

## **CANADA IN KANDAHAR: NO PEACE TO KEEP**

### **A CASE STUDY OF THE MILITARY COALITIONS IN SOUTHERN AFGHANISTAN**



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## FIELD REPORT CONCLUSIONS

### **Following US policies is turning Kandahar into a suicide mission for Canada**

Canadian troops and Afghan civilians are paying with their lives for Canada's adherence to the US government's failing military and counter-narcotics policies in Kandahar. The US-led counter-terrorist operations and militaristic poppy eradication strategies have triggered a new war with the Taliban and other insurgent groups, and are causing countless civilian deaths. To a large extent, it can be said that Operation Enduring Freedom and the related militaristic counter-narcotics policies are significant contributors to the current state of war in Kandahar and the other southern provinces. Canada and the international community continue to seem to unquestioningly accept America's fundamentally flawed policy approach in southern Afghanistan, thereby jeopardising the success of military operations in the region and the stabilisation, reconstruction and development mission objectives.

The Canadian mission in southern Afghanistan must respond to three equally important crises:

#### ***1. The Poverty Crisis***

After five years of international presence in Afghanistan and the establishment of a democratically elected government, little has been achieved to relieve the extreme poverty of the majority of the rural Afghan population in Kandahar province. The substantial efforts and vast amounts of funds provided for the establishment of stability and security in Afghanistan have not been matched by comparable measures in terms of development. The basic needs of the local population are not being met and as a result the population is giving its support back to the Taliban and other local power-holders.

#### ***2. The Opium Crisis***

Forced poppy crop eradication has dramatically contributed to the acceleration of the deteriorating security and poverty situation in Kandahar. The most disquieting consequence of this ineffective counter-narcotics policy is that it has intensified the local power games. The allegiance of local populations is now shifting away from support for the international community and the central government towards Taliban insurgent factions which are regaining power by cashing in on growing local disillusionment.

### ***3. The Security Crisis***

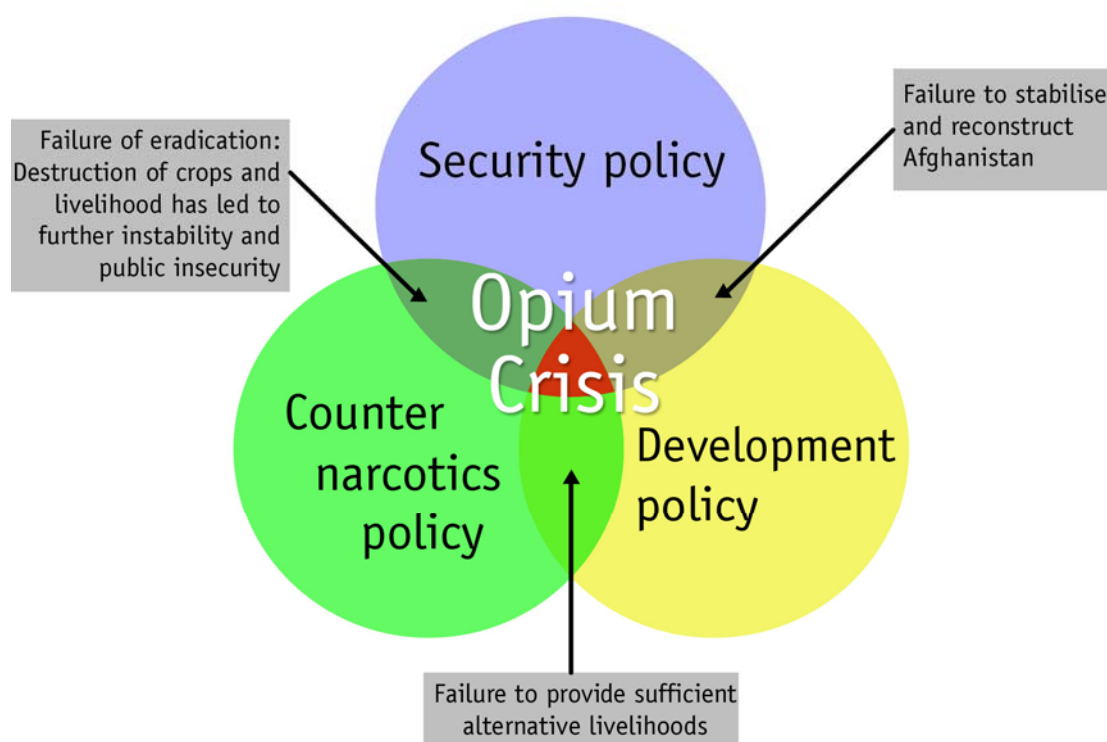
Although in 2001 a high security threat existed in Afghanistan, the current state of war has been triggered by the very interventions which were intended to counteract the Taliban and Al Qaeda. The security crisis has been produced by a combination of an aggressive international military presence, confusion surrounding the military mission and objectives, and a lack of respect and understanding for the local communities in Afghanistan. Innocent civilians have been the victims of the coalition's counter-insurgency interventions in Kandahar province with no proper response to those deaths.

Until now, the international community's response to these interlinked crises has been largely ineffective. Security, development and counter-narcotics policies have operated independently of one another with counter-narcotics and military responses given priority over responding to the poverty and development crises.

The multi-dimensional nature of Afghanistan's crisis situation requires a comprehensive and coordinated response, where each of the three crises is awarded equal importance. Additionally, none of the policy areas should be allowed to undertake operations that undermine achievements in other areas. The most blatant example of this lack of critical policy integration is that the US-led forced poppy crop eradication campaigns have been allowed to be pursued in Kandahar province, despite the extremely negative effect these policies have on the security and poverty levels.

There does not seem to be any learning process underway regarding the results of US military presence in Kandahar. Actions and policies implemented have not been successful, or have in fact exacerbated the dynamics (in particular the support of the Taliban in this province) that initially brought the international community to Kandahar.

Historically no foreign military presence has gained steady control of the southern parts of Afghanistan. The United States has been unable to do so in the years since 9/11 and it is not anticipated that the Canadian military will have any different experience if it continues to follow and support US policies there.

**Afghanistan's Security and Development nexus****I. REPORT CONCLUSIONS WITH REGARD TO THE POVERTY CRISIS****After five years of coalition presence, conditions of extreme poverty persist**

The unbalanced approach of the international community, which has mainly been directed towards counter-narcotics and counter-insurgency, has not only been ineffective and indirectly responsible for the growing state of war, it has also ignored the immediate and vital needs of the Afghan people. Much of the Afghan population is living in conditions of extreme poverty without any short or long term prospects of an improvement in their situation. Much has been promised, but very little has been delivered. Many do not perceive that they have received any benefits from the new government institutions and democracy.

**Ten months of Canadian presence in southern Afghanistan has failed to improve development in Kandahar – the situation has continued to deteriorate under Canadian PRT**

Canadian troops are failing to stabilise Kandahar province, almost a year after taking over control of the Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team. The Taliban and other insurgent groups have re-emerged, and the security situation has deteriorated significantly. In this increasingly negative security environment, Canadian troops have largely failed to assist in the reconstruction and economic development of the province, leaving the majority of the local population in extreme poverty and almost totally dependent on illegal poppy cultivation. However, it appears that Operation Enduring Freedom's failings have not been openly discussed at the international level. As such, there is an urgent need to openly debate the limited results and counter-productive strategies of this operation.

No foreign military has ever succeeded in Afghanistan. The United States did not succeed when they were in Kandahar. Since the Canadians arrived, the situation has deteriorated further.

## **II. CONCLUSIONS WITH REGARD TO THE OPIUM CRISIS**

**Support for US-backed counter-narcotics policies is further endangering the Canadian mission**

At present, poppy eradication is destroying the livelihoods of a large part of the population of Kandahar, and these crops are not being replaced with sustainable and profitable alternatives. Even if Canadian soldiers avoid actively supporting the US-backed Afghan national eradication campaigns, Canadians are still seen as complicit in the destruction of livelihoods by the United States. This perceived complicity adds another chilling dimension to the local population's experiences at the hands of international forces, thereby further fuelling support for the Taliban in Kandahar.

## **III. CONCLUSIONS WITH REGARD TO THE SECURITY CRISIS**

**Canadian forces' situation in Kandahar made more dangerous due to deep mission confusion**

Canadian troops are currently under the command of both the United States-led counter-terrorist Operation Enduring Freedom and the UN-mandated NATO-led stabilising International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). However, the differences between the objectives of the two military operations mean that the Canadian mission is far from clear, and there is local and international confusion surrounding the role of Canadian troops in Kandahar. This opaqueness of purpose and timing is making the Canadian troops' mission considerably more dangerous.



**Canada is at war in Afghanistan, not keeping the peace**

In Kandahar, Canadian troops are fighting increasingly deadly counter-insurgency operations under Operation Enduring Freedom against the resurgent Taliban. Kandahar now is a war zone, with suicide bombings, rocket attacks, ambushes and repeated outbreaks of open warfare, resulting in numerous Canadian fatalities and many more injuries. Consequently, Canadian troops are shifting away from their traditional and accustomed role as peacekeepers, and instead are heavily engaged in waging war against largely unidentifiable enemies.

**Tragic civilian deaths lead to anger against Canadians in Kandahar**

Countless civilians have been killed in incidents involving Canadian or American troops in Kandahar, undermining local support and complicating Canada's secondary mission objective - winning the hearts and minds of the local population. The deaths of innocent Kandahar civilians at the hands of the Canadian military has come to symbolise to the local population Canadian indifference to the Afghan people and to symbolize the failing mission in southern Afghanistan. Canada has wholly failed to properly deal with the issue of civilian deaths in Kandahar. It is increasingly evident that without clear local support, peace, stability and security will remain an illusion.

## REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

### **Canada and the coalition must break with the US-led military approach**

Given the poor results achieved by the US-led Operation Enduring Freedom, the development efforts to date and the current counter-narcotics strategy, it is necessary to dramatically change the focus of the international community's approach in Afghanistan. It is essential to completely re-think the policy objectives and priorities in the face of the current three-fold crisis situation which is putting at risk both the lives of the local population and the international military presence in southern Afghanistan.

### **I. RECOMMENDATIONS WITH REGARD TO THE POVERTY CRISIS**

#### **Immediate financial aid needed for poor communities in Kandahar**

Southern Afghanistan **urgently** needs an injection of financial aid earmarked for the short-term relief of conditions of extreme poverty in which many people live.

#### **Engage with the local communities – Hold extensive community Jirga**

Afghanistan has been pushed into meeting 'Western' post-conflict benchmarks such as 'free and fair elections' at the expense of meeting the communities' immediate need to provide for their families. The coalition requires a more comprehensive understanding of local priorities, and closer engagement and relationships at the local levels. The results of this work must then be used to shape the policy choices of senior decision makers.

There is an urgent need for Canadians and the international community in Kandahar to immediately and significantly engage with all stakeholders in Kandahar and to stimulate a shared sense of ownership of Kandahar's reconstruction and development process. Canada should organise a broad series of local *jirga*-style meetings in accordance with local customs, between farmers' representatives, community leaders, the international community and the Canadians in Kandahar. This will help address the international community's critical failure to understand the actual impact of the policies that have been implemented in the region. Effectively addressing local concerns with the participation of local communities should be an integral part of all future policy decisions.

## II. RECOMMENDATIONS WITH REGARD TO THE OPIUM CRISIS

### **Provide poppy farmers with a period of grace**

In the coming years, thousands of poppy farmers will continue to lack sufficient legal economic alternatives so as to provide for their families. As such, there is a strong need to provide this poor and often indebted part of the local population with a period of grace during which they could continue poppy cultivation without their crops being eradicated. Such a scheme for poppy farmers would provide for the smooth transition from current illegal poppy cultivation to legal alternatives without endangering farmers' economic situations. A period of grace will also constrain rural communities' support for insurgent groups, as farmers will no longer be targeted by ineffective and destructive poppy eradication campaigns. Thailand, after commencing its opium control project in 1978, gave farmers a four-year interlude in which to end their opium cultivation and find alternative crops. Such a scheme should also be applied to Afghanistan.

### **Recognise the links between security and development: Stop Forced Crop Eradication**

Because crop eradication is fuelling southern Afghanistan's insurgency, Kandahar stakeholders should urgently explore innovative approaches to the province's drug economy. The pervasiveness of opium production in Kandahar province, its significant role in sustaining rural livelihoods, and the rise in prominence of parallel institutions related to the drug economy indicate that short-term, rapid eradication programmes have multiple, unintended and far-reaching, negative repercussions. Accordingly, any approach to curtail poppy cultivation in the province should assess both the short and long-term effects that such an approach will have on rural livelihoods, the local security situation and on broader long-term development prospects in the region. In accordance with UNODC policy there should be no forced crop eradication without a viable economic alternative first being in place.

### **Recognise the importance of poppy to Kandahar: implement the provisions in the new Afghanistan Counter Narcotics law that provide for licensing opium production for medicine**

Effective responses to the challenges confronting Kandahar Province require a deeper understanding of the diverse and multiple connections between security, development and poppy cultivation in Afghanistan. Instead of implementing futile yet politically expedient crop eradication-centred drug policies, the international community must recognise the unique circumstances characterising the continued cultivation of poppy in Kandahar and open the way for new pragmatic approaches.

The best short-term solution for southern Afghanistan is assisting the country to produce essential opium-based medicines such as morphine and codeine in accordance with the legal framework found in the new Afghanistan Counter-Narcotics Law passed in December 2005. Implementing these provisions would partly

bring illegal poppy cultivation under control and would also provide economic opportunities and hope to the poverty-stricken poppy growing areas of southern Afghanistan. Licensed poppy cultivation would impact positively on the current security situation by decreasing popular sympathy for insurgents and increasing support for the central and local government.

### **III. RECOMMENDATIONS WITH REGARD TO THE SECURITY CRISIS**

#### **Clarify and rationalize the currently conflicting objectives of the international military presence**

National and international policies relating to the presence and purposes of international military and civilian personnel in Kandahar province must be clarified and coordinated. The profusion of various missions in the region and their conflicting objectives threatens the safety of Canadian personnel in the province. The deteriorating security situation necessitates that Canada's mission in the south of Afghanistan be as clear and comprehensible as possible, both for the soldiers on the ground, the people of Kandahar and the Canadian public.

#### **Counter-insurgency efforts must be linked with pro-poor development work**

The international coalition and the Canadian mission in southern Afghanistan should focus on the immediate economic needs of the local communities, and any use of force should be balanced with extensive, visible and effective development efforts. Sustainable peace in Kandahar and in Afghanistan cannot be achieved by military operations alone: comprehensive and long-term development efforts need to be made. The success of the international mission in Afghanistan relies on convincing the local population that development efforts will provide for a better future and on the realisation of these promises.

#### **Stop the killings of civilians**

In order to achieve the objectives of stability, security, reconstruction and development, it is vital to stop the so-called "collateral damage" of civilian deaths which is fuelling anger among against the Canadians in the province and turning the local population back towards support for the Taliban. Recent incidents such as the coalition's air strike on Azizi village in which approximately 30 civilians were killed including women and children, or the killing by Canadian troops of the father of six who was a passenger in a taxi in Kandahar City, increasingly undermine the support of the local population for the coalition's presence and activities in southern Afghanistan. In the cases of those civilians which have already died, a proper diplomatic response to the families, in accordance with Afghan customs, must be immediately undertaken.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Kandahar, the second largest province of Afghanistan, is located in the harsh barren, desert environment of the volatile south-eastern corner of the country. Following the end of the war between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union, this was the province from where the Taliban emerged in the mid-1990s to capture south, east and central Afghanistan. The province is home to many different tribes of mainly Pashtun origin with a very long and dramatic history of violence and war. For centuries now, almost without exception, every generation of young men from Kandahar has been involved in violent tribal conflicts or conflicts with foreign forces invading Afghanistan.

Kandahar's primarily agriculture-based economy has been entirely destroyed by decades of war and drought. What is left is a province where poppy cultivation is the backbone of the rural economy and where thousands of people live in extreme poverty, dependant on growing opium for heroin for their survival. Regular incomes, electricity, running water, schooling and health services are luxury items. The local population for the most part live with the constant fear of local violence, and with uncertainty, and with the lack of hope for a better future.

The political situation in Kandahar is highly unstable, and it has historically been so. What little local support that had been developed for the central government after the first international war against the Taliban has been diminishing rapidly in the last months, and the province is now again in a state of war, which we could refer to as The Second International War against the Taliban.

The province has always, throughout history, maintained a kind of autonomy from any of the various central governments in Kabul, resulting in a fierce distrust of strong central governmental authority, and the maintenance of informal governmental structures based on local and traditional systems. The current "Westernized" governor, Asadullah Khalid, has become increasingly unpopular in the province because of the poppy crop eradication campaigns that he led and took credit for, alongside American private military contractors and American troops. Locals believe he prioritises the US and UK-led counter-narcotics efforts over local farmers' extreme poverty, and neither is he concerned with or moved by civilian deaths that are "collateral" to US or Canadian military operations in the province. More and more, the local population is turning to the Taliban and Kandahar mullahs and other community leaders for support, guidance and security. The Taliban and the local religious leaders are the *real* power holders in Kandahar.

The national and international security forces operating in Kandahar are over-stretched and resources are extremely scarce, with both Afghan policemen and soldiers being underpaid. Additionally, they are seen as bolstering the unpopular governor. The Taliban movement is increasingly targeting these security forces to further weaken the control that these have over security in Kandahar. Afghanistan's insurgency is spreading deeper within the social fabric of the province. State

institutions and their credibility have become weaker and weaker and the state of war has returned again to this troubled and poverty-stricken area.

The international community's involvement in Kandahar, initially led by the US and currently led by Canada, has so far failed to turn the tide on the growing problems of insurgency, instability and insecurity. The US-led Operation Enduring Freedom has been operating in the province of Kandahar since 2001 and has not only failed to stabilise the situation but has also exacerbated tensions in the province. This summer, the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission is taking over from the mainly counter-insurgency focused Operation Enduring Freedom in a new stabilization effort, to ensure that reconstruction and economic development can finally be established. However, the militaristic approach of Operation Enduring Freedom has not provided the NATO troops with a solid base to work from. The economic situation is in many ways worse than it was five years ago when the American forces arrived.

Canada immediately responded to the United States' call to arms in 2001 and has been working in Kandahar for about ten months under Operation Enduring Freedom. Despite the heroic actions of the Canadian military in Kandahar, the policy context and limitations of the mission have produced a problematic environment for the troops. So far Kandahar has not seen more stability, security or more economic development. The country's traditional objectives of peace-keeping and democracy building are not possible to achieve given the current environment in Kandahar.

On May 17 Canada's Parliament narrowly voted to keep Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan until at least 2009, amid public misgivings about following the United States' lead there, the lack of clarity over the Canadian troops' mission, and fears that Canada is losing its traditional peacekeeping role. Additionally, there is currently local and international confusion surrounding the role of Canadian troops in Kandahar and the precise timing of Canada's upcoming transfer from Operation Enduring Freedom to ISAF command. This opaqueness of purpose and timing is making the Canadian troops' mission considerably more dangerous, and the local population hostile to their presence there.

Canada's political leadership has consistently avoided clarifying Canadian operations in Afghanistan, and has effectively misled the Canadian public over Canada's role in Operation Enduring Freedom. In the May 17 parliamentary debate, both the Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs implied that the current Canadian mission is in fact already a NATO mission: "we are working together with our partners from Afghanistan, the UN, NATO and NGOs in an integrated international effort to support the recovery of this country." The Minister of Defence implied that the Operation Enduring Freedom and NATO missions are essentially identical, and that Canada's role will not change once it eventually does come under NATO command: "there will not be one iota of change except that we will be under NATO command instead of Enduring Freedom. Nothing will change." This is a fundamentally incorrect and misleading statement.

Operation Enduring Freedom and the NATO ISAF differ significantly. One of the most important ways in which these military operations are different is in their drug

policy mandates, which have a direct relationship with the reception the local population give to the Canadian military. Whereas ISAF troops are not allowed to directly participate in the eradication of poppy crops, Operation Enduring Freedom commanders are involved in poppy eradication. In fact, international forces have been implicated in eradication activities in Kandahar, one of Afghanistan's major poppy-cultivating provinces.

Crop eradication in Kandahar is contributing to instability and public insecurity by removing the livelihoods of the rural communities. Recent poppy eradication activities have provided anti-state actors such as the Taliban with an opportunity to offer protection to farmers, and thereby gain the confidence and support of poppy farming communities in their struggle against the local government. The local population cannot and does not distinguish between the military troops of the different foreign countries who are stationed there. Indeed during our field research we saw numerous military patrols without flag markers indicating their country of origin.

The growing insurgency, combined with eradication-focused counter-narcotics policies, has resulted in an explosive situation where Canadian troops are negatively identified with the unpopular US troops. The resulting local negative perceptions of Canadian troops seriously threaten Canada's reconstruction and development-focused mission. Incidents such as the unintentional killing of civilians are further dramatically decreasing popular support for the Canadian mission. Neither the Governor of the Province nor the Canadian government has addressed these civilian deaths in the proper manner according to Afghan culture, leaving growing resentment and anger within the local population.

Canadian troops have been handed an impossible mission which can only lead to significant military casualties. Security and development are two inseparable sides of the same reconstruction effort, but it is unlikely that there can be security in Kandahar in the face of eradication-centred drug policies and the legacy of the US militaristic interaction with this community.

We note with concern the continued propagation by the Canadian government of the idea that Canada is in Kandahar on a "peace keeping mission". Kandahar is a province at war: *there is no peace to keep*.

Until Canada fundamentally re-evaluates its approach and creates its own new strategy for its presence in Kandahar, with a clear split from the failed US policies there, the Canadian mission in Afghanistan is blindly following a path that will lead to senseless military and civilian casualties.



## 1. Profile: The Troubled Province of Kandahar

Figure 1: Kandahar Province, Afghanistan



### 1.1 Geography: a harsh environment

Canadian forces in Afghanistan are currently based in the province of Kandahar. Located in the south-eastern corner of Afghanistan, Kandahar is the country's second largest province. Kandahar is bounded on the north and north-west by the mountainous Uruzgan and Zabul provinces, and in the west by Helmand, and shares a very porous 402km-long border with

the Pakistani province of Baluchistan. The two major river systems in the province, the Arghistan and the Arghandab, are tributaries of the Helmand River. The southern part of the province is desert, and aside from a thinly populated strip along the Pakistani border in the district of Shorawak, this area of the province is largely unpopulated.

