just really want to underscore this point, then ask you a question as to how we can be more effective on good governance in Afghanistan. I think the United States understands the connections between good governance and the ability to move forward on security issues. In 1975 we were one of the leading forces in establishing the Helsinki Final Accords because we recognized the direct relationship between human rights and security.

Recently we saw in Kyrgyzstan the failure of the United States to properly read the government in that country, and it caused us a security concern. So I think we understand this relationship. Sometimes we forget about this or we don't give it the right attention that we should.

Now we're involved in Afghanistan. We've been involved there for a long period of time, and there's a real question whether we have a reliable partner. The Afghan Government is known for its corruption. There is certainly a lack of competence among many of the players in Afghanistan as to whether they can negotiate in good faith because of the reputation of the Karzai government.

So I guess my question to you is, How can we be more effective in the United States role in Afghanistan, as we are talking about building capacity, as we are talking about trying to empower the

people of Afghanistan and its government to take care of its own needs? How can we leverage the U.S. participation? We're giving a lot of money. We have a lot of troops that are over there. How can we bring about the type of accountability, and not just be a source of funds that are used for corrupt purposes or a source for adding to the problems of final reconciliation in that country?

Ambassador Crocker, do you have a suggestion here as to how we can better leverage the U.S. involvement for good governance?

Ambassador CROCKER. Well, it's a vital question, Senator. I arrived in Afghanistan at the beginning of January 2002, when Karzai had been chairman of the Interim Authority about 10 days. So for those first few months I was kind of with him constantly as he tried to figure out how to approach the most overwhelming challenge that I think one could conceivably imagine in governance. And 8½ years later, of course, he's still at it.

Clearly, the challenges are immense. Clearly, the performance of the government has in many respects been disappointing. But I think that we are doing the right thing now in treating President Karzai as our strategic partner in Afghanistan. We're going to get nowhere good working against him. I do recall during my time in Iraq, particularly in the early phase, 2007, there were questions raised, why couldn't Prime Minister Maliki be more like Karzai? Now it seems to be reversed.

Yet we stayed the course and, while Iraq is by no means a finished work, we did at least shift the trajectory. I think that's what we have to do, through very close coordination with President Karzai and his ministers, leveraging the influence, the considerable influence we do have.

But there's something else I think we need to do as well. Support for a more competent Afghan central government is key, but we also need to be engaged locally. Afghanistan has always been a decentralized state and society. I think it always will be. At this stage, I am not sure the government in Kabul is equipped to work local leadership initiatives. We may be the indispensable actor, both our civilian and our military presence in the provinces.

This is something we did in Iraq. Baghdad didn't necessarily like it, but we saw it as essential to work to further local governance in any way that made sense to us and, more importantly, to the people of the areas. So I would like to think this is a current priority for the administration. I think it needs to be, that we work both pieces together.

Senator CARDIN. Ms. Salbi, let me if I might get you engaged here. How is the United States role perceived by those that are concerned about the current practices of the Afghan Government as it relates to protecting the rights of all of its people? Is there more expectation here? Is there a better—can we do things in a more effective way, and what would you like to see the United States do in that regard?

Ms. SALBI. I think the United States has in Afghanistan in the last 9 years, has overpromised and underperformed in Afghanistan, and the people do not see a major shift in their lives. Yes, we have a lot of good stories about girls going to schools and schools being built, the stories we all report on. But in truth, when you go to

Afghanistan and you feel it on a day to day basis it is not felt clear and obvious and in a major way in people's lives.

So yes, it is not felt. And yet it's still the only country that has the highest hope of fixing the situation. So there is an overexpectation in here as well. Managing expectation would be one of it.

The second one is, we did a survey of Afghan women in the grassroots, 1,500 Afghan women, last year. They identify security as a major challenge. Second to security was corruption, and third after corruption was Taliban. So that just puts a context in here of how they are measuring their life things.

The corruption one, the only times in which countries change in corruption, which I completely agree with your reading about how disappointing and frustrating it is, is when there were incentives not to be corrupted or corrupt. The most recent experience was actually Egypt when it showed that it was one of the top countries, top corrupt countries, in the World Bank report, and that scared them enough to hire and invest enough in reforming their laws, and now they are one of the top 10 countries in reform vis-a-vis corruption.

Iraq is one of the most corrupt countries. I know Iraqis who are leaving Iraq right now, not because the security is bad, but because the corruption is so bad. So what are the—my question back to you is, what are the incentives for the Afghan Government not to be corrupt? And if there is a blank check that is constantly going to them and no measurements about corruption, then why should they be not corrupt, and what can we do on this end to do that?

The third one—and I argue when things are not working, then create a third alternative and a third dynamic. In this case, then who are the people who are less corrupt, who tend to be less corrupt, for a variety of reasons? I would argue actually invest in more women and more civilian population. Whether it be in the drug-fighting, create viable alternatives for women in farming vegetables and fruit, whether it is being in security or in infrastructure-building, invest in more civilians, just because they tend to be less corrupt for having no power of corruption or no history of it.

So I don't know if that's helpful, but this is what I have.

Senator CARDIN. I'm for third option suggestions, so I think that's a good suggestion. I do think there has to be more accountability in the U.S. participation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Cardin.

Senator Corker.

Senator CORKER. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

I want to thank each of you for coming. I think it's been a great hearing. I have been personally confused by what our strategy is right now in Afghanistan, and I don't say that to be critical of the administration or anybody else. I think it's a complex issue. I know some of my comments last hearing about the withdrawal date were not meant to criticize. It just seems that we send mixed signals and it's hard for me to understand exactly what our strategy is.

I do think today has been very helpful. Ambassador, you talked numbers of times in your testimony about counterinsurgency and keep stressing that versus counterterrorism. That I think has been

the element that has confused me most about what we're doing on the ground. I know you talked today, both you and Mr. Kilcullen have talked about, Dr. Kilcullen, have talked about damaging the Taliban so they'll negotiate, and you've talked about negotiating with other partners. But what are some of the other elements that you view we should be thinking about? I know this is about reconciliation today, but as it relates to having a full-blown counterinsurgency?

I know both of you have indicated that that takes time. That's the difference between counterterrorism, I think, and counterinsurgency. Counterinsurgency takes patience and time. And I realize the President's dealing with domestic issues here, that people are losing patience. I understand all of those things and I am in no way critical. I just want us to get it right.

So those counterinsurgency issues that are not in place now would be what?

Ambassador CROCKER. It's a great question, Senator. The most fundamental issue I think in a successful counterinsurgency now in Afghanistan is the one that Afghan women identified, as Ms. Salbi noted, and that is security. The thrust of the surge in Iraq, of course, wasn't just the additional troops. It was the mission of those troops, which was to protect the civilian population. That became priority No. 1.

