## South and Central Asia:

# Security Transition Begins in Afghanistan

## Press Release from the Department of Homeland Security, January 1, 2011[1]

Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano today met with Afghan President Hamid Karzai and Minister of Finance Zakhiwal to discuss progress being made in securing the region and America's commitment to working with Afghanistan to disrupt, dismantle and defeat al Qaeda in the region.

"The Obama administration remains fully committed to combating threats of terrorism in Afghanistan," said Secretary Napolitano. "In coordination with U.S. and Afghan military forces, the dedicated civilian Department of Homeland Security personnel assisting the Afghan government with customs and border control have made significant progress in disrupting al Qaeda operations in the border region of Afghanistan and Pakistan."

In her meetings with President Karzai and Minister Zakhiwal, Secretary Napolitano discussed the Department's ongoing efforts—coordinated with the Afghan government—to combat the illicit diversion and trafficking of precursor chemicals that terrorist and other criminal organizations use to manufacture improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

She discussed DHS' deployments of border security and customs personnel to the region to assist Afghan border police and customs officials and help establish an Afghan customs academy. In the last twelve months, DHS efforts have expanded and now more than a dozen U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents are providing training and guidance to the Afghan government and sharing best practices—including the six officials that arrived with Secretary Napolitano yesterday.

Secretary Napolitano also held a roundtable discussion today with Afghan women, as well as U.S. women serving in the region, to hear about efforts underway to advance the role of women in Afghan society. During the discussion, Secretary Napolitano reiterated President Obama's strong commitment to advancing the rights of women and girls in Afghanistan.

The group was comprised of Afghan government officials representing the Ministries of Women's Affairs, Public Health, Labor, Foreign Affairs, and Justice and the Afghanistan National Army and National Police, as well as women serving various non-governmental organizations and American women working to assist the Afghan people in bringing peace and stability to the region.

Yesterday, Secretary Napolitano toured border security operations at Afghanistan's Torkham Border Crossing with Pakistan and met with Afghan and U.S. border security and customs officials working to strengthen border security along the Afghan-Pakistan border while facilitating legitimate travel and commerce. Secretary Napolitano also spent New Year's Eve with U.S. military and civilian personnel.

Following her departure from Afghanistan, Secretary Napolitano will continue to Qatar on Jan. 2; Israel on Jan. 3-5; and Belgium on Jan. 5-6 to meet with her counterparts and discuss international efforts to ensure the security of our global aviation and supply chain systems against threats of terrorism and transnational crime while facilitating the flow of legitimate travel and commerce. More details will be provided once they are finalized.

## Excerpts of Remarks by Vice President Biden with Afghani President Karzai, January 11, 2011[2]

***Vice President Joe Biden and President Hamid Karzai delivered these remarks in Kabul, Afghanistan***

**President Karzai.** Good afternoon. Members of the media, Afghan media and international media, in the name of the God, I'm delighted and honored today to welcome His Excellency Joe Biden, Vice President of the United States.

This is the fourth or fifth—his visit—to Afghanistan. His first visit was at the very beginning of Afghanistan's interim administration, where we met in a very cold room. There was no electricity, nothing. But because of his help and their assistance, we have electricity and everything today. So today we had all the things, and we are in a lot improved situation for which we are grateful to their contributions.

Today, His Excellency Joe Biden, me—(inaudible)—and met in presence of our delegations. We had a working lunch, and we spoke on many issues, including on several issues of mutual importance to both the countries. And then it was followed by a one-to-one meeting that lasted for over an hour and which was also centered on the strategic partnership between Afghanistan and the United States; security in Afghanistan and in the region, as



https://doi.org/10.1017/S1052703611000311 Published online by Cambridge University Press

well as the transition process of security responsibilities to Afghan forces; on ways how to intensify and how to do that process and transition in the best possible manner.

So we had discussions, and I'm pleased of the conclusions and of the results of our meetings, and I once again welcome him to Afghanistan. And I thank you for all the cooperation and for all the contributions that you have given to the people of Afghanistan.

Thank you, Mr. Vice President.

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**Vice President Biden.** [W]e have a strategy and the resources in place to accomplish the goal of a stable and growing and independent Afghanistan able to provide for its own security, and in the process to be able to, at the same time, to disrupt and dismantle and defeat ultimately al Qaeda in Pakistan and the little appearance there is in Afghanistan.

A stable, sovereign Afghanistan that is not a haven for terrorists is critical toward that goal. And to that end we're engaged in working—and I had the opportunity to go to a training facility today—working with your military to train up a first-class military organization that will be eventually in the position to meet all of the Afghan security needs. And toward that end I'd like to thank your Minister of Defense for taking me on the tour earlier today.

In the meantime our military is breaking the momentum of the insurgents and the radicalized portion of the Taliban. Our diplomats are working hard along with the President to promote regional cooperation, including with your neighbor, Pakistan.

And I want to recognize the contribution toward this effort over the past several years of a significant American diplomat who passed away, Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, who had unparalleled skills and tenacity that—where he spent almost two years as our special representative to Afghanistan and Pakistan before he passed away last month.

