

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

GOVERNANCE, GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFGHANISTAN

REMARKS BY HIS EXCELLENCY HAMID KARZAI
PRESIDENT, ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF AFGHANISTAN

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Introduction:

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PROCEEDINGS

MR. PASCUAL: Good afternoon. My name is Carlos Pascual. I'm one of the Vice Presidents of the Brookings Institution. I'm Director of the Foreign Policy Studies here, and it's a great pleasure to welcome you to this discussion with President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan on Governance, Growth and Development in Afghanistan.

I very much want to thank my colleagues at the Brookings Institution who have worked very hard with the embassy in Afghanistan to put this event together in a short period of time. My colleagues at the 21st Century Defense Initiative, at the Center on the U.S. and Europe, and at the Saban Center, thank you very much for all the work that you put into this.

In addition to welcoming President Karzai, let me welcome as well his Ambassador to the United States, Said Jawad, as many of the distinguished members of his cabinet. I'm not going to try to name all of them, but we have quite a number of them with us today.

The challenges that are faced by Afghanistan could not be more critical for the United States, for the international community, for South and Central Asia, and obviously and most poignantly for the people of Afghanistan. At stake is whether the international community operating under a U.N. mandate working with every country of NATO and 40

international partners can join in an effective partnership to help -- to Afghan democracy establish itself as a viable and stable democracy. The answer to this question must be yes because the alternative is to acknowledge that the forces of extremism and terrorism can undermine the efforts of the Afghan people and the international community.

President Karzai has headed his country since appointed interim president in 2002, elected in 2004, and now comes to Washington in the advent of another presidential election in August. Not the least of his challenges will be ensuring with the help of the international community the security and stability of the country and all the candidates. It is a dangerous moment, but one filled with anticipation. The Afghan people have seen a glimpse of what a better future can be with 6 million children in school, including 2 million of them girls, an economy that has grown 10 percent a year in aggregate terms, with basic healthcare coverage starting to reach most of the country, with mobile telecom starting to connect the Afghan people. Yet there are challenges ahead to establish security, to give Afghans an alternative to the narcotics trade, to fight corruption, to find a stable coexistence with Afghanistan's neighbors, to unleash the entrepreneurial potential of the Afghan people. It will be a test of leadership, skill and determination.

President Karzai, we commend your commitment to sustaining a democratic course to chart this path forward. We proudly welcome you to the Brookings Institution and look forward to your comments on a strategy for Afghanistan, for its people, and a partnership with the international community. Welcome to Brookings.

PRESIDENT KARZAI: Ladies and gentlemen, I'm very, very happy to be at the Brookings Institute. Thank you for giving me this honor of my presence before you today in a very important time for Afghanistan and for a partner of the United States of America in Afghanistan. We are not only going to elections in 3 months' time, we are also going to the next step in Afghanistan toward stability, toward institutionalizing our democratic gains, and towards a firmer, stronger partnership with the international community, in particular with the United States.

I would like to start from today but I can't unless I go a little bit to the past. Going a little to the past would start us with 7 years ago and the enthusiasm with which the Afghan people participated in the fight against terrorism, against the Taliban and al Qaeda for their liberation. That fight succeeded immediately. Immediately means that a month and a half once it began because the rest of the world stood with us, because the United States in particular stood with the Afghan people and arrived on the scene, and that partnership, that joining hands together, enabled us to

free ourselves from the grips of terrorism and the tyranny of oppression and obscurantism in less than a month and a half.

And then we began our journey, a journey that had great plusses for the Afghan people, achievements for the Afghan people -- notably the health service, the education, the highways, the roads, the economy, the higher education, the fact that Afghanistan became once again the home for all Afghans, democracy, institution building, the return of women in Afghanistan back to the workforce, to life in politics and the economy, in the society. I was pleasantly surprised. I'm not going to talk about health. You know all about that. I'm also not going to talk about the percentage of women in the Parliament. You know about that. But I'll talk about things that you have not heard about yet.