General Petraeus, of course, is now in Afghanistan and will be developing his own tactics and strategies. But I would expect that, in addition to administering pain to the Taliban, securing the civilian population is going to be a top priority, and indeed the two are related. So I think that is absolutely essential as a first step.

As people broadly speaking feel more secure and as environments are more secure, it is then more possible than it is now for the Afghans, with our support, to get at these other issues, such as governance. In all too many cases, as I understand it, it's not just that governance is not good; there is often really no governance.

But it's only I think in the context in which security is improved for the people that you can then get at these other essential elements, which would be governance, better governance, including efforts to get at corruption, services, economic development. These are all elements, I think, of a successful counterinsurgency strategy, but it starts with security.

Senator CORKER. I'd like for Dr. Kilcullen to jump in. But to both of you, it appears to me that—I think that the stats that Dr. Kilcullen gave earlier are kind of fascinating, and yet for that security to be real it sort of has to be done over the longer term by the Government of Afghanistan itself. But I sense recently we're not focused as much on training folks on the ground to be able to do that, that our commitment over the longer term is lesser in that regard than it's been in the past. I may be getting that wrong, by the way, but I'd like for both of you to respond to that.

Dr. KILCULLEN. I might jump in initially, sir, in respect to your earlier comment. We know roughly how long these things take, and again there's a fairly large body of data on this. The average successful counterinsurgency takes 12 to 15 years, and you can't really rush it because you're talking about, as you said, governance re-

form processes and the building of new institutions and creation of popular confidence that just takes time. You can't do that quickly.

I want to make a slightly controversial point, though, and I say this knowing that I'm recognized as a counterinsurgency specialist. The most important thing to realize about Afghanistan in the context of counterinsurgency is that it isn't a counterinsurgency. It's a stability operation. Why do we care about the insurgents? We care about them because they destabilize Afghanistan. We care about Afghanistan being unstable because it destabilizes Pakistan, and so on.

The problem is not the Taliban. The problem is the instability. If you were to get rid of the Taliban tonight and there were no more Taliban, but not get rid of the other causes of instability in Afghanistan, like bad governance, bad behavior, human rights problems, corruption, then within 6 months there'd be another Taliban arise again. In fact, that's already happened twice since 2001. We first defeated the Taliban in 2001. The international community defeated them again in 2003–2004. They keep on coming back because other things are driving the campaign than just the insurgency.

I don't disagree with anything that Ambassador Crocker said. I think that all those things are critically important. I would just say that counterinsurgency is one of the things we have to do within a broader stability campaign. It's not the whole campaign. The Afghan Government's behavior is just as important a source of instability as the Taliban. Tribal fighting in the west and in the north in particular is extremely important as a cause of violence. There are a lot of other things that are driving the violence.

So I think we need to conceive of the campaign as a stability operation and say that what we're trying to do here is to attack the causes of instability and make the society more stable. I think what that implies from a governance standpoint is that we need to change the mission statement. Right now in ISAF, which is the International Security Assistance Force, the mission as it relates to governance is to extend the reach of the Afghan Government. But if you're extending the reach of a government that's corrupt and in some key ways is oppressing the population, the better you do at that mission the worse it's going to get. We need to change the mission to: Reform the Afghan Government. And I think you only do that, as Ambassador Crocker said, through bottom-up civil society-based, inclusive processes that focus on peace-building at the local level rather than just focus on killing the insurgents.

When I talked about the need to do a lot of damage to the insurgency, I was talking about one very narrow part of the counterinsurgency effort, which is the counternetwork fight. And even that counterinsurgency fight is only one very narrow part of a much broader stability operation. The most important things we can be doing are about giving the population confidence, and that really boils down to corruption and improvement in governance, not extending the reach of the government, but reforming the Afghan Government.

Senator CORKER. May I ask one more question?

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

Senator CORKER. So again I think this testimony has been fascinating. I apologize, Ms. Salbi, for not focusing on you. Ryan Crocker I know has talked numbers of times about “good enough government” in Afghanistan. I realize the Taliban, there’s a big “T”, little “t”, and it’s not something that’s homogeneous. But the part that continues to confuse me some about all of these counterinsurgencies, countries or stability issues, is what exactly good enough governance is. I realize what you’re saying is true and I know Ms. Salbi alluded to the fact that corruption causes people to leave and destabilize the country.

But what is good enough governance? And when we talk about safe haven—I mean, at the end of the day I think that Ambassador Crocker was trying to get at the national security reason that we want to focus on Afghanistan is the safe haven issue to prepare for attacks. But in a country like Afghanistan, what does “good enough governance” mean, and what does that mean as it relates to these outer regions, and does that really at the end of the day still stop in pockets of a country like that that type of activity from occurring anyway?

So are we really achieving our end as it relates to national security?

Ambassador CROCKER. Good enough governance in an Afghan context is ultimately going to have to be evaluated by Afghans themselves. But I think the parameters are clear. A situation in which, in terms of security, not in which there are no more security challenges, there are no more attacks by bands of insurgents and so forth, but where the Afghan security forces are able to deal with these themselves. That’s, I think, pretty much where we’ve evolved to now in Iraq, where in advance of the August 31 re-missioning of U.S. forces in Iraq we’re really already there. We’re the ready reserve, but security operations are ongoing, but they’re now conducted by Iraqi forces. I think that is achievable in Afghanistan over time.

But going back to your first question, Senator, the training and equipping of Afghan security forces, absolutely essential, but this too takes time. We saw what happened in Iraq when Iraqi security forces were asked to do too much with too little preparation. What we’re seeing now is the maturation of those security forces. They are now able to take on that mission. But it can be absolutely disastrous, I think, to force new forces into a fight before they’re ready. I would just add that caution.

In terms of nonsecurity services, I think it means giving the Afghan people broadly the sense that life is going to be better, maybe not for them, but at least for their children; that there will be the prospects of education, of economic possibility in a reasonably stable environment. But that is going to be a lengthy process in its development, and managing expectations I think is vital.

We’ve gotten ourselves into the difficulty that Ms. Salbi has referred to in more than one place of overpromising and under-delivering. As we move forward in Afghanistan, I think it’s very important that both we and the Afghanistan Government convey a message that we are committed to a long-term improvement in Afghanistan, but it will be just that, long-term: the prospect, again,

of better lives, if not for the current adult generation, for their children.

Dr. KILCULLEN. Senator, just to quickly add one comment. Again, I agree with Ambassador Crocker. I talk to a lot of Afghans about this issue of what is good enough at the local level. Most of the people that I talk to, their comments boil down to three issues. The first one is an end to human rights abuses at the local level, particularly ones that come from the police and a variety of other representatives of power brokers, warlords, and so on. So it's a sort of negative thing of we want to see an end to the sorts of things that are happening now.