Table 1: Key facts about Kandahar Province

<b>Size:</b> 54,000 km <sup>2</sup>
<b>Location:</b> Southeast Afghanistan
<b>External border:</b> 402km border with Pakistan
<b>Population:</b> 890,000 (2002 estimate)
<b>Capital city:</b> Kandahar City
<b>Ethnic group:</b> Pashtun
<b>Dominant tribes:</b> Populzai, Barakzai, Allokazai
<b>Agriculture:</b> Fruit, wheat, poppy
<b>Opium cultivation:</b> 13,000 ha. in 2005; estimated 13,000 ha. in 2006
<b>Province governor:</b> Asadullah Khalid



Kandahar is the gateway for much of southern and western Afghanistan. Its capital, Kandahar City, is situated at the junction of Afghanistan's main highway and the major southern link to Pakistan. A highway from Spin Boldak district on the Pakistan border passes through Kandahar City and on to Kabul, while a second major highway leads from Kandahar City to Herat province.

**Figure 2: The road from Kandahar to Lashkar Gah**



## **1.2 The history of a volatile province**

Kandahar City is widely considered to be one of the oldest cities in the world. The city's strategic location was prized by the various competing empires that came to dominate the region's political history. Alexander the Great passed through the city in the fourth century BC, and it is thought that he actually founded the city, which was once named Alexandropolis in his honour. Later the city was ruled by both the Iranian Achaemenid Empire and the Indian Emperor Ashoka. From the seventh century the region was conquered by various rival kingdoms, including the Arabs in the seventh century, the Turkish Ghaznavid Empire in the tenth century, and Genghis Khan in the twelfth century. During this period, the local population, predominantly Pashtun, was converted to Islam.

From 1748 to 1773, Kandahar City was the capital of the emerging independent kingdom of Afghanistan, and is considered to be the birthplace of modern Afghanistan. The Battle of Kandahar was the last major conflict of the Second Anglo-Afghan War in the 1880s, and Britain's decisive victory cemented British control over the region. When Afghanistan achieved full independence under King Amanullah Shah in 1919, Kandahar became part of the state of Afghanistan.

Following the end of the Soviet war with Afghanistan, the Taliban emerged from Kandahar in the mid 1990s to capture south, east and central Afghanistan.

### 1.3 Ethnic composition contributes to instability

Kandahar is divided into 17 districts, 3 sub-districts, and 1,854 villages. The dominant ethnic groups are the Durrani Pashtuns from the Populzai, Barakzai, Allokazai, Achakzai, Noorzai, Mohammedzai, and Alizai tribes. There are also minority communities from tribes such as the Hotak, Tajik, Kakar, Baber, Bareich, Tokhi, Baloch, Ishaqzai and Sayyeds. Historically, there have been political and social tensions amongst the various ethnic groups which are still contributing factors to the political and social dynamic today.

Pashtu is the most widely spoken language, although many of the people who live in and around Kandahar City can also converse in Afghanistan's other main language, Dari. The majority of the population is Sunni Muslim, although there is a Shi'a community close to Kandahar City, and another one in the district of Khakrez.

**Figure 3: Afghan children at the doorstep of their home**



## **1.4 A collapsed and poppy-dependent economy**

Kandahar province has only recently started to recover from more than twenty-five years of war, during which most of Kandahar's industrial infrastructure was either destroyed or badly damaged. In December 2003, a highway linking Kabul to the provincial capital was completed, stimulating the local economy. Some power generation and distribution facilities have been renovated, hundreds of kilometres of irrigation canals have been cleaned and repaired, and traffic along the Highway into Pakistan has tripled in the last two years. However, during recent field trips to the province, local businessmen stated that due to the deteriorating security situation they were moving their families and businesses out of Kandahar to Kabul or Pakistan where they would be safer.

Kandahar's pre-war economy was primarily agriculture-based, with fruit production predominating. Indeed, Kandahar was widely known for the diversity of fruits grown in the province, particularly grapes (chiefly for raisin production), pomegranates, apricots, pears, plums and apples. In addition, industrial crops such as cotton, sesame and sunflowers, and various field crops such as wheat, barley, and corn were grown in some parts of the province. After Kandahar City, Arghandab, Dand, Pamjwai and Maiwand were the most agriculturally productive districts. However, these cities were significantly damaged during the war. The many years of fighting largely destroyed Kandahar's commercial agricultural economy, which was principally based on the agricultural output of these districts.

Small-scale rural industries, such as the production of galims (woven carpets) and namads (pressed wool carpets) tend to predominate in Khakrez, Reg, Shorabakt and Maruf districts. Manufactured products such as woollen cloth, felt, and silk, as well as wood, cumin seeds, fruits, madder, asafoetida and horses are exported throughout Afghanistan and to Pakistan. Kandahar City also produces some construction materials, although brick-factory owners have reported difficulties in finding skilled and experienced Afghan workers, and generally hire workers from Pakistan.<sup>1</sup> Other small-scale industries include the packaging of animal fat in Arghandab and Maruf; baskets in Dand and Shahwalikot; and farm implements in Spin Boldak.

## **1.5 Limited government authority in Kandahar**

In Kandahar, Afghanistan's central government is represented by the provincial governor, appointed by President Karzai. The governor is supported by 17 district governors, who are in turn assisted by district police chiefs. Together these civil servants are responsible for governance and the establishment and maintenance of municipal structures. However, the actual legitimacy of these provincial governance institutions depends to a large extent on their ties with traditional governance structures, and their actual authority in the current unstable environment is very limited, and in some districts non-existent.

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<sup>1</sup> Shoib Safi, 'Kandahar's Employment Crisis', Institute for War and Peace Reporting, 8 July 2003.

### **1.5.1 A US-friendly governor: Asadullah Khalid**

A former governor of Ghazni province, Asadullah Khalid, age 39, was appointed governor of Kandahar province in 2005 by President Karzai. It is widely believed that Asadullah Khalid gained his position as a result of his excellent relationship with US authorities in Afghanistan. Tough on the Pakistan-Taliban connection, Khalid has become increasingly unpopular in Kandahar due to his poppy eradication campaigns.

Locals believe governor Khalid prioritises the US and UK-led counter-narcotics efforts over local farmers' desperate economic situation. These eradication policies rapidly reduce the support for Khalid, the central government, and the foreign military presence in Kandahar. On June 4, 2006, Governor Khalid survived a suicide bomb attack on his transport convoy.

### **1.5.2 Weak Afghan National Army and National Police**

Together with the provincial and district governors, other institutions of state operating in Kandahar include the Afghan National Police force (ANP) and the Afghan National Army (ANA). The governmental forces are over-stretched, and resources are extremely scarce. In Kandahar, ANP and ANA troops are deployed in counter-narcotics and counter-insurgency operations, as well as for the personal protection of local governors. As such, resources for law and order enforcement are extremely limited.

The ANP is underpaid: untrained policemen receive only US\$15 per month, while trained officers earn an estimated US\$65. In the province's capital, Kandahar City, police are paid regularly, but in the more remote districts police officers have reportedly not received payment for many months. As a result many ANP officers are susceptible to bribes from the criminal networks involved in the opium trade, as well as from the insurgents.

Together with government officials ANA and ANP forces have also been targeted by insurgents in recent months. On 3 April, Taliban forces attempted to assassinate the police chief of Arghandab District, and on 21 April an attack by insurgents in Kandahar's Maiwand district left six policemen dead. Also on 11 June, three policemen were injured when insurgents attacked a police station in Kandahar City.

The targeting of central governance structures by the Taliban and other insurgents is further weakening institutions, which already lack loyalty from Kandahar's population.

In general, there is a serious lack of security forces in Afghanistan. A recent report confirms that 200,000 police, army and other security forces would be necessary to stabilise Afghanistan.<sup>2</sup> However, the total number of international and national

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<sup>2</sup> Seth G. Jones, "Averting Failure in Afghanistan," *Survival*, vol. 48 (spring 2006), pp. 111-28.

security forces currently present in Afghanistan amounts to 120,000. This huge security gap makes it extremely difficult to guarantee security in Afghanistan.

### 1.5.3 Strong traditional governance structures

Alongside formal state institutions, traditional systems of local governance contribute to the maintenance of social order in Kandahar. Although these local social structures are informal in nature, within rural communities in Kandahar the traditional collective decision-making and dispute-settlement bodies known as *Jirga* or *Shura* are more influential than the new central government institutions.<sup>3</sup>

*Jirga* and *Shura* hold significant local power. Should these local structures object to any laws or policies, which the central government may attempt to implement, it is highly likely that central government authorities would encounter strong resistance in enforcing such laws.

Local religious leaders are also extremely influential in Kandahar's rural community, and the Mullahs' influence is growing amid confusion over who exactly controls the province. In the aftermath of the recent air strikes by international forces on Kandahar villages, locals turned to their mullahs for guidance on what to do and safe places to evacuate to. Mullahs were present in the Kandahar Mirwais hospital comforting the wounded and organizing assistance to the community. By contrast, there was no such response to the bombing victims and their families from the international community or the central government.

The insurgents/Taliban elements have been competing with the central government for the support of these community institutions, through offers of financial support and protection against the widely unpopular crop eradication policies, as well as through threats. The failure of Afghanistan's central government and its international allies to deliver development and security to the province has caused community elders' faith in and support for the central government to falter. The Taliban and other insurgents are exploiting the resulting power vacuum, and are increasingly becoming the de facto legitimate authorities.

As Kandahar's population continues to turn away from unstable state institutions, it is clear that Afghanistan's insurgency is spreading deeper within the social fabric of Kandahar. International forces in Afghanistan are clearly aware of the threat that these weakened governance structures pose to the Karzai's administration's control over Kandahar and the southern region. In a statement on May 10, just days before the outbreak of the most intense fighting in Kandahar since the fall of the Taliban, the commander of the US Combined-forces Command-Afghanistan General Eikenberry admitted that weak state institutions have been the main cause of the growing insurgency.

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<sup>3</sup> At the core of Kandahar's social system is the *Qawm* (communal group, village, extended family tribe or ethnic group). *Qawm* contribute to social order through the exercise of traditional authority and through other informal processes, and are governed by *jirgas* or *shuras*, which are led by district elders who command the respect and support of their villages. The decisions of these local governance structures are binding and fully respected by the local communities.

**Reports on the ground suggest that both institutional weakness and the increased confidence of insurgents will be crucial factors in the increasingly all-out battle for control of Kandahar and southern Afghanistan.**

## 2. Canada in Kandahar: Confusion over Objectives

### 2.1 Canada in Afghanistan: a response to an American call to arms

Canada has a large and impressive history of military deployments abroad to defend the ideals of freedom and democracy. The Canadian military's commitment to Afghanistan is another chapter in that long tradition of important contributions to countries or people in need. The Canadian forces on the ground are fully committed to improving security and stability in southern Afghanistan and will continue to do so at least until 2009. Canadians should be proud of the heroic and dedicated performance of their military personnel in Kandahar.

Like the majority of the international community present in Afghanistan, Canada's initial involvement in Afghanistan came as a response to the acts of terrorism against the United States in September 2001. Canadian Forces have been involved in Afghanistan since late 2001, performing security, reconstruction and development duties over four main deployments.<sup>4</sup> The Canadian Department of National Defence says that through its participation in the US-led Operation Enduring Freedom and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), Canada's overarching goal in Afghanistan is to prevent it from relapsing into a failed state that gives terrorist organisations a safe haven.

Following the fall of the Taliban, successive Canadian governments defined their involvement in Afghanistan as reconstruction, peacekeeping and democracy building. Over the last fifty years, Canada has played a major role in international peacekeeping operations. "Peacekeeping" has become entrenched in Canada's national identity and serves as the cornerstone for the great majority of Canadian military interventions throughout the world.<sup>5</sup> The presence of Canadian troops in Afghanistan has thus been closely associated with previous Canadian engagements in other conflict regions. The Canadian Government continues to emphasise the 'peacekeeping' objective of Canada's current mission, represented by the Canadian-led Provincial Reconstruction Team in Kandahar (PRT).

The first stated purpose of Canada's current Kandahar mission was to promote a level of stability that will allow development actors to start operating through the Kandahar PRT. Canada's long-term objective in Afghanistan mirrors that of NATO's ISAF: to support the Afghan government to extend the rule of law throughout the country, and thereby provide the conditions necessary for effective reconstruction and development. However, Kandahar's rapidly deteriorating security situation is making it impossible to achieve these objectives, and is both forcing Canadian troops further away from their traditional peace-keeping role, and tarnishing Canada's reputation as effective peacekeepers. While the Canadian forces on the

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<sup>4</sup> Operations Apollo, Athena, Archer and Task Force Afghanistan.

<sup>5</sup> Modern UN peacekeeping forces are very much the product of a Canadian initiative taken by Lester Pearson, then Canada's Minister for External Affairs, during the Suez Canal crisis of 1956. Since the resolution of that crisis, Canada's standing in the international community and around the world has rested on its reputation as a peacekeeping nation.

ground are doing their best to improve the situation in southern Afghanistan, the current problematic policy environment renders their operational tasks increasingly difficult.



Rather than coordinating relatively peaceful reconstruction and development projects, Canada is currently in command of the multinational brigade portion of the Kandahar-based US-led, war-fighting coalition, Operation Enduring Freedom. Although Canadian troops are due to transfer to NATO command in July 2006, it is likely that ordinary Afghans (like ordinary Canadians) will find it almost impossible to distinguish between the Operation Enduring Freedom troops and the NATO-led peace-building and stabilization forces.

## **2.2 Conflicting objectives of military operations**

The two major military operations in Afghanistan – Operation Enduring Freedom and the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) – have significant differences in the operations objectives. They have different legal base, different mission mandates and rules of engagement, different mission objectives; and to a large extent they have operated in different areas of Afghanistan.



**Table 2: International military operations in Afghanistan**

	<b>Operation Enduring Freedom</b> 	<b>International Security Assistance Force</b> 
<b>Date of establishment</b>	7 Oct. 2001	6 Dec. 2001
<b>Current Location</b>	Southern and eastern Afghanistan	Kabul, north-eastern, southern Afghanistan
<b>Legal basis</b>	Having categorised the attacks of 9/11 as an act of war, the US and UK claim Operation Enduring Freedom is grounded in the Collective Self Defence provisions of the NATO treaty and art. 51 of the UN charter.	ISAF is mandated under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, by UN Security Resolutions 1386, 1413, and 1444
<b>Command structure</b>	US Central Command in liaison with ISAF	Command of ISAF rotates among NATO countries. Since May 06 UK has commanded ISAF. Canada currently commands the ISAF multinational taskforce in southern Afghanistan.
<b>Current Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Coalition of forces from 27 countries, including Canada</li> <li>➤ 19,000 US troops</li> <li>➤ Special forces from Canada, Denmark, France, and the UK</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 36 contributing nations</li> <li>➤ 8,000 soldiers, sailors and airmen make up ISAF</li> </ul>
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Counter-terrorism combat operations to eliminate Taliban forces and Al Qaeda in Afghanistan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Supporting the Government of Afghanistan in security and expanding its authority to the rest of the country</li> <li>➤ Providing a safe and secure environment conducive to the spread of the rule of law and the reconstruction of the country</li> </ul>
<b>Recent developments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ During the Jan 2006 London Conference OEF was extended until 2010</li> <li>➤ In July 2006 US troops will reduce by 2500. Mission focus shifts to Eastern Afghanistan's border with Pakistan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ In July 2006 ISAF will assume control of southern Afghanistan, and will increase the total number of ISAF troops to 20,000</li> </ul>

### 2.2.1 Legal bases

US-led Operation Enduring Freedom and the NATO-led ISAF mission do not have equal legitimacy under international law. Operation Enduring Freedom operates in Afghanistan under the guise of 'national self-defence', whereas ISAF was specifically mandated by the UN to assist the Afghan interim administration in securing the country.

The initial legal basis for Operation Enduring Freedom came from two UN Security Council resolutions, and the self-defence-focused Article 5 of the Treaty of Washington, which was invoked unanimously by members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation on 2 October 2001.<sup>6</sup>

The International Security Assistance Force was created in December 2001 in accordance with the Bonn Conference, and operates under a UN mandate.<sup>7</sup> ISAF is not a UN force, it is a 'coalition of the willing' whose mission was initially limited to Kabul. In August 2003, NATO took command of ISAF, and a UN Security Council Resolution in October 2003 paved the way for ISAF to support the Government of Afghanistan in regions beyond Kabul.<sup>8</sup>

#### Is there a proper international legal basis for Operation Enduring Freedom?

The *current* legality of Operation Enduring Freedom is highly questionable. It is arguable that Operation Enduring Freedom's self-defence *raison d'être* no longer applies. In 2001 it was indeed logical for the US to invoke the above-mentioned self-defence clause of Article 5 as the basis to invade Afghanistan, because Afghanistan's ruling Taliban regime clearly supported and harboured the Al Qaeda movement responsible for the September 11 attacks in the United States. Operation Enduring Freedom was designed to remove these elements so as to avoid similar attacks in the future. However, five years on, Operation Enduring Freedom continues to operate under the legal flag of self-defence, yet the situation on the ground in Afghanistan has changed completely.

The Taliban regime has been removed and replaced by a democratically elected government. The remnants of the Taliban, related groups and new insurgent actors currently operating in Afghanistan no longer have clear ties to Al Qaeda or a clear relationship to those that undertook the 9/11 attacks.<sup>9</sup>

The insurgent movement currently operating in Afghanistan can be described as the *neo-Taliban*, and comprises a loose collection of several groups that either benefit

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<sup>6</sup> In September 2001 the Security Council of the United Nations issued two resolutions setting out the methods by which member states could respond to terrorism, and reaffirming the right of member nations (expressed in Article 51 of the UN Charter) to individual and collective self-defence. In October 2001 NATO invoked Article 5 of the Treaty of Washington, which states that any attack on a NATO nation launched from outside that nation shall be interpreted as an attack on all the NATO nations.

<sup>7</sup> Four UNSC Resolutions - 1386, 1413, 1444 and 1510 - relate to ISAF.

<sup>8</sup> UNSC Resolution 1510.

<sup>9</sup> Lacking a permanent presence in Afghanistan, Al Qaeda's influence in the country has decreased significantly.

from local communities' support or have access to support from external sources (such as funding and recruitment from abroad), and operate somewhat independently of each other. As such, the focus of the military missions necessary to counter these new threats has changed from "pre-emptive" international self-defence, to countering and removing destabilising factions in Afghanistan.

It is clear that the original legal basis of Operation Enduring Freedom has disappeared. With NATO troops in the process of replacing the outdated Operation Enduring Freedom in most of Afghanistan, the situation in southern Afghanistan is particularly problematic. ISAF is designed to stabilise and reconstruct Afghanistan, and has no legal mandate to actively track down and target the neo-Taliban forces in southern Afghanistan. Although ISAF troops can support the Afghan Government's counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency missions, they are only allowed to act in self-defence against these forces. Targeted military action against the Taliban and other insurgents will remain the exclusive domain of the Afghan security forces and Operation Enduring Freedom. As such, ISAF forces operating in southern Afghanistan will be operating in a legal quagmire, where their legal basis precludes addressing on-the-ground realities, which are increasingly dictating active engagement with insurgents.

### 2.2.2 Objectives

Although the ISAF and Operation Enduring Freedom missions contain overlaps in terms of overall goals, their core objectives have major differences. Operation Enduring Freedom is a combat mission, and its coalition forces are primarily responsible for counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism operations to eliminate the Taliban and Al Qaeda, in order to build the security foundation necessary for reconstruction and development.

There have been numerous questions and discussions in the various coalition countries regarding the mission objective of the various international military forces in Afghanistan and Canada is no exception.

***"Nothing is changing when Canadian troops go from Enduring Freedom to NATO. No units change. Nothing actually changes. It is all the same. There will not be one iota of change except that we will be under NATO command instead of Enduring Freedom. Nothing will change."***

**The Honourable Gordon O'Connor**

Canadian Minister of Defence

17 May 2006

*(Photo from Canadian Office of the Prime Minister)*



Operation Enduring Freedom's main objective in Kandahar is countering terrorism, through targeted strikes and the 'hunting down' of terrorists. As such, OEF has had limited impact in southern Afghanistan in terms of reconstruction, and has not focused on establishing and rooting control and development structures in Kandahar. Moreover, the Operation's mandate has been disconnected from local

realities: Operation Enduring Freedom has not adjusted its military effort to meet local civilian needs, and Operation Enduring Freedom forces have largely eschewed meaningful interaction with the local population.

The US-led Operation's militaristic approach has exacerbated negative public perceptions of foreigners, and Operation Enduring Freedom has not helped enhance the central government's authority in Kandahar. Overall, Operation Enduring Freedom has not significantly improved security in the region. Indeed Operation Enduring Freedom and US activities in the region, have resulted in creating an environment that facilitated the resurgence of Taliban/insurgent elements rather than their stated mission objective of ridding Afghanistan of those elements.

***"I am deeply disturbed that there has been no acknowledgement that there is indeed a difference and that it makes any difference whether we are there under a NATO led mission or whether we are there under Operation Enduring Freedom. I just about fell over when the Defence minister stated that he considers Operation Enduring Freedom missions as being the same."***

**Ms. Alexa McDonough MP (Halifax, NDP)**

During House of Commons debate on the extension of Canada's mission to Afghanistan  
May 2006



Many Afghans interviewed, including members of the Afghan government and members of the international community present in Afghanistan, have expressed this view privately but state that, due to the American position in Afghanistan, they are not willing to initiate a public discussion on this dynamic.

### **"Collateral Damage": the bombing of Azizi village in Kandahar**

On 22 May 2006, a bombing raid carried out by Operation Enduring Freedom forces in Kandahar killed Taliban forces and at least sixteen civilians. The bombing raid on the village of Azizi followed some of the worst violence in Afghanistan since 2001, and was one of the biggest air strikes since the start of the Operation Enduring Freedom.

Eyewitnesses say at least 30 civilians were killed, including women and children, but OEF spokespeople have accused the insurgents of deliberately hiding behind civilians, and continue to blame the Taliban for these civilian deaths. OEF maintains that rebel commanders should be held responsible for the civilian deaths. However, it is clear that the local population blames the Operation Enduring Freedom troops. Some claimed that Operation Enduring Freedom forces did not allow emergency services into the village to assist the wounded, and popular resentment against Operation Enduring Freedom forces has escalated.