I was very pleasantly surprised about 2-1/2 to 3 months ago when I attended a meeting with Afghans who had returned from their higher education from abroad. I met with a group of 80 of them, engineers, doctors, doctors of medicine and medical sciences, biologists, physicists, agricultural experts, bioengineers, who had in the past 7 years gotten the opportunity to finish their graduate studies and then come to America or to France or to Germany, the majority to India, to Pakistan, to Iran and other countries to do their postgraduate studies, and some of them to gain their doctorates from Japan as well as from China and return

to universities in Afghanistan. The pleasant thing was that they were 80 from a group of 350 Afghans who were currently studying in high education -- gaining higher education in our friendly countries. That was a great thing for us. And the greatest of all was when I learned about 3 weeks ago from our Minister of Higher Education that Afghanistan doesn't have 45,000 students in universities, that Afghanistan has admitted this year alone 45,000 students in higher institutions of learning, universities, mostly government universities, that in 2002 and 2003 we had only 4,000 to 5,000 students in the universities, most of them men, boys, that today we have 75,000 students in our universities both government and private, public and private as you call it in the United States of which more than 35 percent are women and of which in the past 3 or 4 years the highest marked earner, the highest qualifier, either the first or the second or the third of all the thousands of students are women. That is a tremendous achievement and that achievement could not have been there without the help that was provided by your taxpayers in Afghanistan.

What is the road forward? Where do we want to be in Afghanistan as we are going to the next elections and look forward to the next 5 or 10 or 15 years? Afghanistan wants to continue the journey it has began of building democratic institutions, of building a country that has a better standard of living, where not only we save 85,000 lives of infants

and children per year, but where we build ourselves into a country that's counted as the first world. Are those terms still in vogue, the first world and the second world and the third world or have they gone away now? Pretty much in vogue? Right. So we want to be the first world.

How do we want to be the first world? By educating ourselves to the standards of the first world, by providing a healthcare service to the standards of the first world, with differences where I would prefer the British system there than the one you have here when it comes to health service, by acquiring the ability to defend our country, by acquiring the ability to produce of our own, by generating electricity to all of the people in the country, by providing power to the population, by providing roads and access to the population, by connecting the country fully with each other and with the rest of the world.

Part of this has been achieved; part of this is still on the way. We've completed the ring road in the country. We have linked many parts of the country in the districts to the provinces. We have linked fully to the neighbors of Afghanistan. We have raised the income per capita from \$150 a month of 2004 to over \$450 today. We have raised our national reserves, fund reserves from 120 or 60 millions of 2002 to 3.6 billions of today in our national reserves. We have done all of that. But Afghanistan still remains to be poorest country in the world. Afghanistan is still

vulnerable to violence. Afghanistan is still dependent on the international community. The vision for Afghanistan 15 years from now is to be much less dependent on the international community. In other words, not to be a burden on you the way we are today. We will continue to be somehow in need of assistance from you 10 or 15 years from now, but not to be a burden on you as we are today, but to be a partner with the international community in a more meaningful manner. Where Afghan households, the most important of all, where Afghan households when they go to bed at night are sure that neither the Afghan government nor somebody else, nor terrorists, are going to be at their doorsteps to harass them or to take them away; that Afghan live returns to safety and security, the safety of life and the safety of environment; that Afghanistan's women if they decide to go and work and educate themselves have the opportunity; that Afghanistan's people are treated within their own country by their own doctors and are not going to Pakistan for treatment or to India for treatment or the richer ones to Europe and America for treatment; that Afghanistan provides for itself; that democracy is truly, firmly institutionalized, and that Afghanistan is seen by the rest of the world as a country where you can visit as tourists and not as aid workers or NGOs to help Afghanistan, but a country that you would want to enjoy to visit and take back memories from; an Afghanistan that would engage in the rest of the world in trade and

business; an Afghanistan that would export to the rest of the world, an Afghanistan that may not be producing Cadillacs or Jaguars, but an Afghanistan that would be sending plenty of pomegranates to America. You don't need to grow pomegranates in California. You'll have them from Afghanistan. An Afghanistan that sends you the best carpets, an Afghanistan that also sends you perhaps young computer experts for a cheaper pay, an Afghanistan that you will see as rising as a country that presents its culture and the current of its culture to you, an Afghanistan that you will not fear, an Afghanistan that you will like and love, an Afghanistan that will be safe for itself and safe for the rest of the world.