And over the past two years the United States has sent some of America's most capable troops into enclaves where—that have long been operated—the insurgency and the Taliban of being able to operate with impunity. And we've also substantially increased our civilian effort here in Afghanistan with diplomats and development experts side by side with our military and your soldiers and your police and your personnel, Mr. President. And as a result, I think it's fair to say we have largely arrested the Taliban momentum here in some very important areas, particularly in Helmand and Kandahar.

But these gains, as you pointed out to me, Mr. President, as we know, are fragile and reversible. And as the President knows, sustaining them is going to require the Afghans to assume the responsibility for security and governance. And it's going to require more pressure—more pressure on the Taliban, from Pakistan's side of the border, than we've been—we've been able to exert so far. And there are many hard days that lie ahead.

But we know that in order to maintain the support and commitment of the people of Afghanistan and the American people, we must work with our Afghan partners to improve the provision of basic services, to promote transparency and accountability, to strengthen the institutions, and advance the efforts of reconciliation with the Taliban of which we spoke for some time; the Taliban who've rejected Al Qaeda and renounce violence and are prepared to embrace the Afghan constitution.

None of this, as the President has pointed out to me and we have discussed and we know, is going to be easy. But, Mr. President, in concert with your government and our NATO allies, we now have a viable path outline to move forward. And again, I'd like to compliment you publicly on Lisbon. I think it was a very, very useful conference, and I think we're finally all on the same page.

And this year, NATO is going to begin to transition responsibility over the security in certain provinces to the government of Afghanistan, while the United States begins a condition-based reduction of our forces starting in July. And all of this will advance our shared U.S.-Afghani objective of having an Afghan National Security Force in the lead throughout all of Afghanistan by 2014, as President Karzai wisely proposed—there was a first to move forward on.

Together, we will work on a framework for future bilateral relations and a lasting friendship with the Afghan people and the American people. And going forward, we'll continue to train and advise the forces and to provide civilian assistance.

Let me say it plainly, Mr. President, it is not our intention to govern or to nation-build. As President Karzai often points out, this is the responsibility of the Afghan people, and they are fully capable of it. As President Obama said it in a slightly different way, he said, "It's Afghans who must secure their country. And it's Afghans who must build their nation." And we stand ready to help you in that effort. And we will continue to stand ready to help you in that effort after 2014.

**President Karzai.** Wonderful.

**Vice President Biden.** We have moved into a new phase—a new phase—in Afghanistan; a transition to a full Afghan lead that begins this year and will conclude in 2014, as we prepare a framework for our future bilateral relations. This is President Obama's vision for the future. It's a vision expressed by our allies at the Lisbon Conference. And I believe, based on our conversation today, it clearly reflects the vision of President Karzai.

The United States, if the Afghan people want it, are prepared, and we are not leaving in 2014. Hopefully we will have totally turned over the ability of the—to the Afghan security forces to maintain the security in the country, but we will—we are not leaving, if you don't want us to leave. And we plan on continuing to work with you, and it's in the mutual self-interest of both our nations.

And so, Mr. President, again, I want to thank you for a very, very good conversation. And I look forward to seeing you and returning the hospitality in Washington. Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you, gentlemen. I appreciate it.

## Excerpts of Remarks by Vice President Biden with Pakistani Prime Minister Gilani, January 12, 2011[3]

***Vice President Joe Biden and Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani delivered these remarks in Islamabad, Pakistan***



https://doi.org/10.1017/S1052703611000311 Published online by Cambridge University Press

**Prime Minister Gilani.** Pakistan and United States have been on the same side for over half a century and at all defining periods of contemporary history. Our friendship and partnership is based on shared values.

Vice President Biden, your visit has provided us a good opportunity to exchange views on bilateral and regional issues. We had very fruitful discussions. Pakistan looks forward with confidence of a robust, enduring and mutually beneficial partnership with the United States. Policy consultations and coordination are necessary for attaining a shared cause. We value United States' support for Pakistan's economy, stability and security. We have set ourselves a calendar of extensive engagements during 2011. Comprehensive engagements at all plans is important.

I'm happy to note that our enhanced strategic dialogue process is now in place. We are determined to utilize this and other mechanisms to give greater substance and strength to our relations.

I must add that our discussion today on combating terror, issues of regional stability and promoting reconciliation and peace in Afghanistan were extremely useful. Mr. Vice President, I assure you that we intend to work practical solutions and answers to many difficult issues.

Please convey our warm greetings to President Obama and the friendly people of United States. Thank you very much.

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**Vice President Biden.** [O]ur relationship, in my view and the view of President Obama, is absolutely vital, absolutely vital to U.S. interests, and I believe you believe it is to Pakistani interests, as well.

That's why I'm here. This is why it's the first overseas trip of the New Year. And I can tell you President Obama sends his regards and is looking forward later this year to make a trip to Islamabad, as well.

The President and I—indeed, the entire world, I would suggest—were saddened, saddened by the cold-blooded murder of a decent, brave man. The governor was killed simply because he was a voice for tolerance and understanding. To state the obvious, there is no justification, none, for such senseless acts.

As you know all too well and all students of history know, as we've seen throughout history, societies that tolerate such actions end up being consumed by those actions. So please accept my deepest condolences and those of President Obama and those of the American people.

The United States and Pakistan have forged an enduring partnership, as you referenced, Mr. Prime Minister, against extreme ideologies; a partnership based, as you pointed out, on our common interests and our mutual respect for one another.

