



## TRANSCRIPT

### Can We Still Win in Afghanistan - and What is a Win?

**Discussants:** The Hon. Fawzia Koofi, Member, Afghan Parliament  
 Amb. Richard C. Holbrooke, Vice Chairman, Perseus LLC  
 The Hon. Peter Mackay, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Canada  
 The Hon. Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, Secretary General, NATO

**Moderator:** Philip Stephens, Associate Editor, *The Financial Times*

**CRAIG KENNEDY:** My name is Craig Kennedy if you weren't here last night and I want to welcome you to the Brussels Forum. If you weren't here last night, you missed a great opening. Both the opening session with Prime Minister Verhofstadt and then the night owl session with David Ignatius and Javier Solana, was really the best of what we're trying to do here at the Brussels Forum, lively, interactive and provocative.

We are trying some new things this year. One is that while this conference usually gets characterized as a US/European conference, in fact, it's probably more appropriate to call it a North American/European conference, we're very pleased with the Canadian participation we have this year and I think as you'll see with this next panel, it's a very important part of the trans-Atlantic Alliance.

Second thing is, we added lunches this year. Now, this gives a lot of opportunities for wonderful discussion in small settings, but it also means that we have a rather careful ballet at about 1:30 or 1:15 this afternoon. And we're going to need a lot of cooperation and coordination to move all of you to 15 different sites and get things rolling, but I think you're going to find it well worth the time.

We've got a lot to cover this morning in these three sessions. I'd ask you in your questions and comments to keep them brief. Our very skilled moderators have been instructed to cut you off if you ramble on too long and we hope for really, really interesting and stimulating morning. So with that I'm going to turn it over to Philip Stephens, Philip.

**PHILIP STEPHENS, ASSOCIATE EDITOR, FINANCIAL TIMES:** Thank you very much for (INAUDIBLE). I think it's appropriate that the formal sessions of the forum are starting with Afghanistan because if you think about it, this is the existential challenge for the trans-Atlantic Alliance in coming years.

We're going to have a discussion this morning about what to do in Afghanistan, but I think I'm going to take us a given that we have to win the Alliance. The Alliance has to win in Afghanistan. I don't think its worth having an extensive debate about whether we are



winning or how, to what extent it's essential. The starting point for this Alliance is the existential challenge.

We've got a wonderful panel this morning. I'm not going to introduce them. We've got some questions you'll have seen them as we came in about the challenge in Afghanistan, the sort of issues, the obstacles, and the problems that the Alliance has had in Afghanistan and we're going to deal with those.

I'm going to start by asking, putting the question to each of the panelists and they're going to speak for two or three minutes each and then very quickly, I hope, we're going to pull in people from, pull in you as the contributors to comment and if you like to challenge the views of some of our panel.

I'd ask, as Craig said, for everyone to keep their comments or questions relatively brief so we can get as many people as possible to contribute. I'm going to start with Secretary General of NATO, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer. I think the question for him is really the clear or the obvious one, how are we going to win?

This seems to be a fight that I've heard some people say or many people say, and I agree, we can't afford to lose, but many others say we're not winning at Rigor (ph) a few months ago, you I know, and others had some issues about the strength of the Alliance in Afghanistan, have we sorted those problems out? Are we winning and how are we going to continue?

**JAAP DE HOOP SCHEFFER, SECRETARY GENERAL NATO:** Let me start by saying and trying to define the 'we', because as we are sitting here, the 'we' is first of all the Afghan people. They own their nation, NATO doesn't own Afghanistan, but the 'we' more in general in my opinion is the international community. NATO is there, NATO is playing a very important role, an essential role in Afghanistan.

Who are the, only by concerted effort of the whole International community can we win and winning for me. That means not in the first place winning a war, but winning Afghanistan with the Afghani people. So, that's point number one.

Point number two that we have, has NATO now done much better than we did a year ago? We had problems with trying to get the forces we need in Afghanistan. We have done much better; we are not entirely there yet.

We've done much better now, between regions (ph) as we speak, we have generated nine, ten thousand more forces. We are now well over 35,000, but I say again, NATO is an enabler in Afghanistan.

NATO can create and should create a climate of security and stability. Example, as we speak there's fighting going on in the South. Let me commend their Canadian Foreign Minister,



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Peter MacKay for the tremendous job Canada is doing there with the number of our other allies, suffering casualties and fatalities.

What is essentially is that, when we clear areas in the south of Taliban and other spoilers, the Afghan Army can hold. So my final remark will be, if we do solve the number of problems, can we train and equip the Afghanistan National Army and the Afghanistan National Police quickly enough so that they can do in Afghanistan what any normal Army and any normal Police Force does?

(B), can we, but that's not in NATO's hands, can we find a solution for the immensely growing narcotics problem. Point number three, can we, in a more mature political dialog with Pakistan, find a solution for the big problem we're still facing in the South by people coming in across the border, coming in and doing their dirty work and going back to Pakistan again.

In brief, the 'we' is the International Community, United Nations, European Union, G8 and yes, definitely, NATO but a more concerted effort of the International Community is necessary and I think we are doing not too badly as we speak, but we are not far from there yet.

PHILIP STEPHENS, ASSOCIATE EDITOR, FINANCIAL TIMES: So, we're getting better. NATO's an enabler, one among many. I'm sure in the session we'll deal with the coordination or lack of the coordination between some of the different institutions and agency in – agencies in Afghanistan, but Richard Holbrooke that was, are you as optimistic as the Secretary General?

RICHARD C. HOLBROOKE, AMBASSADOR, VICE CHAIRMAN, PERSEUS L.L.C.: First, Philip, I accept your stipulations. We are all here because we believe that Afghanistan is vital in it's own right and is also the ultimate test of NATO and I'm delighted that the Secretary General, who I think's done a tremendous job, is here with us.

I say that because I will say some things I don't think he can fully agree with, at least in public. A year ago when we sat here, Afghanistan was not getting much attention and I must say, with considerable personal annoyance that having just returned from Afghanistan at that time, I was criticized by several American officials for being pessimistic and defeatist, when in fact I was arguing the exact opposite, that it was vitally important.

And I agree with you that the last year has seen a focusing and a reemphasis of the resources and the importance of Afghanistan on the part of NATO and I commend you on your leadership in that area and I share what you said about Canada, which has suffered the greatest casualty since the Korean War and is one of the very few NATO countries fighting without any National Caveats in Afghanistan.