How do we go there is the question. We have one element of that in the strategy that was announced by President Obama, the AFGPAK Strategy, the Afghanistan-Pakistan Strategy, in fighting terrorism and in helping stabilize Afghanistan, and for that matter, as well Pakistan. What is the most important element in this strategy for Afghanistan in order for us to be sure that we are moving forward in the direction that we desire? One, the most important element in the strategy is the announcement of a civilian surge for Afghanistan. A civilian surge means sending your experts to Afghanistan to build Afghan capacity, to act on the Afghan ability to produce and produce better, and to act on the Afghan ability to produce better in agriculture and in water management and in all

other areas of economic activity. But will this surge bring us that objective? And how is it going to bring us that objective? In our opinion and in a few short words, it will bring us that objective, we will achieve it provided the surge of civilians is done in accordance with the requirements of Afghanistan, with the plans of Afghanistan shared and supported by and agreed with by the United States, and in a manner that will add to Afghan capacity building, that 5 years from now or 10 years from now when your experts go back home with a lot of gratitude from Afghans, they will have Afghans trained in their place to take on and take the country forward.

The second element of the strategy is military to combat terrorism. Afghanistan will fully participate in this war against terrorism for its own survival and better future. But what is the most important thing needed in order to have Afghans go with it as they did in 2002 and as they are doing today? To take the Afghan people into full confidence, it's to have the Afghan people trust in this war as one that is against terrorism and one that will eventually deliver Afghanistan out of its difficulties of violence and into a safer and better future. And in that, the most important element is making sure, making sure absolutely that Afghans don't suffer the consequences of it as they do suffer today, that the Afghan civilians are protected, that they see that this war is against terrorism and that it

brings them safety and security, and that the Afghans see that their Army is being trained in the process, that their police is being trained in the process, that Afghans see on a daily basis that with the surge life improves, that with the surge security improves, and that with the participation of the rest of the world the Afghan Army and the Afghan institutions providing security to our country are better and more enabled. In short, this strategy as it envisages a better life for the Afghans and Pakistanis and as it envisages the fight against terrorism will get us where we want to be provided we do what I described in simple words.

The future of Afghanistan in partnership with the United States and in the light of the strategy that we have described here will also require of the United States of America and our other partners to see Afghanistan also through the Afghan eyes. I've heard a lot of stereotypical remarks and views from America and the rest of the West on Afghanistan. I was reading yesterday about some dramas, some books written on which there were some plays in the U.K. on Afghan history in which a woman says, "God, peace be upon him." This was written in that article widely off the mark understanding of Afghanistan was described in that article. A woman says, an Afghan woman in this play, "God, peace be upon him." God doesn't need us to call peace be upon him. It's for the Prophet Muhammad where we say, "The Prophet, peace be upon him." If

a writer on Afghanistan in London is so off the mark not to recognize where the Afghan religious sayings are, where the Afghan cultural values are, there are possibilities of mistaking or misreading or misinterpreting Afghan culture or Afghan thinking. Afghans are requesting from our partners a respect for their culture, a respect for their history, and a respect that this is a country. Sometimes we find in the Western press that we are seen in the light of myths. Sometimes it's a utopian state of the highest beauty, sometimes it's the -- what is that thing Secretary Gates [said], Valhalla? -- We are neither a utopian state of great beauty nor a Valhalla that we see. We are a country like all other countries. We have a history of 5,000 years. We have done good things to ourselves and good things to others. We have done bad things to ourselves and bad things to others. We have been a prosperous country in the past, we have been a hungry country in the past, we have gone through starvations, through droughts, we have gone through plenty, we have gone through sufferings. We are a nation that has emotions, that has a history, that has institutions, that has traditional institutions that wants to be seen by the rest of the world especially our allies as an entity that has feelings and that is seeking a life that any human being would deserve.

In other words, ladies and gentlemen, this war against terrorism will succeed only if we fight it from a higher platform of morality.

Money can't buy you love as you say it in America no matter much it is, and force won't buy you obedience no matter how much it is. Therefore, we have to sit down and think of how we in cooperation with each other and with respect and understanding of each other and in seeing the needs and the realities of a country go forward toward a common objective. That common objective, that shared objective, can only be driven to toward an accomplishment if we believe in it together.

The Afghans began to believe in it with America and with the rest of the world, and the Afghans must be carried in that direction by reinforcing the belief that we have in the fight against terrorism and the success that we will have for all of us together. So a higher moral platform. In other words, a moral platform is the sure way of defeating terrorism and taking Afghanistan to safety and security and the United States and the rest of the world as well.