And because we so value that partnership, I think it's important to not only our leaders, as we talked—as I talked about, understand one another, but that our populations understand one another, the leadership of each of our respective countries, the motives and the intentions, and avoid misconceptions about each of our motives or intentions.

That's why we in the United States and this administration pays close attention to what Pakistanis believe about the United States and U.S. intentions as it relates to Pakistan. We read your newspaper, and to some of the columnists out here, we read you, columnists, as well. We watch your television programs, as you do ours. And we—and I personally—meet with Pakistanis from all walks of life. And I am privileged to have close relationships with the Pakistani American communities, which is very well organized; close relationships for the past 30 years.

So I would like to take this opportunity to address directly what I believe are some misconceptions about U.S. actions and even more importantly about U.S. intentions with regard to our partner, Pakistan.

We know that there are those—I'm not talking about the leadership; I'm talking about in the public discourse—those who believe that in America's fight against al Qaeda, that we have imposed a war upon Pakistan. But violence—violent extremists are a threat not just to the United States but to Pakistan, as well, and indeed to the entire civilized world.

The fact is that al Qaeda plotted an attack that killed nearly 3,000 American citizens. And they continue to plot attacks against the United States and our interests to this very day. And they have, not with your help, but they have found refuge in some of the most remote portions of your country.

As Pakistanis have wondered whether or not we are part of the problem instead of the solution, al Qaeda has worked with extremist allies who have had you as a target and your people as a target, maiming and murdering thousands of Pakistani security forces and ordinary citizens, as you saw so clearly in Swat and other parts of your country.

There are those also who accuse the United States of violating your sovereignty as we support your army and pursue terrorists where they hide. I know well over the past 30 years the proud, proud traditions of the Pakistani military and its capacity to defend and protect Pakistan. But I would respectfully suggest that it's the extremists who violate Pakistan's sovereignty and corrupt its good name. Our goal is to work with your leaders and you, Mr. Prime Minister, to restore and strengthen sovereignties in those areas of your country where extremists have violated it.

There are even some critics in Pakistani society and elsewhere that suggest that America disrespects Islam and its followers. I would like to take some of you to Los Angeles to one of the largest mosques in the world, where Muslim Americans practice their religion in full view and with respect of all Americans.

The assertion that we disrespect Islam is actually quite the opposite. Islam is the fastest growing religion in the United States of America. And as President Obama said in the heart of Cairo, one of the world's great Muslim-majority cities, and I quote, "Islam is part of America. And I believe"—continuing the quote, he said, "I believe America holds within her the truth that regardless of race, religion or station in life, all of us share common aspirations—to live in peace and security, to get education, to work with dignity, to love our families, our communities, and our God."

To those who make these charges against us, I would challenge them to name any other country in the world, any country in the world, who—where those of all faiths enjoy greater freedom of worship than they do in the United States of America. Name me a single country in the world.

So I want to put to rest, which I know I will not by this simple assertion—we are


https://doi.org/10.1017/S1052703611000311 Published online by Cambridge University Press

not, we are not the enemies of Islam, and we embrace those who practice that great religion in our country.

There are also those who believe that our policies favor India and seek to weaken—I've even heard some right—and say to even dismantle this great country. You know and your colleagues know that is dead wrong. We want what you want: a strong, stable, prosperous democratic Pakistan at peace with itself and with its neighbors, including India. We want that not just for your sake but we wish your success because it's in our own interest. It's in the interest of the entire region and I would argue the entire world. America admires, admires the vision of your great founder, who said wisely, and I quote, "Our object should be peace within, and peace without. We want to live peacefully and maintain cordial and friendly relations with our immediate neighbors and with the world at large." End of quote. President Obama and I and everyone in our administration shares that vision.

There's one last misconception I'd like to address, and I'm not suggesting these misconceptions are held or shared by anyone in this government, but we read them, we listen to them, we watch them on your television.

The one last misconception I'd like to address is there are those who point to America's history in this region and claim that eventually we will abandon Pakistan; we will no longer be concerned. But I have learned and we have learned from the past that only a productive way forward—the only productive way forward is a long-term enduring partnership.

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Through our Strategic Dialogue, as you pointed out, we've begun to implement projects that will benefit the people of Pakistan, in areas ranging from energy to agriculture to communications. This means that you will soon see more dams providing more electricity and irrigation; crop yields that are higher; more hospitals providing services to the people of Pakistan, among other tangible benefits.

Through what used to be called the Biden-Lugar bill—now the Kerry-Lugar-Berman legislation—we committed $7.5 billion, in very difficult economic times for us, as well as you and the rest of the world, in civilian assistance over the next five years. There has been talk, and it's true, that it took a while to get going. But it is moving, and we will keep the entire commitment.

Rather than dictate to Pakistan how this money should be spent, we're partnering with the government to achieve your priorities to lay a foundation for a sustainable long-term economic growth for this great country.

We've increased security cooperation between our two militaries, including training, support for operations, and greater coordination among—along the border in Afghanistan. And we've stood shoulder to shoulder with the Pakistani people during the last summer's devastating, amazingly devastating, floods, deploying troops, airlift support, relief supplies to the affected regions as quickly as we possibly could. Our only regret is we could not do more, more quickly with more resources. I know the work is not yet done with regard to the floods, and that your government, Mr. Prime Minister, faces very difficult choices in addressing the cost of rebuilding.