And I hope we'll return to that issue later because I think National Caveats undermine the concept of an integrated force. But on your core question, it is impossible to say that in the race between this tortoise and this hare, we are making as much progress as we need to as fast as we need to.

There is a massive waste of money in Afghanistan by the International Community, terrible this mis-coordination and an almost total waste of the money, of the billions of dollars, most of them American taxpayer dollars, being spent on the drug effort, while poppy seed production continues to increase.

And I say this with the greatest of regret and I look forward to your comments on this, I have heard increasingly in the last few weeks from Afghan friends of mine, both in Kabul and in the United States, that the government has simply lost its momentum and this is the factor that most troubles me.

In the United States, President Karzai and Afghanistan are viewed as synonymous because he's such an articulate, eloquent, charismatic spokesman for his country. But Afghans I have met who have, who supported him universally are now talking about their disappointment with him, their concern that corruption is the cancer that will destroy the government, said that it's Afghanistan's own issue in the end to win or lose and therefore the effectiveness of this government in all the issues, education, drugs, women's issues, transparency and rule of law.

All of these issues are going to be critical and I have and I can sense a tremendous deterioration in the standing of the government and I hope we'll hear more about that this morning.

UNIDENTIFIED PARTICIPANT: Fawzia Koofi, you're a member ...

FAWZIA KOOFI, MEMBER, AFGHAN PARLIAMENT: Yes.

UNIDENTIFIED PARTICIPANT: ... of Afghan parliament. Deputy Speaker, I think there are questions so far in that for you. Is the international community in NATO and the other organizations the EU giving Afghani's enough space to build a nation? And is the Afghan government, as Richard Holbrooke just suggested, losing momentum, losing its grip?

FAWZIA KOOFI: Thank you, I think it's very important to have an Afghan voice here in this forum. I will try to be an Afghan citizen, not an Afghan politician for the discussion, and also a woman who has been in (INAUDIBLE) throughout the violence of the 30 years conflict.

I think we have had some great achievements in Afghanistan for the past five years. The five that we have the elected the most democratically elected President, the Parliament with a, 27



woman participation. The Constitution which is the most democratic constitution in the region is an achievement for the Afghan government and for our strategic partners in the country.

However, what's important here in this process is not only the following of the process but also the effectiveness and the efficiency and being responsible and responsive to the people's need. Now, we are challenged with three main triangle challenges. We call it triangle challenges.

The first thing is the security because without security you are not able to achieve anything. Security, unfortunately, has deteriorated for the past one year, especially in the border areas with neighboring countries.

The NATO and Afghan national army and Afghan national police are trying to put a force to establish security, but I think what's important here for NATO and for Afghan government to find the root causes for insecurity in Afghanistan. We believe the fight in Afghanistan is the fight against international terrorists, it's not only Afghan's being involved in this.

If anything happens, the whole world is responsible. The 911 attacks indicates that it's not only an issue of Afghanistan, so it doesn't only need to be enforced from Afghan side, also we need International Community support which the NATO, the U.S. and other strategic partners and for that we need to identify the root causes first, in security.

We believe, as Afghan's, that the root causes for international terrorists and insecurity is not in Afghanistan, it's in the region, it's in the neighboring countries. And for our strategy partners it's very important to put pressure on the neighboring countries to identify the root causes it's not we cannot have two faces policy on the issue.

We believe in Afghanistan that most of our neighboring countries have a two faces policy toward the issues in Afghanistan. This is one, the second is the issue of us was indicated before, the issue of narcotics. It's also, again, it's not a problem within Afghanistan, it's a regional problem and we need regional cooperation on that.

Of course, since three four years, we've had an increase in the terms of poppy cultivation and trafficking but this year, with international community support and with putting some more pressure on border countries we have a reduction in terms of poppy cultivation.

Now, coming back to the question that we are lost, I don't think that we are lost, I think the fact that we have land and compact, which is developed by Afghan's people, the fact that we have capacity that we have developed the paper for ten years indicates that Afghans haven't lost.



Of course, there are some mistakes done during the process maybe more attention was paid to Iraq rather than to Afghanistan. At the beginning there was a lot of attention, more financial assistance, more military presence, but then for the past three years we forgot Afghanistan almost. That was not on the top of agenda.

Now that more attention is given to there, I hope that with the establishment of the Parliament as a democratic institution for oversight and for making the government responsible, we will find (INAUDIBLE) the system is the most responsible, the most democratic system. Maybe the person here and there we need to bring some changes, but the whole system is a responsive system.

UNIDENTIFIED PARTICIPANT: Well thank you. Thank you very much. Two big among other problems, there are Pakistan, you were talking about neighbors and I assume we were talking about Pakistan and the drug problem and we're going to, I'm sure, come back to those in our discussion. Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED PARTICIPANT: ...this contribution to Afghanistan has been very, very significant. Sometimes I think, certainly on this side of the Atlantic, rather understated, as it were.

There was talk back in the NATO summit in Riga of a two-tier alliance. The countries that were ready contributing up front, the countries that were putting in some troops but were not prepared to see those troops put in harm's way.

From your perspective, have we sold solved some of those problems? Do we have a single alliance now fighting in Afghanistan?

PETER MACKAY, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, CANADA: Well, I guess I'd answer it this way. We're getting there, and I think the alliance has to be indivisible. Canada's commitment has been significant. As was stated, we have taken the most casualties since the Korean conflict.

But Canada views our international responsibility very seriously, as we always have. And I don't think I need to remind Europeans of the contributions that we've made in previous conflicts.

We celebrated the 90th anniversary of Vimy Ridge, which some have described in our country's history as the defining moment when we became a nation. Since that time Canada has always been a promoter of democracy, a promoter of human rights. We are a conglomeration of peoples from all corners of the globe. And so therefore we see ourselves very much as participants in international affairs.



Now I want to come back to just the significance of having a female member of parliament here from Afghanistan, a Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons. That in of itself is evidence in Afghanistan.

Not only could women not vote and walk the streets safely just five years ago, but to have a female member of parliament here now participating fully, demonstrative of the change that has taken place in that country is remarkable, and I am really honored to be here with you today.

There's been a lot of talk of the various elements of falling back in Afghanistan, or where we're not perhaps making enough progress. Security is chief to our ability to accomplish all of the development that has to go on.

We're seeing millions of children in school. We're seeing micro-credit finance that's now being accessible by women predominantly. Roads infrastructure, schools, hospitals, medical clinics being built. Vaccinations for children, programs which will allow for vocational training, all of those benchmarks that are outlined in the London Compact are being achieved incrementally.