We are going to the Afghan elections very soon. The elections as all other elections in the second elections in countries that have suffered war-torn countries will be controversial and difficult. For me, as the President of Afghanistan today, there will be no greater accomplishment, no greater accomplishment but one in which I am either elected in a fair election or defeated in a fair election. Did I get it right? In which I am either elected in a fair election or defeated in a fair election.

Elected in a fair election would mean that the man that has gone to the polling station and has voted knows that he or she has voted for me and that can only happen if it is fair. And if the man and woman in Afghanistan that has gone to the polling station and has voted but voted by coercion and force of the state institutions or of the foreign presence or of the big guys in the country or whatever else, and if I am declared the elected leader of the country the next day, the man or woman who has not voted for me out of a free choice will know that the person who voted for the President also had a free choice so that I will be considered legitimate. But if someone has voted for me out of coercion or force of intimidation will know that I am not their legitimate President, or for that matter anybody else, and that's the day after which will have us face troubles in the country. That is what we don't want.

The future of Afghanistan really lies in a free election and a fair election. The future of democracy lies there. I hope that the Afghan government of which I have given the clearest possible instructions and our partners in the international community will make sure that Afghans go to a free and fair elections which is the best and the only way of institutionalizing democracy. And in that regard, ladies and gentlemen, you are aware that I have chosen my running mates yesterday, as you call them in America, my two Vice Presidents. One is Mohammad Fahim, that

I learned yesterday in the Western press is liked very much, and the other is Mr. Khalili who was my Vice President for the past 5 years. Why have I taken this decision?

As I mentioned earlier, in my 7 years of rule -- I don't like this rule thing. What's the substitute to rule? Government? Administration. Very good.

In my 7 years of administration in the past 7 years, Afghanistan became the home for all Afghans. Communists returned, those who were with the Soviets. Mujahedeen returned, those who had run away from the Taliban. By the way, both of them had run away from the Taliban, the communists and the Mujahedeen. Millions of refugees returned to Afghanistan. Women returned to Afghanistan. Businessmen returned to Afghanistan. All the Afghan ethnic groups returned to Afghanistan, and Afghanistan once again so happily for me became the home for all Afghans.

Today in the Parliament of Afghanistan you have seculars, you have religious, you have women, you have men, you have former Mujahedeen, you have former communists, you have businesspeople, you have this people, you have that people, you have everybody there. But one thing that did not go well in Afghanistan especially in the government was the representation of those who had served Afghanistan so well by

fighting the Soviets and the communists in the occupation of the former Soviet Union. Those were the Mujahedeen. Because they were in school in early ages and they left school to fight the Soviets, they remained uneducated. So when we began our government in the name of reform and efficiency, and for reform and efficiency, we had to take many of them out and replace them with former communists and those who were working in the Soviet era because they were educated, especially in the police and in the military institutions, and that left the thinking of the country that those veterans of our war against the Soviets were not treated well, and that I want to correct. One reason.

Second reason. The country needs to be united and Fahim Khan will be a factor of stability and unity for the Afghan people. He will be a Vice President that will be able to go to any part of the country and deliver. We need a man on whom we can rely in hard times. For a President that is extremely important, and Fahim Khan will deliver that. And Fahim Khan has been one of those people who contributed immensely in the war against terrorism, shoulder to shoulder with U.S. soldiers in Afghanistan, and that we just recognize, and therefore for stability, for continuity, for taking the country forward in difficult times we have decided to have him. It's good for us, it's good for America, and the

Washington Post and *New York Times* should know that and begin to write well about him.

There is one last thing that concerns the partnership with America. We have had ups and downs especially in the past year and a half in our relations with America. There were difficult moments over civilian casualties between us. There were tense moments over the issues of aid distribution and corruption and all that. But ladies and gentlemen, through this forum I would to inform the American people that the fundamentals of this relationship are very, very strong. Even those Afghans who have suffered in accidents of casualties, when they come to complain to me they ask me when I say what am I do to, they say, President, tell them not to do that, but we want their continued stay in Afghanistan, we want this partnership with them to continue into the future and we are grateful for that help given to the Afghan people.