Mullahs and religious leaders were present in the Mirwais hospital in Kandahar City following the attack to comfort and assist the injured and their families. No representatives of the central government or the international community were reported to have come to the assistance of the injured civilians or their families.

In contrast, NATO-led ISAF is effectively a peacekeeping, stabilization mission, whose role, according to NATO spokeswoman Sue Eagles, is to “support the Government of Afghanistan, to extend security and stability and the rule of good governance and the rule of law.” The ISAF mission has been described as aiming to “prevent Afghanistan reverting to ungoverned space which could harbour terrorism; build security and Government institutions so that the progress of recent years becomes irreversible, and to enable eventual international disengagement; and, support efforts to counter the growth of narcotics production and trafficking.”<sup>10</sup>

After his October 2005 visit to Kabul, NATO Secretary-General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer announced that ISAF would expand on this original role, and take on counter-insurgency operations as it moves into southern Afghanistan. However, critics such as former German Minister of Defence Peter Struck have condemned this role expansion as fundamentally changing NATO’s role in Afghanistan, making the situation for NATO troops doubly dangerous. “NATO is not equipped for counterterrorism operations. That is not what it is supposed to do.”<sup>11</sup>

### 2.2.3 Confusion over Rules of Engagement

Rules of engagement set the parameters within which national forces operate and are key to determining how mission objectives will be achieved. Given their different objectives, the Operation Enduring Freedom and ISAF missions have different rules of engagement, and although the exact rules are confidential, some details have been made available. Under Operation Enduring Freedom, for example, attacking insurgents can be shot at and pursued, but under ISAF rules of engagement, “insurgents will not be pursued because that constitutes counter-terrorist activity.”<sup>12</sup>

Canadian troops currently serve under the commands of both Operation Enduring Freedom and ISAF in Afghanistan and operate under two different sets of rules of engagement. It is this feature of Canadian involvement – participation in two separate and conflicting military operations – that makes the Canadian mission in Kandahar particularly dangerous and doomed to failure. The Canadian political leadership has failed to clarify the true nature of the Canadian military mission, and the troops themselves are uncertain.

<sup>10</sup> UK House of Commons Defence Committee Report, ‘UK Deployment to Afghanistan’ 28 March 2006.

<sup>11</sup> Judy Dempsey and David S. Cloud, ‘Europeans balking at new Afghan role’, The International Herald Tribune, 14 September, 2005.

<sup>12</sup> Fox, L., (MP for Woodspring) UK House of Commons Debate on Afghanistan, 26 January 2006.

Prior to the most recent deployment in February 2006, the Canadian mission was pitched to the Canadian public as a 'peacekeeping' ISAF mission rather than 'peace-making' or counter-insurgency mission. However, Canada's top military commander General Rick Hillier has promised that Canadian troops will be targeting 'detestable murderers' and 'scumbags',<sup>13</sup> and another senior Canadian officer has said that "in Canada, it's clear that this is not a peacekeeping mission."<sup>14</sup>

The new ISAF commander Lieutenant General Richards statements have further complicated the issue, saying "ISAF does not have a counterterrorist role; [Counterterrorism] will remain a US-only operation [...] Our underpinning purpose is not a counter-terrorist mission."<sup>15</sup>

## 2.2.4 Areas of operation

Operation Enduring Freedom is currently carrying out counter-terrorist and counter-insurgency activities in the southern and eastern provinces of Afghanistan, and also operates a number of Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs).<sup>16</sup> In the summer of 2006 the main American component of Operation Enduring Freedom will withdraw from the southern provinces, and the Canadian-led multinational component of OEF will be incorporated into ISAF.

**Table 3: Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs)**

**PRTs** are military-civilian institutions with the following objectives:

- Strengthening and extending the authority of the Central Government;
- Assisting in establishing stability and security;
- Enabling reconstruction and facilitating the coordination and division of labour between civilian and military actors, including by delivering projects;
- Providing professional expertise and facilitating the work of NGOs and other actors by improving the security situation.

The civilians involved are typically engineers, mechanics and other specialists, while military members are responsible for meeting immediate and long-term

<sup>13</sup> Colonel SJ Bowes, in Thorne, S., 'Murderous Scumbag' Shot Par for the Course for New Defence Chief; No Reprimand,' CP, 15 July 2005.

<sup>14</sup> Schmitt, E., 'NATO troops will relieve Americans in fighting the Taliban', New York Times, 31 December 2005.

<sup>15</sup> Brownell, G. 'We will get it right', Newsweek, 9 March 2006; and Rheinheimer F., 'Afghanistan Stage III: Nato's most ambitious Operation?' Center for Defense Information, May 16, 2006.

<sup>16</sup> The Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) were established in Afghanistan for the international community to provide both improved security and to facilitate reconstruction and economic development throughout the country. The PRTs have a broad mandate in bringing reconstruction to the people of Afghanistan, although in practice, OEF and ISAF have interpreted this mandate in different ways. There are currently 23 PRTs in Afghanistan. OEF leads 14 PRTs (12 US-led, one each led by Canada and New Zealand) in the southern and eastern regions of Afghanistan. NATO/ISAF commands 9 PRTs: Mazar-e Sharif (Sweden), Maimana (Norway), Konduz and Feyzabad (Germany), Pol-e Khumri (the Netherlands), Herat (Italy), Qal-eh-ye-Now (Spain), Chaghcharan (Lithuania) and Farah (United States, as a member of NATO).

security requirements. In many parts of Afghanistan, the PRT model has been an innovative and effective model for stabilisation efforts. The combination of civil and military personnel facilitates a shared sense of purpose, security, and development among post-conflict stakeholders. However, the model is vulnerable to differing national styles: OEF and ISAF-led PRTs function very differently, particularly with regard to the civil-military balance. This aspect is highlighted when control of PRTs changes, shifting the civil-military balance.

To be successful, PRTs require certain levels of political stability, infrastructure and support from NGOs and other civic actors, in order to build bridges with local communities and to deliver development projects effectively.

ISAF currently operates in Kabul, the northern and the western regions of Afghanistan, and its forces are responsible for providing security assistance in more than 50% of Afghanistan's territory. ISAF has operational control over nine PRTs and in the coming months, ISAF will replace the withdrawing US elements of Operation Enduring Freedom in the southern provinces. According to NATO's Operational Plan for its work in Afghanistan, ISAF will eventually operate throughout the entire country.

### **2.2.5 Counter-narcotics mandates**

The eradication of poppy is one of Operation Enduring Freedom's priorities. According to commanders of OEF, "the US Department of Defense counter-narcotics [eradication-focused] program in Afghanistan is a key element of our campaign against terrorism."<sup>17</sup> Under the umbrella of Operation Enduring Freedom, the US military plays a significant role in attacking traffickers and their installations, and the US Government continues to provide assistance for eradication and law enforcement.

For ISAF and NATO, responsibility for drug policy lies with the Afghan Government, assisted by the UK as the lead nation on drug policy. ISAF is mandated to assist the Afghan Government in several ways to combat drugs, and if ISAF forces find illegal drugs during their military operations, they can store these drugs until they can be handed over to the Afghan authorities. However, ISAF has no authority to destroy poppy crops or harvests, or to take independent action against drug producers.

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<sup>17</sup> "US CENTCOM (Central Command) views narco-trafficking as a significant obstacle to the political and economic reconstruction of Afghanistan. Local terrorist and criminal leaders have a vested interest in using the profits from narcotics to oppose the central government and undermine the security and stability of Afghanistan." Major Gen. John Sattler, USMC, Director of Operations-US CENTCOM, before the House Committee on Government Reform Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy, and Human Resources, Apr. 21, 2004.

### 2.3 Canada's failing mission in Kandahar

In order to assist the Afghan Government and stabilise the Kandahar region, in mid-2005 Canada took over command of a US-led PRT in Kandahar. This reflects the strong commitment of the Canadian government and the Canadian military to increase its assistance to Afghanistan. Ideally, the Canadian PRT will extend security and development to this key province, promote central government policies and priorities with local authorities, and help Afghans to create a secure environment to facilitate the delivery of basic services like schooling, road maintenance and basic medical care in the region.

Operating from Camp Nathan Smith in Kandahar City, Canada's PRT comprises approximately 250 soldiers and includes representatives from Foreign Affairs Canada (FAC), the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). These civilian representatives are intended to work under the team's military leadership to provide diplomatic, development, defence and other support to the country and co-ordinate humanitarian and reconstruction projects throughout the province of Kandahar, also ensuring that operations respect religious, ethnic and cultural sensitivities.

Although Canadian troops based at the Kandahar PRT are liaising with civilian contractors and are conducting deterrence patrols on road construction sites in the province, CIDA's budget for the PRT is less than US\$5 million. According to public reports only one development programme (to enhance local confidence in Kandahar's governance institutions) has been started since Canada took control of the PRT last year. Critics of the PRT mission warn that Canadian soldiers could face dangers in Kandahar similar to those seen by American forces in Iraq.

***"The challenges are enormous. There are no quick fixes and success cannot be assured by military means alone."***

**The Right Honourable Stephen Joseph Harper**

Prime Minister of Canada

17 May 2006

*(Photo from Canadian Office of the Prime Minister)*





**Canada's "Confidence in Government" Programme**

Canada's Confidence in Government Programme, introduced in Kandahar's Shah Wali Kot district in May 2006, is described as a "uniquely Canadian approach" to reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan. The programme seeks to extend the reach of and support for the central government in Kabul to the rural areas by responding to the development concerns of local communities.

To this end, the Confidence in Government Programme will fund development projects which have been identified through consultations with local councils and tribal elders.<sup>18</sup> Local councils and tribal elders are encouraged to discuss with their local communities how development funds from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) should be spent in their local area. Projects thus identified would be implemented by CIDA.

When Canada took command of the Kandahar PRT, the troops made efforts to distinguish themselves from the American OEF troops in Kandahar, who are viewed by locals with extreme hostility. However, the initial goodwill generated by these attempts quickly evaporated.

According to the Canadian Department of National Defence, the majority of Canadian soldiers in Kandahar (at least 2,000) work solely with the US army in patrols and security work, and do not carry out much reconstruction or development work.

Despite the excellent performance of Canadian military forces abroad, some locals stated that they see the Canadian troops as overly aggressive, indifferent, militaristic and lacking communication skills. Insurgents' guerrilla fighting has forced the Canadians into a heavily armed posture that alienates the people: Canadian convoys race at top speed through Kandahar, "like mice running from hole to hole" according to locals.

Our interviewees stated that the Canadian Prime Minister travelled to Kandahar but went directly from the airport to the military base. They stressed Prime Minister Harper's failure to properly meet with locals in accordance with Afghan customs, or to speak to them about their views of the Canadian presence in the province. This was widely remarked upon as improper, insulting to Afghan pride, and an indication of cowardice on his part.

Incidents, such as the March shooting of a taxi passenger for driving too close to a Canadian military vehicle and the lack of a proper local response to that incident,

<sup>18</sup> However, Canadian spending on this and other alternative livelihood and development projects pales in comparison to funds spent on military operations in Afghanistan. Between 2001 and 2006 Canada spent over CDN\$ 4 billion (US\$3.6 billion) on its military deployments, but has spent and pledged less than US\$1 billion for humanitarian and development aid. See Appendix for details of the costs of Canada's military deployments to Afghanistan.

have caused deep hostility in the community specifically directed at the Canadians present in the region.

Creating additional difficulties for the Canadian troops is that the majority of the military vehicles and convoys travel without flags, preventing differentiation between the actions of US, Canadian military and the Private Military Companies involved in poppy eradication (DynCorp). Because of this, and because foreign military elements have been reportedly involved in the recent forced poppy eradication campaigns, many Kandahar locals believe that the Canadian military are complicit in the recent US-supported eradication activities.

Although almost without exception the local actors from the international community are deeply concerned about the living conditions and future of the local population, many of them privately expressed their inability to produce positive results for the region given the dynamics between local and the US military and counter-narcotics operations. Hamstrung by the lack of clarity on objectives and priorities, and lack of sufficient personnel and resources, there is little these dedicated and hard working individuals can achieve in this region. Additionally the generalised hostility against foreigners makes the security situation extremely difficult for those foreigners who would like to work on aid projects in the region.

In Kandahar City itself foreign aid workers live in security compounds, travel to work in offices in secured compounds and rarely travel on the street of Kandahar or out into the villages. When they do, most travel in convoys with armoured vehicles and highly visible armed escorts which creates further tension and distance with the local population. The number of NGO organization operating in Kandahar has dropped dramatically in the last year.

The effectiveness of PRTs depends on a number of preconditions, including a high level of political stability, the support of NGOs and other civil society actors, and basic infrastructure in the area of their operation. In Kandahar province, these necessary factors are absent: formal governance structures in the province are extremely weak and rapidly faltering, and increasing insurgency activity has prompted power vacuums in several of the districts.

In addition, an atmosphere of distrust and hostility towards the presence of Canadian troops prevails, further complicating efforts to implement the objectives of the PRT. Finally, after more than twenty-five years of war, most of Kandahar's infrastructure remains badly damaged despite recent attempts at reconstruction. Therefore, the effectiveness of the PRT in Kandahar is questionable considering the absence of a number of elementary requirements.

## **2.4 Canadians at war: paying the price for following the US**

Despite repeated calls for clarification and evidence to the contrary, the former and current Canadian Governments both insisted that Canada is in Kandahar under the auspices of NATO to carry out reconstruction work. In fact, rather than a post-conflict peace-building arena, Kandahar is now a province at war.

For the past eight months Canadian troops have been fighting ever more deadly counter-insurgency operations under the US-led Operation Enduring Freedom against increasingly powerful insurgent groups and the Taliban. The ongoing debate in Canada's House of Commons regarding the precise role of Canadian troops in Kandahar prompted the Minister of Defence to declare that the OEF and the ISAF missions are effectively identical.

In attempting to counter the insurgency in Kandahar, Canadian troops are shifting significantly away from their traditional and accustomed role as peacekeepers, and are now heavily engaged in waging war against largely unidentifiable enemies.

Rather than assisting in the reconstruction and development of Kandahar province, 2,000 Canadian troops have been tasked with containing and quashing increasingly powerful and confident insurgents in one of the largest provinces of Afghanistan. Rising concerns over Canadian involvement in the transfer of captured insurgents to known human rights abusers highlight just how far Canadian troops are moving away from their traditional peacekeeping role.

***"This is not a traditional peacekeeping mission"***

**The Right Honourable Peter Gordon MacKay**

Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs

17 May 2006

*(Photo from Canadian Office of the Prime Minister)*



Canada has a reputation for being highly respectful of international treaties and international cooperation, and has a long tradition of peacekeeping interventions in global conflicts. However, Canada's transfer of prisoners in Afghanistan to human rights abusers has left Canadian troops open to prosecution for abuses of human rights. Unless this situation is swiftly resolved, Canada's neglect of the Geneva Conventions will negatively affect its reputation and weaken the capacity of Canadian troops to achieve their objectives in Kandahar province.

**Table 4: Canadian fatalities in Afghanistan (as of June 21, 2006)**

Date	Casualties	Cause	Location
18 April 02	4 soldiers	Friendly fire	Kandahar
02 Oct 03	2 soldiers	Landmine explosion	Kabul
27 Jan 04	1 soldier	Suicide attack	Kabul
24 Nov 05	1 soldier	Armoured vehicle (LAV III) roll-over	Kandahar
15 Jan 06	1 diplomat	Suicide attack	Kandahar
02 Mar 06	2 soldiers	Armoured vehicle (LAV III) crash	Kandahar
29 Mar 06	1 soldier	Fire fight	Kandahar
22 April 06	4 soldiers	Roadside bomb	Kandahar
17 May 06	1 soldier	Combat	Kandahar

## 2.5 The treatment of prisoners: a breakdown of Canadian ideals?

In December 2005, Canada's Chief of Defence General Hillier signed a Prisoner Transfer Agreement with the Afghan Ministry of Defence.<sup>19</sup> The Agreement details the legal basis for transferring prisoners from Canadian Forces' custody to any detention facility operated by the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, making Afghans responsible for detainees. Although Article 3 of the Agreement affirms that "the Participants will treat detainees in accordance with the standards set out in the Third Geneva Convention," legal experts believe that because the arrangement does not adequately guarantee detainees' protection and rights, Canadian soldiers may well be at risk of prosecution in the international arena. "Whoever negotiated this Agreement did our soldiers a great disservice [...] The mere fact there is a possibility for Canadian troops to be charged demonstrates how fundamentally flawed this detainee transfer arrangement is."<sup>20</sup>

**Figure 4: Canadian soldier searching a Kandahar civilian**



Canada's Prisoner Transfer Agreement does not protect Canadian troops from facing charges of war crimes. While inspired by a similar agreement between the Netherlands and Afghanistan, the Canadian agreement contains far fewer protections for captured insurgents, leaving them open to torture and other abuses. Unlike the Dutch Agreement, Canada's Agreement does not oblige the Afghan authorities to supply detainees' names to the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission, and in March 2006 the US State Department confirmed that Afghan authorities are known to routinely torture detainees. Nor does the Agreement prohibit the transfer of detainees to third parties, allowing the possibility that prisoners leaving Canadian custody could end up in US custody in Guantanamo Bay. International human rights organisations have heavily criticised the US for violating

<sup>19</sup> See Appendix for a copy of the Prisoner Transfer Agreement.

<sup>20</sup> Michael Byers, an international law professor at the University of British Columbia, quoted in David Pugliese, 'Canadian soldiers risk war-crimes charges, report warns', *The Ottawa Citizen*, 10 April 2006.

prisoners' rights.<sup>21</sup> It is likely that Canadian Forces can be considered legally responsible for the abuse of prisoners, not only when they are transferred into Afghan custody, but also if they are sent onward to a third nation, such as the US.

The Canadian Government has remained vague about the actual status it accords to insurgents captured in Kandahar. Although it recently affirmed that while "Taliban are not entitled to prisoner-of-war status, they are entitled to prisoner-of-war treatment," and claims that Canada treats all prisoners according to the Geneva standards; it has not substantively addressed Parliament's concerns over the Prisoner Transfer Agreement. Recently, Canadian Forces' Second in Command Lieutenant General Michel Gauthier appeared to confirm the Government's position, claiming that "captured fighters don't deserve these rights because it is not a war between countries."<sup>22</sup>

These ambiguities over Canadian Forces' treatment and transfer of detainees are degrading Canada's image and reputation as a fair, law-abiding and peace-seeking nation. The recent threat of terrorist attacks on Canada shows that Canada is increasingly seen as a 'top priority' enemy.

## 2.6 Collateral Damage: the death of Nasrat Ali Hassan

On 14 March 2006, Canadian soldiers in Kandahar shot and killed a passenger in Kandahar City.

Nasrat Ali Hassan, a father of six, was travelling home with his family after an evening visiting relatives.



A spokesman for the Canadian Forces Lt. Col. Derek Basinger commented that "our rules do not allow any Afghans to come within a certain distance of our patrols." Afghans interviewed in Kandahar stated they had not been informed of any such rules.

Lt. Col. Basinger said that Mr Ali Hassan was not treated at the Canadian base because the Canadian troops on the scene believed his wounds were not life-threatening. Mr. Hassan was taken to the Kandahar hospital and died hours later.

Mr Ali Hassan's funeral was attended by a large crowd of local people who came out in support of his family, and the story of his death spread quickly through Kandahar.

So far, the family has not received a formal apology from Canadian representatives which is necessary under Afghan customs, nor has the Canadian government offered support to the family. This incident and the lack of an apology or compensation was mentioned repeatedly in interviews in Kandahar about the communities current negative perception of the Canadian presence in Kandahar.

<sup>21</sup> So far, more than a hundred detainees from Iraq and Afghanistan have died in US custody and on June 11, three prisoners jailed in Guantanamo Bay committed suicide.

<sup>22</sup> Paul Koring, 'Troops Told Geneva Rules don't apply to Taliban', *The Globe and Mail*, 31 May 2006.

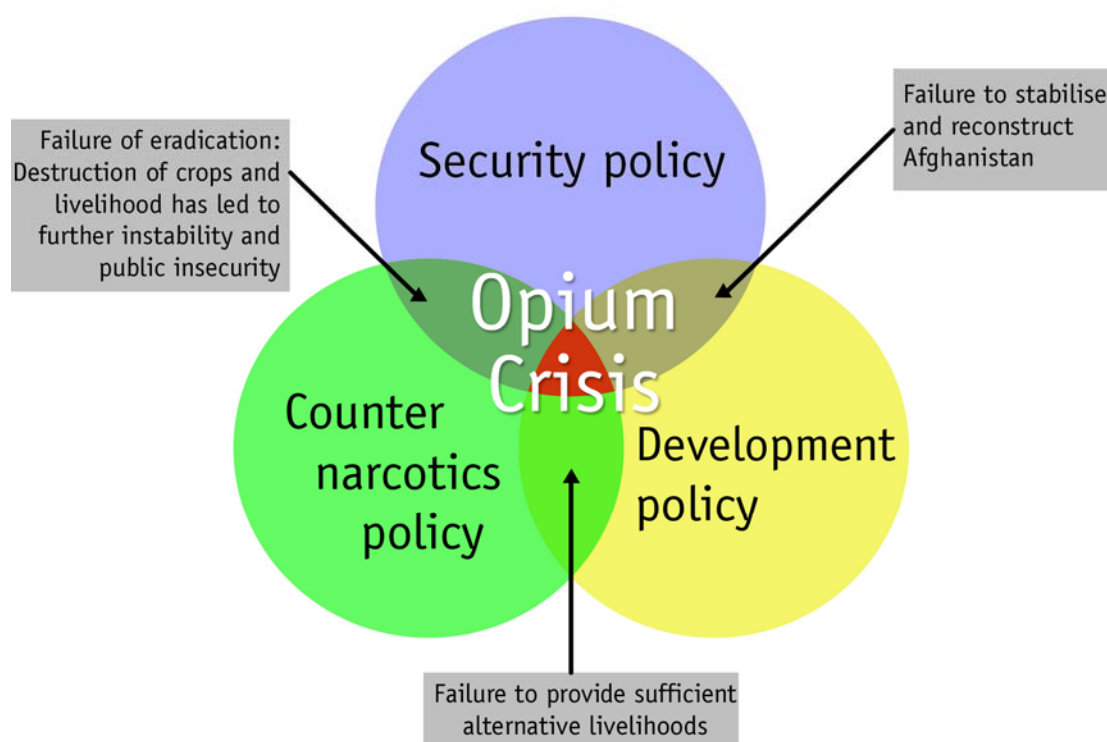
Instead, such incidents prompt further support for the insurgent groups that are currently fighting the international forces. At the same time, Canada has wholly failed to properly deal with the issue of civilian deaths in Kandahar, while it has become clear that without solid local support, both stability and security will remain an illusion.