But if somebody says give us one good reason we should be in Afghanistan – so girls can go to school and get an education so that they can participate fully in society. Those are reasons enough. And democracy comes in many forms, and it's often slow and ugly and incremental, but it is happening in Afghanistan.

And an unshakable commitment to Afghanistan and democracy and those principles is what Canadians believe in. And I truly believe that we are winning every day. Every day that we're making progress on those compact benchmarks, every day that we're increasing the security perimeter in places near the Pakistani border and other parts of the country, addressing the drug problem. It's going to take time.

But when you look at where we were five years ago, and the credit that is due to the alliance and the commitment and the leadership of people like Mr. de Hoop Scheffer and others who have looked ahead and said this is where we want to be. And we are now pulling together in greater numbers getting the commitment through meetings like we had just yesterday in Oslo from our NATO allies.

Burden-sharing is still a bit of an issue for us in Canada. We want to see further equipment in training and in the necessary troop commitments. But it's happening. And it's happening now at a pace that I believe is going to allow us ultimately to get to the place where Afghans will be able to walk on their own. And that's the winning formula.



That's where we want to be when Afghans can take control of their own borders, have their own social services, a government in place that's committed to the welfare of the people. And Canada is very committed to achieving that goal.

PHILIP STEPHENS, ASSOCIATE EDITOR, FINANCIAL TIMES: Thank you. Well that's a more optimistic note in some respects. I'm not sure that everyone in the room will share that optimism. I think everyone shares the ambition.

But we've heard in four excellent contributions from our panel some of the problems that are clearly going to be faced; drugs, Pakistan, the question of whether NATO is acting as one, the question of coordination between the civilian and the infrastructure building in Afghanistan and the security dimension. So I'd like to bring people in now if as I say if people would like to make short comments or questions. And if they could identify themselves first and we'll start here.

JOSEF JANNING, BERTELSMANN STIFTUNG: My name is Josef Janning, Bertelsmann Stiftung, I would like to ask Richard Holbrooke who has hinted at a point that he would very much like to make is about, what would you recommend to put in place in terms of integrated forces providing security.

You were hinting to the point that National Reserves and National Caveats by some NATO members were not helpful. What would be your advice? What would your kind of structure for a security regime be in Afghanistan?

PHILIP STEPHENS, ASSOCIATE EDITOR, FINANCIAL TIMES: If I may, I'm going to take three questions and then perhaps come back to one.

DARRELL ISSA, CALIFORNIA CONGRESSMAN, UNITED STATES: Got it, OK, Congressman Darrell Issa, from obviously from California. Maybe a provocative question that splits the panel here a little bit, NATO inherited everything that came before that.

So for a moment my question would give a pass on the problems of NATO's coming assuming the lead role, I think all facts considered, it's the first time every outside of Europe. And there's a lot to be said that's positive even if we could talk about what hasn't happened.

But looking at the other side, you're a Member of Parliament, but you're a Member of Parliament in a democracy that we orchestrated, the United States. That mandated women's positions in addition to women's rights. Something that is not mandated in the United States, we don't have quotas that you have to elect so many people of a particular gender or religion.

And how do you feel that impacted this emerging democracy? And both for Ambassador Holbrooke and for yourself, if the Afghan people in the border regions are unwilling to assist





either NATO or the United States and in fact are complicit in border crossings then what is Afghanistan going to do about that?

That's not a matter of dollars or military training. That's a matter of political will that Afghanistan clearly has shown it doesn't have. And in fairness Pakistan has also shown it doesn't fully have.

STEPHENS: All right, I'm going to take one more from the back there and then I'll come back to you in a moment.

KEN WOLLACK, NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS: My name is Ken Wollack, National Democratic Institute, the panelist talked about building democratic...

STEPHENS: Speak up a bit.

WOLLACK: What role

STEPHENS: Excuse me a sir; could you turn on that mic in front of you, you don't have lean.

WOLLACK: Ken Wollack, with the National Democratic Institute, the panelists have talked about building democratic structures in Afghanistan. What role do you see in this process for the warlords? Are they part of the problem or are they part of the solution? And what is the relationship of the international community with the warlords both in Kabul, and throughout the country?

STEPHENS: OK I'll take each of the panel, and so we've got three challenging questions. I'll start with Richard Holbrooke.

HOLBROOKE: First of all on National Caveats, I would defer to the Secretary General on detail, but it's an integrated military alliance. And when countries say we'll send you airplanes like the Germans but here are the rules. And the rules become micro managed by the INAUDIBLE. That puts unbearable additional strains on the alliance.

And since Afghanistan, everyone in this room agrees is a common cause of vital importance to all of us and it is the defining issue of NATO in the modern age. I think the Secretary General and his Commanders on the ground should be able to have all the troops as available as the Canadians.

And as the Canadian Foreign Secretary has just made clear, the inequality of this is causing an additional burden to Canada. Because Canada is taking a disproportionate casualties



precisely because they're living up to the highest ideals of the alliance while other countries including I say with great regret Germany are putting too many restraints on their troops.

Now in the much, much bigger question that Congressman Issa raised, I want to briefly address it and then I think you should talk about it. First of all Afghanistan is the most extraordinary country I've ever been in and I've been in a lot.

It is compelling, it is mysterious, it has this ancient history. It appears divided and yet there's never been a (INAUDIBLE) movement Dari, and Pashtun and Tajik and Hazara and all the other groups all feel that part of this nation that always resisted outside invaders from Alexander the Great on and we're now faced with this extraordinary problem.

We're trying to help Afghanistan build itself up and yet history suggests that time is not open-ended here in the country, plus there is the question of domestic pressures. Although, I think so far, at least in the U.S., Afghanistan has been bipartisan issue. So, I feel of all the issues I've seen the most compelling to me personally is the issue of women.

I think the Bush administration deserves great praise for legislating this group. I know that you sat with Mrs. Bush at the State of the Union message two years ago in the balcony and the whole Congress rose and applauded you and it's very moving to see.

At the same time, when I was in Herat with my wife, we went to the burn center and the immolations, the self-immolations of young girls being told to burn themselves to death by their own families because they had disgraced the family. Because they had been seen alleging talking to a man in the market place in Herat and I mean all over the country, it happened to be Herat, was terrifying to see.