The fundamentals of this relationship are very strong. Any future government of Afghanistan will be committed to this because the Afghanistan people want this partnership. And I want to reassure the American people that the Afghans are good partners, they recognize and appreciate the help you have given them, and they are strategic allies and they want to continue in this strategic alliance and the bonds are deeper and deeper because we have shed blood together, we have helped each

other together, and we are on a journey together. And there will be ups and downs and bumps as we move along this rugged highway which will have bumps and ups and downs, but the fundamentals are strong (inaudible) and the Afghans will continue this partnership, and that's also one of our election agendas, a strengthened partnership with America which means more money from America. Thank you very much.

In Afghanistan you don't get thirsty. Here you do. Is it because of the air conditioning? I think so. We open the windows and there's air and plenty of fresh air and birds chirp and blossoms.

MR. RIEDEL: Stale air. I don't think the Secret Service will let us open the windows, Mr. President. Mr. President, again I want to thank you for coming to Brookings. For those of you who don't know me, I am Bruce Riedel. I'm a Senior Fellow in the Saban Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institute, and I also had the honor of chairing President Obama's strategic review of American policy toward Afghanistan and Pakistan that was announced at the end of March.

PRESIDENT KARZAI: Good. Wonderful. Great work.

MR. RIEDEL: What we're going to do for the next half an hour or so is have a dialogue. I'm going to take the prerogative of the chair to ask the first couple of questions and then open it up to the audience, and we hope we can have a give and take. I also want to thank

you for bringing so many of my friends from the Afghan-Pakistan review who are all sitting here in the front row and for their contributions.

You talked about the journey that Afghanistan has taken over the last 7 years, and it's a very impressive journey. You mentioned in passing your neighbors, and I'd like to ask you about your neighbors starting with your neighbors to the east, Pakistan and India, both of them. How would you characterize their role in this journey over the last 7 years? These are two countries with an intense rivalry, and how do you expect that relationship to move ahead in the future?

PRESIDENT KARZAI: Well, this is a very, very important question, Mr. Riedel; indeed, a question that had the attention of Afghanistan and Pakistan and India and the United States with regard to the war on terror in a great deal. Pakistan is our neighbor, the closest of our neighbors. Pakistan is sharing a lot of history and blood relations with us. We are kin in many ways. Pakistan has looked after Afghans in a manner that no nation has ever looked after any other people in the history of mankind to the extent that we know. We have been there 30 years and 30 years we have lived as if we were the most honored of the Pakistanis for which we are grateful. We have the former Minister of Information of Pakistan, the man sitting there with us. Thank you for that. We have also had differences of opinion with certain elements of the

Pakistani policy for itself and for the region of Afghanistan. We think that radicalism or the use of instruments of violence promoted by religious radicalism or through the use of religious radicalism is not going to serve any purpose.

India has been a neighbor of Afghanistan on the other side, a distant neighbor. An old friend of Afghanistan for many, many years, and especially India has contributed massively to Afghanistan in the past 7 years. It gives us a thousand scholarships each year for Afghan graduates, 500 graduates in higher studies, 500 in vocational training. We have had as a result of that in the past 5 years hundreds of Afghans return to serve their country. India has contributed to the reconstruction of Afghanistan over a billion dollars and significantly in water projects and transmission lines for electricity, a very important role, the building of the Afghan Parliament and all that, a very powerful relationship.

Pakistan has contributed to the Afghan reconstruction by building roads in Afghanistan, by building kidney hospitals in Afghanistan. So relations with both countries are strong and fundamentally very, very important for Afghanistan and for the region. Pakistan has had a lot of influence in Afghanistan in the past 30 years because we were there as refugees, because we raised our jihad against the Soviets from Pakistan because the Pakistani institutions, the ISI and the military and others

helped the Afghan Mujahedeen to fight the Soviets. That brought Pakistan a lot of influence in Afghanistan. That influence had its plusses and minuses for Afghanistan and for the region. Pakistan is a rival with India, unfortunately, and they have issues with each other. So Pakistan does not like India's strong presence in Afghanistan which is what we don't agree with.