The second thing is access to justice. One of the big areas where the Taliban has the edge on the Afghan Government is the justice system. If you go into the Afghan Government courts, it takes months, you've got to pay thousands of dollars in bribes, you probably get beaten up or, if you're a woman, you get raped for even bothering the system, and in the end they give the judgment to somebody who is more powerful than you or pays a bigger bribe.

The Taliban system is free, it takes about half an hour, they issue a judgment, and it sticks. So access to justice is a critically important issue.

The final one is community participation in decisions that affect that local community, including their own security. I think that's just to boil down lots of conversations that I've had to the main three issues that most of the Afghans that I talk to are calling for.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Feingold.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

There's obviously a growing recognition that there's no military solution to Afghanistan. Indeed, many of our efforts to secure short-term security gains may be undermining the prospects for a long-term political solution. I've said many, many times, for many months, I believe the first and foremost conclusion we get from this is it underscores the need for the President to establish a flexible timetable for the responsible drawdown of U.S. troops.

But, as we're hearing today, it's also increasingly likely that we will be called on to support, as appropriate, a political solution to underlying problems in Afghanistan. Questions and concerns remain about the nature and details of any political solution, including whether it will be representative, can protect hard-won rights and freedoms and can address broader ethnic, religious and regional fissures, as well as negative perceptions of the government. I am already benefiting greatly from what I'm hearing this morning.

Let me go to Ms. Salbi and have her say a bit about the fact that there's been this emphasis on reintegration of fighters and reconciliation with insurgent leaders, but there are also broader underlying tensions in Afghanistan that need to be addressed, including ethnic and regional tensions and a sense of alienation from the government on the part of segments of the population.

How can we pay more attention to addressing these kinds of issues as part of any kind of political solution?

Ms. SALBI. I think we must include ethnic minorities in any discussion. I think it's the overpromise, underperform part. When we include, whether it is women or whether it is ethnic minorities, it

is in symbolic ways. So it's immediately transparent to everyone: Oh, they invited one Tajik or one woman out of hundreds of women or hundreds of members.

So I think the political will to actually make a very clear statement, we're not including you in symbolic ways, just to check a box, that we're actually including you in a thorough place, one.

Second, they have information. I wish we'd learn about Afghanistan from their perspectives, because their insight of what's happening on a day-to-day basis is very different than the insight you get from Kabul. My favorite expression is that there are two Afghanistans, the one that you see in Kabul and the one that you see in rural areas, and there are two different stories and two different realities.

It's in our interest to include them in real ways, not in symbolic ways, because they shed light on things that we do not know on a daily basis and definitely do not know with the political elites.

So I would say these are the two things, is how do we make an effort and how do we have real resource allocations to ethnic minorities. I think I would add, if I may, on the "good enough government," it's infrastructure building. At the end of the day, people want a decent job and a decent school for their kids and a decent home. That's all what they measure at the end of the day. Unless we make concrete efforts to show a real investment in making these simple homes, which are much cheaper, by the way, than a lot of the military tactics that we're talking about, but still symbolically goes a long way.

So unless we will make concerted efforts to invest in the minorities, both in giving them the space as well as investing in the improvement of their lives, it's so far seen as very symbolic gestures and not real.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you.

Dr. Kilcullen, the Afghan Government's track record gives little reason to believe that it will pursue a broad and inclusive reconciliation process rather than relying most likely on back room deal-making with warlords, which could alienate the broader population. Karzai's recent decision to allow the amnesty law to go into effect appears to speak to this tendency.

In your view, would such a deal-making process garner the broad support needed to bring lasting stability?

Dr. KILCULLEN. Senator, we were talking about this before on a couple of occasions and I stand by what we sort of agreed on last time, which is that they will never make these kinds of efforts to inclusive negotiation without significant cooperation and pressure from the international community. I think it has to not only be the United States—and I agree with Ms. Salbi on this issue. We don't necessarily have the position of an honest broker as far as negotiations are concerned. But it cannot be left to the Afghan Government by itself or we won't get the result. I think you need to have both national and subnational participation and you also need to have regional participation. I think those things are very important as incentives to get the Afghan Government to negotiate in good faith. If you don't do that, then you're going to end up with similar back room deals to what put the same warlords back in charge after 2001. So I agree with you.

Senator FEINGOLD. I want to elaborate on that; this relates to the answer you just gave. In his preliminary assessment, General McChrystal found that our partnerships with “polarizing and predatory power brokers” had undermined our efforts to stabilize Afghanistan. You’re already suggesting this, but our relationships with these actors continue and it’s making a political solution more difficult.

Are you saying the United States continues to rely on these warlords and that this is contributing to the instability? Is that what you’re saying?

Dr. KILCULLEN. I don’t think I was going that far. I think all I’m saying is that there are a lot of sources of instability in Afghanistan. A lot of them in fact originate from our own aid programs and from our own military presence. So there are a lot of causes of instability in Afghanistan. The Afghan Government is one of the big causes, and I think it’s very important not to focus solely on the Taliban and say, if we just got rid of the Taliban everything would be fine. We do need to do that, but that doesn’t get you where you need to be. You have to look in a much more broad manner at all the sources of instability that are driving the conflict.

Senator FEINGOLD. Say a bit more, if you would, about how the aid programs add to instability.

Dr. KILCULLEN. There’s a very interesting study recently conducted by Mr. Andrew Wilder from Tufts University in Boston, looking at United States aid programs in Afghanistan. He finds a very strong correlation between actually lack of stability and lack of security and high U.S. aid spent. Now, that is not the fault of the aid program or the people that are working on the ground. I’ve worked very closely with both NGOs and the USAID officials and they’re doing an awesome job.

It’s because we have a policy of putting the majority of our aid into the least secure areas, what you might call a red-first policy. If you look at a map of Afghanistan and you think of red areas as being the areas that are heavily Taliban-affected and green areas being the areas that are safest, the bulk of United States foreign assistance goes into the least safe areas, which by definition are the areas where accountability is weakest because you can’t get out and observe your programs, you can’t work with viable local partners, it’s very difficult for aid officers to go out and see what’s going on, and indeed there are a lot of armed local power brokers who are taking advantage of our presence.

I’ve been to some villages in Afghanistan where people say: Look, there’s the mosque that you built us with the CERF money, and there’s the mosque you built us with the USAID quick impact project money, and there’s the mosque that the NGO built, and they’ve got three buildings out of one program based on our inability to coordinate because it’s a very violent area.

Similarly, if you go to the north of the country you hear officials say things like: Who do I have to shoot to get some assistance around here? If there was more violence in my area, maybe I’d be getting more aid.

I think we need to take a different approach to the provision of assistance and look at what I would call stability programming, look at what are the things that are specifically creating violent in-

stability in an area and work with the community on a similar basis to the national solidarity program, which you may be aware of, to resolve those issues.

