



Afghanistan Update

A twice-weekly, one-page situation report on the latest developments affecting U.S. policy and engagement in Afghanistan.

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Topic in Focus: The Civilian Role in Afghanistan

- The majority of analysts, political and military leaders agree that the civilian role in creating a stable Afghanistan is **at least as important as the military operation**.
- Analysts have criticized the civilian effort in Afghanistan as having been **uneven, uncoordinated and ineffective** – blaming a lack of coordination, prioritization, and resources, compounded by competition between civilian organizations, ineffectiveness, and corruption.
- On-the-ground activities of US and allied civilian personnel, both inside Kabul and in the provinces, have been increasingly **inhibited by tighter security constraints** caused by an increasingly insecure operating environment.

In Quotes:

"We cannot let this moment pass without making important changes in the way we all do business...The best options [for civilian assistance in Afghanistan] is debatable, but there can be no doubt that new leadership and enhanced coordination is required if we are all to succeed". **William B. Taylor, Jr. and J Alexander Their**, United States Institute of Peace, December 2009.

In Quotes:

"The intention is to strengthen the [NATO civilian representative] office, certainly in terms of staff, to enhance its capability to support the coordination of the overall civilian efforts, without wishing to in any way diminish the role of the U.N. mission in Afghanistan, which all allies also want to see strengthened." **James Appathurai**, NATO spokesman, Jan 20.

Who's Who:

Richard C. Holbrooke is United States Special Envoy for Afghanistan and Pakistan; he is the highest ranking civilian with direct oversight of Afghanistan and Pakistan, with remit to integrate regional military and civilian efforts.

Recent news:

Mr. Holbrooke said this week he is most concerned about Pakistan, which he thinks is not getting adequate international support. He plans to tell lawmakers that he hoped Congress would set aside even more money, beyond the current \$7.5 billion in nonmilitary assistance.

Holbrooke told a meeting on 8 January 2010 that "we can't use [the term AfPak] anymore because it does not please people in Pakistan, for understandable reasons."

Career Background: (b. 1941) Six years of service in Vietnam with US Department of State and USAID, negotiated the Dayton peace accords to end the war in Bosnia. 1981-1993 successful career on Wall Street; US Ambassador to United Nations 1999-2000.

Key Issues and Developments:

- The U.S. State Department has released a 30-page policy paper, detailing a formal plan for the civilian part of the administration's strategy in Afghanistan and Pakistan. It envisions **keeping thousands of Americans in the region for years**, well after any final military withdrawal.
- During 2009 the **U.S. tripled the number of government civilians in Afghanistan**, from 320 early last year to about 1,000 now.
- The new State Dept policy paper sets out plans to add **200 to 300 civilian experts in 2010**. Many of these will be posted outside Kabul, in agricultural projects or as advisors to government ministries, with more civilians also serving back-to-back tours in the country.
- The estimated resources available to meet requirements for the deployment of additional civilian expertise are approximately **\$400 million**. The total funding for all components set out by the policy paper is about **\$10.2 billion**.
- U.S. and NATO allies are planning to create a **high-ranking NATO civilian post in Kabul**, equivalent in rank to Gen. McChrystal, to improve coordination of Western civilian aid efforts.

Possible Questions:

- What percentage of U.S. civilians is based outside of the Embassy compound, in Kabul?
- What oversight measures are in place to ensure that the 'civilian surge' is being / will be effective?
- What additional security measures are being taken to ensure the safety of an increased number of unarmed civilians?
- How prominent is the civilian role and profile within Provincial Reconstruction Teams? Does this need to be increased?
- What will be the reporting lines for the new NATO civilian representative? How will this position relate to serving Ambassadors and UN leaders in Kabul?

News Updates: A report by the Congressional Research Service released this week has found that private security contractors in Afghanistan make up between 22 percent and 30 percent of armed U.S. forces in Afghanistan.

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