Giving women an opportunity, which is essential can only be done if the men are taught that what they do and the way they treat the women is unacceptable and I don't see enough of an effort and so there is it seems to me a backlash and the, who does the, the backlash is coming from conservative men.

I talked about the burka with the woman. Why do you, do you wear the burka and one woman, one of your colleagues, made a very eloquent statement to me. She understands that to the West the burka is a sign of an inferior composition for woman. She said you don't understand. I make my daughter wear the burka because it's her defense.

It's the only way she can go into the streets and the backlash is dangerous for the woman, it's dangerous for social progress that we all want and it also benefits the Taliban. So I think it's, I think this is perhaps the biggest social issue in this extraordinary country. On the drug issue, I just think we've wasted our money, Congressman.



We poured in billions of dollars. If we had spent that money, instead of on crop destruction, which only created more Taliban, and if we put that money into roads, which I think are the first item, President Bush has talked regularly about roads, but the road building program has not progressed. It would create jobs, it would give the farmers a chance to create alternate crops, and we ought to re-examine what we're doing in the drug program.

STEPHENS: I know it's kind of fuzzy, Koofi to take a couple of those questions, then I'm going to take two or three more and come back to the Secretary General and the minister, so Fawzia.

FAWZIA KOOFI, MEMBER, AFGHAN PARLIAMENT: Thank you. Having (INAUDIBLE) and bilateral relationship between Afghanistan and Pakistan especially in the (INAUDIBLE) is in the interest of both Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Let me speak about President Karzai's speech here, whenever he talks about Pakistan, he mentioned this (INAUDIBLE). That for the past five years when the stability and securities in Afghanistan, in terms of business promotion. Pakistan was able to send, to export to Afghanistan with a high cost of thousands of millions.

So it's an interest of both countries. Now what is important here is in the Durand Line area, we always had this understanding that those border areas are traditionally tribal countries area. Let me make it clear here that Pakistan, that traditional tribal structure is not there anymore. You -- its replaced with the parties.

You have (INAUDIBLE) party, you have other parties, so if the central government in Pakistan wishes to control, it is a political structure in the border areas that they can control it. When it comes to Afghanistan side, I think it's a fight between extremism and democracy. It's not a fight between which tribe and which region.

It's a fight between extremism and the new democracy in Afghanistan. (INAUDIBLE) giving any kind of privileges to (INAUDIBLE) extremism means officially (INAUDIBLE) of territories and that is what we don't want. Any kind of negotiation and discussion with Taliban Al Qaeda means officially you give them an identity and giving them an identity means that (INAUDIBLE) and that is not healthy and this (INAUDIBLE) of one, isn't this promoted in the 30 years of conflict of the partisan to fight (INAUDIBLE) and vision, (INAUDIBLE) countries to fight (INAUDIBLE) invasion.

Now mostly the bad consequence was on the woman. (INAUDIBLE) women were affected by victims of extremism during the past 30 years. Although (INAUDIBLE) culturally is not a country where it's extremism and violation against women. It's part of the history. No, it's not that way.



Even during 1960s and 70s, we had women who were politically participating in Parliament. We have women who were Member of Parliament. We have a quota in constitution through which women participation is guaranteed, but let's be clear here.

Out of 27 person women who should be in the parliament per quota, 17 women managed to get vote as open competition. In a very conservative area, (INAUDIBLE) province, in my province I was the second in terms of the votes and gender seat, so that indicates the level of acceptance, the level of progress towards the woman is very good.

Now yes, we have fewer reports on violation, self-immolation, etcetera, etcetera, we look at it from two perspectives. One is that you have more transparency, more reports on violation and people are open to talk about it. We see it from that, that's why we have a lot of violation cases.

But also on the other hand, yes, because there is a gap between women who are living in big cities, who are living in the rural areas. More attention is paid to the big cities, and women who are living in rural areas somehow feel themselves deprived and detached from all this progress.

So it's very much important that any strategy, any plan which is to (INAUDIBLE), we need to consider equal distribution of resources.

PHILIP STEPHENS: Two strong points that we must deal with the Taliban, give them credibility and we must push ahead with the equality agenda. Now I've got I think, one, two questions here, two there. This lady here first. This lady here.

UNIDENTIFIED PARTICIPANT: Thank you very much. I'm Vesna Pusic, the Deputy Speaker, Parliament of Croatia. First something on the quotas. Congressman said that the women in the Afghan parliament were result of proposed quotas.

I don't think there's anything wrong with that. There was Scandinavians having proved the makeup of their parliaments by imposing quotas and now there's almost a 50/50. There isn't a 50/50, but let's say there's a 40/60, which is much better than anywhere else in the world.

We in Croatia have imposed quotas for, or representations for minorities and its working. So I think, you know, in the beginning it's a shock but then people get used to these people like women or like representatives of other minorities being present in Parliament and actually making decisions and with time they decide to actually vote for them.

So I think it's not bad tactics, let's say. And I'd like to ask a question about the legitimacy issue that you've raised, because that from the Croatian and Balkan experience this is a very important thing.



Once the arrangement of the government starts losing its legitimacy, then the whole, you know, it loses its authority, it loses its capacity to act, it loses the strength to do something. So is it (INAUDIBLE) government as such, or is it the arrangement that you feel that Afghanistan is losing support and legitimacy among the people?

STEPHENS: OK. This gentleman here.

UNIDENTIFIED PARTICIPANT: Thank you. OK. The recent comments of the universal (INAUDIBLE), our Assistant Secretary, Richard Boucher, spoke very highly of the (INAUDIBLE) of the continental trade, and in comparing Afghanistan into East – West energy corridor and all that.

So I would like to ask the participants on the view – on the promise of that and on a related note, we discussed this morning that both (INAUDIBLE) now has a presence as a native as part of a native force in Afghanistan and I know NATO is introducing and increasing its numbers.

And I would like to ask Secretary General, if possible, to comment on the promise and the prospects of partners participation in that force, not only NATO members per se, but partners as a part of the (INAUDIBLE) commitment to this. Thank you.

STEPHENS: I've got at least five more people who've put their hands up, so I'm just going to take two or three more before coming back to the panel. I'd ask everyone to be as brief as possible. So the gentleman here and the lady here and then the lady here.

BERT VAN DER VAART, SMALL ENTERPRISE ASSISTANCE FUNDS: Thank you very much. Bert van der Vaart, with Small Enterprise Assistance Funds. We've just begun investing in small and medium businesses in Afghanistan.