If you think about how NSP works, there is a community-based committee which must include one woman, so it has at least three members. If you look at the Afghan parliamentary elections that are about to happen, 2,577 candidates, of whom 405 are women. That's about one in seven. So again, the systems that the Afghans set up don't necessarily exclude ethnic minorities and women. If you let them do it themselves and you work with them in a constructive manner, you can often have a better result.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you for your answers.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Casey.

Senator CASEY. Thanks very much.

I thank you each of you for your testimony and for your presence here today.

Ambassador Crocker, I think you and I have spoken about this conversation that we had back in 2007 at least once before. You may not remember it, but when I was in Iraq in 2007 we were at dinner one night and I was complaining about President Bush's language as it relates to our objectives in Iraq. I asked you, how would you—I'm not sure how I asked the question, but something along the lines of: How would you define success, or how do you define the objective and then therefore our success in achieving that objective?

You said at the time that the language that you use, which I thought was very helpful language in terms of describing what we had to achieve there, and therefore I asked you the same question as it relates to Afghanistan. At the time you said that the way you described the objective was "sustainable stability."

I ask if you can analyze the objective in Afghanistan, or what should our objective be and our success in achieving that, and can you use similar language and should that be the way that we define success in Afghanistan?

Ambassador CROCKER. Well, thank you, Senator, for not only recalling what you said, but also what I said, because I would have been hard put to dredge it up. But I did use that phrase.

Senator CASEY. You got a lot of visits, right, in those days.

Ambassador CROCKER. I did use that phrase and it is what I'm trying to get at. It's another country, another time, so I've got a different phrase, and that's "good enough governance." But it means the same thing, and that gets at Dr. Kilcullen's point. However we define terms—for me, counterinsurgency is a very broad process. It involves all of the nonkinetic elements that he refers to in the context of stability operations. But I think we mean the same thing here.

In an Afghan context, that would mean a situation, as I described earlier, in which—not in which there are no longer security challenges and peace and harmony reign supreme, but in which, roughly like Iraq, there are security challenges, but Afghan security forces are able to deal with them, with us providing perhaps some logistical or special systems support, but we're not in the fight; they are.

That would be sustainable security stability. Sustainable stability more broadly speaking in Afghanistan is going to be a huge challenge, for all the reasons you've heard from Dr. Kilcullen and Ms. Salbi already—the pervasiveness of corruption, the absence of governance in so many parts of the country, the absence of services. Security is the key, though, and I would certainly endorse what Dr. Kilcullen said, that assistance that is meaningful, in the sense of changing the lives and expectations, has to follow security. It can't precede it.

One of the ways we got into trouble in Iraq was doing major projects in areas that we then couldn't secure. So we've got to be very careful about that in Afghanistan.

So ultimately the hardest challenge may not be the effort at security, as hard as that is going to be. It will be the other elements in a stability operation/counterinsurgency that are nonkinetic. That is why again our partnership with the Afghan Government to develop some common views of things that need to get done and some tactics for getting them done, but also working this bottom-up with local representation, local services, in which we will play a major role at this juncture, as we did in Iraq at a certain time, and with the development and nurturing of civil society, are all going to be very important in getting to sustainable stability Afghan-style.

It will in my judgment be a harder lift than it was in Iraq, as hard as that was.

Senator CASEY. Thank you.

Dr. Kilcullen, I wanted to highlight just briefly part of your testimony and ask you a question about it. You highlighted four major problems. One is the credibility, viability, and legitimacy of the government. Two is the timeline, which you spoke of earlier. Three was the continuing active safe haven in Pakistan for the Afghan Taliban. Third—fourth, I should say, is lack of resources.

I wanted to get to that third one, what you describe as a continuing active safe haven in Pakistan for the Afghan Taliban. A number of us when we—I remember being in Kabul in 2009, got a briefing on what was then described as the three insurgencies: Quetta Shura, Haqqani, and then I guess the acronym HEG, H-E-G, at the time.

I'd ask you I guess two questions. One is, based upon what you know in terms of what's happening on the ground militarily, is Haqqani still the biggest threat to our troops in achieving a measure of success militarily? And two, how do we get at this basic problem—or what's the best both tactical and strategic approach to this problem No. 3 that you highlight, the active safe haven for the Afghan Taliban?

I know that's a lot, but if you can just take a crack at it.

Dr. KILCULLEN. Yes. I would refer you to a paper that just was published a few days ago by a guy called Matt Waldman, who is a researcher at the Carr Center for Human Rights at Harvard University. It's called "The Sun in the Sky," and it's a study of the Afghan Taliban's relationship with the Pakistani ISI. It is based on a substantial number of open-ended interviews with Taliban commanders conducted in Afghanistan over the past 12 months. It's a very current study.

It suggests that the relationship is extremely close, operationally active, and that to a certain extent even the Quetta Shura Taliban, but certainly the Haqqani network, act at the direction of some elements of the Pakistani national security establishment. That's not to say that the Pakistani Government is directing traffic. It's saying that some people in the organization are doing so. I think it's worth taking a look at that for some of the detail that you're looking at.

How do we deal with it? There isn't a military solution. It has to be political and it has to be a solution that takes into account Pakistani interests, that understands that the Pakistanis are concerned about a power vacuum in Afghanistan, they're concerned about their long-term relationship with militant groups, which they can't sever that relationship because then they'll lose visibility and lose control of what those militant groups are doing. They're concerned about the presence of the Pakistani Taliban, but to some extent they see the Afghan Taliban as an insurance policy in case things go bad in Afghanistan.

I'd also point out that the al-Qaeda has been, although it's had a very destabilizing effect on Pakistan, it's also been the source of a very large amount of international attention and about \$16 billion in international assistance. So I'm not necessarily sure that everybody in Pakistan sees they have a very strong incentive to get rid of that goose that lays the golden egg.

But I would actually defer to—we have the former Ambassador to Pakistan sitting here, sir. I probably said a few things that you would disagree with, Ambassador Crocker. Do you want to comment?

Ambassador CROCKER. It is something that we wrestled with during my time in Pakistan, 2004 to 2007, something we are still wrestling with today. It remains a hugely complex issue involving history, capacity, and views of the future. That's why I think the signal of a long-term strategic relationship with Pakistan is so important, given the ups and downs that we have seen before and, in the Pakistani narrative, when the relationship goes down, as it did in 1990, it becomes an existential threat to the entire state.

So they would argue, do we hedge our bets? Yes, we hedge our bets, because we're not sure of you and we could pay with the life of our state. Self-serving? Of course it is. But there are elements of, I think, ingrained psychological truth in it as well.

In terms of the Quetta Shura and the tribal areas, the difficulties of effective action by the Pakistanis, even with 100 percent intent, those difficulties cannot be overestimated. The tribal areas have never been under anyone's central control, ever. They are juridically separate from the rest of the state because that's what the Pakistanis inherited from the British. The Raj could not control these areas.