Our position is that Afghanistan is the closest neighbor of Pakistan, the closest brotherly-sisterly relationship with Pakistan. We are like conjoined twins. We are not separable. We are one. We are together. We are living together, we will die together, but we will not die, we'll continue living together. It's that important. But we also recognize that Pakistan understands that Afghanistan is a sovereign independent country and a very jealous country, by the way, with it comes to sovereignty and independence. We are a very jealous country when it comes to that. We love our independence like hell and our sovereignty and we keep it so jealously. That's why we have fought everybody. The only friends that we have is America now. We fought the Soviets, we fought the British, we fought everybody else because we wanted to keep this sense that we are independent, our sovereignty. And for that reason we are requesting our friends in Pakistan that we will have relations with India because we are sovereign and we will have relations with India

because it's in our interests. But our relations with India will never be against relations with Pakistan or at the expense of relations with Pakistan, it will be a contribution of relations to Pakistan.

Having said that, for Pakistan, for Afghanistan and for India, it's extremely important to join hands in the war against extremism and radicalism and the terrorism that it brings to our lives together, and we seek this partnership with America and Europe together the three countries in the region. If we do it together this menace will go away sooner rather than later.

MR. RIEDEL: Thank you for that. I can't help but ask one other question before I open it up, and that's your other neighbor to the west, Iran.

PRESIDENT KARZAI: Your friend.

MR. RIEDEL: Our friend, which as you know, a country which gets a lot of attention from this country. How do you feel Iran interacts with Afghanistan on the questions of stability and peace in the region?

PRESIDENT KARZAI: Iran has been a member participant of the Bonn Conference 7 years ago. It helped America and the rest of the world establish the Afghan interim government. It participated very, very well in the transformation of Afghanistan from the rule of the Taliban

to the present. It sees its interests in Afghanistan in terms of the stability of Afghanistan, the war on narcotics, the smuggling of drugs. It sees its interests in Afghanistan in being friendly to Iran and being friendly in the region. It sees an interest in Afghanistan in trying to fend off the possible dangers that it can have from the perception of the relations that they have with the United States and the West. So Iran has contributed to the stability and peace and reconstruction of Afghanistan. Iran has been listening to Afghanistan as well with regard to relations with Iran and to relations in the region. And Iran has been naturally fearful as well of the consequences of the Western and America stay in Afghanistan for them. In this context, we have been very frank and blunt I may say with both America and Iran. We have told the Americans that Afghanistan should not be a place for rivalry between America and Iran, and we have said exactly the same thing to the Iranians, that Afghanistan should be kept away from their differences that they have. Rather, we have tried our best to work between the two countries to befriend them. We have had occasions of this having been seen in good light, we have had occasions of this having been seen not so successful, but our effort is to continue to provide advice to both countries on improving relations. We find that very much in the interests of Afghanistan, we find that very much in the interests of Iran, we find that very much in the interests of America. So it's

been a good relationship, a relationship that in which we have tried to keep a very delicate balance between the two countries. So far we have succeeded in keeping that balance between the two countries and we would like to continue there. I liked President Obama's remarks on Iran and the desire to improve relations with Iran by Secretary Clinton. I would want to see the same reaction from our Iranian brothers, and we would very much like that.

MR. RIEDEL: Thank you. Let me open it up to you now. I'll take one more prerogative of the chair and call upon my colleague Mike O'Hanlon from the Brookings Institute also to ask a question.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you, Bruce. Thank you, Mr. President, for being here and for what you've done for our country and for our partnership. In terms of the review that's now been completed, do you feel that the number of resources from the United States are going to be enough to begin to mitigate these problems of air strikes and other kind of civilian casualty issues that you've been so concerned about in your country? And if I could follow-up, how long do you expect it will take until we see progress? This is a question on Americans' minds and on Afghans' minds. How long do you think before we see the strategy really begin to kick in and make progress on the ground?

PRESIDENT KARZAI: Well, the Afghans, when the United States was leaving Helmand Province in the southern parts of the country, they came to me in 2004 and asked the U.S. not to leave, but the U.S. did, and now we have the problems that we have there. The addition of resources to Afghanistan in the war on terrorism is a good change in the right direction, but it must be very carefully applied. Careful means we must make sure that it is interpreted in positive terms by our neighbors. I've had indications recently from the Pakistani press that they are worried about the addition of troops, and Pakistan is your ally. Therefore the United States must go to Pakistan and explain this as a step that's in the right direction that's going to produce the needed results in the war on terrorism.

Second, for Afghanistan it must provide better protection for Afghan civilians, better security for Afghan civilians. And in the direction of providing better security and better protection for the Afghan people, the Afghans will understand when there are difficulties arising as we move to strengthen our presence there.