### 3. The Disastrous Legacy of Poppy Eradication in Kandahar

#### 3.1 The failure to connect security and development policies

Security and development are two inseparable sides of the same reconstruction effort, and economic development is essential to long-term political stability. As such, development without security and the rule of law will result in Afghanistan again becoming a failed state, and security at the expense of development will not be sustainable. The current lack of security is a major impediment to development and reconstruction efforts in Kandahar province: international development agencies and Afghan aid organisations are unable to provide sufficient development aid due to the increasingly fragile security environment.

**Figure 5: Afghanistan's Security and Development nexus**



Infrastructure in Kandahar province remains poor and funds for rebuilding the vital agricultural sector are constrained, and ill-adapted alternative livelihood programmes have led to widespread public disillusionment. Consequently, the majority of Kandahar's rural population continues to engage in opium cultivation to feed their families.

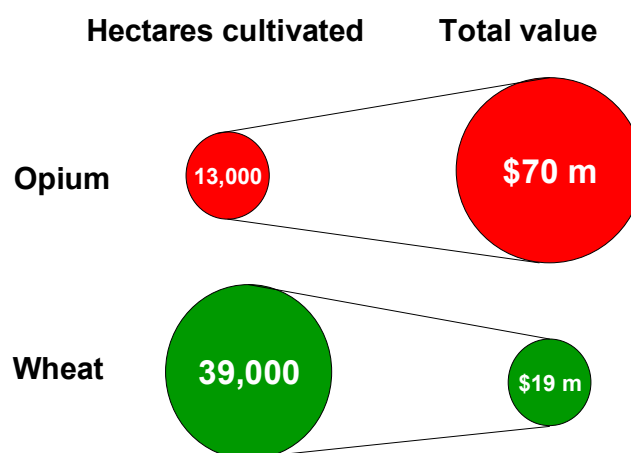
***“The poppy farmers will fight hard to protect their only means of livelihood, and without roads and irrigation systems [to help them grow different products] you can hardly blame them. [Unless the farmers were given incentives to grow other crops] we’ll be stirring up a hornet’s nest”***

**Lieutenant-General David Richards**  
ISAF Commander in Kabul  
(Source: The Times 26 June 2006)

The precarious security situation and dearth of viable development alternatives in Kandahar is further entrenching the opium economy in Kandahar to such an extent that opium now represents the backbone of Kandahar’s economy. It is clear that opium lies at the heart of Afghanistan’s reconstruction nexus, and recent eradication efforts in Kandahar have impacted extremely negatively on security in the province.

In 2005, Kandahar had the second highest level of poppy cultivation in Afghanistan: a record 13,000 hectares, accounting for 12% of total poppy cultivation in the country. Producing an estimated 500 metric tons and generating US\$5,400 per hectare, in 2005, Kandahar’s poppy fields yielded almost ten times more income than those from wheat. Around 26,000 households or 160,000 people rely on opium poppy cultivation in Kandahar.

**Figure 6: 2005 value of poppy versus wheat in Kandahar (US\$) according to UNODC figures**



### 3.2 Counter-productive drug policies and public disillusionment

Although poppy cultivation has reached unprecedented levels in Kandahar province, alternative livelihood programmes are totally failing to address the opium crisis, and resources continue to be poured into aggressive strategies such as crop eradication. Yet eradication is a militaristic counter-narcotics intervention that primarily affects the most vulnerable actors of Afghanistan’s opium economy, and reinforces farmers’ economic vulnerability. Farmers’ livelihoods are being destroyed before social protection mechanisms and sustainable alternative economic opportunities are in place.



**Figure 7: Afghan eradication forces I**

***“Eradication without providing for meaningful alternative livelihoods is not sustainable. Eradication does not hold promise as a near-term solution, and forcible eradication can be counter-productive. Given the multi-dimensional nature of opium production in Afghanistan, counter-narcotics efforts should be mainstreamed into all aspects of development: security, economic growth and governance. There are no quick and simple solutions.”***

Ali Jalali  
Former Afghan Interior Minister  
May 2006

In the spring of 2006 Afghan authorities (with strong support from the US and the UK) launched an aggressive eradication programme in Kandahar, involving Afghan counter-narcotics police officers, soldiers and other security forces. Throughout 2006 US and UK-funded Poppy Elimination Programme (PEP) teams, comprising eight to ten Afghan and international experts and advisors, will remain in Kandahar to facilitate the eradication activities of provincial authorities. Currently, OEF forces provide significant support to Afghan forces engaged in eradication. This support includes the training of police officers and transport for eradication forces. Although ISAF troops are not permitted to take direct, pre-planned action against the opium trade in Kandahar, in light of the Afghan Government’s limited counter-narcotics capacity in the province, it is entirely possible that Canadian Forces could be required to engage directly in eradication activities.

***“Foreigners were with them [the Afghan National Army]. We don’t know which country they came from. They surrounded the area, they did not let anyone come near and then we were kicked out and forced to go very far. Then they started to eradicate the field. We didn’t even talk with those people. It was Afghan people who eradicated but the foreigners were commanding the eradication.”***

Farmer in Kandahar  
May 2006

There have been widespread allegations that the eradication process in Kandahar is corrupted at many levels. The inconsistent and unequal nature of eradication policies carried out by government and international forces has exacerbated resentment among the local population. In particular, locals view international troops as a purely military force, which together with the Afghan Government, embark on targeted forceful action against farmers and their families. Typically, eradication operations target those unable to afford bribes and those whose farms are located in highly visible locations.

**Figure 8: Afghan eradication forces II**



### 3.3 Poppy eradication fuelling support for insurgents

While it has been reported that the Taliban is resorting to raids on un-cooperative rural Kandahar communities for food and shelter,<sup>23</sup> the insurgents' actual relationship with the local Kandahar population is more complex. Although civilians resent the insurgency for amplifying provincial instability and for threatening local *Shuras* and schools, the Taliban and insurgents compare favourably to the current Government, which has not managed to enforce security in the province. Increasingly, Kandahar locals see the resurgent Taliban as a powerful and organised political structure capable of enforcing law and order.

***"When they came with the tractors to eradicate this area yesterday I told them that they just might as well drive the tractor over me because I can't live anymore. I have 15 members of the family to feed so it means you're killing me. We don't know what we should do."***

Farmer in Kandahar  
Transcript of video footage of The Senlis Council  
May 2006

Insurgent groups have considerable tribal and family ties with the people of Kandahar. In the past, the Taliban 'levied' a son from each Kandahar family for their army, ensconcing themselves at the heart of Kandahar's social network.

<sup>23</sup> ISAF Press Conference, 4 May 2006.

Intermarriages with families in the Pakistani provinces from which insurgents enter Afghanistan continue to strengthen these ties. In their attempts to establish their authority in Kandahar, insurgents employ both 'carrots' (protection from eradication operations) and 'sticks' (intimidation, burning down schools) against the locals. Kandahar is currently so chaotic that insurgents' projected strength and authority appeal to locals' longing for law and order.

## 4. Major Challenges for Canadian Forces in Kandahar

### 4.1 Canada bearing the brunt of America's mission failures

According to the Canadian Government, the successful operation of the Kandahar PRT is their troops' top priority. However, Canadian troops have been handed an impossible reconstruction mission: until Kandahar is secure, there can be no stability and there will be no reconstruction, and Canada's commitment to Afghanistan will not be a success.

After more than four years of activity by OEF forces, Kandahar's security situation has not significantly improved. Operation Enduring Freedom has not been able to stabilise the province, nor fully remove the presence and influence of the Taliban movement. If Operation Enduring Freedom had removed the Taliban and similar insurgent

movements from Kandahar, the basic security and stability conditions necessary for reconstruction and economic development projects to prosper would be in place. Having failed to do so, Operation Enduring Freedom's stabilisation and security mission

**Figure 9: Insurgent attack on UN convoy in Kandahar City**



will now fall to Canadian troops who will be operating under ISAF's more limited "self-defence" rules of engagement.

Operation Enduring Freedom's failure to secure and stabilise the province has meant that only very limited economic development has taken place in Kandahar since 2001. As such, the rural communities of Kandahar continue to depend to a very large extent on illegal poppy cultivation and opium production. The destruction of these livelihoods through eradication is stimulating popular unrest in Kandahar and fuelling support for insurgent groups. The deteriorating security situation, combined with high levels of corruption and the heavy-handed tactics of international troops, is further provoking local discontent with the government and the international community. As such, further direct or indirect involvement of Canadian troops in eradication operations will be a major factor in the success of the Canadian mission in Kandahar.

#### 4.2 In the face of looming Canadian mission failure, a new approach is needed

Poppy cultivation in Kandahar links the three main issues that could cause Canada's mission in Kandahar to fail. First, Canada's current counter-insurgency and counter-terrorist roles under OEF are undermining the political objectives of stability, reconstruction and development. Second, direct or indirect involvement in eradication risks the lives of the Canadian soldiers and the success of the mission. Lastly, when Canadian troops eventually move to ISAF, Canada's reconstruction and development objectives will be further undermined by ISAF's supporting role in eradication-focused counter-narcotics policies.

**Figure 10: Potential mission failure in Kandahar**





### 4.3 Growing insurgency threats

Since the spring of 2005 Kandahar's security has progressively deteriorated. Attacks by insurgent groups have increased significantly, and Kandahar is now in a state of prolonged, politically motivated violence between increasingly organised insurgent groups, and Afghan and international forces.







#### 4.3.1 Insurgency evolution and trends

In recent months Afghanistan's insurgency has grown and evolved. Attacks by non-state actors in Afghanistan have increased five-fold in less than four years: from a monthly average of just five in 2002, to at present on average, 25 attacks each month. The situation is even worse in the south of Afghanistan, where there has been a 600% increase in violent attacks in the last six months, and terrorism is now a pressing concern in Kandahar: the majority of terror attacks in Afghanistan occur in Kandahar and the bordering provinces. In 2005, Kandahar experience 76 significant security breaches. This year there have already been 95 major security breaches in Kandahar.

**Figure 11: Afghan eradication forces III**



**Table 5: Security breaches in Kandahar in 2005 and 2006**

		<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>
<b>Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs)</b> 	Controlled remotely, IEDs are constructed using old mines or rockets. These are used to target armoured military or civilian vehicles, as well as individuals. More sophisticated IEDs triggered by infrared systems have recently been employed in Kandahar, reflecting a growing influence of techniques widely employed in Iraq.	26	23
<b>Ambushes</b> 	Ambushing isolated patrols in rural areas is a favoured tactic of insurgents in Kandahar. These attacks usually involve several dozen well-armed militants who use the element of surprise to shoot at security forces or murder government officials, before quickly withdrawing, often on motorbikes.	12	5
<b>Suicide bombings</b> 	Suicide attacks, previously rare in Afghanistan, have been increasingly used in Kandahar during recent months, with insurgents appearing keen to adopt tactics used in Iraq. Using either two-wheel or four-wheel vehicles and targeting military convoy as well as official/international compounds, suicide bombings are also extremely murderous for Afghans civilians.	9	20
<b>Rocket and shell attacks</b> 	These tactics are regularly used to target official and international compounds, as well as individual targets with limited efficiency. However, this tactic is effective in spreading fear among the population, while causing constant disturbance to the enemy. The Canadian base in Kandahar is regularly targeted by rocket attacks.	5	5
<b>Outbreaks of open warfare</b> 	In the last few weeks, insurgents have become increasingly willing to engage well-equipped ANA units with large well-armed forces of their own, in pitched battles often lasting several hours. Suffering significant losses, Taliban have however succeeded in greatly destabilising the province. Civilian casualties caused unintentionally by Canadian troops or US air strikes strongly reinforce local support for the Taliban.	12	28
<b>Small arms assaults</b> 	The Taliban make large use of small arms for assaults both on coalition forces and civilians (politicians, religious leaders or aid workers). These attempted assassinations aim at terrorizing the population and at weakening the local support for the central government.	12	14
	<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>95</b>

As part of their ongoing attempts to fill the region's power vacuum, insurgents' warfare tactics have evolved substantially. It is increasingly clear that insurgents are modelling on the insurgency in Iraq, as suicide attacks, assassinations and the

use of remote controlled, hi-tech Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) have surged both in number and in sophistication over the last few months. Suicide bombings are extremely successful in spreading terror and undermining government authority and credibility, as well as highlighting the fiction that Canadian Forces are 'peacekeeping.'<sup>24</sup>

Increasingly, insurgents are launching large and mid-scale attacks against police stations and army convoys involving several dozen combatants. While insurgents are experiencing significant casualties, this strategy is successfully damaging ANA and ANP control of, and support in Kandahar province. These tactics are forcing international forces to engage in large-scale war manoeuvres such as the current 'Operation Mountain Thrust.'

#### **Operation Mountain Thrust**

This operation is OEF's biggest offensive since the fall of the Taliban in 2001. The operation, involving more than 11,000 Afghan and international troops (including 2,200 Canadians), commenced in mid-June and aims to quash Taliban and insurgent fighters in southern Uruzgan, north-eastern Helmand and north-western Kandahar.

#### **A new battle for Kandahar City?**

Our interviewees in the city of Kandahar repeated rumours in the area that suggest the Taliban are planning a large-scale attack on their historic stronghold. Insurgents are stockpiling weapons in the provincial capital's slums and finalising their strategy. Until now the presence of Canadian troops has deterred direct attacks on the city, with the Taliban preferring guerrilla-style tactics like suicide or roadside bombs. An all-out battle for Kandahar's capital would signal a new level of intensity in Afghanistan's latest war.

Following the fall of the Taliban regime, reconstruction and development efforts focused on Kabul and the relatively benign northern Afghanistan, and largely ignored southern Afghanistan. Taliban remnants and other disaffected actors exploited this opportunity to regroup, and with the Afghan transitional Governments' and international community's attention focused elsewhere, insurgent groups became entrenched in the border provinces between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Consequently, Kandahar and

Helmand effectively became 'breeding grounds' for anti-state actors. Increasingly, these Taliban remnants and anti-state actors are joining forces against the central government.

The local population is highly politicized and intensely involved in political discussion especially since this directly affects their day to day security. The "propaganda" war in the area is a sophisticated one, and political discussions contain many elements related to local incidents involving the international community, but also the international political context for the foreign presence in Afghanistan.

<sup>24</sup> Suicide bomb attacks are a relatively new phenomenon in Afghanistan. According to the Afghan Minister of Defence Abdul Rahim Wardak, 'Afghans believe that suicide is a cowardly act.'



Many of the interviewees discussed the foreign presence in Kandahar in a historic context of Muslims vs Christian. Many of them believe that the international presence in Afghanistan is related to a western interest to dominate the Muslim world and connect that to the invasion of Iraq. Many question American motives in Afghanistan and refer to an American desire to “take revenge against Afghans for the 9/11 death”. Others stated that they did not believe that internationals cared about Afghans dying, and declared that “Afghan blood is cheap”. Others consider the international development efforts in Afghanistan to be related to providing infrastructure for their military presence in Afghanistan and consider Karzai’s government as being treated by the international community as a “puppet government”.

Local Afghans are not familiar with the details of the aid efforts in the area - they were unaware for example that USAID pays for the diesel that provide electrical power in Kandahar city. Locals see the international community as disinterested in and disrespectful of Afghan and Islamic culture and traditions.

Some interviewees said that although they were initially supportive of the international presence in the south, they now look at them as the latest foreign occupation, which they will resist with violence if necessary. They see the next month as a time which will determine the future relationship of the coalition forces with Afghanistan.

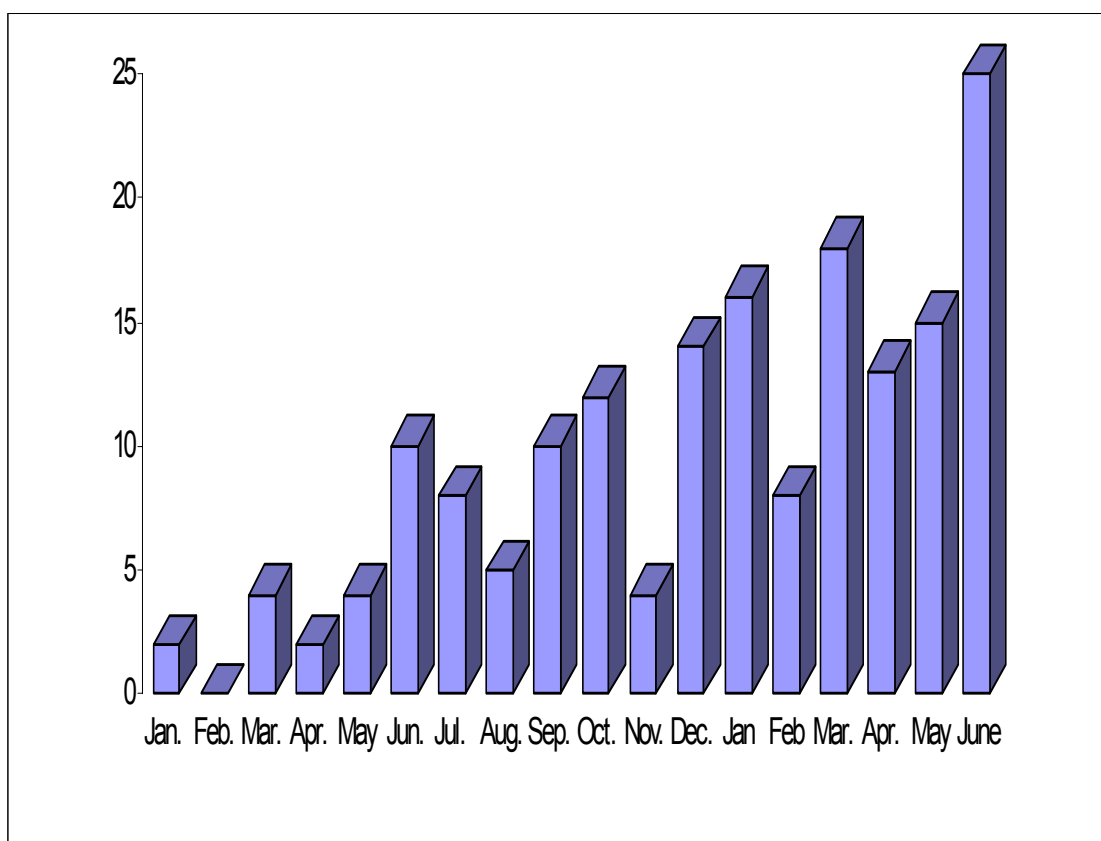
Individuals often mentioned the level of poverty in the region and the deterioration of the economic situation in the area. Many individuals discussed leaving Kandahar, many individuals stated they would leave Kandahar if they were able to, but some do not have the financial means to do so.

During the day in Kandahar there is a decreasing number of women and children on the street, during the night even locals travel with caution.

Family relationships also have a bearing on whether there is support for the Taliban/insurgents in the area. In this province during the Taliban government there was a great deal of marriage with Arab and Pakistani elements and these family relationships are still relevant in the local political dynamics. The international presence in the south is seen as a “Christian/infidel” presence and often referred to in this way in interviews.

Young men interviewed had no employment and no prospect of employment. They were quick to become angry about many elements of their life, and therefore very susceptible to Taliban propaganda.

The return of Taliban control to the south is not simply a military phenomenon nor an “Al Qaeda” initiative. It represents a culmination of local and global economic, social and political factors. It has its first roots in local poverty, but it is fuelled by the perceived global dynamics between the “Muslim and Christian” world.

**Figure 12: Increasing number of security breaches in Kandahar, 2005-2006**

#### 4.3.2 Insurgent groups operating in Kandahar

In the volatile Kandahar province, the term 'insurgent' has functioned as a catch-all term for politically motivated groups taking part in the action against the central government and foreign troops. The reality of Afghanistan's insurgency is more complex however, encompassing a number of different groups, some indigenous and some foreign 'Jihadists', with divergent goals and backgrounds and military tactics. However, these groups share a common radical Islamist ethos and the goal of ousting Karzai's Government. In recent months there have been clear indications of increasing coordination between different insurgent groups. Growing similarities between the tactics used show that insurgent groups are conducting joint efforts to gain territorial control over Kandahar and the south of Afghanistan.

Although Al Qaeda no longer has as firm a base in Afghanistan as it did under the Taliban regime, the group continues to exert influence in the country. On 22 June Al Qaeda's second-in-command Ayman al-Zawahri released a video urging Afghans to join the insurgency against international forces in Afghanistan, and warning that 'significant violence' lies ahead in southern Afghanistan.