My question goes to the legitimacy of the government because what a lot of people on the ground that we see, in Kandahar and Mazare etcetera, is that with all the billions of dollars committed, very little actually is felt to be trickling down to the people.

There's no running water, there's no electricity, any investment we have to make we have to think about generating backup capacity, etcetera and I suppose the question to NATO would be is, for all the sacrifice that's been done, why can we not find a better way to integrate gains on the ground that are lasting, that are providing stability that actually are going to funnel some of that billions of dollars into things that the people of Afghanistan can feel, can understand.

There's just too many, there's a hodgepodge of little things going around. It's not the basic stuff that's being perceived. Roads, water, electricity, it's what everyone takes granted, it's not happening in Afghanistan and I think until that happens, you're really going to have a



legitimacy problem and I – we're going to have a problem making decent investments to get that economy off the ground.

STEPHENS: And that seems to me and I hope we'll come back to that, it's a very big question. I mean, this lack of integration and the question I ask, because I have in my mind, should the European Union be taking over the civil side, the coordination there, but – take this lady and this lady and then I'm going to come back to the panelists.

XENIA DORMANDY, BELFER CENTER: Xenia Dormandy, from the Belfer Center. I'd like to push a little bit on the Congressman's question about Pakistan and Afghanistan.

There's little question that over the last two years the relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan has worsened and so, if you recognize that Pakistan does play a role and does play a very important role in the future of Afghanistan, what are the two governments doing to turn back that relationship and get it back on a positive path, because all we're hearing at the moment is criticisms of one another?

UNIDENTIFIED PARTICIPANT: Thank you. This lady just here.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE, MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: (INAUDIBLE), Member of the European Parliament. We have heard recently a group of women members of the (INAUDIBLE) brought by Ambassador Swanee Hunt and they all complain that despite they are there, they are not paying attention by anyone, including the European Union, for instance, in drafting the recently the country strategy paper for a European development corporation in Afghanistan.

And my question is, is it not, maybe to Secretary General, is it not that – of course we need NATO and we have a deficit in a way and the problem with the caveats – we need the Military support, but is it not that there has been too much NATO steering of the process and too little soft power so to say, so more U.S. corporation to deal with the crucial crisis of institutional building of development of the drug issue and so on.

STEPHENS: OK, we've got several very strong points and questions there. I'm going to ask everyone on the panel, but perhaps everyone on the panel will choose one or most two of those points and questions and I'll start with the Minister.

PETER MACKAY, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, CANADA: Well there's been so many questions, I don't know where to start. One of the earlier questions talked about democracy and I still believe that for Afghanistan, democracy is the anchor for human rights, for a burgeoning justice system, for issues related to the expansion of the economy.

The private sector can play a much larger role, I believe, and included in that would be democracy promotion organizations coming in and giving advice in some instances to the



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Karzai government itself, but this issue of dealing with the insurgence and the security problem that still exists at the Pakistan border, I believe you cannot renovate your house if your furnace is on fire and in the south, near Kandahar, where the Canadian troops are currently based with others, this transient Taliban coming in and out of the country where many are being recruited from refugee camps inside Pakistan.

That has to be dealt with. That has to be a primary focal point in order for us to get on with all the other capacity building. The gentleman is right, there is still a major problem with infrastructure in the country and when the NATO forces, when our humanitarian aid workers, people going out from the provincial reconstruction teams to try to work with Afghan people to build capacity, roads, schools, clinics so that we can start to create a much greater atmosphere of stability, they have to be protected.

And so until such time as we're able to truly secure that border area and that is going to involve in some cases as has been mentioned, the lifting of caveats, the greater full participation in securing the southern region of the country, much of this will affect the confidence of the Afghan people and also the confidence of the international community.

We're seeing more countries come in. It's not just NATO countries. Let's not forget. It goes beyond the 37. There are some 60 countries now participating in the larger contribution in areas of capacity building.

So building confidence means first and foremost emphasizing the security and then getting on with this collective effort to bring in more countries, more concentration on the infrastructure and good governance.

I would strongly submit, is at the very center of all of this. Having a government that is not just about (INAUDIBLE) and (INAUDIBLE), but is spreading throughout the country the necessary concentration of effort.

STEPHENS: Thank you, General.

JAAP DE HOOP SCHEFFER, SECRETARY GENERAL, NATO: I think we should not be surprised and that's the reason I started this morning when you asked me the question as I started that the nation which basically came from middle ages is the Taliban regime was trying to get the nation back into the Middle Ages. That was only in 2001.

While we're sitting here in '07, that it is not yet a full democracy and that we still have as far nation building and reconstruction development corporations concerned, we have generations to go. Let's not fool ourselves. We have generations to go. That's my first point.

My second point is I have not heard yet the word terrorism this morning and let's realize why we are in Afghanistan and why the Taliban regime was chased out of the region. It is one of



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the front lines in our fight against terrorism and if the front line becomes a fault line, that is not only why NATO's credibility is involved, but the credibility of the international community if we lose and if that becomes a fault line, we'll not only see Afghanistan and the region in big trouble, but the consequences will be felt in all the nations you represent here this morning. Let's never forget that. And that would be my answer to the member of the European Parliament.

Too much NATO, I wouldn't say so at the moment, I wouldn't say so because as Minister MacKay was saying, development and reconstruction is absolutely impossible without creating (INAUDIBLE). The problem is that long time security is impossible without development and that is the reason that I think that the international community should much stronger coordinate.

I'm in favor of having a (INAUDIBLE) type figure or perhaps a woman with a lot of political clout, Holbrooke, perhaps. I was mentioning Holbrooke, I don't know what, but any way.

UNIDENTIFIED PARTICIPANT: ... European Union taking over at least the European dimension of the international construction effort ...

UNIDENTIFIED PARTICIPANT: ...

UNIDENTIFIED PARTICIPANT: Can you see this as a – the possibility of a NATO EU operation?

SCHEFFER: The European Union is stepping up to the plate now by coming in with a number of police trainers.

UNIDENTIFIED PARTICIPANT: I know, but we have all those individual European countries doing different things ...

UNIDENTIFIED PARTICIPANT: Well, it's not all terribly coordinated. Isn't there somewhere where the EU should step up as an institution?

SCHEFFER: Well, the EU police mission is going to work as closely together within NATO (INAUDIBLE) mission, but you have a point and the representatives from the audience have a point when they say that the international community is not coordinating enough.