The number of years that it will require to succeed, the image it imparts in providing better security to the Afghan people will be sooner if we do it correctly and that means a lot of detail that the defense people will have to work out. In the longer term, the war on terrorism will

succeed only if it is also addressed in a political matter. It's not a military question alone. It's more a political question now. You have to have immense confidence given to Pakistan that Pakistan will be a country that will be stable, that Pakistani integrity is going to be respected, that Afghanistan as it moves forward in strength and in developing its forces and its economy will be an asset to Pakistan as a friend and not a reverse of that, and that Afghanistan will be a partner with Pakistan in that. And in return we must seek from Pakistan a very clear moving away from whatever links that there may be with radical forces or the use of radicalism. Unless we do that, we will continue to be bogged down, we will continue to suffer, and an improvement of relations between India and Pakistan will be another very positive addition to our quicker success. I was trying to be very careful, you know.

MR. RIEDEL: In the back, please, Gary.

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Bruce, and thank you, President Karzai. Gary Mitchell from "The Mitchell Report." You used a very interesting phrase in your remarks and I want to ask you about that. You said that we need to fight terrorism from a higher moral platform, and I wondered if you could flesh that out for us a little bit and describe what that means to fight terrorism from a higher moral platform and whether that's directed at a specific audience.

PRESIDENT KARZAI: I also said before that money won't buy you love and that force wouldn't buy you obedience. Look, this is, well, clever. You caught the right thing, sir. That's very remarkable. I'm grateful you're putting me back on this question. I'm a pacifist by nature and I think every human being should be that. We must be seeking peace and peaceful means. The respect for life is I believe the best of the human nature. I was pained like you wouldn't imagine last year when I saw a clip on CNN a man throwing a 3-year-old or 2-year-old baby, I don't know if it was in California or somewhere on a highway. Some of you must have seen that. It was last year. And subsequent to that, a man was interviewed who had seen that incident, and the pain that I saw on that man's face describing that scene and what he saw showed immense humanity in that man and the suffering that humans have for each other.

When I say the higher platform of morality, it means to share the pain of others and to recognize it, that families are families and children are children whether they're poor or rich, that the poor love their children as much as the rich love, and that has to be -- that is what I mean by moral platform or higher moral platform, that we care for life. Now I'm not going to go into more detail on this. A higher moral platform means that we must be conducting this war as better human beings because we are better than the guys that are fighting us. We must prove that we are

better than the guys that are fighting us and that we have a higher moral standard.

MR. RIEDEL: I think you've made your point eloquently and diplomatically, Mr. President. Carol?

MS. GRAHAM: Carol Graham from Brookings. We've just finished a study of well-being and life satisfaction in Afghanistan working with some colleagues in Kabul. One of the things that we find I think that's quite remarkable is coexisting with low levels of trust in public institutions and low levels of trust in other citizens. The Afghans seem to have by world standards very high happiness levels, a tremendous amount of hope for the future, and very strong preferences for political democracy.

PRESIDENT KARZAI: Yes, they do.

MS. GRAHAM: So my question to you is how can you see both the government, the Afghan community, supporting those positive sentiments, but also how can your allies, the strategy with the United States, how can we support those positive trends going forward?

PRESIDENT KARZAI: You mean that you found the Afghans to be happier people with their lives than the richer countries or other countries?

MS. GRAHAM: Higher than the world average on par with Latin Americans who are generally much wealthier, but also equally

important, much more hopeful for the future. In other words, believing that poor people can get ahead and then become wealthy. All sorts of --

PRESIDENT KARZAI: The Bhutanese have a great attitude toward life. They don't call their economy in terms of the gross national product or gross national income. They call -- their lives, their standard is called the gross national happiness, and that's wonderful. I asked the Prime Minister of Bhutan to give me what they have and he sent me a book and I went to it. Yes, the Afghans are happier generally with their lives because of where there is no terrorists life is very good. They go to school. They have their farms. God gave us a lot of rain this year and I hope he will continue to give us all that rain. But this is something that is easily damageable and that's why the success that we are seeking in the fight against terrorism and the overall stability of the region is very, very important in order for it to sustain.

