TESTIMONY OF MARIN STRMECKI
SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
HEARING ON STRATEGIC OPTIONS IN AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN

February 26, 2009

Mr. Chairman, Senator McCain, and distinguished members of the committee: My name is Marin Strmecki. I am the senior vice president and director of programs at the Smith Richardson Foundation, a private foundation that supports public policy research and analysis. I appreciate the opportunity to give you my views on the situation in Afghanistan. I have followed events in that country closely for more than 20 years. I served from 2003 to 2005 as a policy coordinator and special advisor on Afghanistan in the Office of the Secretary of Defense and undertook a fact-finding trip to the country for the Secretary of Defense in 2006. Though I am currently a member of the Defense Policy Board, the views I present today do not reflect any discussions or deliberations by the board.

In light of the opportunity and challenge that Afghanistan presents to the Obama Administration, the Committee's hearings are very timely. Today, I want to make five major points.

1. During the past three years, the situation in Afghanistan has deteriorated, particularly in terms of security. The vast majority of Afghans oppose the Taliban, but local communities cannot defend themselves from insurgent intimidation and attacks. Reversing the negative trends requires rededicated U.S. leadership, greater resources, and an improved strategy and campaign plan. The fact that the Obama Administration is undertaking a wide-ranging strategic review is an encouraging sign.

2. In this review, it would be a mistake to revise our goals downward, giving up the current objective of enabling Afghans to establish an effective and representative government aligned with us in the war against terror. The United States needs an Afghan

state capable of policing its territory to prevent the reestablishment of a terrorist safe haven. Helping the Afghan people succeed politically and economically will produce a significant positive demonstration effect in the wider region, thereby contributing to the war of ideas against extremism. Success will end the cycle of proxy warfare that has cost more than a million Afghan lives during the 1980s and 1990s. It will also open a route to global markets for the Central Asia states and create an economic zone that can be the basis for greater prosperity in Central and South Asia.

3. The focus of our policy should be to defeat a real and growing threat arising from a set of violent extremist groups based in western Pakistan and their supporters in Pakistan. The necessary conditions for success include the stabilization of Afghanistan, as well as strengthening elements in Pakistan opposed to extremism and finding ways progressively to narrow the areas in Pakistan in which the extremists can operate until these organizations have in effect been smothered.

4. A key task is to induce elements of the government of Pakistan that have historic ties to the Taliban and other groups to make a strategic choice to cooperate fully in eliminating extremist sanctuaries. This requires the United States to undertake sustained diplomacy that is cognizant of the motivations and interests that might underlie Pakistan's policies and that is designed to create a regional context conducive to the stabilization of Afghanistan. The Obama Administration's appointment of Ambassador Richard Holbrooke as a special envoy presents this opportunity.

5. U.S. efforts to "harden" Afghanistan against the insurgent threat operating out of the sanctuaries can succeed. To do so will require changes in our current approach, including development of a more robust political and state-building effort, shifting to a classic counterinsurgency strategy focused primarily on providing security to the population, and integrating Afghan and international civilian and military efforts in a phased campaign to secure contested areas.

***

As we approach this challenge, it is vital to understand what conditions produced stability in Afghanistan in recent history and what dynamics underlie the instability of recent decades. Too often, commentators mistakenly take the view that Afghanistan has been either ungovernable throughout history or has lacked a central government whose reach extended throughout its territory. In fact, until the late 1970s, Afghanistan had been a relatively stable developing country for much of the twentieth century. It was a poor country, to be sure, but one with a state that carried out basic governmental functions and that enabled gradual political and economic progress.