Dr. Kilcullen has given you some modern reading references. One of my favorite reads on the tribal areas, both past and present, is Winston Churchill's first book, "The Story of the Malikan Field Force," written I think in 1896. It hasn't changed.

The Pakistani army is now engaged in six of seven agencies in a way they have not been before, suffering significant casualties, with fairly limited success. So it's a question of intent, it's a ques-

tion of capacity, and above all it is a question of time. I think we've got to use that time to build some stable relationships that will allow incremental progress as we move ahead, but it will be incremental.

Senator CASEY. I know we're out of time, but I'll ask, at another time ask about whether you think we've got a strategy in place to achieve that. But I'm 4 minutes over.

Senator KAUFMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The chairman's not here. I just want to commend the chairman on these series of hearings on Afghanistan. I think if you ever want to—I've said in my experience this is the most complex public policy issue that I have ever dealt with. I think that these hearings have really been extraordinarily good in terms of, if you want to find out what's going on in Afghanistan, if you're Rip Van Winkle and you came back, you could pull out these hearings and look at them and get a lot about it.

I think of all the panels we've had, this may be the best one in terms of the quality of people we have here, and that's why we keep wandering off from reconciliation, which is the subject, because we don't often get—we've had excellent people here, but I want to thank the three of you for your service.

Ms. Salbi, let's get back to just one question on the issue. The Afghan Government would not be considered women-friendly as it's presently constituted. Dr. Kilcullen has talked about one of the solutions to the insurgency is to have seat at the table. How does a government which includes the Taliban ever work for an Afghan woman?

Ms. SALBI. A very hard question. It's hard to say yes. What I want to highlight, to pick up on Ambassador Crocker's points, there were times in Afghanistan—well, first of all, there is not even one view of Islam in Afghanistan. Northern Alliance have very different views than the Taliban. So there are different moderate views. There are alternative moderate views within Afghanistan itself of Islam.

The question is how do we highlight those and how do we give those a seat at the table and highlight their views vis-a-vis the Taliban? So that's one thing.

The second: No, it will be very hard to reconcile, frankly, Taliban's views of women within a government. But is it possible to negotiate within an Islamic framework the role of women in government? Absolutely. Pakistan actually provides a good model for that, having women very involved in their own government. Many Muslim countries or Muslim-dominant countries provide good models for that.

I think the discussion is not whether we get defined by what Taliban defines Islam. I think the question is how do you provide within an Islamic framework, because there are lots of viable alternatives out there that Islam provides vis-a-vis women and human rights, and how do you highlight that and how do you put that at the center of the discussion, as opposed to have the Taliban frame the discussion. So that's my answer.

Senator KAUFMAN. I don't mean to be tough on this, but there surely are many, many models in Islam where women have a role. But today we're talking about Afghanistan, and we talked about

how Afghanistan's different in so many ways from so many other countries that have Islamic majorities. Really and truly, how does it work?

I mean, if you were a woman in Afghanistan and you here there's a government coming together—the present government, which is not friendly—Dr. Kilcullen gave some numbers on one in seven, and that's good and it's promising, but it's not a woman-friendly government. You add—so there's a model. We've got a model out there that could work, but how does that happen when you have the governance—and again, Dr. Kilcullen has talked at length and so has Ambassador Crocker, about how important governance is. I happen to think that's the key to this. How does it work when you have a governance that is the present government added to the Taliban?

If you're a woman, how do you go to a woman in Afghanistan and say, we've got this worked out, we're going to have stability, it's going to work for us in terms of, as Dr. Kilcullen says, in terms of our objective stability, we've got stability; now, we can have stability, but here's the government you're going to be living under?

Ms. SALBI. You will not have support by women. You simply won't have support by Afghan women, and that's why their buy-in is very crucial. That's why their inclusion in the negotiating table is very crucial, so you make them part of the solution.

If you're going to isolate them and then tell them this is the dynamics, this is the government, you will not have that, and you will have women mobilize, as they did during the Taliban's time and as American women mobilized for Afghan women. I find it very, very hard for any Afghan woman to support that.

But I find it—and I know many Afghan women want to be part of the negotiations with the Taliban, they want to engage in—

Senator KAUFMAN. I have no doubt about the women's desire to be part of negotiations. I'm just concerned about everybody else at the table. And the table is—again, as Dr. Kilcullen said, they cannot be a faction. It can't be us and the government's here and the Taliban's here. They can't be treated as a faction. So they're the ones who are going to be doing the negotiations, the present government.

Anyway, I'm just raising this. We talk about reconciliation, we talk about women. Your testimony was great. I hear a lot of things. In the end, there are certain things I just cannot picture happening. A government, the present Afghan Government supplemented by the Taliban, is one that I just don't know how that's going to work in the long run. I see lots of things that aren't going to work.

Ms. SALBI. I think it's possible. I actually really think it's possible.

Senator KAUFMAN. Good.

Dr. Kilcullen and Ambassador Crocker, both of you talk about the focus on government. We've had a lot of discussion about this July 2011 date. Do you think we'd be making the progress we've made in terms of the movement of the Karzai government on everything from training to governance to shuras if in fact we had not had some kind of a deadline?

Before this deadline was made, President Karzai was talking about we were going to be there until 2025. So I thought one of the good things about this deadline is the fact that it's incentive for governance, which we all agree is the key issue. How are we going to get governance to work, how are we going to deal with corruption, how are we going to do these things? One of the things the July 2011 thing did was say, OK, guys, as you have so graphically presented to me how we should present things to the Karzai government, this seemed to me to be the closest thing to what we could do.

So can you talk a little about the July 2011 as an incentive to the Karzai Kabul government to actually get about what they have to do?

Dr. KILCULLEN. Sir, I agree with you. I think that the silver lining in the deadline has been its effect on some members of the Afghan Government who, particularly officials, who have said: We've got a limited amount of time to get this right. I think that's very true.

I do think that on balance it's outweighed by the negative effects, and you only have to look at the sudden willingness of members of the Afghanistan Government to start negotiating directly with the Taliban without taking into account some of these issues we just talked about, the collapse in investment confidence, so that a lot of people who were planning to invest in Afghanistan are no longer planning to, the flight of capital that is a lot of resources, several billion dollars, coming out of the country since the deadline was announced, the fact that two of the most competent members of the Cabinet have been fired, primarily because they were people that are unacceptable to the Taliban as negotiating partners.

I think there's been some negatives as well. But I do think, like you say, the one positive is that some people have woken up and said: We've got to do something different.

What I worry about more is the effect on the Afghan population, that is at the local level, because we now have a lot of tribes and a lot of people in the districts who are unwilling to back the coalition at the local level because they don't believe we're going to stay. I think that's something we have to change. It doesn't mean we don't have a deadline. It means we have to think about how to communicate both "You have to reform or we're going to leave" with "If you do reform, we're going to stay and back you." It's that kind of either-or that has to be in there.