From them I plea on the ground in (INAUDIBLE) or have a political figure with a lot of clout who can open doors, who can push at doors, so for the moment, no madam, not too much NATO. NATO with a lot of partners announced it to my Afghan friend, a lot of partners from (INAUDIBLE) to Georgia, as Minister MacKay had mentioned the figures. Japan is a very important donor, but and here's the but, if we do not, I repeat my point.



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PETER MACKAY, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, CANADA:...NATO, if we do not succeed. And that was one of the major themes of the NATO Foreign Minister's meeting. In adequately training and equipping the Afghan national army and the Afghan nation police, there will be no rule of law for which our Afghani friends will be responsible.

And a final remark, we are as NATO, and as international community, defending universal values in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. Those universal values are important. And that does mean that by definition the international community is interested in what kind of media law there is in Afghanistan. Is interested in how detainees are treated in Afghanistan.

What I'm saying is that in permanent dialogue with the Afghan parliament and with the Afghan government, we should also have these universal values permanently on our agenda, because parliamentary and public support in our NATO nations for sending the Canadians, and the Dutch, and Estonians to Afghanistan means that I can explain that we are defending universal values there together.

And that's why I'm happy that the Afghan government, on the allegations of mistreatment of detainees, has now agreed to launch an inquiry in to these what are still allegations. But these are important points. OK. Richard Holbrooke.

RICHARD C. HOLBROOKE, AMBASSADOR, VICE CHAIRMAN, PERSEUS LLC: I agree with everything you said, Peter, and everything you said. But, and of course if you compare to the black years of the Taliban, it's an incredible achievement. And nothing is more symbolic than your presence here. It's very moving to me.

But let us be honest with ourselves. The government is getting weaker. Last week national police, at the instructions of the Attorney General of Afghanistan, raided the only really viable independent television station in Koppel. Am I correct?

Tolo television run by a brilliant, courageous Australian Afghan named Saad Mohseni,. Wonderful man. And this was the government doing it to themselves.

You mentioned the police. We all understand that security and development go hand in hand. The police are not being trained. When they're trained, they're not being equipped. When they're equipped, they are totally corrupt. And they turn for their resources to the traditional methods.

The United States training program, under Dynacor which I visited, is an appalling joke. And somebody made the point earlier, you made the point earlier, sir, about all this money and none of it reaches the ground.



Well, these Dynacor people spend five weeks training Afghans in a language they don't speak. Five weeks. They're paid \$1,000 a day by the U.S. taxpayer. They sit in their armored – it's a complete shambles. I think the military training is better, by the way, but it's still a problem.

And then finally to your point. Everybody I talked to says this, and everybody sees it. Of course a good chunk of the huge American bill never leaves the United States under a system which I say Congressman Issa, is to my mind corrupt and needs to be investigated on a bipartisan basis.

For those of you who don't know our system, Congressman Issa is the ranking republican on the Government Oversight Committee, next to Congressman Waxman. And it is their committee that has got to look into these issues and find out why the billions of dollars that we give for Afghanistan stays inside the beltway, in these beltway bandit companies.

So back to the core point, I don't want to appear to be negative each year as we come to the Brussels Forum and talk about Afghanistan. But unless we are honest about the problems, we're going to be sitting here year after year saying, oh we made a little more progress, but we've lost a lot of ground. And sooner or later we all know where that's going to end.

Your model for an EU-NATO cooperation is, in fact, roughly what was attempted in Bosnia and Kosovo and with a different structure in East Timor, with mixed military civilian models. We could have learned from that.

Not one lesson from the Balkans, neither the positives nor the negatives, was applied in Afghanistan. They were all ignored. NATO offered to come in early, and the U.S. turned them down, and now finally belatedly they're coming in.

I would love to see a senior coordinator of all international assistance with teeth. And we had it in the Balkans. It didn't work too badly. The Ahtisaariplan provides for such a person in Kosovo, after independence which I assume will be forthcoming soon. Why is it that it's even more important and whose success or failure will determine the future of NATO. We have not got Iraq together yet.

UNIDENTIFIED PARTICIPANT: One remark; Let's not forget that we do not have détente (ph) powers in Afghanistan we have a government, a legitimate government, we have a parliament, we have governors. They might not be all right and non-corrupt all the time, but we do not have any détente powers and we shouldn't I think.

UNIDENTIFIED PARTICIPANT: I agree.

UNIDENTIFIED PARTICIPANT: So there's a basic difference between the Balkans and Afghanistan.



HOLBROOKE: Well, I agree with that but I think everyone here and you and I would all agree that the thousands and I mean thousands of international aid organizations and NGOs that are flooding Afghanistan because it's so compelling and so exciting to work in and so emotional are completely uncoordinated.

On the drug issue; Who's in charge of the drug issue according to the international community? The British. Where does the money come from? The U.S. Congress. Who administers it? The DEA. What is their concept? Well, it's the same concept that didn't work in the golden triangle in Thailand.

This is absolutely unacceptable at the international level and we owe your country much better support, not more, but better support to help you get to where all of us in this room want to go.

PHILIP STEPHENS, ASSOCIATE EDITOR, FINANCIAL TIMES: Fawzia Koofi, I've got about six or seven people who want to intervene. So, I've, if you'll forgive me I'm going to come back to you first in the next session.

Just on just on Richard Holbrooke's point, I was talking to a British General who's recently been back from Helman Province and he said the only answer to the drug problem was for the British army to buy the whole crop use some of it back in our national health service back in Britain and dump the rest in the North Sea and he was serious about this.

This was not a ...

UNIDENTIFIED PARTICIPANT: Philip, we ...

STEPHENS: (INAUDIBLE)

UNIDENTIFIED PARTICIPANT: ... I just need to make a point, we tried that policy in Thailand in the golden triangle in the '70s. Crop purchasing, the farmers aren't stupid, they sold it to us and then grew more and so it's a bottomless pit ...

STEPHENS: I'm not sure you can grow it anymore in Afghanistan. I had a gentleman back here in this – Yes. Hello? So then I do have one right at the back, or in the middle there. Yes. You've got a microphone on your chair?

UNIDENTIFIED PARTICIPANT: (INAUDIBLE)

UNIDENTIFIED PARTICIPANT: (INAUDIBLE)

STEVENS: Yes. Now ...



KARL-THEODOR FREIHERR ZU GUTTENBERG, MEMBER GERMAN BUNDESTAG: Karl zu Guttenberg, a member of the German Parliament. I have a very quick question to Ambassador Holbrooke. Ambassador, could you just specify the restraints you have mentioned, the German Parliament has put on the (INAUDIBLE) we have sent to the south in (INAUDIBLE).