At the simplest level, three factors were essential to stability. First, the Afghan people broadly viewed the government as legitimate, particularly during the rule of King Zahir Shah. The monarchy was rooted in the Pushtun community, but Afghan leaders understood the need to provide for participation by other ethnic and social groups. The monarchy ruled on the basis of a flexible compact between the central government and local tribal and social leaders, providing policing and civil administration as a means to strengthen political cohesion and allegiance. Second, Afghan security institutions were sufficiently strong to prevent subversion, encroachment, or aggression by ambitious neighboring powers. For example, when externally sponsored Islamist extremists sought to infiltrate the country in the early 1970s, they were policed up rapidly, with the cooperation of local leaders and communities. Third, a tacit agreement existed among regional rivals that Afghanistan should be a buffer state, not dominated by any of its neighbors but instead open to political, economic, and social influences by every power at a level that would not threaten the others. As long as those conditions persisted, Afghanistan enjoyed stability and "worked" as country.

The tragedy of Afghanistan was triggered when this system collapsed. It began with the coup that brought the Afghan Communist party to power in 1978 and the subsequent invasion by the Soviet Union in 1979. Once Moscow imposed its proxy regime in Kabul, the Afghan people mounted a national resistance. In this period, Pakistan and Iran mobilized and armed proxies among the resistance groups, with the

United States in effect supporting Pakistan's effort with financing, arms, and supplies. After the Soviet withdrawal in 1989 and the eventual collapse of Moscow's client state in 1991, a three-way civil war broke out between proxies supported by Pakistan, Iran, and Russia. By 1996, the Taliban, a proxy group backed by Pakistan, won control of Kabul. However, it continued to fight an inconclusive war against factions that joined together in the Northern Alliance, a proxy supported by Russia, Iran, and India. Throughout this period of conflict, all of these client regimes lacked national legitimacy: these groups were instruments of foreign states with limited popular support, typically rooted in narrow factions or one ethnic group or region. As a result, none could establish a state that was capable of extending its reach throughout Afghan territory or precluding armed subversion by adversarial neighbors. This pattern of competition – fighting among internal Afghan factions backed by rival external powers – resulted in a quarter century of violence.

The promise of the Bonn Process, sponsored by the U.N. and supported by the United States as military operations were undertaken against the Taliban regime in 2001, lied in the fact that it sought to establish a post-war order through a renewed version of Afghanistan's traditional formula for stability. Internally, it involved *all* anti-Taliban factions in a political process that step by step gave greater political weight to the preferences of the Afghan people, culminating in national elections in the presidential election 2004 and parliamentary election in 2005. This vehicle enabled the establishment of an inclusive, broad-based state, with the Afghan people ultimately serving as the arbiters of who would rule in Kabul. The Bonn Process also provided for external support, principally from countries outside of the region, to rebuild effective Afghan security institutions. At the same time, all of Afghanistan's neighbors were players in the Bonn Process, providing them with transparency and a measure of influence and allowing for participation in Afghanistan's reconstruction.

The Bonn Process – and the underlying formula for restoring Afghanistan's stability – produced significant results in terms of political stability and state-building. Most significantly, in the months following the Afghan presidential election in October

2004, the level of security incidents in Afghanistan fell to negligible levels. This offers proof of principal that a dual process – building political legitimacy and using regional diplomatic engagement to prevent destabilizing interventions – could produce a path to stability and progress in Afghanistan.

***

During the past three years, the stability won by the Bonn Process has been largely lost. The core of the problem has been the regrouping of a set of violent extremist forces in sanctuaries in Pakistan, some seeking to carry out terrorist attacks on the United States, others undertaking cross border attacks on Afghanistan, and still others attempting to radicalize and destabilize Pakistan.

In Afghanistan, rising insecurity has been driven by an escalation in cross-border infiltration and attacks by the Taliban, the Haqqani group, and the Hezbe-Islami of Hekmatyar Gulbiddin. This activity increased incrementally in late 2005. It escalated dramatically in 2006, including operations by larger-unit formations against NATO units assuming command in the south. Enemy operations expanded geographically in 2007 and 2008, increasing the scope of contested areas even as enemy tactics returned predominantly to small-unit and terrorist actions.