And we have made a long-term commitment to assist with the reconstruction and recovery, as evidenced by our announcement last week of another $190 million in Watan—I'm hoping I'm pronouncing it correctly—Watan cards.

And by the way, I don't say this to say—for you to suggest that you owe us any debt or gratitude. It's what partners do for partners. It's what should be done. It's in our interest to help you beyond it being the right thing to do.

These are just some of the many initiatives underway that are strengthening our partnership and helping to forge a more secure and, God willing, more prosperous Pakistan.

Let me leave you all with this final thought. My country's aspirations for Pakistan largely mirror yours, Mr. Prime Minister, and the rest of the Pakistani people.

## Excerpts of Remarks by Secretary of State Clinton in an interview with Kim Ghattas of BBC, January 12, 2011[4]

***Secretary Hillary Clinton delivered these remarks in Muscat, Oman***

**Q. Madam Secretary, thank you very much for your time. We always appreciate interviews you give to the BBC.**

**I would like to start with Pakistan. The assassination of the Governor of Punjab Salman Taseer has really brought Pakistan, it seems, to a turning point. How concerned are you about the direction that Pakistan seems to be going?**

**Secretary Clinton.** Well, Vice President Biden is in Pakistan, and will be meeting with both the civilian and the military leadership. And he will, of course, express our concern, as well as our condolence for the loss of Governor Taseer.

I think that Pakistan is facing some very difficult decisions. They've been making some for the last two years, for which I give the leadership a lot of credit. But they now have to recognize that the real threat to Pakistan's stability and security is coming from within.

**Q. It's always been the case in Pakistan that usually the tension in the country is between civilian leadership and military leadership. And now it feels as though they both find themselves overrun by the radical elements of society. Is that a concern for you?**

**Secretary Clinton.** Well, I think the facts are that the radicals are still a very vocal and very active—and, unfortunately, very deadly—minority. And the leadership, not only elected leadership and military leadership, but leadership of academia, of business, of the professions, of every walk of life, have a stake in banding together, despite political party differences, to stand against this internal threat. And I believe that will (inaudible).

**Q. Do you think the military and the civilians are up to the job, that they can**



https://doi.org/10.1017/S1052703611000311 Published online by Cambridge University Press

**stick together in the face of that threat?**

**Secretary Clinton.** I think a united leadership in Pakistan is more than up to the job.

**Q. But what about the moderates? They really have become very silent in the aftermath of this assassination. We saw thousands of people who demonstrated in supporting the blasphemy law which Governor Taseer stood against. We saw the reaction in the streets, the people who hailed his assassin as a hero. Where does that leave the moderates? I have heard of a lot of people who think it's time for them to leave Pakistan.**

**Secretary Clinton.** Well, that would be a great loss, if people were to leave, instead of banding together and supporting effective action that sends clear messages that Pakistan was created, yes, as an Islamic state—certainly if you go back and look at the founders—as a state that also included minority beliefs and populations. And it would be a real repudiation of that founding principle.

And I think that people are standing up. Minister Bhutto's son, who was the head of her political party, has spoken out. Others will begin to speak out. But the real challenge is how to rein in those who wreak violence and death—people, because of their religious beliefs or their political beliefs—no country can tolerate that.

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**Q. I would like to ask a question about Afghanistan. There is some suggestion now over the last couple days that American troops could stay in Afghanistan beyond 2014. Could you clarify whether Washington is, in fact, considering staying in a combat capacity in Afghanistan beyond the date of 2014?**

**Secretary Clinton.** No, there is no discussion about staying in a combat capacity. The 2014 date was first suggested by President Karzai and his government as the point at which not only America but international forces would have completely turned over the security of the country to Afghan forces. We embrace that. We embrace it as a nation. We embraced it at the NATO summit in Lisbon.

But just as we have seen in other situations, where combat missions end, there may be a desire on the part of the Afghan Government to have the United States and NATO form a training mission, a logistical support mission. But that's in the future. There has not been any discussion of that.

**Q. So training, but not necessarily combat.**

**Secretary Clinton.** No.

**Q. That brings me to my last question. The region more—closer to where we are, Lebanon, and the tribunal, which is expected to, at some point in the near future, issue indictments. You have said that the choice for Lebanon is not between stability and justice. But it is because if Hezbollah members are indicted and Hezbollah takes to the streets and brings down the government of Saad Hariri, what are you going to do?**

**Secretary Clinton.** Well, we do not believe it will come to that. And we certainly are doing everything we can—

**Q. It's a crisis—**

**Secretary Clinton.** Well, yes, it is a crisis. But it is a crisis because there are those who do not wish to bring murderers to justice, or at least to have people who are charged with murder held accountable. They may be found innocent. But you cannot run any society where murder is given impunity.

Remember, it wasn't only former Prime Minister Hariri who was assassinated. Nearly two dozen people were killed. They have families; they have loved ones. They have a right to seek justice for the murder of their family member. So this is, yes, of course, about Prime Minister Hariri's assassination, because he was the primary target of the assassins.