We have just decided, have recently decided on this in the German Parliament and must have seriously missed something, if it's just the fact that we're flying under the eyes of command that's not quite the (INAUDIBLE). Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED PARTICIPANT: (INAUDIBLE). Yes. You want to answer that?

HOLBROOKE: I can't.

UNIDENTIFIED PARTICIPANT: (INAUDIBLE). Last year was not a good one in military terms in Afghanistan. There was a doubling and tripling of some of the insurgent and terrorist activity. And we've had some importation of the methods from Iraq; roadside bombs, suicide bombs, that sort of thing.

The fighting season is upon us in Afghanistan. There has been talk of a Taliban offensive and I'd like to congratulate NATO that at least initially, it seems like we are anticipating some of the Taliban activities and nipping them in the bud.

But if you had to make a prediction, what would you say this year will look like (INAUDIBLE)? And specifically, is it true what some of my British Commanders are telling me, that in Afghanistan's second largest city Kandahar we at NATO and the government only control the airport?

And that the city itself is in fact a no-go area for western personnel and officials? And well generally, what proportion of districts in southern Afghanistan is under effective Afghan control and what isn't.

UNIDENTIFIED PARTICIPANT: (INAUDIBLE).

UNIDENTIFIED PARTICIPANT: My name is (INAUDIBLE) I am from Canada. Former Cabinet Minister of (ph) Immigration and (INAUDIBLE). And I was part of the government when at first we decided to go to Kabul (ph) and then there was an issue with terrorism, of course, and that is the reason why we are there.

And then we went to Kan D'har (ph) so we support, of course, our government in that mission, but there is two things; We believe that the best way to succeed is to apply the Triple D Defense, Diplomacy and Development, and a feeling that it's more a military



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operation. And there's lack of coordination among NATO alliance. So we feel sometime that there are several Afghanistan, that you have the west, you have south and maybe we should, of course we need more troops. And we have to do something about that.

Secondly, of course there's the issue of Pakistan. I mean if we want to fight terrorism we'll have to close the border because the Taliban (ph) reserve themselves every winter and they are coming back to shoot at us and to do what they are doing right now.

And thirdly you spoke Secretary General about the detainee. There is torture is right now, there is an issue with the prison system. And of course we have to be respectful of the Geneva Convention. And to do so I would disagree that it's among bilateral agreement like Canada who has an agreement.

Netherlands, the British or Norway, I believe that we should have a NATO agreement with NATO and Afghanistan to make sure that we have career and then a better coordination so make sure that can respect the Geneva Convention.

PHILIP STEPHENS, ASSOCIATE EDITOR, FINANCIAL TIMES: OK, I'll invite three more speakers and then I want to give everyone a chance on the platform. And someone in my ear keeps telling me we haven't got much time, so if everyone could be quite quick.

AL FITZ (ph), GERMANY: Al Fitz (ph) from Germany, first what could we do to avoid NATO to slip into the role of occupation force which would be the sure receipt for disaster? And second, what about talks to the Taliban? Are there talks, and should there be?

STEPHENS: OK, take somebody right back there.

TODD BANDLER (ph), KISSINGER MCCARTY (ph) ASSOCIATES: Todd Bandler (ph), Kissinger McCarty (ph) Associates, I just want to go back to the question of Pakistan, because I think it is a very important part of the problem here.

If the warlords continuously infiltrating into Afghanistan, getting into small villages, paying people off in the villages to plant crops and to develop the drug industry and to export it. And then paying off the locals, leaving but keeping up the contact, it's a very serious part of their kind of revolutionary incursion that something needs to be, something more needs to be able to done about it?

STEPHENS: And final question, here or point.

MISHA BLEDING (ph): Misha Bleding (ph), the microphone problem again, I'm just completing a book on transnational organized crime and globalization and I want to go straight to the issue of the narcotics which Dick (ph) has raised.



But we have to be perfectly frank about this, the war on terror or the fight against terrorism, whatever you want to call and war on drugs are not compatible. That as long as you have the war on drugs you are guaranteeing the financing of the Taliban (ph) in their fight in Afghanistan and so until you address the issue the narcotics loraform (ph) you are not going to eradicate the Taliban (ph) because they can make so much money from opium cultivation.

STEPHENS: Thank you very much. I'm now told through my earpiece that I will get fatal electric shock if the speakers take more than one minute to each in wrapping up, so I'm going to start with Fawzia.

FAWZIA KOOFI, MEMBER, AFGHAN PARLIAMENT: You've cast the ticket now. I 100 percent agree with Colicke (ph) with friend from the floor. Yes, in terms of development activity maybe we could have done much better than what we have done in the past.

The government policy is now political policy is to focus more in unsecured area in terms of development the force. One earmark when two years when we were providing alternative livelihood program to farmers especially in the provinces where there is grove of poppy, other provinces when they realize that farmers are getting more incentive when they grow poppy.

They start growing poppy also to get incentive. So maybe in terms of security if we focus more in the areas in terms humanitarian assistance we will get insecure and we'll forget the secured areas not part of the country not is part of the country in terms of addressing meeting the basic needs of people, food, electricity, education, school, et cetera. People

UNIDENTIFIED PARTICIPANT: Travel to (INAUDIBLE), they warn me, they say if you forget us, we will start, you know, creating insecurity so that is the message from the people. Means the government and the International Community need to create a balance between focusing on unsecure areas and also not forgetting the secured areas in terms of addressing the people's need.

On the talk with Taliban, for me, who are Taliban? This is a question. We need to identify the faces of Taliban. Any kind of – this is as we agreed, it's a war against terror. Any kind of negotiation with terrorist means giving them official (INAUDIBLE).

I want to repeat what I have repeated before. Now on the government, just one second more. On the government, there are some talks going on in order to be able to respond to the people's immediate need.

Maybe the system is very much centralized. Maybe our International partners need to help us look at the decentralization of the power, because more attention to Kabul (ph), more focus to central power, although the reality is that most of the province doesn't obey the



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central government, so why don't we give legitimacy to the system. Maybe this is a plan that our strategy partners need to look at it.

UNIDENTIFIED PARTICIPANT: Thank you very much. Richard Holbrooke.

RICHARD HOLBROOKE, AMBASSADOR, VICE CHAIRMAN, PERSEUS L.L.C.: First of all, on the national caveat question that our German colleague raised, I would defer to the Secretary General.