An enabling condition for successes by the Taliban and other extremists has been the underperformance of the Afghan government and its consequent loss of popular support. This is not to deny significant Afghan achievements of building the Afghan National Army, instituting effective Afghan-led national programs in rural development and health, and other areas. However, following the elections of 2004 and 2005, President Karzai disappointed the expectations of the Afghan people that their government would systematically improve provincial and local governance, by deploying honest and effective officials and delivering basic services. In too many areas, weak, corrupt, or nonexistent government was the reality. As Afghans often say, “The problem is not that the Taliban are so strong – it is that the government is too weak.”

This combination – violent extremists operating out of a neighboring country and eroding legitimacy at home – has produced the deteriorating situation in Afghanistan today. Reversing this trend requires a two-pronged effort to eliminate enemy sanctuaries in Pakistan and to "harden" Afghanistan against the insurgency of the Taliban and other extremists. I will take up each of these in turn.

***

Uprooting the sanctuaries will require a broad-based political strategy. A first order question that the Obama Administration will face is assessing the role of the government of Pakistan in the insurgency in Afghanistan. President Zardari's election provides a willing partner to help stabilize Afghanistan, but power is divided in Islamabad. Key elements of the military establishment – particularly Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) – have long-standing ties to extremist groups operating against Afghanistan. I believe that these elements, at a minimum, have not made a strategic choice to cooperate fully with the effort to stabilize Afghanistan.

Press reports and analysts have long noted that, in the past seven years, Pakistan's security services have helped capture hundreds of al Qaida leaders and operatives but only a handful of those of the Taliban. They have also observed that the Taliban operates openly in Quetta, the capital city of Baluchistan province where ample Pakistani police and other security forces are available. More troubling is the reporting of David Sanger in his recent book *The Inheritance: the World Obama Confronts and the Challenges to American Power*. He states that in a conversation with former Director of National Intelligence Mike McConnell, a Pakistani general admitted that his military was supporting the Taliban. Sanger also writes that McConnell asked for an assessment by the intelligence community of Pakistan's relations with the Taliban. He states that the resulting report indicated that the Pakistani government regularly gave the Taliban and other militant groups "weapons and support to go into Afghanistan to attack Afghan and coalition forces." I am not aware that any U.S. official has disputed this account. If it is

accurate, it raises troubling questions about the activities of Pakistan's military and intelligence services in Afghanistan.

If elements in Pakistan's military and intelligence establishment are adversarial to our efforts in Afghanistan, the starting point in trying to change their orientation is to understand the underlying reasons for their actions. In my view, there are at least five potential motivations:

- The first is the fear that Pakistan's regional rivals – particularly India – will secure undue influence in the government of Afghanistan. On this topic, Pakistani officials offer a litany of complaints, starting with President Karzai's close ties to India, continuing with prominent roles of former Northern Alliance figures in key security institutions, and including accusations that anti-Pakistan intelligence and political activities are orchestrated from Indian consulates and road building companies in eastern and southern Afghanistan.

- The second is a belief that the United States, as well as NATO, lacks staying power and will abandon Afghanistan. This, in turn, will lead to the failure of the Afghan government and a reprise of the proxy competition among regional rivals of the 1990s. If this scenario is likely, it follows that now is the time to field effective proxy forces to gain positional advantage in the fight to come.

- The third is the fear that a successful Afghanistan will exert a dangerous political appeal to ethnic Pashtuns who live in Pakistan. The unresolved legal status of the Durand Line and the history of tensions with Afghanistan over the Pushtunistan issue exacerbate this concern.

- The fourth is the strategic aspiration of some in Islamabad to project Pakistani influence into Central Asia through Afghanistan.

- The fifth is the belief that the United States will only remain engaged with Pakistan – and provide military and economic assistance – if security threats draw us into the region. This leads to the view that Pakistan's interests lie in acting as a "strategic rentier state," perpetuating a degree of insecurity in order to be paid to reduce it.