But it's also about whether or not any society can tolerate that level of political violence, and have either justice or stability. So I think it's a false choice. You can have a false sense of stability if you give in to those who do not want to hold murderers accountable. And you can have an effort at justice without stability, and people don't understand how the two are related.

**Q. But if Hezbollah takes to the streets, what are you going to do, then?**

**Secretary Clinton.** We, along with the Saudis, the Egyptians, the French, and many others, are going to continue to support the integrity of an independent, sovereign Lebanon. And, remember, people have taken to the streets in the past in Lebanon, and it has given an outlet for expression.

There is no problem with people peacefully demonstrating and protesting. It's going on in Tunisia right now. We support peaceful protest and the right of assembly. So we don't have a problem with people going into the streets to express their political opinions. We have a problem with people picking up arms and murdering and intimidating those who don't agree with them, whether it's in Lebanon or anywhere else.

**Q. Madam Secretary, thank you very much for your time.**

**Secretary Clinton.** Thank you.

## White House Statement, January 14, 2011[5]

The President met with President Asif Ali Zardari of Pakistan today at the White House. The discussion focused on our shared efforts to fight terrorism and promote regional stability, specifically on the importance of cooperating toward a peaceful and stable outcome in Afghanistan. The President underscored the importance of the U.S.-Pakistan relationship and our continued support for Pakistan. The President said he is looking forward to visiting Pakistan later this year. President Zardari will attend Ambassador Richard Holbrooke's memorial service this afternoon at the Kennedy Center.


https://doi.org/10.1017/S1052703611000311 Published online by Cambridge University Press

## Press Release from the U.S. Trade and Development Agency, February 8, 2011[6]

USTDA Director Leocadia I. Zak this week has joined Secretary of Commerce Gary Locke on the India High Technology trade mission. Also participating in the mission are twenty-four U.S. businesses based in 13 states across the country, with over half being small- and medium-sized companies. The Mission seeks to identify additional ways to increase bilateral cooperation and U.S. exports to India.

During this visit, Director Zak is highlighting USTDA's catalytic role in opening export opportunities for U.S. businesses in the energy, civil aviation, and information and communications technology sectors. India is an important market for U.S. exports and a focus of the President's National Export Initiative (NEI), which seeks to double exports by 2015. This trade mission builds on the success of President Obama's visit to India in November 2010, which resulted in trade transactions worth more than $9.5 billion in U.S. content. As part of the Export Promotion Cabinet, USTDA joins the mission to support U.S. company efforts to expand their goods and services exports to India and to coordinate its trade promotion efforts with partners in the U.S. government.

On Monday, Director Zak announced two programs designed to support India's continued economic development, which also hold the potential for significant U.S. exports. Under the successful U.S.–India Aviation Cooperation Program, USTDA will sponsor technical cooperation working with the Airports Authority of India and the Directorate General of Civil Aviation to install and certify a pilot Ground Based Augmentation System (GBAS) system using satellite navigation technologies at Chennai International Airport. The objective of the GBAS is to achieve increased safety and capacity as part of India's air traffic management modernization programs. U.S. commercial opportunities could reach over $50 million in U.S. exports as India deploys GBAS.

USTDA also announced its support for a feasibility study to deploy an integrated emergency communications system (IECS). Working with India's Ministry of Home Affairs, USTDA's support will develop a plan for the establishment of an IECS and the required support infrastructure for the city of Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh India. U.S. commercial opportunities could include exports of over $500 million in U.S. goods and services.

## Press Release from the Department of the Treasury, February 17, 2011[7]

The U.S. Department of the Treasury today announced that Deputy Treasury Secretary Neal S. Wolin visited Kabul, Afghanistan February 16-17.

While in Kabul, Deputy Secretary Wolin met with President Karzai, Finance Minister Zakhilwal and Central Bank Governor Fitrat. The Deputy Secretary met with Afghanistan's leadership to discuss the importance of Afghan efforts to reform and strengthen its financial sector and stressed the need for the Afghan government to take swift and decisive action to ensure a credible, effective resolution of issues related to Kabul Bank. He also discussed the status of negotiations between the IMF and Afghanistan on a possible IMF program and expressed U.S. support for the IMF's position.

Deputy Secretary Wolin's stop in Kabul follows his visit earlier this week to Baghdad, Iraq. He last visited Afghanistan in February 2010.

## Press Release from the Department of the Treasury, February 18, 2011[8]

The U.S. Department of the Treasury designated today the New Ansari Money Exchange, a major money laundering vehicle for Afghan narcotics trafficking organizations, along with 15 affiliated individuals and entities under the Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Designation Act (Kingpin Act).

The New Ansari Money Exchange is at the center of an unofficial network of individuals, money exchange houses and other businesses operating throughout Afghanistan and in the United Arab Emirates. Between 2007 and 2010, the New Ansari Money Exchange used the billions of dollars it transferred in and out of Afghanistan to conceal illicit narcotics proceeds. The New Ansari Money Exchange transfers money to its Dubai subsidiaries, Green Leaf General Trading LLC and Al Adal Exchange, also designated today, which then transfer money through the U.S. and international financial systems.

"Today's designation is another important step in our ongoing efforts to target money laundering and narcotics trafficking activity in Afghanistan," said Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence Stuart Levey. "We will continue to work to expose the funding and support mechanisms for such illicit activity, and to take actions to safeguard the U.S. and Afghan financial sectors from abuse."