Senator KAUFMAN. Ambassador Crocker.

Ambassador CROCKER. I broadly agree with Dr. Kilcullen. There are at least four audiences for the time line: the American audience, the Afghan Government audience—actually five—the regional audience, the Afghan popular audience, and our adversaries.

As I said earlier, I think that the administration has been effective with the American audience in creating a sense of nuance and differentiation. I am more concerned that the other four audiences are not picking up on that. I would like to see us find ways to do precisely what you're suggesting, send a signal that patience is finite and that we have got to see positive direction in a range of areas relating to governance, but also signaling perhaps more clearly than we've been able to thus far to those other four audi-

ences that, depending on how things develop over this coming year, we are prepared to make a long-term commitment.

We talked about the importance of local governance, which I think we all believe is absolutely crucial. But that's the problem we're into now. Given the incapacities of the central government, the only way governance at the local level is possible is with our strong support. Yet you're going to find few people willing to take those risks if they think that support is going to vanish, leaving them there a year from now.

Senator KAUFMAN. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Kaufman, and thank you for your words about the hearing.

Just very quickly, Ms. Salbi, earlier you were talking about the jobs, schools, et cetera, and it sounded awesomely like nation-building to me, not counterinsurgency even. You're nodding.

Ms. SALBI. I think it's part of the job. I think it's part of the deal. If I use Iraq as an example, what the Iraqis in areas—there were so many militias out there. What the people in that area, in these neighborhoods, were asking for is to fix their sewage system, to improve their housing systems, and to get better education. It's very interrelated for me with the role the militia's playing in these contexts.

The CHAIRMAN. But Afghanistan is not Iraq.

Ms. SALBI. Afghanistan is worse than Iraq—

The CHAIRMAN. It's way behind. That's what I'm saying, way behind. The concept of doing that for the average American right now, who's struggling to pay the bills, find their own job, grow our own economy, is pretty daunting.

Ms. SALBI. I think we are competing with al-Qaeda in terms of development. I argue that al-Qaeda and members of the Taliban are going and addressing why—and addressing people's immediate needs. I think we need to—I wrote a whole paper of why women are supporting them. When a widow is received by the Taliban and said, here's a rice sack, I'll feed you and your children for a whole month, just give me a few children to train them and recruit them, she's making that choice.

The CHAIRMAN. That brings us back to the nature of insurgency. Dr. Kilcullen, we all understand the concept of trying to win hearts and minds, but there's a basic question: Do we have enough people on the ground and capacity to be able to do it?

And there's another question: Why can't the Afghans do some of that themselves? I think a lot of Americans are asking the question: Hey, do these people want to fight for themselves a little bit? You know, the Taliban don't have—how much money do we put into one recruit? How much money do we put in, Dr. Kilcullen?

Dr. KILCULLEN. It's roughly \$25,000 a year for one Afghan private soldier.

The CHAIRMAN. And how much in the training?

Dr. KILCULLEN. I could find out the answer to that, but I'm not sure off the top of my head.

The CHAIRMAN. I saw a figure of something like half a million dollars or something.

Dr. KILCULLEN. You mean for a unit?

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

Dr. KILCULLEN. Yes, for an Afghan battalion.

The CHAIRMAN. What do you think it is per Taliban?

Dr. KILCULLEN. You would probably need access to some—the audit of some agencies in another country, but I suspect it's a lot cheaper.

The CHAIRMAN. Suspect a lot cheaper? I think you're an expert enough to know.

Dr. KILCULLEN. It is obviously much cheaper.

The CHAIRMAN. Dramatically.

Dr. KILCULLEN. But the really significant difference is between an American soldier in country and a Taliban.

The CHAIRMAN. That's an even bigger difference. That's a million dollars or something, I believe—

Dr. KILCULLEN. It's a very substantial amount of money.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. Correct?

Dr. KILCULLEN. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. So the question that a lot of Americans are asking themselves is: Hey, if these guys really don't like the Taliban, which everybody says they don't—what are the Taliban at, 9 percent in the country in terms of popularity?

Dr. KILCULLEN. If that.

The CHAIRMAN. If that. And they don't want the Taliban back, correct? So a lot of Americans are saying: Hey, where are they? Can you answer that, Ambassador Crocker?

I mean, it's not as if Afghans haven't been fighting for centuries. Do we have to train Afghans how to fight? They kicked the Soviets out. What's going on here?

Ambassador CROCKER. Well, I am at quite some distance now from any direct involvement in Afghanistan or even Pakistan. And acknowledging that there are enormous differences between Iraq and Afghanistan, with everything being more difficult in Afghanistan, I think there are certain points of comparison. And it is why I think at this critical juncture our security effort is so important.

There is in many areas and in many cases simply no alternative to the Taliban except for us. Afghan security forces are improving, but, as I said earlier, we have to be very careful at this juncture not to make the mistake we did in Iraq, which is asking them to do too much too soon.

The CHAIRMAN. I understand, but I don't think you're getting to my question. I mean, if 50 guys can decide to go off and be fed and paid a little bit and sort of taken care of sufficiently that they'll find—they aren't all ideologues. A lot of them are kids, unemployed, they're thugs, they're criminals, they're different categories of Taliban.

But if they're satisfied to go off and do that, why aren't the other folks satisfied to fight back with less?

Ambassador CROCKER. Well, I think that's exactly what we're starting to see. Again, I'm just following the press reports, but with President Karzai now authorizing the formation of local protection forces, I think that's precisely the way we should go. Again, it requires local organization. You need to have the central government's authority. General Petraeus seems to have gotten that. And

it may be in some rough respects not dissimilar to the Sons of Iraq effort that Dr. Kilcullen was so intimately involved in.

But there again, if we're going to expect young men to take up arms locally against the Taliban, they've got to have the expectation that in 12 months that we just don't vanish completely before there is an Afghan backup that is going to guarantee the Taliban does not literally remove their heads.

So I think we're taking an important initiative here, but it's—again, it's time lines and signals to different audiences that I was speaking to in response to Senator Kaufman's question.

Dr. KILCULLEN. I might just add to this. I agree with Ambassador Crocker. I'll go back to something I said earlier, that what is good enough governance? It's the local community having a say in the critical issues that affect it, including security.

I'll quote to you verbatim from a conversation that I had with a local district elder, Mullah Abdul Salaam, who was a Taliban leader who defected from the Taliban to the government in March 2008. I sat down with him and 11 of his tribal leaders about a month after he defected and I said: Why did you decide to leave the Taliban and join the government? And he said: You don't get it; that's not how it works. He said: I wasn't with the Taliban before and I'm not with the government now; I'm trying to protect my own population, and I'm going to stick with whatever I believe gives the right security to my people.