As Ambassador Holbrooke engages with Afghan and Pakistani leaders, a key objective should be to draw out from Pakistani military and intelligence leaders what are their strategic concerns and to advance discussion between the two sides about how these might be addressed in a manner consistent with a strong and stable Afghanistan. At a minimum this should include discussion of a package containing five initiatives:

- Create a system of redlines governing the activities in Afghanistan of all regional powers, including both Pakistan and India, to allay concerns that one rival is gaining unilateral advantage and to provide a transparent system for monitoring compliance.

- Craft credible commitments on the part of the United States to remain the principal external power engaged in state-building in Afghanistan, particularly regarding security institutions, and to take Pakistani security concerns into account in formulating its policies.

- Mediate discussions between Afghan and Pakistani leaders to arrive at a common understanding of the border regime and use relations between the Pushtun communities in both countries to foster constructive social and economic ties.

- Make commitments to plan, jointly with Kabul and Islamabad, and to finance the construction of the infrastructure (e.g., roads, rail, pipelines, communications) to connect Central Asia through Afghanistan to Pakistan, thereby enabling expansion of trade and cultural and political ties.

- Develop a major package – on the order of U.S. assistance to Egypt – to support the economic and social development in Pakistan, including support to improve the educational system, to stimulate growth of private enterprise, and to build needed infrastructure, in order to demonstrate the United States values a long-term relationship with Pakistan for its own sake not just as a tactical necessity in the war on terror.

These initiatives, among others, can address the motivations that might lie behind the apparently reluctance of elements in Pakistan to make a strategic choice to support efforts to bring stability to Afghanistan, as well as isolate those who might sympathize with the ideology of the extremists. It is imperative to recognize that the inducements needed to "flip" their policies must be significant. Current assistance, including Coalition support funds and bilateral aid, creates a foundation for leverage. However, the increments of additional assistance will need to be large in order to be commensurate with the stakes involved.

At the same time, for a package containing these initiatives to be effective, the benefits should flow only on a "pay for performance" basis. If U.S.-sponsored mediation leads to a meeting of minds on these issues, bestowing the benefits should begin only when the security situation in southern and eastern Afghanistan has stabilized – only when the sanctuaries have been closed down.

Together, these actions could create the basis for a transformation of the Afghan-Pakistan relationship. As I noted, the Zardari government is already a willing partner. However, I believe that, since the attacks of September 11, U.S. policy makers have underestimated the sensitivity of Pakistan's military establishment to the evolution of post-Taliban Afghanistan. The issue is not whether those fears or beliefs are grounded in fact or paranoia. Instead, the issue is to find ways that Afghanistan and the United States can allay or address whatever concerns might be driving Pakistan conduct without compromising our interests or values.

***

If all elements in Pakistan fully cooperate to eliminate extremist sanctuaries, the task of hardening Afghanistan against the residual insurgency would be an order of magnitude less difficult than the challenges we face today. Yet, even if the Pakistan-based insurgency remains at current levels, it can be done.

The principal reason for my conviction is that the legitimacy of the Afghan government can be renewed. The overwhelming majority of the Afghan people, as measured in polling and shown by anecdotal evidence, oppose the Taliban. Large majorities want the new democratic political order to succeed. What has been missing on the part of the Afghan government, the United States, and other friends of Afghanistan is a fully resourced counterinsurgency strategy and campaign plan to mobilize and vindicate this latent support.

The hard core of the enemy is a cadre composed of Afghan and (increasingly) foreign fighters who operate out of cross-border sanctuaries. According to polls, the Taliban also appears to have the support of about 5 percent of the people. In addition, there are "soft" layers of coerced, tacit, or expedient supporters. In light of the inability of Afghan or NATO forces to protect local populations, many Afghans believe they have no choice but to submit to Taliban threats and demands. Sometimes, ineffective or corrupt officials demoralize local communities to an extent that they have no preference between the Taliban and the Afghan government. In other instances, tribal rivalry results in disadvantaged groups seeking tactical alliances with the Taliban. It is likely that military mistakes or civilian casualties in NATO operations have turned communities against the Afghan government. In still other cases, some individuals have become "terrorists for a day" to make money.