Elements of the New Ansari network have laundered money for Haji Azizullah Alizai and the Haji Juma Khan Organization, both identified as Significant Foreign Narcotics Traffickers by the President in June 2007 and May 2009, respectively. Haji Azizullah Alizai is a major heroin trafficker and supplier in Southwest Asia and the Middle East. The Haji Juma Khan Organization is an international opium, morphine, and heroin trafficking organization based in the border regions of Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

As a result of today's action, U.S. persons are prohibited from conducting financial or commercial transactions with these individuals and entities, and any assets the designees may have under U.S. jurisdiction are frozen. The investigation that led to these designations was the result of collaborative efforts of Treasury, the Afghan Threat Finance Cell (ATFC), the Drug Enforcement Administration. The ATFC is a tactically focused, interagency fusion center that collects, analyzes and disseminates relevant financial intelligence on individuals and organizations involved in financing the insurgency.

"The New Ansari network is yet another example of money launderers exploiting legitimate financial systems to launder their ill-gotten gains, including illicit drug proceeds, as part of their criminal enter-



https://doi.org/10.1017/S1052703611000311 Published online by Cambridge University Press

prise," said DEA Administrator Michele M. Leonhart. "Cash is the ultimate commodity for these criminal networks, and these proceeds often fuel insurgent activity and corruption, while undermining the authority of developing governments. DEA's investigation into this network and subsequent OFAC designation illustrates our joint commitment to exposing these rogue businesses and dismantling their operations."

## Statement by President Obama, March 2, 2011[9]

**President Obama.** I am deeply saddened by the assassination of Pakistan's Minister for Minority Affairs Shahbaz Bhatti today in Islamabad, and condemn in the strongest possible terms this horrific act of violence. We offer our profound condolences to his family, loved ones and all who knew and worked with him. Minister Bhatti fought for and sacrificed his life for the universal values that Pakistanis, Americans and people around the world hold dear—the right to speak one's mind, to practice one's religion as one chooses, and to be free from discrimination based on one's background or beliefs. He was clear-eyed about the risks of speaking out, and, despite innumerable death threats, he insisted he had a duty to his fellow Pakistanis to defend equal rights and tolerance from those who preach division, hate, and violence. He most courageously challenged the blasphemy laws of Pakistan under which individuals have been prosecuted for speaking their minds or practicing their own faiths. Those who committed this crime should be brought to justice, and those who share Mr. Bhatti's vision of tolerance and religious freedom must be able to live free from fear. Minister Bhatti will be missed by all who knew him, and the United States will continue to stand with those who are dedicated to his vision of tolerance and dignity for all human beings.

## Remarks by Secretary of Defense Gates and Afghani President Karzai, March 7, 2011[10]

***Secretary Robert Gates and President Hamid Karzai delivered these remarks in Kabul, Afghanistan***

**President Karzai.** Secretary Gates on his 13th visit to Afghanistan. And we're happy to be coming to this press conference with him to get your questions.

Secretary Gates is one of the highly respected and skillful secretaries and members of the cabinet of the United States. And he is a great friend of Afghanistan and an important element of growing an enhanced relationship between the two countries.

And today we discussed in a very friendly spirit all things and all issues of bilateral importance. And we are grateful for his personal efforts throughout all these years in making things better.

Today we discussed on a wide range of issues our mutual interests. That included training, talks on training the Afghan security forces; the strategic partnership between Afghanistan and the United States; the situation in the region; and the start of the transition process of security responsibilities, which began on the Afghan new year—and we also discussed on how this process will be taken forward by the end of 2014—and on many other issues of interest and concern to Afghanistan and the United States. Of course, civilian casualties was one of those issues we discussed.

And I once again welcome him to Afghanistan. Mr. Secretary, you have the floor.

**Secretary Gates.** Thank you, Mr. President. And thank you for once again hosting me.

I would like to begin by joining General Petraeus in offering my personal apology for the accidental killing of nine Afghan boys by coalition forces last week. This breaks our heart. Not only is their loss a tragedy for their families, it is a setback for our relationship with the Afghan people, whose security is our chief concern.

We've been working extremely hard, first under General McChrystal and now General Petraeus, to avoid civilian casualties. Coalition forces, despite this incident, have done a much better job over the past couple of years. Even so, I would also like to offer President Karzai my personal apology, because I know these tragedies weigh heavily on his heart and create problems for him as the leader and protector of the Afghan people.

Although insurgents are responsible for over 80 percent of all civilian casualties, it is ultimately our duty, along with our Afghan partners, to protect the Afghan people—all of the Afghan people. And to do that, we must continue building on the significant security gains achieved by the Afghan and coalition forces in the last year.

Tonight President Karzai and I had a very productive discussion about how to maintain this momentum as we look forward to beginning the formal transition to Afghan security lead this year—this summer. When I visited Afghanistan last December, I said that the progress that our joint forces had made together on the ground had exceeded my expectations. From my conversations with commanders at Bagram this afternoon, it is clear that they have not let up the pressure on the enemy at all this winter. In fact, we are conducting a record number of operations despite, as I saw firsthand today, occasional bad weather that has made difficult terrain even more challenging.