**Table 6: Insurgent groups operating in Kandahar**

<b>Taliban</b>	
Taliban is currently used as a “catch-all” term encompassing all kinds of insurgents, particularly those operating in southern Afghanistan. In reality the Taliban should be differentiated from criminal and opium smuggling groups who are also involved in armed (albeit less violent) activities in the area. Supporters of the Taliban regime who fled to Pakistan in 2001 have largely recovered from that defeat. They have recently amplified their incursions along the Afghan-Pakistan border and inside Afghan territory, and are launching increasingly effective attacks on ANA forces and international troops.	
<b>Strategy</b>	Taliban may be preparing a large offensive to invade southern Afghanistan. They are following a strategy similar to the one that brought them to power in 1994. This strategy consisted of taking southern provinces district by district through a combination of military and diplomatic victories.
<b>Warfare tactics</b>	The Taliban have organised their assault forces into company-sized units, and are attempting to overrun police stations and whole villages. So far, this tactic has engendered severe losses in the Taliban’s ranks. However, these tactics have useful psychological effects on the local population and international troops.
<b>Main areas of Operations</b>	Before Operation Enduring Freedom, Kandahar City was a Taliban stronghold. They still have strong support in the province, especially in rural areas. As well as Kandahar, the Taliban are operating in the five southern provinces dominated by Pashtun tribes.
<b>Size</b>	20-25 heavily armed militias comprising 3,000-5,000 men.
<b>Al Qaeda and Foreign Jihadists</b>	
Al Qaeda is a loose amalgam of Salafi jihadists from the Middle East, Central Asia, Caucasus and North Africa, led by Osama Bin Laden. Allegedly, Al Qaeda has reorganised its efforts and appointed two of its most experienced commanders – Khalid Habib and Abd Al Hadi Iraqi – in charge of Afghanistan’s south-western and south-eastern provinces. Local support for Al Qaeda in Afghanistan is weak, as many Afghans strongly resented these Arab fighters’ interference in Afghan political life during the 1990s. However, Al Qaeda has been calling on Muslim solidarity and Kandahar locals’ common hatred for Americans, to build its legitimacy in the eyes of Kandahar’s population.	
<b>Strategy</b>	The jihadists are dispersed in semi-autonomous guerrilla units, effectively working as franchisees without direct chains of command. They have imported from Iraq and Chechnya new guerrilla tactics such as suicide bombings.
<b>Warfare tactics</b>	“Arab-Afghans” were the elite troops fighting for the Taliban Regime during Operation Enduring Freedom.
<b>Main areas of operation</b>	Southern Afghanistan
<b>Size</b>	1,000 to 2,000 fighters based in north Pakistan along the boundary with Afghanistan

### 4.3.3 Civilian deaths

The field research in Kandahar revealed that the number of civilian deaths in the province has doubled from 2005 to 2006. Of the total number of fatalities for 2005 and the first half of 2006 (until the end of June 2006), civilian deaths represented an astonishing 22 percent of total fatalities. This equals the amount of Afghan security forces being killed in Kandahar. Table 7 shows the total amounts of fatalities for civilians, the Afghan security forces, international forces and the Taliban.

<b>Table 7: Fatalities in Kandahar</b>				
	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>Total for 2005 and 2006</b>	<b>Total number (%)</b>
<b>Civilians</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>22%</b>
Afghan National Army / Afghan National Police	96	60	154	22%
International Forces	13	10	23	3%
Taliban	61	303	364	52%

### 4.4 Phantom borders: the Durand Line

During their deployment to Kandahar, Canadian troops will have to succeed where Operation Enduring Freedom has already failed: it will be necessary to stabilise the 'phantom border' between Kandahar and the Pakistani provinces of Quetta and Baluchistan. Following failures to improve the living conditions of the tribal people living in these areas, popular support for Al Qaeda and the Taliban is markedly increasing. However, until the Afghan and Pakistan Governments stop arguing over this arbitrary border, it is likely that Canadian troops will have a *mission impossible* on their hands in southern and eastern Kandahar.

Kandahar borders Pakistan's unstable Quetta province, and is one of the most volatile parts of Afghanistan. During the 1990s, the Taliban used Kandahar as their main entry point into Afghanistan, and the province remains a Taliban and Al Qaeda stronghold. Mullah Dadullah, the former Taliban intelligence chief, allegedly commands the Taliban insurgency from a base in Quetta, Pakistan, and anti-government elements fully exploit the porous border, infiltrating and ex-filtrating Kandahar at leisure.

The border between Kandahar and Pakistan is an ongoing area of concern for Afghanistan, and has significantly contributed to the increasing instability. The border forms part of the so-called *Durand Line*, created by the British Indian Government in 1893 to divide the Afghan tribes, which at the time were a major concern for the British rulers of India. That border, never accepted by Afghanistan, is still in place and divides the Afghan Baloch and the Pashtun tribes on both sides

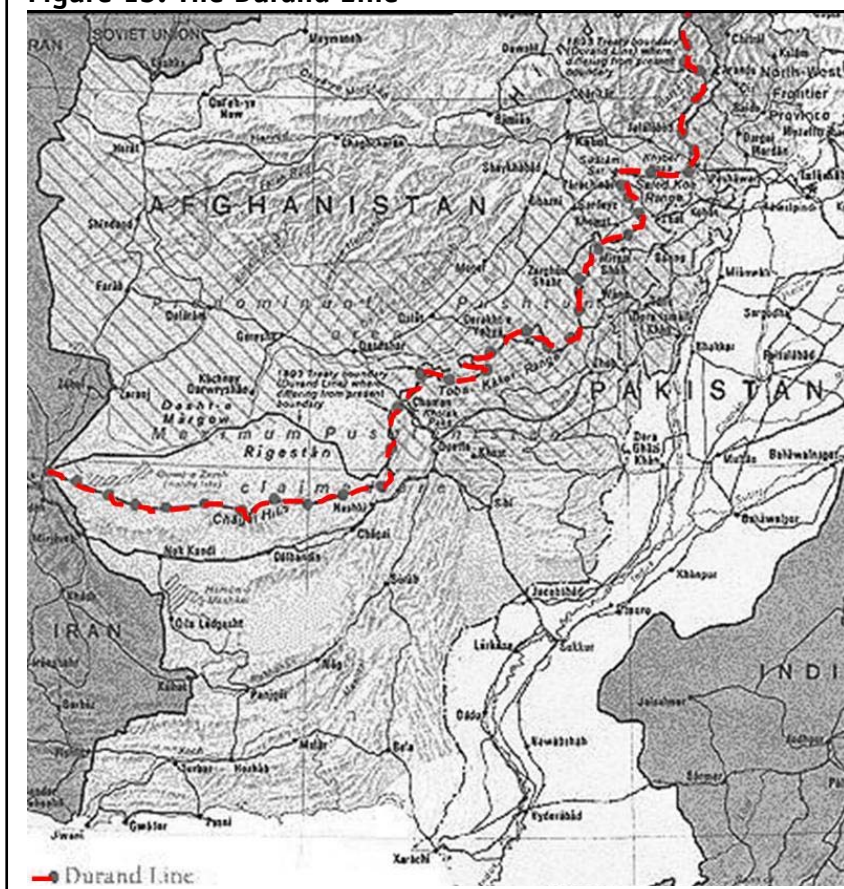
of this technical barrier. Afghans still refer to some parts of the disputed territory on the other side of the border as South Pashtunistan.

Following the collapse of British India and the subsequent partitioning of India in 1947, the *Durand Line* became the actual border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. However, in 1949, the Afghan parliament unilaterally declared the border invalid, proclaiming that Afghanistan did not recognise the *Durand Line* as a legal boundary. Thus the border can best be described as a 'phantom border', having important implications for the current security situation in Kandahar.

Pakistan continues to pressure Kabul and the regional tribes to accept the *Durand Line* as an official international border. The issue remains a source of tension between both countries as well as international forces in the region, but neither the Afghan nor the Pakistani Government has full control over the border areas. Pakistan wants to uphold the border as a barrier against the flow of Afghan refugees during periods of conflict.

Canadian and American OEF forces seek a firm border against insurgents quartered in the Baloch region. However, the governor of Kandahar has only partial control over the tribal activities in this area and his Pakistani counterpart has even less control over what most local people see as Afghan territory. The Pashtun people from Pakistan's North West Frontier Province, Baluchistan and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas wish to secede from Pakistan, considering their territories to be part of Afghanistan.

**Figure 13: The Durand Line**



#### 4.5 Pakistan's influence on security in Kandahar

The recent escalation of violence in Kandahar brought into question the role of Pakistan's Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI) in supporting Taliban actions. The Taliban has long-standing links with the ISI, and despite Pakistani denial, the Afghan Government has continued to accuse the Pakistani army of aiding and abetting the Taliban's launch of attacks across the border in Afghanistan. Afghanistan's President Karzai recently said that "Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence trains young Afghans to burn down schools and attack engineers working in construction."<sup>25</sup> Kandahar's Governor Assadullah Khalid has continuously denounced Taliban penetration from Pakistan's Baluchistan province, claiming that "the suicide bombers are trained and equipped by Pakistan and then sent to Afghanistan for sabotage activities".<sup>26</sup>

The Pakistan military works closely with the Islamic parties which govern the two provinces that border Afghanistan, North-West Frontier and Baluchistan. These political groups are long-standing supporters of the Taliban. By interfering as little as possible with the support of these groups to the Taliban, Musharraf's administration may be trying to ensure its political survival by keeping Islamic radicals on his side. However, according to the director general of the Pakistani ISI, Hamid Gul, although Pakistan has positioned 80,000 troops along the Durand Line, Pakistan is not able to police the Taliban in Pakistani territory: "The Americans cannot stop infiltration through the Mexican border - how can we stop it [with Afghanistan]? Especially as the Durand Line is just an imaginary border, not a physical border."<sup>27</sup>

Pakistan's Secret Service is not the only Pakistani force influencing Kandahar province. While historical and cultural elements may explain the interest of Islamabad in shaping Kandahar's future, Pakistan also has a strong socio-economic influence on Kandahar. As Kandahar's most important trade partner, Pakistan plays a key role in the province's development. During trade agreement talks with Afghanistan in 2005, Pakistani authorities showed keen interest in setting up industrial zones between Kandahar and Jalalabad.

However, despite the potential for economic development, Pakistan's influence has created hostility among the Kandahar population. The ISI's support for the Taliban has led to several demonstrations around Pakistan's consulate in Kandahar City. Kandahar locals have particularly resented the arrival of hundreds of Pakistani workers, engaged in Afghanistan's huge road-building projects. These Pakistanis have better road-construction skills, and are paid more than Afghan workers. To some extent, Kandahar locals hold Pakistan responsible for the high level of unemployment in Kandahar province, and Pakistani workers have been targeted and killed in recent months.

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<sup>25</sup> 'Pakistan denies helping Taliban', BBC News, 19 May 2006.

<sup>26</sup> 'Afghan governor blames Pakistan for attacks', Daily News, 18 January 2006.

<sup>27</sup> Syed Saleem Shahzad, 'The Battle Spreads in Afghanistan', Asia Times, 29 May 2006.

## 5. Appendices

### I. Instability and conflict: definition and rating

Political motivation can encompass diverse issues such as territorial disputes, control over state institutions, religious and ethnic violence and a scramble over economic resources. The onset of war requires a conscious commitment, a significant mobilisation, on the part of the belligerents in question and a quantum of violence.

Tactics of violence may vary from classic war tactics carried out with sophisticated weapons to tactics of terror and destabilization that are theoretically outlawed by the rules of modern warfare, often carried out with rudimentary artillery, suicide bombings, and the exploitation/employment of communication media.

This kind of political violence can involve organised crime, locally nationally and trans-nationally. In absence of traditional levy, an informal criminalised economy is built into the functioning and financing of political communities involved in the fighting. This form of political violence is usually of high intensity, with massive violation of human rights and involvement and targeting of the civil population.

The civil population may ally with different political communities according to belief, location, religious or ethnic identity and/or personal interest. Winning the hearts and minds of people and changing the opponent's behaviour is often the main stake in this kind of political violence. Military might is often of limited use in attaining this strategic objective.

The following combination of five control and security indicators, covering each different factor provides a 'reading grid' to measure the state of violence and instability at play throughout Kandahar:

#### 1. Formal vs. Informal Control Factors

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Distinction between military and police functions</li> <li>▪ Capacity of indigenous military forces and ratio of Afghan police per inhabitant</li> <li>▪ Regular army and police force and new recruits to replace government losses</li> <li>▪ Areas/checkpoints/borders covered by police patrols</li> <li>▪ Control over major transport and energy axis</li> <li>▪ Number and engagement of international military forces is also being considered</li> </ul>	VS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Number and presence of militia/irregular forces across the provinces</li> <li>▪ Control over road, land and trade routes, for example through informal checkpoints</li> <li>▪ Patrolling of borders and key points</li> <li>▪ Support from external groups and powers</li> </ul>
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## 2. Rule of Law vs. Rule of Guns Factors

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Functioning of civilian administration across the provinces</li> <li>▪ Independence of civil service</li> <li>▪ Functioning of judicial and criminal system</li> <li>▪ Prosecution of major traffickers</li> </ul>	VS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Level of corruption and bribery</li> <li>▪ Factional control of courts</li> <li>▪ Ability to conduct armed attacks against the Afghan population, international forces and NGO personnel</li> <li>▪ Number of insurgent attacks and related deaths</li> <li>▪ Propaganda and intimidation of local population</li> <li>▪ Support gained from indigenous population including recruitment of new supporters and ability to blend into the population</li> <li>▪ Dangerous road travel and blocks in main routes</li> <li>▪ number of armed robberies, abductions and murders especially in government-controlled areas</li> <li>▪ Rivalry and fighting among warlords and regional commanders</li> </ul>
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## 3. Legal vs. Illegal Economy Factors

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Farming activities supported/funded by Government and international community</li> <li>▪ Access to water</li> <li>▪ Infrastructures and access to markets</li> <li>▪ Non-farming activities</li> </ul>	VS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Illegal opium trade - increased levels of opium cultivation; source of revenue for warlords and drug traffickers; dependency of opium poppy farmers; heroin factories;</li> <li>▪ Illegal arms/drugs/human trafficking</li> <li>▪ Security and protection costs</li> </ul>
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## 4. Development Policies vs. Destructive Strategies Factors

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ alternative livelihoods</li> <li>▪ building of infrastructure</li> <li>▪ facilitating access to markets</li> <li>▪ access to quality education</li> <li>▪ support and funding of non-farming activities</li> <li>▪ integration of local structures</li> <li>▪ functioning of public health systems</li> </ul>	VS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ threat of and actual eradication</li> </ul>
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### 5. Public Perception and Support Factors

- Perception of security priorities, for example threats from insurgents and warlords, crime incidents
- Perception of government presence and effectiveness of current policies
- Perception of international forces present in the province
- Perception of the work and effectiveness of International NGOs
- Interaction of local population with external groups

In light of those indicators and of the different factors at play through the many security incidents, Kandahar rates 8 on a scale of instability. Rating 8 characterises a state of systematic attacks and political violence, close to the state of civil war.

10	Open warfare situation. Evacuation.
9	Daily random guerrilla attacks on civilians, and western and local security forces. Safe base insecure.
8	<b>Random but systematic attacks on international civilians and total estrangement from local community. Dependency of rural communities on illegal opium.</b>
7	Increased attacks on government, international forces and civilians. Vehicle movement difficult with blocks in main routes. High level of corruption. Increased level of illegal opium cultivation.
6	Scattered violence and threats of violence against civilians. Dangerous road travel. Growth of illegal economy.
5	Scattered attacks and threats against government and international forces .
4	Underlying threats and intimidation of local population, anti government and anti-Western propaganda.
3	Crime second schedule with tendency towards first schedule offences. Low level of illegal economic activities.
2	Crime second schedule. Government patrolling key points and borders. Functioning of civilian administration.
1	Government control throughout the province. Prevalence of legal activities. Safe to go unhindered in accordance with development projects.

## **II. Excerpts from the Canadian Parliamentary debate on the deployment of Canadian Forces in Afghanistan**

The full debate is available online at:

[http://www.parl.gc.ca/39/1/parlbus/chambus/house/debates/025\\_2006-05-17/toc025-E.htm](http://www.parl.gc.ca/39/1/parlbus/chambus/house/debates/025_2006-05-17/toc025-E.htm)

### **Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC) moved:**

That,

- 1) Whereas the House on April 10, 2006 debated a motion in support of Canada's significant commitment in Afghanistan;
- 2) Whereas Canada's commitment in Afghanistan is an important contribution, with that of more than 30 other countries, to international efforts under the auspices of the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO);
- 3) Whereas these international efforts are reducing poverty, enhancing human rights and gender equality, strengthening civil society and helping to build a free, secure and self-sustaining democratic state for all Afghan men, women and children; and
- 4) Whereas Canada's commitment in Afghanistan is consistent with Canada's support of freedom, democracy, the rule of law and human rights around the world;

The House support the government's two year extension of Canada's deployment of diplomatic, development, civilian police and military personnel in Afghanistan and the provision of funding and equipment for this extension.

He said: Mr. Speaker, as members of the House know, we made a pledge during the last election campaign to put international treaties and military engagements to a vote in this chamber.

If we made this promise, it was because before we send diplomats, relief workers and soldiers on dangerous missions abroad, it is important to be able to tell them that Canada's parliamentarians believe in their objectives and support what they are doing.

This is an opportune time for such a debate and such a vote. Last week the Minister of Foreign Affairs visited Afghanistan. During his visit to Afghanistan, President Karzai requested that Canada extend its peace and security operation in his country beyond our existing commitment which expires in February 2007. This operation of our national defence personnel is fundamentally linked with our other diplomatic and humanitarian efforts. President Karzai and the Afghan people are waiting for our response.

This evening we will vote for a renewed commitment.

It is a vote that is long overdue. It is a vote that all parties in the House have asked for and have agreed to. As members know, our diplomats, aid workers and soldiers have been deployed in Afghanistan for almost five years.

Despite the fact that members of three of four parties in the House have consistently voiced support for a mission in Afghanistan, Canadians on the ground in Kabul, Kandahar and in the PRT have never received a clear mandate from this Parliament. That is not fair to the brave men and women who wear the maple leaf. They need to know that their Parliament is behind them.

President Karzai's request provides us with an opportune time to explain our next moves forward and to renew our commitment. Today we will debate and tonight we will vote.

President Karzai is not the only person waiting for Canada to decide. Our international and NATO allies will also be watching. They, too, want a renewed commitment. As members know, both the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, our two primary partners in southern Afghanistan, have recently renewed their commitments, two year and three year commitments respectively. The Dutch and the British have made their commitments.

Our rationale for being in Afghanistan is clear. It is in the interests of this country.

We are there as well at the invitation of the Afghan government. We are taking part in a multinational operation sanctioned by the United Nations.

Our mission there is not some sort of throwaway option among competing alternatives. It is not a manufactured make-work project to keep soldiers and diplomats busy. It certainly is not a unilateral effort on Canada's part.

The events of September 11, 2001 were a wake-up call not just to Americans but to people in all free and democratic nations. Two dozen Canadians were killed as a result of the attacks on the twin towers. They were our ordinary fellow citizens, people with stories, families and dreams. The attacks in New York and Washington have been followed by others in Madrid, Bali, London, Turkey, Egypt and elsewhere.

We should be clear. Canada is not safe from such attacks. We will never be safe so long as we are a society that defends freedom, democracy and human rights.

We have known as a nation since the beginning that as long as we defend the values of freedom, democracy and human rights, we will not be safe from attack from those who oppose them. Not surprisingly, al-Qaeda has singled out Canada along with a number of other nations for attack. It is the same al-Qaeda that together with the Taliban took an undemocratic, failed Afghanistan and made it a safe haven from which to plan terrorist attacks worldwide.

We just cannot sit back and let the Taliban backed by al-Qaeda or similar extremist elements return to power in Afghanistan. It cannot be allowed to happen. The continued existence of Taliban pockets following defeat of the regime means our efforts in Afghanistan have never been peacekeeping in the traditional sense.

Al-Qaeda and the Taliban are not interested in peace. They target civilians. They target women and children in a quest to impose once again their will and their dark

and backward vision of life on the Afghan people. They promise their followers heaven in the afterlife. What they deliver is hell on earth.

The previous government recognized this.

In fact, the leader of the official opposition never shied away from voicing his support for fellow Canadians in Afghanistan. In the debate just last month on our mission to Afghanistan, he stated, "I want to start by echoing the minister's words.... We are very proud of them". On numerous times he corrected misinformation about our role in Afghanistan. I quote:

"We are in Afghanistan because the Afghans want us in Afghanistan. This is not an invasion or occupation. This is going to help people."

Support for the mission was echoed last month in the House by the member for Vancouver South, who stated:

"Our government agreed to this deployment. We believed then and we believe now that destroying root and branch the agents and infrastructure of supply and training that made Afghanistan into a safe haven for international terrorism is in Canada's vital national interest."

Support for our troops has also been expressed consistently by the Bloc Québécois and even some members of the New Democratic Party. I could quote the member for Sackville—Eastern Shore on this.

It is an opinion shared by the hon. member for La Pointe-de-l'Île, who stated: "Why should we be in Afghanistan? Because it is a question of international solidarity that can make Quebeckers feel obliged to be there".

I can tell you from direct experience that our men and women in Afghanistan are grateful to the many members from such diverse parties who supported what they are doing.

Together, diplomats, workers and soldiers from 35 countries are working with the government of Afghanistan to rebuild that country. We are providing knowledge, financial assistance, security; security that allows the Afghan people to build a justice system, develop and grow their economy, construct schools, hospitals and irrigation systems, and yes, ensure that the rights of the Afghan people are protected.

I am thinking of the right of women to be treated like human beings, of the right to see, read and say whatever one wants, of the right to choose one's leaders through the electoral process.

There are real risks involved in helping the Afghan people achieve these gains. There are risks for Afghans, risks for our allies, and as we all know, risks for Canadians. We know this because we had again today a combat fatality. These risks, as tragic as they are, and these losses, as tragic as they are, are not unique to this

time and this place. There were risks when Canada went to the Balkans, to Cyprus, or during the Suez crisis, and of course, in Korea and in two world wars.

Canadians accept risks when those risks are in the service of a greater good. We honour those who take risks and make the ultimate sacrifice by staying the course and supporting their mission.

In the government's view, the emergence of a stable, safe, self-sufficient, democratic Afghanistan that will never again be a haven for terrorists or traffickers is well worth the effort.

Canadians, particularly young Canadians, often ask me what I saw in Afghanistan. They want to know what work we are doing there. I tell them the work is both serious and complex.

We are working together with our partners from Afghanistan, the UN, NATO and NGOs in an integrated international effort to support the recovery of this country.

Key to this are the 27,000 troops from dozens of countries, including Canadian Forces personnel, who are helping to stabilize Afghanistan so that vital humanitarian and development work can be undertaken.

**The challenges are enormous. There are no quick fixes and success cannot be assured by military means alone.**

In fact, Canada and her allies all agree that we need to promote simultaneous support for Afghan governance and economic development to bring about a lasting recovery. This is why we opened a mission in Kabul, in great danger in 2003, and recently doubled our presence there.

Canadians from our embassy are working directly every day with Afghans, the UN, the World Bank, NATO and our other partners to ensure that the reconstruction of this country is a success. This pre-supposes that the resources intended for development are there and distributed equitably among the Afghan people.

Our work is paying off. In little more than three short years, 12 million Afghans, both men and women, have registered to vote in two historic elections. Close to five million children have been enrolled in school, one-third of them young girls. Almost four million refugees have returned and more than half of all Afghan villages have received grants to allow them to begin to rebuild.