The logic of classic counterinsurgency doctrine provides the template for peeling away the soft outer layers of the insurgency and for defeating the hard core. It begins

with the recognition that the center of gravity is the people. They are the key because the enemy moves among them – they know who in their areas is linked to the enemy. If the people provide this intelligence, rooting out the enemy can be done surgically, even by police actions. To obtain this information, the challenge is to win the "hearts and minds" of the people. Winning the mind of an average Afghan involves persuading him that the Afghan and NATO forces are going to win the war and that these forces will protect him from retaliation if he takes the risk of providing intelligence on the insurgents. Winning the Afghan's heart entails persuading him that he will benefit, in terms of improved governance and economic development, as the Afghan government prevails. Winning hearts and minds cannot be done without persistent presence of security forces at the local level – this visibly gives the assurance of protection against retaliation and provides the basic security needed to deliver services to the people. There is no short around the hard work of providing security for the population. It is the foundation of all other measures.

From late 2003 through mid-2005, Coalition forces shifted to a population security-based campaign plan. Coalition and Afghan forces were deployed permanently into contested areas, instead of launching cordon and search operations that left no enduring security presence. Though the threat and troops levels in this period were lower than those of today, this approach succeeded in winning cooperation from local communities and increasing stability in the south and east. However, as the Taliban and other extremist forces escalated attacks in late 2005 and 2006, U.S. and other NATO forces gradually moved away from the population security paradigm and toward an emphasis on maneuver operations, firepower, and raids by Special Operations Forces. In the current paradigm, Afghan, U.S., and NATO forces withdraw shortly after clearing an area of the enemy, which allows him to reenter and results in no enduring gains. It is not surprising that some polls show that, while Afghans support the continuing presence of international forces, they are losing confidence that these forces can deliver security.

To implement a counterinsurgency strategy in Afghanistan entails making a commitment to success, strengthening the legitimacy of the Afghan government,

establishing security at the local level, and the fielding of effective governance and development. It requires ten principal actions:

1. **Recommit to a definition of success that includes the improvement of the lives of average Afghans**: Loose talk about diminishing U.S. goals or expectations demoralizes our Afghan allies. If an Afghan villager doubts our staying power, he will not risk his life and the lives of his family members to provide intelligence on the enemy. If he believes that we are solely pursuing a parochial mission of hunting down terrorists, he will become cynical and indifferent to our success. If we operate in partnership with the Afghans – and if we credibly recommit to success – this action alone will reduce counterproductive hedging and result in popular mobilization to support the common cause.

2. **Align the United States with popular aspirations for reform**: In the coming election in Afghanistan, the United States should announce that it hopes that Afghans will seize the opportunity to achieve a political breakthrough for reform, bringing to office leaders for whom reducing corruption and the taking on narcotics industry as primary missions. It is for Afghan political figures to compete for popular support in terms of these and other issues. The key for the United States is position itself to support the better aspirations of the Afghan people.

3. **Resolve issues through collaborative problem solving**: Diplomacy based on angry demarches seldom work with Afghan leaders. Assigning all blame to President Karzai for failures in governance is unfair and counterproductive. There have been instances when he sought to move against a corrupt minister or a criminal figure but was persuaded to desist by U.S. officials and military officers. President Karzai has been an effective leader when he is confident in his relationship with the United States, when he has a strong team of reformist officials around him, and when his main U.S. interlocutor works with him to arrive at a common definition of the problem, an agreed action plan with responsibilities allocated among the Afghan government and the international community, and a system for working through

challenges in implementation. As the United States has moved away from this kind of time-consuming but productive engagement, Karzai's leadership suffered, to the detriment of our common efforts. We should return to the successful model based on close collaboration to the get the most out of the Afghan government.