The gains we are seeing across the country are significant. In the east, Afghan and ISAF forces are expanding zones of security outward from Kabul and Jalalabad, focusing on blocking insurgent infiltration into population centers along key arteries. As a result, commerce has grown and distant provinces are increasingly connected to major marketplaces.

Something similar is happening in the south, where Afghan and international troops have forced the Taliban out of their traditional strongholds and a semblance of normalcy is beginning to return to local populations now free of their grip. Our forces are linking zones of security in Helmand to Kandahar as we ultimately move toward connecting these areas in the south with those in the east, centered in Kabul.

Because of the shared sacrifices of Afghan and coalition forces, we are now closer than ever to President Karzai's goal


https://doi.org/10.1017/S1052703611000311 Published online by Cambridge University Press

of building Afghan national security forces that can take the leader for their nation's security, as they will in more and more areas in the months ahead. President Karzai will soon announce the first areas of the country where this formal transition will take place. We spoke tonight about that process and how it will impact the distribution of U.S. forces in July. While no decisions on numbers have been made, in my view, we will be well-positioned to begin drawing down some U.S. and coalition forces this July, even as we redeploy others to different areas of the country.

Nevertheless, as I have said time and again, we are not leaving Afghanistan this summer. Come September, October and beyond, there will still be substantial numbers of coalition forces here, still partnering with Afghans and still maintaining unrelenting pressure on our enemy, and working toward our shared objective for Afghanistan to assume the lead across the country for its security by the end of 2014. And we will in the coming months and years continue building a long-term security partnership with the Afghan people.

We know there will be more tough days ahead, but thanks to the strategy, resources and partnership we now have in place, I believe we are now positioned to achieve the shared goal of a stable, secure Afghanistan that is no longer a safe haven for terrorists. The United States will remain committed to this effort because we recognize the importance of our work here for the future of the Afghan people, for the stability of the region, and for the long-term security of America and its allies, and because we want a long-term, close relationship with Afghanistan.

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**Q. President Karzai, you mentioned the civilian casualties issue. I wonder if—in light of the personal apology that Secretary Gates just offered, do you accept that apology, in light of the statement that you put out yesterday saying the U.S. response had been inadequate? And also, what is an adequate U.S. response to civilian casualties, understanding that you would prefer there be none, but there have been and there have—when they do happen, how should the U.S. act differently?**

**And may I ask also a question of Secretary Gates? You mentioned the strategic partnership that you wish to work with Afghanistan, and you mentioned earlier today that discussions were already under way. I wonder—understanding that the details will be worked out in negotiations, could you give us an idea of what at least the contours of that would look like to the U.S. side? What would the U.S. be willing to do militarily in Afghanistan, beyond 2014?**

**President Karzai.** With regard to the civilian casualties, sir, this has been an issue that has been for long now at the heart of some of the tensions in an otherwise very healthy relationship between the two countries.

The United States and its allies arrived in Afghanistan in 2001, and the subsequent removal of the terrorists and the Taliban from Afghanistan, with the help of the Afghan people, was an event that rightly the Afghan people called a liberation of Afghanistan from oppression and tyranny and a hope for Afghanistan towards a better future.

Much has been achieved in that journey from 2002 to today. The country has better roads. The country has better education. The country has a better economy. The country has a better capacity. The country's flag is flying all around the world and Afghanistan is present in all international occasions. It's a country no longer forgotten or no longer in isolation. That has been done because of our relationship with the United States and because of the assistance that the United States has given to the Afghan people—all of them.

Now, while all of that is there in a manner of great appreciation of the Afghan people, civilian casualties are an issue that the Afghans fail to understand, because we, the Afghan people, are allies with the rest of the world in the war on terror. We are victims in the war on terror. But for us to continue to suffer civilian casualties is something that we fail to understand and becomes a major issue of grief and disappointment.

Secretary Gates is an honored friend of Afghanistan. And I trust completely when he says he's sorry and he apologizes. That's something that we respect personally because of him as well as because of the message he brings on behalf of the United States government.

And I, as the president of Afghanistan, as someone that the Afghan people have elected to look after them and to make sure that they are secure and protected, find it extremely difficult to—(inaudible)—when we have multiple meetings when civilian casualties take place to explain to the Afghan people that this can go on. They want it stopped. They want it not reduced; they want it stopped.

Now, I understand the difficulty on the side of the military, where the engagement operations, that that is at times inevitable. That inevitability, the Afghan people understand, but they want it stopped, and they want done in the manner that Afghans will not lose their loved ones anymore, either in the crossfire or when the operations are—take place.

Secretary Gates' apology I will convey to the Afghan people. They heard him speak right now. And I will say that Secretary Gates, from the depth of his heart, apologized. But while we take that apology with a lot of respect and agree with it to accept it today, I would request Secretary Gates that he take the plea of the Afghan people to Washington that these civilian casualties stop, and make the utmost effort so we don't have them anymore.

We are ready to sacrifice in the war on terror. We have never complained when our soldiers die. We have never complained when our security forces die and for giving sacrifices on a daily basis. But civilians, of course, it is their right and our responsibility to protect.