All that has happened in a country where, just a few years ago, there were no elections, there was virtually no public education, women had no rights, and the future looked very bleak.

I saw this progress first-hand, and it made me proud to know that Canada was there making it happen.

Working with our allies and the Afghan people, Canada has achieved great things, but there is much more to do.

Afghanistan is still the fifth poorest country in the world. The Taliban are trying to return to power and too many people have to fall back on drug trafficking to meet the needs of their families.

We need to extend our mission so we can work to finish the job the previous government started. We need to improve the security situation in southern Afghanistan to bring it in line with the north and the west of the country. We need to ensure that children in southern Afghanistan will be able to go to school without fear of attack. We need to ensure that the people there can get the things we take for granted, things like clean water, roads without mines and reliable sources of energy.

Stability in southern Afghanistan will also help the Afghan national government focus on improving the country's emerging democratic infrastructure.

That is to say, an independent human rights commission, a new central bank, and a professional police force.

Our mission in Afghanistan is one more example of the Canadian leadership tradition in world affairs, a tradition that crosses party lines, a tradition of which we are all proud, a tradition that favours actions over words, results over process, principle over politics.

The allied governments that have sent missions to Afghanistan are a diverse lot: conservative, liberal, social democrats; people in parties who would normally and naturally disagree on so many other day to day political issues, as we do in this chamber, but who share a common resolve to strengthen democracy, ensure equality rights for women, reduce poverty and make the free world safe from the threat of terrorism.

To achieve these objectives, our allies agree that we must eliminate the threat posed by al-Qaeda and the Taliban, and train Afghan security forces so they are capable of sustaining security in their own country.

Therefore, this government is seeking Parliament's clear support to renew Canada's mission in Afghanistan. Our men and women need to know that we share their goals and support their efforts and are willing, regardless of polls that sometimes go up or down, to back them for the next few years so they can finish the work they were sent there to do.

We are asking Parliament to make a commitment in three areas: diplomacy, development and defence.

All three are inextricably linked. In a moment I want to go through what we are asking Parliament specifically to support over the next couple of years.

I think I also need to be clear, given the events over the last 24 hours or so, of what the consequences would be if there were a No vote. Let me be clear on this. This would be a surprise to this government. In debates in this chamber up until last month and in private meetings until very recently, we had every reason to believe that three of four parties, which have consistently supported this action, would continue to do so.

Should that turn out not to be the case, this government is not in a position to simply walk away or to run away. What the government will do, if we do not get a clear mandate, the clear will of Parliament to extend for two years and beyond, is proceed cautiously with a one year extension. We cannot walk away quickly. We will proceed with another year and if we need further efforts or a further mandate to go ahead into the future, we will go so alone and we will go to the Canadian people to get that mandate.

We are asking for a two year mandate that extends the elements of the current deployment.

The first part of our commitment entails the construction of a permanent, secure Canadian embassy in Kabul, which will serve Canada's interests and meet Afghanistan's needs for at least 15 years.

The second is the approval of an additional \$310 million expenditure for development assistance from next year until 2010-11, which will raise Canada's total contribution to nearly \$1 billion over 10 years.

Third and finally, we are seeking to extend the mission of both the Canadian Forces in Kandahar as well as the efforts of Canadian military diplomats, development workers and police in the PRT, the provincial reconstruction team, for 24 more months. This mission extension, if the motion is passed, will cover the period from February 2007 to 2009 when we expect a transition of power in Afghanistan itself.

Extending the mission of the Canadian Forces has operational consequences. We will take on once again a second leadership rotation from November 2007 to May 2008, and this is new. As I said earlier today, we will be prepared to assume overall leadership of the ISAF for one year starting in February 2008.

Near the end of each calendar year, 2006, 2007, 2008, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and National Defence will evaluate the results of our involvement, in concert with our allies, according to the criteria set out at the London conference, and we will share this evaluation with parliamentarians of all parties.

There we have it, the reaffirmation of Canada's intent expressed through a clear and renewed commitment, a commitment that builds on past achievements, a commitment in line with Canadian values, a commitment that allows us to finish the job.

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the right hon. Prime Minister for elaborating on further details, which probably should be included in the motion to be voted on tonight. Maybe he would agree to an amendment.

My question has to do with process. The Prime Minister will be aware that members are concerned about the swiftness of the requirement for this debate and vote. He indicated in his speech that both the Dutch and the British had already made their commitment to extend their missions for a further two years, but we only found out about this on Monday.

Could the Prime Minister advise the House when he found out about the extension request of two years from either NATO or Mr. Karzai? When was the first time he advised Parliament?

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper:** Mr. Speaker, first, I will say a couple of things to that.

In the first place, all the engagements that we are asking Parliament to back, with the one exception of command of ISAF as I mentioned, are all engagements as undertaken at the present time. These are extensions to Canada's current involvement, not changes.

He knows the government, of which he was previously a member, made these commitments. I would assume, as a member of the previous government, he is well aware of the time lines that are involved in terms of expectations of new engagements. We are coming up on an international conference. The fact that our NATO allies have extended their commitments is not a secret fact. This is a publicly known fact.

All I can say in terms of the process is the House was consulted in a take note debate in April. The view of his party at that time was clear, as it had been for the previous few years. His leader was consulted in the lead-up to this, and his party agreed to the process we proposed, which made this debate possible today.

**Hon. Jack Layton (Toronto—Danforth, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have two questions for the Prime Minister.

First, is he suggesting that if the House were to oppose the motion before us, that his government would proceed in any event with a further deployment on a mission in Afghanistan after 2007, despite the vote in the House?

Second, is he suggesting that the commitment would terminate ultimately in February 2009 because of a change of administration of some sort in Afghanistan. In his view, if the change, to which he has referred and which is rather vague, does not happen, what would Canada's plan be for the longer term?

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper:** Mr. Speaker, there are a couple of things that I want to respond to in the questions.



First, as I said earlier, the government would quite frankly be surprised if we did not have the support of the same three or four parties that supported this mission from the outset and up to at least last weekend. If it were the case that we were surprised by the result of tonight's vote, I do not think it is feasible for Canada to simply walk away in the next few months. The government has to take its responsibilities and the safety of its soldiers and its diplomats seriously.

What we would do is proceed cautiously for a year, as I said. If we believe we need to go further beyond that, we will seek a mandate from the Canadian people.

What we are asking for here is to extend the mandate in this motion for a clear two years. That would bring us to the end of President Karzai's term, and that is where the allies, which have been with us from the beginning, are by and large at today.

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper:** Mr. Speaker, members across various parties in the House have requested a vote. Members of all parties, in particular the hon. member and his party, are more than aware of the details of our engagement in Afghanistan, which we are seeking to extend.

Let us be serious. The government believes there should be a vote. The government offered a vote and that vote was accepted. The process was accepted unanimously by the House, including by his party. If he does not like that, he should take that up with the leadership of his party.

However, we have men and women over there who are doing great work, who are prepared to take bullets for our country. If the hon. member and his party are not prepared to stand up and simply endorse the mission, then they are, frankly, not supporting the people on the ground they claim to support, and that is what they should do.

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper:** Mr. Speaker, the House, especially the party opposite understands the mission in Afghanistan. I hope that, before sending our troops, our young men and women, into a military campaign, it understood the mission in Afghanistan.

This government wants strong support for our troops in Afghanistan. This is why we responded to calls from the parties to have a vote.

We know the NDP may vote against the motion. However, indications are that the other parties support the motion. It will be a good message for our troops.

I would just add that, in my own opinion, the comments by the parties have been clear up to this week. Our troops and the public have a hard time understanding why the parties suddenly change their mind when there is a vote.

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper:** Mr. Speaker, I was in Afghanistan. I know the Minister of Foreign Affairs and others are in contact with our allies. The Dutch and the British are proceeding. I can tell the House that the Dutch, in large measure, are proceeding because they know Canada is behind this mission and they have never

forgotten the Canadian role in the liberation of the Netherlands during World War II.

**Hon. Gordon O'Connor (Minister of National Defence, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as I begin, I want to offer condolences to the family of Captain Nichola Goddard. Our thoughts are with them tonight.

Today, Canada faces a weighty decision: whether to continue our diplomatic, military, police and development efforts in Afghanistan for another two years, or to let our contributions expire in February 2007.

Last month, I stood in this House to explain why the Canadian Forces are involved in Afghanistan. While six weeks have passed, the rationale for this mission has obviously not changed. In fact, the rationale has not changed since the previous government committed the Canadian Forces to this mission four years ago.

I stand here today to advise Canadians that our job in Afghanistan—a job that we have executed successfully so far—is not finished. The right decision is obvious.

The bottom line is that the mission in Afghanistan supports one of the enduring goals of Canada's foreign and defence policy: to protect Canada's national interest. We must commit to seeing our mission through. Our national interest is straightforward: to ensure the security and prosperity of the Canadian people. This government has summed it up in two words: Canada first.

The Canada first defence strategy seeks to protect Canadians from threats that confront us at home, along our coastlines and from any place abroad. Right now this means being in Afghanistan, once a failed state that harboured terrorists, terrorists who attacked our closest friend and ally, terrorists who killed Canadians and who still threaten Canada, terrorists who now seek to undermine the democratically elected government of Afghanistan.

In 2002 Canada decided to help ensure that Afghanistan does not again harbour such extremists. We are not in Afghanistan alone but with a dedicated group of more than 30 countries. The mission is a priority for our allies in NATO, the G-8 and the United Nations. As a responsible ally and member of the international community, Canada must continue to participate in this mission.

We are also in Afghanistan at the request of the Afghans themselves. We responded to that request because Canada has a longstanding tradition of helping those in need.

Afghanistan was a failed state and remains one of the poorest countries in the world. By helping provide security and stability in Afghanistan, the Canadian Forces are creating a safe environment where reconstruction can take place. Let me assure you, Afghans have no doubt as to why we are in Afghanistan or to the positive impact that we are having there.

Because our national interest is at stake, because our allies need our help, and because Afghans themselves requested our presence, over 7,000 Canadian troops have been deployed to Afghanistan since 2002. Altogether some 16,000 Canadian troops have been involved in the international campaign against terrorism since September 11, 2001.

Today we have over 2,000 troops in Afghanistan. The 1st Battalion of the Princess Patricia's is helping the Afghan national security forces improve security in Kandahar province. We have a provincial reconstruction team stationed in Kandahar City comprised not only of Canadian Forces members but also of specialists from CIDA, the Department of Foreign Affairs and the RCMP. Together they form a multi-dimensional and integrated team that is working to stabilize Kandahar province and facilitate and encourage development efforts there.

We have a strategic advisory team in Kabul giving advice to President Karzai's government. We have Canadian Forces personnel working at the Kabul military training centre, the coalition hospital at Kandahar airport and in ISAF headquarters. We are leading the multinational brigade for regional command south in its transition to NATO control scheduled for this summer. Our troops in Afghanistan are among the most capable in the world.

They have acquitted themselves well under fire. They have captured Taliban insurgents. They have befriended local leaders. They have helped provide for the pressing humanitarian needs of the local population. They have supported efforts to diversify the Afghan economy and to deal with the global threat posed by narcotics originating in that country.

In short, we have the right personnel with the right skills, training and equipment to meet the requirements of the mission in Afghanistan and to deal with the risks involved.

Be assured that we will continue to make sure that our troops have the right equipment to be successful. The Department of National Defence is currently conducting a study to determine how well the needs of our soldiers are being met for the mission in Afghanistan and what we can do to support them better.

Moreover, the Department of National Defence has purchased \$234 million of new equipment specifically in support of this mission, including the heavily armoured Nyala patrol vehicles our forces recently received, one of which, as we witnessed last Monday, already saved the lives of two Canadian soldiers when it was struck by a roadside bomb.

Our troops are also equipped with robust rules of engagement that allow them to execute operations effectively and they are rooted in a strong command and control structure that is framed around a new generation of leaders formed in the crucible of real and relevant operations.

Moreover, their mission stands on a firm legal basis. After September 11, 2001, Canada acted in accordance with article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations,

which maintains our individual and collective rights of self-defence. The United Nations Security Council recognized this right in resolution 1368, passed on September 12, 2001. Our current mission in Afghanistan is based on our legal right to defend ourselves.

In addition, the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force, which is scheduled to expand this summer, is mandated by the United Nations, under Security Council resolution 1623. Moreover, the Government of Canada has the consent of the government of Afghanistan.

We all know that the Canadian commitment has not and will not come without cost. A cost measured not only in dollars and cents, but also in human lives. We have mourned the loss of 17 Canadians since the mission began. And others have suffered serious injury. But Canada must persevere in this mission.

The efforts of the Canadian Forces have brought about real progress in Afghanistan. Upon its expansion this summer, the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force will be present in three-quarters of the country, with plans to expand soon thereafter.

We are moving into areas where al-Qaeda and the Taliban were previously uncontested. We are restricting their movement, undermining their local support and engaging them face to face. Our Canadian trainers are working at the Kabul Military Training Centre, graduating up to 800 Afghan recruits every two weeks.

Just last week, Canadian soldiers captured 10 suspected Taliban fighters or sympathizers who were hiding out near the Gombad forward operating base. This was the biggest capture of suspected insurgents by Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan to date.

The detainees were then rightfully turned over to the Afghan authorities, in accordance with our arrangement regarding detainees, an arrangement that supports the principle that Afghan authorities have the responsibility for handling detainees captured in their sovereign territory, an arrangement that helps strengthen local capacity and good governance.

Our strategic advisory team, a highly influential group of just 15 people, is currently working with Afghan leaders in Kabul to develop the fledgling institutions of the Afghan state. This team was specifically requested by President Karzai. Its military and civilian members are working with his senior economic adviser on the Afghan national development strategy. They are helping the Civil Service Commission build a legitimate and accountable public service and they are on hand to assist President Karzai's chief of staff.

Our Canadian Forces medical outreach team, which is part of our provincial reconstruction team, as well as members of our battle group, regularly visit villages and offer medical services to the suffering population.

These are the real efforts and achievements of the Canadian Forces, in partnership with officials from foreign affairs, CIDA and the RCMP.

We have concrete benchmarks to evaluate the progress and success of this mission. The Afghanistan Compact, along with Canada's own strategy and plans for the mission in Afghanistan, lays out the medium-term benchmarks and the final objectives to which we are aiming.

The compact, signed in London earlier this year, outlines how the Government of Afghanistan, the United Nations, the international community, and Canada are going to work over the next five years to ensure that the Afghanistan mission achieves its desired effects. While we still have significant work left to do, we have a clear roadmap guiding us forward.

Ultimate success in Afghanistan will be achieved when the country and its government are stabilized, when the terrorists and their local support networks are defeated, when we are assured that terrorist groups will be denied sanctuary within Afghanistan, when the Afghan national security forces are well established and under the firm and legitimate control of the government of Afghanistan and when these forces can protect their own people and their own country.

Working toward these objectives requires long term commitment and sustained effort by the international community. It depends upon the future contributions of Canada.

That is why, in parallel with expanded diplomatic and development efforts, the government strongly believes that the mandate of the Canadian Forces contingents, including the army task force, its enabling forces and the provincial reconstruction team, should be extended for another 24 months from February 2007 to February 2009. This is the minimum contribution necessary to achieve mission success and to exercise leadership among our allies.

Canada should also plan to reassume the leadership of the multinational brigade in Kandahar in November 2007 for another six months and will be open to other leadership opportunities as they arise.

A two-year commitment will allow the additional time needed for Afghan security forces to become operationally effective.

A two-year commitment will help ensure a smooth political transition in 2009 when the current mandate of President Karzai ends.

A two-year commitment is what our allies expect and need from us. The planned contributions of the U.K. and the Netherlands, for example—who have committed troops for the next three and two years respectively—are predicated upon Canadian participation in this mission. If we let our mandate expire in February, we would risk our allies' support for the mission and the success of the mission itself.

The two year commitment is also consistent with the timeline expected in the Afghanistan compact. A two year commitment will employ significant military resources, but the Canadian Forces will retain some flexibility to respond to other priorities or to other unforeseen crises. This was a question that was raised by the Leader of the Opposition.

We can maintain the commitment into Afghanistan ad infinitum at its current level. What we can also do is have a naval task force available for deployment in the world to meet a crisis. We can also contribute modest land force contributions to meet other anticipated crises. From what we know is evolving in Darfur and Haiti, which are two examples, we believe we can meet whatever requirement is being set for us by the United Nations or other forces.

In the long term, the government is committed to expanding the Canadian Forces in support of a greater leadership role for Canada in world affairs.

In the short term, however, these expansion efforts will limit our ability to undertake another major operation. We will continue to play supporting roles in other operations or crises.

The Canadian Forces are in Afghanistan standing up for Canada's national interest.

They are partnering with our allies. They are helping the people of Afghanistan. But their mission is not yet complete. Together with our allies, we have devised a clear plan that outlines the way forward, to achieve the aims that we have set out.

As a responsible member of the international community, as one of the most prosperous nations on earth, and with our national interest at stake, Canada must extend and expand our commitment to this multinational mission.

As was said by Edmund Burke, "All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing". Afghanistan asked for our help and that of the international community in eliminating the threat posed by al-Qaeda and the Taliban. These terrorist networks are failing in Afghanistan because Canadians recognize the implications of complacency.

Through the good work of Canadians, Afghan institutions are functioning again. Liberty is returning after a long and cold absence. Women have a stake and a voice in the country. Learning is blossoming in countless schools.

Simply put, the Taliban and al-Qaeda are losing the battle because brave Canadians have stood up in the front lines.

Let us solidify the achievements we have gained so far. Let us move this mission forward, for the sake of the Afghan people, for the sake of our allies and for the sake of each and every Canadian. As the Canadian Forces put Canada's national interest first, they deserve nothing less than our continued support.

Therefore, I call upon all members of Parliament to support the motion that extends Canada's commitment in Afghanistan to February 2009.

**Hon. Bill Graham (Leader of the Opposition, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I think maybe the minister got a little carried away in his French.

He said twelve years instead of two years. The House would find that a bit hard to swallow.

I assume his English on two years was a little more reliable than his French on douze ans.

I believe the minister clearly confirmed what his colleague, the Minister of Foreign Affairs said. Ultimately he is giving the assurance to the House that the potential for a Haiti or a Darfur mission will not be diminished by our Afghan commitments. Those were the words of the foreign minister. I believe those are the words that members of the House want to hear when we debate and come to a decision on this very important mission.

I have two questions.

One goes to his observation about the nature of equipment. I have recently read a book by General Rupert Smith called *The Utility of Force*. In that book he describes very clearly the nature of these new missions and the type of equipment that is necessary because these are always actions behind enemy lines or within an area where it is not like a traditional situation.

Could the minister assure us that, with the use and prevalence of IEDs and these types of weapons in Afghanistan, our forces are properly protected? He mentioned the Nyala. We know the minister will be purchasing trucks shortly. Will these trucks also have the types of protection that would be necessary?

Second, he mentioned the strategic advisory team in Kabul, which has had huge success. Will the minister tell us whether the government intends to replicate this activity in Kandahar as well to enable the governor and the region to provide similar success the civil society in that area?

**Hon. Gordon O'Connor:** Mr. Speaker, I will confirm, to the best of our knowledge and within the resources that we know we have, that we anticipate we can meet requests from the United Nations or whoever asks us for Darfur or Haiti. We have done our assessment and talked to the United Nations and other people to get a sense of what they want, and I think we can certainly meet their needs.

With respect to equipment, I saw some photos recently of the explosion that occurred about a week ago in which the Nyala was involved. That vehicle saved the lives of those two soldiers. It is built to deal with mines. It suffered the same extent of explosion as the Mercedes Jeep had a few weeks earlier, when four of our soldiers died. The soldiers inside the Nyala were shaken up and slightly wounded, but their lives were saved. That is proving to be a good piece of equipment.

Yes, when the truck project goes forward, I anticipate that a number of the cabs will have to be armoured. When these trucks are deployed offshore into dangerous areas, the crews can be protected. I am quite confident we will have that kind of equipment.

With respect to the member's question about whether we would duplicate the strategic team in Kabul, I cannot honestly answer that question. I would have to ask one of the ministers because I have not asked that question, but it is a fine idea.

**Mr. Robert Bouchard (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the Minister of National Defence about some statements he made on November 15, 2005, when he was national defence critic.

"When a government decides to intervene in a failing state there are a number of considerations that must be taken before committing troops. It must be satisfied that the mission supports the goals and objectives of Canada's foreign policy."

This is just part of what he said. There is much more, but I will only quote a few excerpts.

The Bloc's position on the mission is this: before making a decision about such an important matter as extending Canada's presence in Afghanistan by two years, the government must inform parliamentarians and the public.

As defence critic, he asked a number of questions consistent with the motion that we submitted to the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure of the Standing Committee on National Defence. We wanted a more in-depth review of our mission and presence in Afghanistan. As such, how can the minister say that today, everything seems clear to him and he is ready to make a commitment on behalf of himself and his government for two more years without providing more information to parliamentarians and the public?

**Hon. Gordon O'Connor:** Mr. Speaker, my opinion has not changed. The questions I asked when I was in opposition are valid questions and I have the answers to those questions. When I came over to the defence department, I made it my business to find the answers to these various questions.

The one that the member raises is whether our operations in Afghanistan are in accordance with our foreign policy goals and objectives. They are. Our Canada first defence policy and our foreign policy mean that we have to think in terms of Canada. If we can keep threats away from Canada, if we can deal with threats that are far away from us, that is better than dealing with them at home.

The member may recall that we are in Afghanistan today because of the attacks in New York City in 2001. That is why we are there today. About 24 or 25 Canadians were killed in New York. Terrorists came from Afghanistan, a failed state, so we, as part of a coalition, went back into Afghanistan, overthrew the Taliban government, and helped restore democracy in Afghanistan. It is definitely in our interests.



I might say that in opposition I certainly did ask questions, but I did not oppose the commitment to Afghanistan. In fact, if the member were to check, he would find that the Conservative Party supported the Liberal Party on the mission in Afghanistan.

**Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Coquitlam, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the speech that the minister delivered here tonight. There are things that he said with which we in this party agree concerning the training of the Canadian armed forces. They are skilled. They are well-trained. They are incredibly brave and all Canadians appreciate the work that they have done and the work that they are doing.

However, I was also pleased to hear that he has found the answers to the questions that he asked a few months ago regarding this mission. I hope that he will share the answers to those questions with us tonight in the House of Commons. It would be most appreciated by all of us who are here tonight.