A greater part of this overall happiness of our Afghans is also because of the taxpayer's money that we got for Afghanistan. It's extremely important for the American taxpayer to know that the money that they send has brought a lot of improvement to Afghan life. That's one side of it. The other side of it is that the Afghans are a hearty people anyway. Any other nation gone through so much suffering would have been in an extremely difficult psychological environment today, but the

Afghans are still going on and in 30 years of war and destruction. So it's the nature of the people and the help of your taxpayer's money that has made is a happier lot. Continue it.

MR. RIEDEL: Please, in the back. The lady right there.

MS. LAKSHMANAN: I'm Indira Lakshmanan from Bloomberg News, and we last met in Kabul when you were still head of the transitional administration.

PRESIDENT KARZAI: Right.

MS. LAKSHMANAN: Nice to see you again. I want to ask whether you feel you have the trust and support you need from the Obama Administration and the U.S. Congress, and if not, what are you going to say this week to allay any doubts in Washington about your government's ability to fight terrorism and corruption and to effectively deliver services to the Afghan people?

PRESIDENT KARZAI: As I mentioned in my remarks, the past year and a half has seen a difficult period in this relationship with regard to civilian casualties and other issues, but as I also said, the fundamentals are very, very, very strong, and those fundamentals are moving us toward the future with greater hope and greater assertiveness toward a better life helped by America. The U.S. administration has been helping us and will continue to help us. Now we know what each side

thinks about the issues that we have and we have sorted some of them. I'll be sorting out the rest of it I hope in this trip with the U.S. administration. The Afghan government has a plan. The Afghan government has a plan for security in the country or the fight against terrorism, improvement of services which is immensely better today as compared to the past, so that that will not be the sticking issues between us. I think there are large issues concerning the region, concerning the overall impact of what we are trying to produce together in the region in the fight against terrorism that will be the main issues. And of course I will have to convey to the American administration, I will have to bring to them, that they ought to trust in Afghanistan and that they also surely do trust the Afghan people as we move forward. So trust is there. It has to be washed a little.

MR. RIEDEL: One last question. Yes, right here.

MS. NAURATH: My name is Nicole Naurath and I'm from the Gallup Poll. We have conducted two surveys in Afghanistan most recently in December, and in fact we're going back into the field this month. But in the last survey in December we asked all Afghans if they felt that the Taliban had a positive influence on the city or area where they lived and only 10 percent said yes, and in my estimation, in my opinion I think that's very low support.

PRESIDENT KARZAI: For the Taliban?

MS. NAURATH: Excuse me?

PRESIDENT KARZAI: For the Taliban?

MS. NAURATH: Right. The question was do you think that they have a positive influence in the city or area where you live or not, 10 percent said yes. My question is why is it then that I feel like there is a rise in the Taliban and they've become stronger recently when they really don't have a lot of support in Afghanistan?

PRESIDENT KARZAI: A very important question. Ma'am, can I go to the question of sanctuaries?

MS. REHMAN: Mr. President, it's your forum.

PRESIDENT KARZAI: The war on terrorism, the Taliban, the violence, Ambassador Holbrooke had the best remarks that I've ever heard from a U.S. official. He said no matter how economically powerful Afghanistan is or becomes, no matter how effective a government Afghanistan has, no matter how powerful an Army and the security institutions Afghanistan has, unless the sanctuaries in our neighbors, the training grounds in our neighbors go away, Afghanistan will not be stable or peaceful. The return of the Taliban is because we did not address the question of sanctuaries in time.

Unfortunately, today Pakistan is suffering for this massively in a consequence of that. And tomorrow we will have an occasion between us, Afghanistan, Pakistan and America, to discuss this very question that you've raised in depth and try to find answers for that, and Afghanistan will do all that it can in immense friendship and brotherhood with Pakistan and alliance and friendship with America to address it.

MR. RIEDEL: Thank you, Mr. President. I think you ended for us on a note we'll all want to know what the answer is tomorrow. If I could ask you all to please stay in your seats, the Secret Service would ask you to stay in this room while the President and his party departs. Again thank you very much.

PRESIDENT KARZAI: Thank you very much.

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CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY PUBLIC

I, Carleton J. Anderson, III do hereby certify that the forgoing electronic file when originally transmitted was reduced to text at my direction; that said transcript is a true record of the proceedings therein referenced; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which these proceedings were taken; and, furthermore, that I am neither a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

/s/Carleton J. Anderson, III

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