**Secretary Gates.** With respect to a strategic partnership, the United States will send a team here to Afghanistan next week to begin negotiating on a strategic partnership. The specifics, I think, remain to be negotiated. But I would say that if the Afghan people and the Afghan government are interested in an ongoing security relationship and some sort of an ongoing security presence, with the permission of the Afghan government, the United States, I think, is open to the possibility of having some presence here in terms of training and assistance, perhaps making use of facilities made available to us by the Afghan government for those purposes. We have no interest in permanent bases,



https://doi.org/10.1017/S1052703611000311 Published online by Cambridge University Press

but if the Afghans want us here, we are certainly prepared to contemplate that.

**Q.—from Al-Jazeera English. Sir, my first question would be the —I've been with the U.S. Army embedded for 12 days in—district. Many people there believe that there is a hidden agenda, U.S. has there, and not only there but all over Afghanistan, the people of Afghanistan doesn't—.**

**President Karzai.** Where was that?

**Q.—the one example that there are these projects called "cash for work." There are like 1,800 people there paying 300 Afghanis each a day. But 1,800 people would not—would not exist there. This money, people believe, goes to Taliban, indirectly supporting Taliban; and there's a hidden agenda American have.**

**So if we are talking about long-term strategy, what is this long-term strategy? What's U.S. want from Afghanistan? We know what Afghans want from U.S., but we don't know—what is this—and also this hidden agenda that everyone's talking about? Is there a hidden agenda?**

**And my question, Mr. President, I was there within the Afghan military too. They're very weak. They're—not morale-wise; they're very—strong morale. But they have the guns but no ammunition. They have their food that comes to them one week later. Are you expecting them in two weeks' time to fight enemy like Taliban with their fists? How are you expecting them to do that?**

**Secretary Gates.** As hard as it may be for some to believe, the United States has no hidden agendas in Afghanistan or in this region as a whole. What we want is stability. We want a region that is not a source for terrorists to launch attacks against the United States that kill thousands of our citizens. And we would like to see democratic, prosperous states here. They're, of course, for—good for their own people. We have no interest beyond that.

**President Karzai.** On the question of the Afghan army and their state of readiness, we are aware of the difficulties that they have. I'm glad to hear from you that they have a high morale. If they are weak on the equipment side and the resistance side. This is an ongoing issue of discussion between us and the United States and our other allies. We will keep pursuing that the Afghan army is trained better and equipped better.

Of course, while we are training our army and equipping our army, it is—even if our army is not fully equipped today, even if they are not as well-trained today as the armies of the rest of the world or as our allies, Afghanistan is our country and we will have to protect it, even if it is with our bare hands.

Therefore, the state of readiness will not reduce our responsibility or our determination to provide protection to the Afghan people and protection of our borders and security of our—of our people.

Now, I was told by one of your colleagues today that you were in—(inaudible)—and that you were there for twelve days and that you went there with the U.S. Army and the Afghan Army. And I would like to see you, to hear more about your observations there. Thank you.

## Remarks by Secretary of State Clinton, March 22, 2011[11]

***Secretary Hillary Clinton delivered these remarks in Washington, DC***

**Secretary Clinton.** The United States welcomes President Karzai's announcement today of the first three provinces and four cities to begin the process of transition from ISAF to Afghan-led security in the coming months. This step advances the vision for transition that ISAF members and the Afghan Government agreed to at the Lisbon Summit in November and that President Obama reaffirmed in his December policy review. We look forward to troop reductions starting in July and continuing based on conditions on the ground, with the transition to be completed by the end of 2014. As we have long said, the Afghans themselves must take responsibility for their own future—for providing security, for strengthening governance, and for reaching a political solution to the conflict.

The provinces and districts included in today's announcement include areas in every region of the country and together they are home to nearly a quarter of the population of Afghanistan. Together with our Allies and partners, the United States will realign our civilian and military resources in these provinces to support the Afghan Government's increasing responsibility for security and the delivery of other essential services to its citizens. As transition proceeds and Afghan leadership strengthens across the country, a process of political reconciliation to end the conflict will become increasingly viable.

Transition is an essential pillar of the U.S., NATO, and international community's long-term commitment to Afghanistan. As part of that commitment, NATO and the Afghan Government signed an Enduring Partnership Declaration at Lisbon. The United States is also currently negotiating a bilateral Strategic Partnership Declaration with Afghanistan. This new partnership will contribute to building up Afghanistan's capacity and institutions, as well as to improved economic and political relations between Afghanistan and its neighbors well beyond 2014.

The United States continues to support the Afghan people as they work to build a more stable and peaceful nation and we remain committed to the goal of a region that is free from al-Qaida and no longer a safe haven for international terrorism.

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1. Dept. of Homeland Security Press Release, January 1, 2011.
2. White House Press Release, January 11, 2011.
3. White House Press Release, January 12, 2011.
4. Dept. of State Press Release, January 12, 2011.
5. White House Press Release, January 14, 2011.
6. U.S. Trade and Development Agency Press Release, February 8, 2011.
7. Treasury Dept. Press Release, February 17, 2011.
8. Treasury Dept. Press Release, February 18, 2011.
9. White House Press Release, March 2, 2011.
10. Dept. of Defense Press Release, March 7, 2011.
11. Dept. of State Press Release, March 22, 2011.



https://doi.org/10.1017/S1052703611000311 Published online by Cambridge University Press

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1052703611000311 Published online by Cambridge University Press