Further to that are some of the questions that we have asked and have not received responses. Why did NATO not take over the mission in southern Afghanistan in February? The previous minister on the Liberal side had indicated to the House in November of last year that NATO would be there in February. It is not under NATO. It is under Operation Enduring Freedom. That is in the minutes of the defence committee.

If NATO does take over, what will the mission be? How will it interrelate with Operation Enduring Freedom?

**Hon. Gordon O'Connor:** Mr. Speaker, right now, I understand that the schedule for NATO to take over our sector is somewhere in late June or July. That is the plan right now, and it is only because of bureaucracy that things get delayed. There is no other reason.

**The NDP keep saying that it is different under the American command than under NATO. We are going to do exactly the same thing. Our military is going to perform the same roles. Our aid people are going to do the same thing. Our diplomats and the RCMP are going to do the same thing. There will not be one iota of change except that we will be under NATO command instead of Enduring Freedom. Nothing will change.**

We are following the same tactics. We are following NATO tactics. Go check what the French are doing in the north. Go check what the Germans are doing in the north. They are doing the same thing.

**Mr. Wajid Khan (Mississauga—Streetsville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to compliment the Leader of the Opposition, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of National Defence for their excellent and passionate speeches. Everybody in this House is extremely passionate about our mission in Afghanistan. I also agree that there is no question that defeating the jihadists and al-Qaeda in Afghanistan translates to security for us here at home and for the Afghans in Afghanistan.

The Taliban are now increasingly deploying new modus operandi of suicide bombings and al-Qaeda has reinvested in Afghanistan, which would explain the surge in attacks.

For the benefit of all members of this House, I would like to ask the knowledgeable Minister of Defence just a couple of very quick questions and then he can take his time answering them.

What is the strategy for a counter-insurgency operation, so that the insurgents are not just contained but rolled back, so the Afghan security forces have a level playing field to control their own country? Could the minister briefly explain about the CF units that are to be integrated with the ISAF under the command of ARRC? They would then be moving down from stage three to stage four in all probability and there will be some rebadging going on which is a serious situation. That is one of the concerns I have in the timing of this six hour debate. Could the minister please comment on that?

**Hon. Gordon O'Connor:** Mr. Speaker, the member asked a lot in his questions. With respect to dealing with the insurgency, one of the big factors is Pakistan. In fact, Pakistan has about 80,000 soldiers in the areas adjacent to Afghanistan. Part of the reason why we are seeing more activity by the Taliban in our area is because the Pakistanis have been successful in starting to root some of them out.

There has to be an arrangement between Pakistan and Afghanistan to try and seal the border. What we are doing in Kandahar province, as the Brits move into Helman province and as the Dutch move into the province north of us, is trying to move into every part of the province, so that the Taliban or the insurgents have no room to move. We are trying to press them out of the area.

**With respect to the other command in control, essentially nothing is changing when it goes from Enduring Freedom to NATO. No units change. Nothing actually changes. It is all the same.**

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC)**

Canadians accept risks when those risks are in the service of a greater good. We honour those who take risks and make the ultimate sacrifice by staying the course and supporting their mission.

**Hon. Bill Graham (Leader of the Opposition, Lib.):**

This mission is consistent with our foreign policy review and our defence review which foresaw difficult missions in failing states such as Afghanistan where the military is not there exclusively on military missions. In fact, we foresaw in our foreign policy review precisely the nature that this mission would need to take to be successful. It needed to have what we called a 3D approach: diplomacy, defence and development. We needed the military there to set conditions for success.

If there is a crisis in Haiti or a crisis in Darfur where we can make a contribution, will the government give us its assurance that it will be possible for us to respond

as Canada must respond? That is why we always had short missions before and why we insisted that we have flexibility to go in and help.

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):**

The concern the New Democrats have had is whether a mission should be initiated in which we continue to fly under Operation Enduring Freedom. I think the U.S. styled counter-insurgency methods of this operation are fundamentally different from where the Canadian army has gone and where many of the Canadian people are comfortable going.

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):**

What exactly is the nature of the Canadian military commitment? [...] The public cannot be accused of not understanding all the issues and opposing participation by Canada when it is not being offered clear and adequate answers.

We must be clear about the role of the Canadian army before making decisions that commit us for a number of years. Humanitarian aid, logistical support and intervention in peacekeeping missions seem to me the priorities that would permit the Canadian army to play a useful role, without ruling out purely military intervention.

New Democrats stand in opposition to the government's plans to lock our country into a long term, war-fighting role in Afghanistan, a role that does not properly reflect the principles and ideals of the people of Canada.

For four years the U.S. military, the most powerful military in the world, has tried to stabilize southern Afghanistan at the point of a gun through a forward leaning, counter-insurgency approach. The U.S. military has failed in that effort. The situation has become more, not less, dangerous. Osama bin Laden remains at large. Heroin production has skyrocketed. The insurgents are becoming ever more adept at building and deploying sophisticated roadside bombs.

Today the United States wants to draw down its forces in Afghanistan and it wants its allies to pick up the slack. Most of those allies, most of NATO, have been dragging their heels, concerned that the counter-insurgency approach creates more problems than it solves. Canada, however, has rushed into this gap, taking on the most dangerous mission in Afghanistan as part of the U.S.-led Operation Enduring Freedom in Kandahar province.

The NDP shares the concerns of many of Canada's allies that the counter-insurgency approach cannot succeed, and if it cannot succeed, why are we there? Is it simply because the United States has asked us to be there because it wants out? Or is it simply because we do not have the imagination or wherewithal to devise a better approach? Or is it because we do not want to be elsewhere on a different, less macho, more explicitly humanitarian mission, saving the people of Darfur from a full-blown genocide?

Afghanistan is the largest recipient of Canadian overseas development assistance. The NDP unequivocally supports the continuation of that funding, especially when it

supports the work of non-governmental aid organizations operating at arm's length from foreign military forces whenever possible.

Afghanistan is a large and diverse country that offers many opportunities for the deployment of reconstruction teams made up of a mix of Canadian Forces, CIDA, foreign affairs and RCMP personnel. The NDP unequivocally supports the maintenance of a sizeable Canadian reconstruction presence in Afghanistan. However, the NDP believes that the extension of the counter-insurgency mission is not the best use that could be made of Canada's small but highly skilled professional army.

The NDP has other concerns about the extension of the counter-insurgency mission in southern Afghanistan. We remain concerned about Canadian soldiers transferring detainees to Afghan or U.S. custody without adequate protections for Canada's continuing obligations to those detainees under international law. We remain concerned about Canadian soldiers relying on anti-personnel land mines laid by foreign forces in violation of the spirit and the intent of the Ottawa land mines convention.

We are also very concerned about the cost of this mission. By the time the current mission is complete in February 2007, it will have likely cost Canadians in excess of \$5 billion. The Polaris Institute has estimated that a two year extension or a new mission would cost an additional \$2 billion to \$3 billion.

We could provide a huge amount of reconstruction and humanitarian aid for \$7 billion, not just in Afghanistan but also elsewhere. As I mentioned at the beginning of my speech, military force is a blunt, dangerous and expensive instrument. For \$7 billion it is incumbent upon us as guardians of the public purse to confirm that there is no alternative to the counter-insurgency approach and to ensure that this is the right mission.

Finally, the NDP is concerned about the continuing uncertainty over the timing for the transfer of overall operational control over Canada's soldiers from the U.S. military to NATO.

**I am not prepared to support this new mission in Afghanistan because we do not have answers to the questions. We know that the Americans have been fighting a counter-insurgency role for four years in Kandahar province and that the situation has only become worse.**

Every independent analyst and in fact even the minister and the Department of Foreign Affairs have told us that it is far more dangerous now in Kandahar province than it has ever been. This is after the strongest military in the world has been fighting a counter-insurgency role there for four years.

**Hon. Peter MacKay (Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, CPC):**

Canada does not shrink or shirk duty in the face of adversity. In times of turmoil, in places where security is at risk, Canada has always been there. We step up, we step in, we carry our load, we keep faith, and we do not break our word.

**This is not a traditional peacekeeping mission.** Al-Qaeda and the Taliban refuse to recognize the will expressed by the Afghan people through successive and successful elections. Their efforts to destabilize Afghanistan and provoke the departure of international military forces must not be allowed to succeed.

**Mr. Michael Ignatieff (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.):**

I support the mission precisely because it is the moment where we have to test the shift from one paradigm, the peacekeeping paradigm, to a peace-enforcement paradigm that combines military, reconstruction and humanitarian effort together. I have been to Afghanistan and I believe this new paradigm can work.

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):**

We are discussing a change in the role that Canada has played in Afghanistan, which has been a fantastic role in terms of our ability to rebuild that country. We are now involved in a counter-insurgency operation under Operation Enduring Freedom. Canadians want to know why we are under this operation.

**Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Coquitlam, NDP):**

Some of the questions that we have asked and have not received responses. Why did NATO not take over the mission in southern Afghanistan in February? The previous minister on the Liberal side had indicated to the House in November of last year that NATO would be there in February. It is not under NATO. It is under Operation Enduring Freedom. That is in the minutes of the defence committee.

If NATO does take over, what will the mission be? How will it interrelate with Operation Enduring Freedom?

**Hon. Gordon O'Connor:**

Mr. Speaker, right now, I understand that the schedule for NATO to take over our sector is somewhere in late June or July. That is the plan right now, and it is only because of bureaucracy that things get delayed. There is no other reason.

**The NDP keep saying that it is different under the American command than under NATO. We are going to do exactly the same thing. Our military is going to perform the same roles. Our aid people are going to do the same thing. Our diplomats and the RCMP are going to do the same thing. There will not be one iota of change except that we will be under NATO command instead of Enduring Freedom. Nothing will change.**

We are following the same tactics. We are following NATO tactics. Go check what the French are doing in the north. Go check what the Germans are doing in the north. They are doing the same thing.

**With respect to the other command in control, essentially nothing is changing when it goes from Enduring Freedom to NATO. No units change. Nothing actually changes. It is all the same.**

**Ms. Francine Lalonde (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ):**

**One could say that the eradication of drugs in Afghanistan, which we favour, only managed to distance the population from the soldiers who were trying to enforce it. So when Canadian soldiers—there are no more American soldiers there—and the British soldiers who are arriving, and French soldiers, meet with Afghan women and men, they will always have to remember that if they reach out, if they make friendly overtures, the Taliban may attack them.**

**I wish to point out that, in order to finally eradicate opium or simply to ensure soldiers can function in a normal way in Afghanistan, they must have the collaboration and support of the people. I have just described a situation in which this would be immensely difficult for them.**

**It is extremely dangerous, though, to turn ourselves into a new modern colonizer for democracy and development if we do not consult the general population with regard to international aid or military intervention.**

**Mr. Steven Blaney (Lévis—Bellechasse, CPC):**

I have a question for the member, who has just demonstrated her extensive experience. The mission has two objectives: to secure the Kandahar region and to provide humanitarian aid. I would like to know how our troops can combine these two objectives.

**Ms. Francine Lalonde:**

Mr. Speaker, I am not at all convinced that soldiers should be looking after the humanitarian mission. I am in touch with several NGOs that say that combined missions can be ineffective from the soldiers' standpoint. From the NGOs' standpoint, they become extremely dangerous because personnel are associated with soldiers.

To answer the question, this is not desirable. I know that it is done, but I am not certain that when an assessment is carried out at some point, the results will be positive.

**Mr. André Arthur (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, Ind.):**

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for La Pointe-de-l'Île has given us a perfect illustration of the absurdity of conducting a humanitarian mission and carrying out a military operation at the same time. Based on what she just said I am even more ambivalent about what our government is doing and how our country comes across. I am very much aware of Canada's international reputation and I know that it is precisely through peace missions that Canada won the Nobel peace prize all those years ago.

**Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, the member has given us some very thoughtful comments tonight. I do not think that we should be allowing Canada to be dragged into a U.S.-style military combat role in Afghanistan, nor should we be supporting George Bush's failing strategy on the war against terrorism.

**Mr. Bill Siksay (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP):**

Many Canadians know that this is not our traditional role of peacekeeping. This is not how Canadians do peacekeeping. We are out there to separate combatants, not to be a combatant, which we are now. We are there to support UN peacekeeping efforts, not to support the American Operation Enduring Freedom. We are there to deliver development aid, but not to deliver it by the military. That is not the Canadian way of doing development work. We are there to do democratic development, but not to do it at the end of the barrel of a gun. That is not the Canadian way.

**Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Cape Breton—Canso, Lib.):**

What I got tonight from the Minister of National Defence and Minister of Foreign Affairs were their assurances that the essence of this mission would not change. All of us in the chamber know that the circumstances on the ground in Kandahar have changed. We understand that it has been amplified. It has become tougher, but if it were an easy job, it would not have been Canada that would have been asked to intervene. They would have asked a lesser country.

**Mr. Russ Hiebert (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, CPC):**

A Canada first defence policy means accepting that Canada must engage in an often dangerous world beyond our peaceful shores, that we have responsibilities when it comes to international peace, security and stability.

**Mr. Richard Nadeau (Gatineau, BQ):**

As the conflict could deepen, could splinter, is there an exit plan to protect our soldiers in the event the conflict becomes like the war in Vietnam or Iraq?

**Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, Afghanistan, no doubt, is a country that needs assistance and I strongly support helping the people of Afghanistan. However, Canada is in Afghanistan, thanks to the previous government, in a combat role, a counter-insurgency role under U.S. command as part of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Many Afghans, including the Afghan Women's Organization, do not support Canada's combat role because it interferes with peace, security and rebuilding. I will vote against the motion tonight.

Why is the government ignoring the wishes of so many Afghan people and the majority of Canadians who want to return to security and peace building but not a counter-insurgency mission?

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):**

It is exceedingly important for us to engage constructively in a process of comprehensive peace-building. However, that is not what we are doing in Kandahar and that is one of the principal concerns that my party has in voting against the motion this evening.

There have been many claims about how much our current mission has contributed to improved security and improvement in the lives of the people of Afghanistan. It is very important that we think about this as we contemplate our future commitments. As I have said, we need to make future commitments. We need to understand that the gains and the improvements that have been made in Kabul have not been made under an Operation Enduring Freedom mission, not under the U.S. search and kill aggressive combat effort that is in full flight in Kandahar. That is a very important thing for us to realize.

**I am deeply disturbed that there has been no acknowledgement that there is indeed a difference and that it makes any difference whether we are there under a NATO led mission or whether we are there under Operation Enduring Freedom. I just about fell over when the defence minister stated that he considers the NATO and Operation Enduring Freedom missions as being the same.**

For the record, here is the NATO agreed upon statement on the difference between the two missions. The ISAF, the International Security Assistance Force and Operation Enduring Freedom relationship is described as follows:

**ISAF and Operation Enduring Freedom, the ongoing US-led military operation in Afghanistan, will continue to have separate mandates and separate missions. ISAF will continue to focus on its stabilization and security mission whilst Operation Enduring Freedom will continue to carry out its counter-terrorism mission. Clear command arrangements will coordinate, and where necessary deconflict efforts within the two missions as agreed under the auspices of the operational plan.**

How could the defence minister possibly say it did not really matter whether we talk about one or the other? Actually, the Leader of the Opposition made more or less the same comment. He indicated that it did not really worry him that we were not operating under a NATO led mission.

**Let me go further. There has been an attempt tonight on the part of the government to completely ignore, not acknowledge the fact that there is a raging debate going on within NATO around that counter-insurgency mission that is taking place in Kandahar. It is clear and it is acknowledged by everyone from Donald Rumsfeld to a recent report by the Council on Foreign Relations that there are serious problems with that counter-insurgency mission. In fact, President Karzai himself went to the U.S. and said it was time to put an end to it.**



**Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP):**

In January 2002 Canada made a major commitment to assist in the reconstruction of Afghanistan. We supported that. From August 2003 to December 2005, Canada's military commitment was largely based in the capital, Kabul, as part of the international assistance force, which had the aim of providing intelligence and security to allow for rebuilding and supporting the democratic process, something which eventually saw elections in the fall of 2005.

Canada ended this role in late 2005 and committed a battle group of about 2,000 personnel to Kandahar in early 2006. This is when things changed. The mission changed from being a UN-NATO mission to Canada then taking on the mission in the south under the American mission, Operation Enduring Freedom. It should be noted that the American Operation Enduring Freedom tactics have been to conduct aggressive search and destroy missions, aerial bombings and all-out offensives against alleged terrorist insurgents for the last four years with absolutely dismal results: The lack of clarity in the south, which has brought not more security but less.

It is imperative for us to recall that the NATO-UN mandated mission was not to go to war in the south, but rather to build security for ordinary Afghans through the backing of the Afghan police and military. That is what Canadians understood our forces were doing.

### III. Cost of Canadian Military Operations in Afghanistan 2001-2006 (CDN\$)

Canadian military deployments to Afghanistan		
<b>Apollo</b>	Oct 01 – Oct 03	Canadian military contribution to the international campaign against terrorism, including the war in Afghanistan
<b>Accius</b>	Nov 02 – June 05	Canadian contribution to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). Canada contributed one Lieutenant Colonel.
<b>Athena</b>	Oct 03 – Oct 05	Canadian contribution to the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan (ISAF).
<b>Archer</b>	From Aug 05	Canadian contribution to US-led Operation Enduring Freedom, Afghanistan. Current number of Canadian personnel: 2300.

Fiscal Year	Operations	Full Costs <sup>28</sup>	Incremental Cost <sup>29</sup>
2001-02	Apollo	CDN 510,800,000 US\$ 454,400,000	CND 216,000,000 US\$ 192,100,000
2002-03	Accius, Apollo, Athena	CDN 709,300,000 US\$ 630,900,000	CDN 233,600,000 US\$ 207,810,000
2003-04	Accius, Altair, Apollo, Athena, Foundation	CDN 1,167,400,000 US\$ 1,038,500,000	CDN 600,900,000 US\$ 534,500,000
2004-05	Accius, Altair, Athena, Foundation	CDN 717,800,000 US\$ 638,500,000	CDN 411,100,000 US\$ 365,700,000
2005-06	Accius, Altair, Archer, Athena, Foundation	CDN 1,041,300,000 US\$ 926,300,000	CDN 704,500,000 US\$ 626,700,000
2001-06	All operations	CDN 4,146,600,000 US\$ 3,688,800,000	CDN 2,166,100,000 US\$ 1,926,900,000

<sup>28</sup> “Full cost” includes civilian and military salaries; overtime and allowances; petroleum, oil and lubricants; spares; contracted repair and overhaul services; and depreciation and attrition costs of all equipment involved.

<sup>29</sup> “Incremental cost” is the cost incurred by Department for National Defence (DND) over and above what would have been spent on personnel and equipment if they had not been deployed. It is derived from the Full Cost by subtracting salaries, equipment depreciation and attrition, and other sums that would otherwise have been spent on exercises or absorbed as part of normal activities. Canadian participation in United Nations operations, 2001-02 to 2005-06.

#### **IV. Arrangement for the Transfer of Detainees between the Canadian Forces and the Ministry of Defence of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan**

THE CANADIAN FORCES and THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF AFGHANISTAN (the "Participants"), have consented to the following Arrangement:

1. This arrangement establishes procedures in the event of a transfer, from the custody of the Canadian Forces to the custody of any detention facility operated by the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan of any detainee in the temporary custody of the Canadian Forces in Afghanistan.
2. "Detainee" means any person, other than a Canadian national, whose initial capture and detention, for whatever reason, occurred at the hands of members of the Canadian Forces.
3. The Participants will treat detainees in accordance with the standards set out in the Third Geneva Convention.
4. The International Committee of the Red Cross will have a right to visit detainees at any time while they are in custody, whether held by the Canadian Forces or by Afghanistan. Visits may be delayed by a Detaining Power only as an exceptional and temporary measure for reasons of imperative military necessity.
5. The Afghan authorities will accept (as Accepting Power) detainees who have been detained by the Canadian Forces (the Transferring Power) and will be responsible for maintaining and safeguarding detainees, and for ensuring the protections provided in Paragraph 3 above, to all such detainees whose custody has been transferred to them.
6. Detainees who are wounded or sick will be cared for by the Detaining Power at first instance. Sick or wounded detainees will not be transferred as long as their recovery may be endangered by the journey, unless their safety, or the safety of others, imperatively demands it. Arrangements to transfer wounded or sick detainees will be expedited in order to reduce risk to their health or facilitate medical treatment.
7. The Participants will be responsible for maintaining accurate written records accounting for all detainees that have passed through their custody. Such written records should, at a minimum, contain personal information (as far as known or indicated), gender, physical description and medical condition of the detainee, and, subject to security considerations, the location and circumstances of capture. Such written records will be available for inspection by the International Committee of the Red Cross upon request. Copies of all records relating to the detainee will be transferred to any subsequent Accepting Power should the detainee be subsequently transferred. The originals of all records will be retained by the Transferring Power.
8. A Detaining Power, can be either a Transferring or Accepting Power, and will be a Power which detains the detainee for any period of time beyond that reasonably required between initial capture and transfer. The Detaining Power will be responsible for classification of detainee's legal status under international law. Should any doubt exist whether a detainee may be a Prisoner of War, the detainee will be treated humanely, at all times and under all

circumstances, in a manner consistent with the rights and protections of the Third Geneva Convention, even if subsequently transferred to the custody of an Accepting Power.

9. Where there is doubt as to which Participant is the Detaining Power, all Participants will be jointly responsible for and have full access to all persons detained (and any records concerning their treatment) until the Detaining Power has by mutual agreement been determined by the Participants.
10. Recognizing their obligations pursuant to international law to assure that detainees continue to receive humane treatment and protections to the standards set out in the Third Geneva Convention, the Participants, upon transferring a detainee, will notify the International Committee of the Red Cross through appropriate national channels.
11. Participants recognize the legitimate role of the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission within the territory of Afghanistan, including in regard to the treatment of detainees, and undertake to cooperate fully with the Commission in the exercise of its role.
12. No person transferred from the Canadian Forces to Afghan authorities will be subject to the application of the death penalty.
13. At the request of one of the Participants, the Participants will consult on the implementation of this arrangement.




















Signed in duplicate in Kabul, on the 18th of December, 2005, in the English, French, Dari and Pashto languages, all texts being equally valid. For the purposes of interpretation, the English language version of this Arrangement is authoritative.





