4. **Avoid actions or statements that shift the United States toward the role of an occupying force**: In addition, loose comments about bypassing Kabul to work with provincial, local, or tribal leaders can be harmful. U.S. forces and agencies already undertake constructive work at the grassroots level. However, if a shift in rhetoric or policy appears to diminish the elected Afghan government, the United States will take a step down a path that could result in our being viewed as occupiers. The best approach is to work from the bottom up as well as the top down to achieve immediate effects while improving the functionality of linkages between levels of government. This model was used to great effect in the CORDS program in Vietnam.

5. **Develop an integrated population security-based counterinsurgency campaign plan jointly with the Afghan government**: Since our forces and those of our Afghan and NATO allies are limited, we should first secure major population centers and then progressively expand secured areas district by district and province by province as more Afghan or NATO forces become available. Also, too often, the United States and its NATO allies develop military plans and bring them to the Afghan side for formalistic approval. Sometimes, actions are taken without any consultation. Going forward, this should change. Afghan security forces are the largest component of the coalition, and the Afghans can provide valuable local knowledge needed to build out the plan. Moreover, an integrated campaign should bring to bear Afghan-led governance and development programs immediately in the wake of military operations. These include the Focused District Development program (which upgrades training of police personnel for an entire district), the Independent Directorate for Local Governance (which evaluates and replaces provincial and district officials if necessary), the National Solidarity Program (which provides small grants to carry out projects selected by village-level development

councils and already operates nationwide), and others. The Afghan Public Protection Force concept – a program in the pilot stage – is designed to provide village-level security thought vetted and trained recruits, under the authority of the Ministry of Interior.

6. **Bring all Special Operations Forces active in Afghanistan under NATO command**: Press reports, as well as speeches by Department of Defense officials, have noted a major expansion in actions by Special Operation Forces (SOF). In Afghanistan, the highest and best use of SOF is partnering and mentoring ANA and Afghan National Police (ANP) forces. There is no better way to move Afghan forces up the learning curve and thereby to increase our capacity to fill contested areas. However, there are indications that direct action is the dominant SOF mission. Senior Afghan officials believe that SOF raids are a principal cause of excessive civilian casualties and are disaffecting the Afghan people. We should take this concern seriously. It is encouraging that NATO is concluding a military technical agreement with the Afghan government that may cover this issue. Specific SOF operations should be measured against the standard of whether they advance the population security campaign. This approach would result in greater emphasis on the mentoring mission and less on direct action.

7. **Field a major expansion of the training, partnering, and mentoring capacity for Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF)**: Though the Bush Administration's decision to increase in the planned end strength of the ANA from 70,000 to 132,000 deserves praise, the Obama Administration should increase the target to 250,000, as well as increase ANP end strength above 100,000. In light of the current level of the threat, it is only when the ANSF reaches those numbers that the ratio of security personnel to population will achieve the level necessary for success in counterinsurgency. More precise estimates of needed ANSF force levels will be possible as the campaign plan demonstrates how much area or population can be secured by particular numbers and mixes of the ANSF. This will require a major expansion of training capacity – at least a doubling – but the experience in Iraq shows

that this is possible without loss of quality. While it will be expensive, there is no more cost effective approach to secure Afghanistan than to build up the ANSF dramatically.

8. **Accelerate support to the Ministry of Interior (MoI)**: President Karzai's appointment of a new, reform-oriented minister in October 2008 created an major opportunity to improve the performance of the institution in charge of civil administration and police. A major U.S.-supported program to reform the ministry is underway, but the United States should spare nothing in ensuring that the new minister has what he needs to advance these changes. The Afghan-led Independent Directorate for Local Governance (IDLG) has show that the appointment of high-quality local and provincial leaders can have transformative effects. A reformed MoI, supported by the experience garnered through the IDLG, creates the needed mechanism to systematically improve governance beyond Kabul.