It's a complicated issue. I just don't believe in them, but I'm not going to get in an argument with my friends in Germany over the details of the Torenado (ph) deployment. I just think the Commanders should be able to send troops where they want and it's important to note, the reasons the Canadians take the highest casualties is they said we'll go everywhere, so they were given the most dangerous assignment.

Let's face it and not only acknowledge Canadian bravery, but question why other countries did not participate similarly since we all agree with you about the importance of it. On Pakistan I agree with Don Bandler (ph) and I'm fascinated by Misha Glenee's (ph) point.

Misha (ph), I look forward to your book and in the interim, maybe you can answer the question about the tension between the war on terror and the war on drugs. Now when I listen to all this, I wonder sometimes if maybe we're trying to do too many things all at once in Afghanistan.

Maybe there is a lack of prioritization here because everybody wants to help and everybody has their own issues and wrenching Afghanistan from where it was to a democratic, open pluralistic society is not going to be easy and there has to be priorities.

That has to be decided by the Afghan people and that brings me to my last point, Philip. I am more concerned right now and this is a big difference from last year for me. I am more concerned right now about the weakening Karzai government than I am about the Taliban.

I agree with the comment that was made over here, that NATO is blunting, if not defeating, the Taliban offensive. We're going to get through this period. The Taliban will have gained a bit, lost a bit and we'll have another offensive in 2008.

But the government must succeed or else the Taliban will benefit from it and these recent events, the walking away from democracy, the closing down of the government, the alienation of some of the best and the brightest Afghans who had supported the government originally and now are fed up with it, these are really fundamental problems we don't want to see in Kabul (ph), the kind of political chaos which in Baghdad, is destroying the coalition effort.



UNIDENTIFIED PARTICIPANT: (INAUDIBLE) an offer you can't refuse there to answer that question.

UNIDENTIFIED PARTICIPANT: (INAUDIBLE) imagine is answering a question (INAUDIBLE) I'll do it. We can still do a way with more caveats but quite honestly, it's a bit unfair always to single out our German friends.

They make a major contribution in the North. The Riga Summit decided that in case of emergency and extremes (ph) as the Military say, every single ally, including Germany, will come to the assistance to every other ally.

That is a basic, basic point now since Riga. German tornados are flying all over Afghanistan. Having said that, I am also – and there I agree with Dick Holbrooke, I'm also always fighting for the least number of caveats as possible, by the way, there's not a single ally in Afghanistan, including the U.S., who has no caveats.

All 26 nations have caveats in one form or the other. There is NATO coordination. As we speak, the (INAUDIBLE) Commander can move his forces around. If I tell you that 75 percent of the Dutch F-16 (ph) and Apache Tech Helicopter (INAUDIBLE) are done together with our Canadian; (INAUDIBLE); Romanian; Polish; Danish.

And in the South, so you see the coordination there. That's not my problem. My problem is the International coordination. NATO is not being seen as an occupation force.

There's still a huge majority of the Afghan people who support very much the presence of the International community and the presence of NATO and ...

UNIDENTIFIED PARTICIPANT: It's eight zero percent.

UNIDENTIFIED PARTICIPANT: 80 percent and I'm glad that the Deputy Speaker supports that, so I'm absolutely not afraid of being seen as an occupation force. We have to avoid civilian casualties, but let me say once again, who are killing the most Afghans?

That's the Taliban. They kill Afghans and it is not the string – a sign of strength, but a sign of weakness, Radoslaw Sikorski to come to you. Roadside bombs and suicide killers – suicide bombers are a sign of weakness in – a sign of weakness and not strength.

We have not seen yet the Spring offensive everybody was waiting for. I'm not saying we're out of the woods yet. I mean the South erratic (ph), if NATO ISAF (ph) clears and the Afghan National Army can hold, and that is the concept, as we speak the ANA is holding more but that is why I keep underlining training and equipping.





And may I say, looking you into the face how much difference Poland made under your competent and (INAUDIBLE) leadership of your Defense Minister, because Poland decided – Radoslaw Sikorski decided to send the full battalion of Poles into the Southern part of Afghanistan when the situation was really tough and I think that triggered many more allies of bringing in their forces as well.

UNIDENTIFIED PARTICIPANT: Would more troops make a difference or do you have enough troops?

UNIDENTIFIED PARTICIPANT: Oh we can still do with more, but the NATO ISAF (ph) Commander, as we speak, has certainly after Riga a sufficient number of extra forces. If you ask me can we do better? Yes, we can do better.

We can do better, for instance, we – the need for more helicopters and C-130 (ph) and transport planes, (INAUDIBLE) because otherwise you'll get short.

PETER MACKAY, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, CANADA: I certainly believe we can do better and I think Jaap would agree that having a concentrated effort militarily where it's needed most, when it's needed most, when the Spring offensives occur, which in fact, hasn't materialized to the extent that was expected.

But I think some of the basics that we have to go back to are polishing up the good governance practices of the government itself in Kabul (ph) and ensuring that its reach goes into all parts of the country.

Canada's commitment there is real, but every country at the political level, at the public support level, is going to reexamine this mission, if we don't start to see substantial progress in some of these other areas of development and reconstruction and so, again, I think the plea has to go out to some countries who, if not there militarily, are willing to share some of the burden in terms of contributions and in that number in that list of countries.

I would include Russia and China and that may as well be something that we have to examine in a more fulsome way. The Military job is not done. As long as there is insecurity in this country, as long as Afghanistan is still facing a terrorist threat from without, in terms of the Taliban coming back in and bringing back what I think has been the most brutal regime, certainly in my lifetime and the practices that were being brought to bear on the Afghan people, they have to be pushed back out of that country, never, ever given a foothold, because let's not forget – let's not forget where 911 originated.

It was in Afghanistan. That was the epicenter of terrorism for the world and it will come to all our shores, if it's ever allowed to take hold again in Afghanistan. So that's where it sounds perhaps trite, but it's true.



Democracy is worth fighting and dying for and Canada's commitment I think has been demonstrated. Other countries as well, but the job is not finished yet. There's more work to be done.

PHILIP STEPHENS, ASSOCIATE EDITOR, FINANCIAL TIMES: Thank you. A very strong finish to a very strong panel and since I'm still standing, I'm just going to say thank you very much and thank you again.

UNIDENTIFIED PARTICIPANT: Thank you. I like that idea very ...

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