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






Afghanistan: Minister of Defence Abdul Raheem Wardak






















Canada: Chief of the Defence Staff R.J. Hillier

## V. Violent incidents in Kandahar 2005 and 2006






















Violent incidents in Kandahar 2005/2006: No peace to keep		
29 Jan 2005		A landmine planted by suspected Taliban fighters killed nine Afghan soldiers on patrol in the Spin Boldak Area.
31 Jan. 2005		A small bus carrying civilians hit a landmine in Arghandab district of Kandahar province killing five civilians and injuring 10.
17 March 2005		A roadside bombing killed at least five people and wounded 32 others in the southern Afghan city of Kandahar.
21 March 2005	 	One prisoner was killed and six people injured during a clash at a jail in Kandahar City. Suspected Taliban gunmen ambushed a convoy of civilian trucks carrying vehicles to the US military in southern Afghanistan, killing three of the drivers in Spin Boldak district.
22 March 2005		An IED exploded destroying one Humvee near Kandahar and injuring its US passengers.
3 April 2005		A remote-control detonated bomb exploded in Spin Boldak on the Pakistani border, killing one civilian.
17 April 2005		Suspected Taliban rebels detonated a bomb near a fuel tanker outside the main US military base near Kandahar, setting off a chain of large explosions that destroyed five tankers and injured three drivers.
2 May 2005	 	A remote-controlled bomb exploded near a government police vehicle in southern Afghanistan, killing two Afghan officers and injuring four others. There were no reported casualties from two other blasts directed at Americans committed the same day. One damaged a pickup truck near the OEF base in Kandahar, the other was a bomb buried beside the main road to Kandahar from Kabul. It went off just after a US military convoy had passed by.
5 May 2005		Nine Afghan soldiers were killed while on patrol in the mountainous district of Shah Wali Kot in Kandahar province. Their vehicle struck a mine and immediately came under fire from gunmen.
25 May 2005		Five police officials were killed in a landmine blast in the Spin Boldak area.
29 May 2005		Gunmen shot and killed the top Muslim leader in southern Afghanistan's Kandahar province
1 June 2005		A suicide bomb tore through a mosque in southern Afghanistan at the funeral of a Muslim cleric, killing at least 20 people, including Kabul's police chief, and wounding dozens.
11 June 2005		An Afghan army truck collided with a bus Saturday in Spin Boldak area, killing three villagers and wounding seven.
13 June 2005		Four US soldiers were wounded in an attack on a military convoy outside the city of Kandahar.
16 June 2005	 	Fighting between about 90 suspected Taliban rebels and hundreds of Afghan soldiers and OEF troops left seven insurgents dead and 10 wounded on the border between Kandahar and Uruzgan. In a separate incident, rebels attacked a medical clinic, killing a doctor and other six people.
17 June 2005		Taliban captured 13 Afghan soldiers in a raid on Mian Nishin district in Kandahar province.






















18 June 2005		Taliban guerrillas attacked an Afghan district capital for a second straight night and took 18 policemen prisoner, among them was the provincial chief police, killed some days later. Three rockets were fired into the city of Kandahar - with one landing near a building housing US troops.
21 June 2005		An Afghan employed by the joint Afghan-UN election body was shot dead and another wounded in an ambush in Kandahar province.
22 June 2005		Afghan and US troops backed by warplanes killed up to 77 Taliban guerrillas in south western Afghanistan in the Mian Nishin district of Kandahar. One soldier from the Afghan National Army was killed five US troops wounded. Four police officers were killed and three wounded.
27 June 2005		US troops shot dead a suspected Islamic militant on a motorcycle who sped up to a checkpoint in Kandahar province.
2 July 2005		Afghan and US troops patrolling northeast of Kandahar killed two insurgents, wounded another and captured two after being attacked with small arms and rocket-propelled grenades.
3 July 2005		A pro-government Islamic scholar was killed in the city of Kandahar.
13 July 2005		Taliban fired several rockets at the OEF base in Kandahar, wounding two Canadian civilian contractors.
14 July 2005		a suicide bomber drove a car full of explosives into a U.S. military vehicle in southern Afghanistan ending in the deaths of three soldiers.
15 July 2005		Seven Afghan policemen and four Taliban fighters were killed after the rebels attacked a police checkpoint in Shor-Abak district
22 July 2005		District administrative official Mohammed Shafi was killed in Shah Wali Kot district when a remote-controlled mine exploded as he walked out of his house.
23 July 2005		Two attackers on motorcycles shot a district judge while he was walking to work in Kandahar province's Panjwayi district.
28 July 2005		A mortar attack on an OEF base northeast of Kandahar wounded 2 Afghan civilians.
8 Aug 2005		Four civilians were injured in a bomb blast at a marketplace in Kandahar city.
17 Aug 2005		A remote-controlled roadside bomb killed an Afghan policeman and wounded 16 others in Kandahar city.
18 Aug 2005		Two US Soldiers were killed, and two others wounded when an IED struck their armoured vehicle as they were driving in the north of Kandahar province.
21 Aug 2005		Gunmen riding a motorbike killed anti-Taliban cleric Mawlawi Abdullah.
29 Aug 2005		OEF and Afghan forces killed a Taliban commander and three other Taliban in the Kandahar province. One US soldier and an Afghan interpreter were also killed.
2 Sept 2005		Two Japanese tourists were killed in unknown conditions. Their bodies were discovered about six kilometres from the main road linking Kandahar city to the Pakistan border.
3 Sept 2005		Taliban fighters kidnapped and killed six hostages, including a UK contractor, his interpreter, and one Afghan election candidate.
5 Sept 2005		In the mountains of Ghorak district of Kandahar province, OEF and Afghan forces killed 13 Taliban fighters and captured more than a






















		dozen more. The OEF-led assault targeted Taliban rebels suspected of the murder of Abdullah Kalid, an election candidate.
11 Sept 2005		An Afghan policeman and an insurgent were killed and another policeman was wounded when suspected rebels ambushed a police patrol in Kandahar province.
13 Sept 2005		Two US soldiers were wounded by a roadside bomb which exploded near a convoy on a main road through Kandahar City.
15 Sept 2005		A US soldier was injured when a military vehicle hit an improvised explosive device in the southern Kandahar province
18 Sept 2005		One French soldier was killed and another wounded in roadside bomb in Shiro Auba area of Spin Boldak district, Kandahar province.
26 Sept 2005		One US soldier was killed during a ground assault operation in the west of Kandahar province.
30 Sept 2005		One US Soldier died in Shah Wali district when his unit was attacked by enemy forces using rocket-propelled grenades and small arms fire.
5 Oct 2005		A suspected suicide attacker was killed and a civilian was injured on Wednesday as the attacker tried to target a Canadian convoy in Kandahar.
9 Oct 2005		An explosives-laden car rammed into a vehicle in Kandahar City, injuring 4 Britons and 2 Afghan civilians.
13 Oct 2005		Three aid workers were wounded in the ambush by suspected Taliban militants near the city of Kandahar.
14 Oct 2005		Two police were killed and 13 injured as suspected Taliban militias ambushed a police convoy in Kandahar province.
16 Oct 2005		Two RAF Harriers were damaged in a rocket strike on the OEF base in Kandahar.
18 Oct 2005		Four Afghan policemen were killed as they mistakenly came under US troops' fire in Afghanistan's southern Kandahar province.
19 Oct 2005		A headmaster and a guard of two schools in Kandahar province were killed by Taliban militants.
20 Oct 2005		A district chief Haji Ahmadullah Khan was shot dead in a mosque in his home village in Panjwayi district while saying his evening Ramadan prayers.
23 Oct 2005		Two Afghan mine clearing experts were killed and six others were hurt after a blast hit their truck in Kandahar City.
26 Oct 2005		2 British NGO workers were killed and 6 other injured in a bomb blast in Kandahar City.
26 Oct 2005		A bomb fixed to a bicycle exploded in Kandahar City, killing a policeman and wounding two civilians.
30 Oct 2005		A rocket attack hit the OEF base in Kandahar, but caused no injuries.
9 Nov 2005		A roadside bomb exploded near a UN convoy in Kandahar, damaging an armoured car.
10 Nov 2005		Rebels killed seven police officers and abducted two others after ambushing them on a road.
15 Nov 2005		A suicide bomber rammed a car laden with explosives into a convoy carrying Westerners in Kandahar City, killing three Afghan civilians and wounding four others.




















22 Nov 2005		One US soldier died in Shah Wali Kot, when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle during patrol operations.
3 Dec 2005		A remote-controlled bomb destroyed a vehicle in the Shawali Kot district north of Kandahar. District administration chief Hayatullah Popul and two police officers travelling with him were killed.
4 Dec 2005	 	During combat operations, a US Chinook helicopter made an emergency landing in north Kandahar. Five US soldiers were injured.  A suicide bombing killed two and injured two others in Kandahar province.
5 Dec 2005		A Canadian soldier was injured in Kandahar City after an OEF convoy was targeted by a suicide bomber.
8 Dec 2005		Thirteen Taliban militants were killed and five OEF troops (including 3 Canadians) were injured in a joint OEF-Afghan forces operation north of Kandahar City.
11 Dec 2005		US military convoy on Sunday narrowly escaped a suicide bombing in the city of Kandahar while three civilians were injured in the incident.
12 Dec 2005	 	Three Canadian soldiers and one foreign journalist were injured after a roadside bomb detonated close to their vehicle near the town of Maywand, about 90 km west of Kandahar City. Four OEF troops were wounded when their vehicle detonated a mine in Kandahar province.
14 Dec 2005		Gunmen riding motorbike shot dead Mawlawi Ahmad Shah, a member of local religious council in Kandahar City.
15 Dec 2005		One US soldier was killed, and another one injured when they came under small arms fire from enemy forces in Shah Wali Kot district.
24 Dec 2005	 	One policeman and three Taliban militants were killed in a firefight in Maiwand district. Two Taliban militants crashed into the school of Cholghar village of Panjwayee district, destroying the library, desks and books.
25 Dec 2005		A land mine exploded on a highway in southern Afghanistan, killing four suspected Taliban insurgents as they tried to plant the explosive on the road in Maywand district.
28 Dec 2005		One OEF soldier was killed and another four injured in a vehicle roll-over accident near Kandahar City.
2 Jan 2006		A suicide attacker drove a car bomb into a convoy of Canadian troops in Kandahar City, killing himself and wounding a woman and a child.
3 Jan 2006		Two suspected Taliban militants were killed when an anti-aircraft stinger missile went off accidentally in Maroof district, Kandahar province.
8 Jan 2006		Taliban burned down a primary school in Kandahar City.
14 Jan 2006		Mullah Abdul Samad Khaksar, an intelligence chief and deputy interior minister during Taliban rule, was gunned down close to his home in Kandahar City.
15 Jan 2006		A Canadian Diplomat was killed and three Canadian soldiers were wounded after a bomb detonated close to their vehicle. The incident occurred about one km southeast of the OEF base in Kandahar City.
16 Jan 2006		A suicide bomber on a motorbike detonated explosives near a crowd of about 100 people watching a wrestling match at a fair in Spin Boldak, killing more than 20.










19 Jan 2006		Canadian Forces foiled a suicide attack three kilometres from the OEF base in Kandahar.
23 Jan 2006		A bomb exploded next to a Canadian military convoy in Kandahar City but no soldiers were injured.
25 Jan 2006		Militants dropped a hand grenade in front of the Indian consulate in Kandahar City.
26 Jan 2006	 	Afghan security forces arrested two suspected suicide bombers wearing vests packed with explosives in Kandahar City. A fuel tanker truck exploded at a police checkpoint in Kandahar City, and police later seized a second empty tanker truck in the city after it was found to be carrying explosives.
28 Jan 2006		Seven Taliban fighters were killed and five Afghan police wounded after the militants attacked a police building in Kandahar's Geristan district.
30 Jan 2006		A minibus packed with more than 130 pounds of explosives, drums of gasoline, and gas canisters was intercepted about a half-mile from the OEF base in Kandahar City.
31 Jan 2006		Two militants and a villager were killed when villagers attacked Taliban rebels who had blockaded a road and were confiscating music cassettes from passing cars in Spin Boldak.
31 Jan 2006		Kandahar City was 'locked down' as Afghan and OEF troops carried out a major sweep for Islamist militants believed to be planning "high-impact" suicide attacks. Nine people alleged to be militants were arrested including two Pakistani nationals whose vehicle was found to contain explosives.
4 Feb 2006		Militants attacked a police convoy using a remote-controlled bomb in Kandahar City, killing a woman and child walking in the area.
4 Feb 2006		The Taliban commander Abdul Samad was killed in Spin Boldak by border forces as he tried to enter illegally from Pakistan with 10 other militants.
5 Feb 2006		A land mine ripped through a police vehicle killing six officers and wounding four in Kandahar.
7 Feb 2006		A suicide bomber blew up a guard post outside the police headquarters in Kandahar City, killing 13 people.
9 Feb 2006		Four Canadian soldiers were injured after a roadside bomb exploded next to their light armoured vehicle in Shah Wali Kot District.
16 Feb 2006		Canadian soldiers found an IED made of two old Russian shells, connected by wire with a remote-controlled detonator in Kandahar City.
19 Feb 2006		Canadian troops exchanged fire with insurgents in Shah Wali Kot District.
26 Feb 2006		A Canadian patrol came under rocket-propelled grenade attack on the highway to Kandahar City.
2 March 2006		One Canadian soldier was killed and another 7 injured when their armoured vehicle ran off the road in Kandahar.
3 March 2006		Five Canadian soldiers were injured when a suicide bomber drove his vehicle into a Canadian military convoy outside Kandahar City.
4 March 2006		One militant was killed and one Canadian soldier critically injured when militants attacked Canadian soldiers at a meeting with Afghan village elders in Shah Wali Kot District.
10 March 2006		A roadside bomb blew up 800 metres away from the Canada's top soldier in Afghanistan General Rick Hillier, damaging a Canadian

		Bison armoured vehicle.
11 March 2006		Taliban insurgents abducted and killed four Albanian nationals in Maiwand district.
13 March 2006		Five Afghan police were killed and six others injured as suspected Taliban militants raided a check post. (Mian Nashin district)
14 March 2006		Canadian forces on patrol in Kandahar City opened fire on a vehicle, apparently in the belief it was a suicide bomb attempt, killing a passenger.
19 March 2006		Nine policemen were killed whilst retrieving the bodies of the four kidnapped Albanians.
19 March 2006		A suicide car bomber was killed and an OEF soldier injured in an attack on an OEF convoy in Spin Boldak district.
19 March 2006		Two Afghan policemen and two Taliban fighters were killed, and four policemen went missing after insurgents attacked a security post using light arms and mortars in Mewand district.
21 March 2006		Canadian troops foiled a planned bombing involving two motorcycles in Kandahar City.
22 March 2006		Police killed 15 armed Taliban, including 2 Taliban commanders in a gun battle while they were trying to cross the Pakistan border at Spin Boldak.
22 March 2006		Armed men attacked a fuel truck killing the driver and injuring another person in Kandahar.
22 March 2006		A civilian passenger was killed when gunmen fired on a taxi on the main road to Kandahar City.
22 March 2006		A roadside bomb damaged a government vehicle in Kandahar City.
28 March 2006		A rocket attack targeted the OEF base in Kandahar City.
30 March 2006		One Canadian soldier and six Afghan civilians were injured when a suicide bomber struck a convoy in Kandahar City.
31 March 2006		A suicide bomber targeted an Afghan National Army convoy in Arghandab district.
2 April 2006		Following a suicide attack on an OEF convoy security forces shot and killed an alleged accomplice of the suicide bomber in Maywand district.
9 April 2006		A bomb blast in Kandahar City injured six soldiers and five civilians.
14 April 2006		Attacks in Zare Dasht district killed at least six Afghan policemen and 47 Taliban fighters.
14 April 2006		Following an ambush on a joint Afghan army and police patrol by a small group of Taliban fighters, Canadian troops fought a day-long battle in the desert West of Kandahar City. A Canadian light armoured vehicle was hit by two rocket-propelled grenades.
17 April 2006		A large blast near the Canadian base in Kandahar City wounded seven Afghan police officers,
19 April 2006		A Canadian troop relief convoy was hit by a roadside bomb, injuring two Canadian soldiers in Kandahar City.
21 April 2006		Six policemen were killed by insurgents during an attack on a police post in Maiwand district.

22 April 2006		Four Canadian soldiers were killed when their armoured patrol hit a roadside bomb in Shah Wali Kot District.
23 April 2006		Taliban militants killed a security guard in an attack on a construction company working for OEF forces in Kandahar City.
23 April 2006		Taliban launched two rocket attacks in Kandahar province.
23 April 2006		At least three militants and a police officer were killed as Afghan security forces surrounded Taliban fighters hiding in a village.
25 April 2006		Five Taliban militants and one policeman were killed in a two-hour battle when 50 Taliban militants raided a police checkpoint in Miana Shien district.
29 April 2006		Three Afghan soldiers were wounded and 12 insurgents were captured in a joint Afghan-OEF operation in Panjwayi district.
1 May 2006		One US soldier was injured when a suicide bomber attacked OEF forces in Maiwand district.
12 May 2006		Canadian forces arrested 10 suspected Taliban during a raid in Kandahar province.
17 May 2006	 	A suicide car bomb exploded near a UN convoy in Kandahar City. In another incident, Canadian Capt. Nichola Goddard was killed by shrapnel when the LAV III in which she was riding was hit by several rocket-propelled grenades. During the same battle 20 insurgents and six ANA and Afghan National Police were killed. (Panjwayi District)
18 May 2006		OEF forces killed up to 20 Taliban and in air-strikes.
20 May 2006		Two French Special Forces troops were killed while fighting the Taliban in Kandahar.
21 May 2006		Four ANA soldiers and 15 militants were killed in an ambush on an Afghan National Army convoy.
22 May 2006		Gunmen attacked offices of the Maroof district.
22 May 2006		An estimated 34 civilians and up to 80 militants killed when the village of Azizi was attacked by Canadian troops and US gun-ships
23 May 2006		A rocket attack on the Canadian base was foiled when local villagers chased away militants.
24 May 2006		Afghan soldiers clashed with a sizeable Taliban force in Panjwai district, and OEF forces provided heavy bombardment in support.
25 May 2006		An officer from the Afghan National Army was killed, and an Afghan interpreter for the Canadian troops was badly wounded in a Taliban ambush, in the Banzya village in Panjwai district.
27 May 2006		A rocket attack landed in OEF's Kandahar base.
29 May 2006	 	Five Canadians are wounded in an ambush on their patrol by Taliban insurgents in Panjwai district, and at least one and possibly six Taliban were killed in the incident. Insurgents fired six rockets at the OEF base, although no injuries were sustained.

2 June 2006	 	Four policemen and 18 suspected Taliban were killed when insurgents attacked a police post in Kandahar's Miana Shien village. <b>In Kandahar's Arghandab District, a suicide bomber attacked a Canadian military convoy, killing three civilians and himself.</b>
3 June 2006		OEF troops captured an insurgent suspected of building bombs in a cave near the Kandahar village of Gumbad, where Canadian forces have a base, and Afghan police arrested two suspected Taliban militants riding in a car full of explosives about 50 kilometers north of Kandahar City.
4 June 2006		<b>A suicide bomber attacked a Canadian military convoy escorting Kandahar's Governor Asadullah Khalid, killing four civilians, and wounding 13 others.</b>
7 June 2006		Taliban insurgents shot dead two Afghan policemen in Kandahar province.
10 June 2006		Three policemen were wounded when insurgents threw a hand grenade into their police station in Kandahar City.
11 June 2006		Four members working for an Indian road construction company were found shot dead four days after they were abducted in Maiwan district.
11 June 2006		Two Canadian soldiers were injured when OEF forces clashed with Taliban in the Panjwai district.
12 June 2006		A clash between OEF and insurgents in Kandahar's Panjwai district killed more than thirty insurgents.
13 June 2006	 	<b>'Night letters' were distributed in the Maran Jan area of Kandahar's Arghandab District, warning residents to evacuate the surrounding area as insurgent were planning to commence their operations against the Canadian and Afghan Security Forces.</b> Insurgents also ambushed and set fire to a fuel tanker on the Kandahar-Herat road.
14 June 2006		<b>Taliban distributed 'night letters' to students of the Kandahar University in Kandahar City, warning them to desist from their studies or face the consequences. Taliban also threatened to kill Mullahs who performed burial rites for Afghans who had worked for international forces and NGOs.</b>
15 June 2006		<b>A bomb exploded on a bus in Kandahar City killing 12 civilians and injuring 17 Afghans. Another IED was found in the city and defused by police.</b>
16 June 2006		Five policemen were killed when their vehicle was destroyed by an IED in Maiwand District.
17 June 2006		Taliban attacked the centre of Kandahar's Mianishin District. A two hour firefight killed seven Taliban and one policeman.
20 June 2006	 	Afghan police seized small arms and grenades from a car in Kandahar City and reports were received of a suicide car bomber driving around the city, looking for targets. 1 Romanian soldier was killed and 4 were injured when an IED targeted an OEF convoy 6 miles northeast of the OEF base.
21 June 2006	 	Four Canadian troops were injured when a roadside bomb hit their patrol convoy in Kandahar's Shahwali Kot district. <b>A suicide bomber and one civilian were killed and seven others injured in an attack on a Canadian military convoy on the Helmand-Kandahar highway.</b>

	 	<p>A civilian was killed and 2 Canadian soldiers were among the injured in another suicide attack on a Canadian Army convoy in Kandahar district of Kandahar province.</p> <p>A 'night letter' delivered to a mosque in Kandahar City warned of death to those who cooperate with 'the infidels'.</p>
23 June 2006		Coalition and Afghan forces attacked a large group of militants and fought a three-hour battle in Zharie district. Several militants would have fled to nearby villages. They might have taken civilians with them as human shields.
24 June 2006	 	<p>A Canadian mission that was setting up a medical clinic in Panjwai district came under fire by Taliban fighters. No Canadians were injured in the fight, but four Taliban fighters got killed.</p> <p>Two Coalition members died and one was injured as Afghan and Coalition forces battled enemy small arms and rocket propelled grenade fire in the Panjwayi District in part of Mountain Thrust Operation. 45 Taliban have been reported to be killed.</p>
25 June 2006		Afghan and coalition forces engaged a large group of insurgents near the village of Mirabad, northeast of Kandahar.
27 June 2006		A group of insurgents have attempted to burn a girls' school in Kandahar city.

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