9. **Adopt the national program model for service delivery and development**: Afghan-led national programs in rural development and health have been significant successes. The National Solidarity Program has created 23,000 Community Development Councils and through them as implemented more than 45,000 locally selected reconstruction projects across the country, at a fraction of the cost of those undertaken by Western NGOs or contractors. Improvements in the national health infrastructure, led by Ministry of Health and supported by a wide variety of donors, have started to move health indicators such as child mortality in a positive direction. The model is based on using an Afghan ministry as the vehicle to receive donor funds and to carry out donor programs. If the ministry lacks capacity – in strategic planning, procurement, auditing, or other functions – it contracts foreign specialists to work within the ministry, side by side with its personnel. The ministry also either delivers the services itself or enters direct contracts with providers, thus avoiding Western overhead rates and reducing inefficient sub-contracting. This model should be applied to other program areas and should be adapted to accelerate development of Afghan capacity in economic sectors, such as agriculture, food processing, and

construction. It should be complemented by an enterprise fund to support small and medium-sized enterprises and joint ventures and by a greater use of instruments such as Overseas Private Investment Corporation.

10. **Reconcile the reconcilable elements of the insurgency as the counterinsurgency campaign unfolds**: A population security-based campaign will naturally peel off the "soft" layers of the insurgency. Providing enduring security to vulnerable communities will reduce the level of coerced support. Improved governance will win over disaffected communities that opted to sit on the fence between the insurgents and the government. Effective governors and district administrators, who historically have mediated tribal or communal conflicts, can prevent the insurgents from exploiting local conflicts to gain support. Effective counterinsurgency should entail far less kinetic strikes, reducing the numbers of enemies produced by mistakes or civilian casualties. As economic growth takes hold in secured areas, the relative attraction of payments to carry out insurgent actions will diminish. Improvements in the lives of average Afghan citizens may also win over some of those who report sympathy for the Taliban in polls. If all these groups are reconciled, the next final is whether any elements can be split off from the hard core.

These ten measures create the needed balance between providing security on the one hand and taking advantage of improved security to take the political, governance, and economic actions to strengthen the legitimacy of the Afghan government and to enable Afghanistan to stand its own feet. It is a tried and true and statement that effective counterinsurgency entails 80 percent civil actions and 20 percent military measures. A properly executed population security-based campaign supported by a fully resourced state-building and economic development program should meet that standard.

***

In closing, I would again urge us not to reduce downward our goals. If the United States does so, it will diminish its ability to win the hearts and minds of the Afghan

people – and thus the intelligence they can provide – for they will know that their aspirations are excluded from the definition of success. Such a reduction in our goals would also wave a red cape in front of regional powers already doubtful of our staying power and could prompt them to take actions that will further destabilize Afghanistan. Moreover, even if the United States were to remain engaged with a narrow military mission of preventing a renewed terrorist safe haven, it would become a mission of indefinite duration. An Afghan government with sufficient capacity to police its own territory is the path to a drawdown of NATO forces.

The example of South Korea should be the model. After the end of the fighting in the mid-1950s, South Korea was worse off by most social, economic, and political indicators than Afghanistan after fall of the Taliban. Yet, a robust and well-designed state-building and economic development program, led by excellent South Korean leaders and supported by the United States, produced an Asia Tiger within twenty-five years. Even though we retain a defense commitment and forward deployed forces, the overwhelming burden of defending the peninsula falls is carried by South Korea. In the cold war competition in East Asia, the peninsula was vital terrain. The same is true for Afghanistan in the struggle against extremism and terrorism. The South Korean case shows what can be achieved by resolute American commitment and effective partnership with local leaders. The Obama Administration should carry those lessons over to Afghanistan.