And I said: Well, what is that? He said: Well, the British came into my district, they disarmed me and then they left, so now I'm vulnerable to the Taliban. He said: Give me my own weapons back; if I can't have my own weapons back, then I want American troops. If I can't have American troops, then I'll take the Afghan army, but I don't want the Afghan police.

That reflects a lot of what I've heard from different people at that local village and district level over the last few years of conversations in Afghanistan.

Why are the Taliban willing to fight when members in the Afghan army aren't necessarily as willing? First, I think it's slightly derogatory to the Afghan Army. I've seen them fight pretty hard. But I think your general point is right that the motivation of Taliban fighters seems to be more substantial. It's largely because in about 75 percent of cases they're fighting in their own district and for their own district and under tribal elders who they respect, who they know well, and they've known since they were a child. That's the difference.

The CHAIRMAN. Is it also that they're fighting somebody that they perceive to be an occupier?

Dr. KILCULLEN. I think the biggest grievances that I hear from people are actually to do with the Afghan Government, and they are corruption, lack of access to justice, and bad behavior. What you often hear from people that are aligned with the Taliban is that it's the corruption and injustice of the government that most concerns them. You also hear them say: Look, I don't want to necessarily be part of the Taliban, but my district is so insecure, who am I going to back? I have to back someone who comes from my district. In a lot of cases that's the Taliban.

I do think that in some cases they're opposed to us because we're foreigners, but I think that the real issue is lack of an alternative. They don't like the Taliban, but they would rather the Taliban than lethal anarchy.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Lugar.

Senator LUGAR. I have just one question, Mr. Chairman. Just picking up on your point, Dr. Kilcullen, earlier we were talking about how negotiations might begin, how the parties could be assembled. But the point you've just made is that by and large Afghans have great reservations about their government, specifically concerning the well-documented corruption problem, as well as with respect to its competence and fairness. So it's confusing to me how this group can be led to gather at the negotiating table given that we've already said that this process has to be guided by the Afghan Government, and a good number of the parties that are going to need to be compelled to negotiate currently have very little confidence in the conduct of that government, this one or any other one, I suspect, previously in Afghanistan.

In other words, it's just very hard for me to envision the end of the trail when the parties themselves have such diverse views of each other, quite apart from whoever might be out in the field in the brunt of conflict, participating in operations leading to the killing of Taliban forces.

In other words, who will actually step up and say to the Afghan Government, shape up, you've really got to change your ways or you won't be able to gain the confidence of your people? This is beyond our capacity and I think the capacity of the other governments and everybody else involved. What really brings about any degree of reform that is credible?

Dr. KILCULLEN. Well, sir, I would just say that it's the United States. We sit here and we criticize the Afghan Government. This is our Afghan Government that we set up. These are our leaders that we put in charge. When I say "we" I mean the international community, the Bonn process. We've called on them repeatedly to reform. We need to say: Look, you stand or fall on the basis of international community assistance. In fact, that's very much the conversation that happened last week in Kabul, in fact.

So that I think that the international community has to put its foot down about some of these behaviors. But I would also just say—and this is repeating something that was said earlier. The average Afghan doesn't wake up in the morning and say: I live under a corrupt government. What they're worried about is not the international recognition of the Karzai government. What they're interested in is local issues, local abuses, access to justice, infrastructure issues, those kind of things. You can get a long way in shaping people's willingness to negotiate by affecting those local areas.

We talked about shaping the Taliban to make them weaker for negotiations. You also have to shape the Afghan government to get them to a position where they're actually credible enough to be part of those negotiations, and I do think that's a longer timeline than next summer. It's going to take us a while.

Senator LUGAR. But are there really alternatives? Didn't we select or support various elements, now including President Karzai, in part because they appeared to be the best alternative? Where

are the other possibilities? In other words, if Karzai said, OK, if you're not behind me, who else would you support? Who really would be any different?

Dr. KILCULLEN. The alternative is not another national figure that's out there. The alternative is another approach, a locally inclusive approach based on things like district elections and those sorts of approaches, rather than solely looking for the right individual leader at the elite level. I think the elite focus is not the right way to go here.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Lugar.

Senator Kaufman, I think you had an additional question?

Senator KAUFMAN. Yes, I do.

Look. Our government, we set it up. Stand or fall, put our foot down. I've only been hanging around, going to Afghanistan, for the last year and a half. And we've put our foot down, we've yelled, we've screamed. We put in an incentive for July 2011. Everybody says, well, that's not such a good idea.

Dr. Kilcullen, you described it as a silver lining. I described it as the meat and potatoes of what we're doing, because we've got to move the Karzai government, the Kabul government.

And the idea that we're going to be around in 2014—we're supposed to have a review of this in December of this year. We're supposed to have another review in July of next year, and already we're talking about 2014? What happens? I have not seen a whole lot of progress in terms of governance on the ground.

We had good people over there. We've been working them hard. Our military's doing a great job in what they're doing. But in terms of governance on the ground, I have a real problem with seeing where it's going.

Let's just talk about corruption for a minute, just for a minute. We talk about corruption. The report's now out that we've found people, we've found they were corrupt, we got the goods on them, and there was a report in the Post, I think it was June 28, the Karzai government let them go. Now, at what point do we say that we can't make this work? It may be our government. We can't make this work if in fact when we find corruption, when we identify it, when we nail them, the government lets them go.

So just some comments on that. I don't get it.

Dr. KILCULLEN. I'm going to defer to Ambassador Crocker here and also Ms. Salbi. One of the things that I was most impressed with about the surge in Iraq was the way that Ambassador Crocker and General Petraeus forced a change in behavior on the part of the Iraqi Government. That was done through more than just passionate calls for change. It was leverage based on dossiers showing bad behavior by certain officials that were shown to key members of the Iraqi Government, and they were told: You fire this guy or we're going to fire him for you.

Senator KAUFMAN. Can I just interrupt for a second. We've shown dossiers to the Kabul government and people.

Dr. KILCULLEN. But we've never held—that's right, but we've never held them, I think, accountable—

Senator KAUFMAN. How do you hold them accountable if they're not going to do it? I mean, you in fact are there. This present gov-

ernment and the President doesn't seem to react. They know they've got us. They know it's our government. We present them with dossiers. We presented them in Iraq and we didn't, and they did something. But we presented them to this government and they haven't done anything.

Dr. KILCULLEN. I think I generally agree with you. We've had this conversation before, not in this forum, that in fact they—

Senator KAUFMAN. My point is at some point—that's why I think we need to look at this hard in December and see where we are. We've got to look at this thing again in July and see where we are. Can we carry this off? The military will do their job. I have no doubt about that. But will the government be able to hold up their part of the bargain?

Yes, Ms. Salbi.

Ms. SALBI. The United States is going to leave. It is considered an occupier. We will leave both for our own interests as well as the frustrations with the Afghan Government. For me, it's how we're going to leave. Either leave with Dr. Kilcullen saying create viable alternatives there, all the suggestions, either leave and create a new coalition who would lead Afghanistan in the future, which is what I suggested, have Turkey bring other Muslim-led countries to take more ownership in the solutions for Afghanistan, or whatever other options. Do not leave and repeat the mistakes of the 1980s, which eventually led to what we are dealing with. That for me is the worst case scenario, if we leave and wash our hands off and say we have nothing to do with them, because that will create a fertile land to the reemergence, if not of the Taliban, other extremist groups.

It's about how do we leave, so let us leave in a way that at least carries on something. I don't think leaving with the Afghan Government as is is a viable solution for us.

Senator KAUFMAN. Well, I'll tell you what. I'm not for spending one more dollar or one more American life until we have a conviction that we can get governance that's good enough. This is not about resurrecting Afghanistan, with all due respect, and I care about Afghanistan. But the standard is not that we leave something better. On the day we decide that we don't have governance there that's good enough, we should leave that day.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Kaufman.

I need to go to a 12 o'clock meeting, so I'm going to leave it in the hands of Senator Corker, Senator Lugar. I just want to thank you all for coming today. I think there are a couple of options that we haven't put on the table today that I'm not going to, but I'd like to talk to you about privately.

I thank you for coming today. It's been very, very helpful and I look forward to following up with you very shortly. Thanks.

Senator Corker.

Senator CORKER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I too want to thank you for the hearing. I think it's been very good, and I agree with Senator Kaufman, one of the best we've had.

You know, you listen and you come to—at least I come to the observation, I don't know who's holding the best hand here. If it's in our national interest that—and I think Ambassador Crocker and

others have said that it is in our national interest—that Afghanistan function with a good enough government, then, getting to Senator Kaufman’s frustrations, I don’t know what it is to lever, because obviously President Karzai knows it’s in our national interest and yet he doesn’t behave in a way that breeds loyalty from folks in the Afghan Army and the Afghan police. They know that the government is corrupt. They know there are bad actors.

So I’d like to—I don’t understand exactly. I know that we were successful—these are all about human beings. I know you said don’t invest too much in the elite and I agree that we should be working at the local level and much should be occurring there.

What is it you do to lever someone who accepts bad behavior on the ground and yet knows that we believe it’s in our national interest to be there and for Afghanistan to be successful? Again, who’s holding the best hand of cards?

Ambassador CROCKER. Senator, if I could make a comment on that, because it also gets a bit at Senator Kaufman’s point. I don’t mean to keep using Iraq as a point of reference, but I think there are certain dynamics there that can inform us in Afghanistan.

What we had in Iraq was a sense of partnership with Prime Minister al-Maliki. That sense of partnership was severely tested a number of times on both sides, but with the surge I think down deep Maliki felt we were doing everything we could to make things work in Iraq and to make his government successful.

That set the stage for a series of very, very difficult conversations on individuals, individual issues, issues of corruption, issues of malfeasance. In some of those we prevailed, in some of those we didn’t. In some of those Maliki was able to say: I understand, I got you, but here’s the other threading on this; if I do that, here’s what unravels underneath in ways that maybe we didn’t understand.

I say all of that because I think the sine qua non for moving in a positive direction in Afghanistan is a shared sense of partnership with President Karzai. He has to believe and we have to believe that, however we may differ on various issues, that we are working for the same goal, which is a stable enough Afghanistan with good enough governance to prevail on its own.

If you have that, then I think you can have these difficult conversations and start making some progress where we and he would see that we’re not suggesting the removal of this official just because it makes us feel good, it’s because we see it as essential for him to succeed. But what has to underlie that is the belief on both sides that we are seeking the same goals.

I think over the last few months we have worked harder to try and signal that and I sense, although I’m not close to it, I sense with some success. But clearly, over this coming year between now and December and December on forward, there have to be those conversations. But to be meaningful, they have to be with the Government of Afghanistan and its leader. That’s our partner, for better or worse, and I hope we are able to find a way to work with him to start to make a strategic difference.

Senator CORKER. Dr. Kilcullen, do you want to add to that?

Dr. KILCULLEN. No, I agree entirely with that. I would just maybe add the comment that, can we reform the Afghan Govern-

ment? Maybe. Can we do it by July 2011? No. That's why I think the timeline matters.

Senator CORKER. Well, I think what's occurred has occurred, but I think when we focus on counterinsurgencies the fact is you have to have a partner for it to work. I think that's the issue of the day, really, is how we in essence end up having a partner that works. The American people have got to decide, through us and others, whether they believe this to be in the country's national interest to ensure that Afghanistan succeeds.

I'm not sure that any of us have done a good enough job explaining whether that is or is not true. But in a counterinsurgency you have to have a government that functions. So far, that's obviously been a huge gap, and I think there will be a lot of discussion as we move ahead.

I would say that I think having General Petraeus come and talk about how that relationship is developing at the right time, as you mentioned at the end of your testimony, your written testimony, would be a good thing. I know that Senator Clinton—excuse me—Secretary Clinton has mentioned she'd be willing to do the same. But I think understanding how that relationship is evolving or not evolving would be an important thing for all of us to understand.

With that, I'll stop. I thank you all for your time and certainly for wonderful testimony.

Senator LUGAR [presiding]. Senator Kaufman.

Senator KAUFMAN. Can I just make one comment, because I think it's really key. I don't think anyone's expecting us to solve this by July 2011. But I think what we're trying to say is that by December of this year, which was committed to, we would see progress toward this. Some of the progress is measurable. I'm not talking about the whole list of metrics and everything else. But let me tell you: If in July 2011 we're still trying to get the first person in jail who we've built a dossier on, then 2014 is not an option.

Dr. KILCULLEN. I would agree with you.

Referring to a conversation we had once before, a lot of the benefits you get from the timeline, you would get those same benefits whether it was public or not. A lot of the negative effects of the timeline come from it being a public timeline. So that there may in fact be an interest in private conversations depends on what develops during that timeline.

Senator KAUFMAN. Yes. It depends on whether you're trying to concentrate the mind of the Taliban or concentrate the mind of the government. My opinion is that—you know the old saying, there's nothing like the prospect of hanging to concentrate the mind. But I think the idea is not to have it all settled by July 2011. The idea is do we have—I'm not going to get into the whole thing, but do we have an idea that it's going to work out.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you very much, Senator Kaufman.

I'm certain that I'm speaking on behalf of our chairman and all of the members of the committee in thanking each of the members of the panel for really your thoughtful and well-informed testimony today, and for your responses to our questions. I agree with all that this has been one of the most important conversations we've had about Afghanistan on this committee, and hopefully this will be important in the dialogue with the American public.

So we're grateful to all three of you. We look forward to seeing you again, and with that the hearing is adjourned.
[Whereupon, at 12:08 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

