

## Keynote Presentation: Co-ordinating International Actors in Post-Conflict State-Building: The Case of Afghanistan 2001-2007

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### CHAPTER 1 – INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY CO-ORDINATION

When the international community intervenes in another state which has failed or is deemed to be on the point of failure, recent experience in the Balkans, Iraq and Afghanistan suggests that multifarious organisations become involved in ways which are frequently uncoordinated. This is because the 'international community' acts coherently only to the extent that its members, whether states or organisations, are prepared to subjugate their individual interests to the interests of common goals to the benefit of the target state. This, of course, assumes that common goals have been defined. Although the intervention may have some

sort of umbrella mandate, such as a United Nations Security Council Resolution<sup>1</sup>, the organisations which become involved in the failed state will owe varying degrees of allegiance to the umbrella authority. Moreover, some of these organisations will operate predominantly in the target state while others will be largely external actors, albeit usually with some form of representative in country. These organisations will have their own reasons for intervention and they will have differing mandates. As international or non-governmental organisations (IOs and NGOs) some may well have been operating in the state at various stages in its downfall; simultaneous intervention by all actors is unlikely<sup>2</sup>. As the state emerges from its failure with the assistance of the international community it will also spawn its own institutions whose mandates, and hopefully capabilities, will increasingly overlap and assume responsibility from the international community. The role of the actors will therefore evolve over time.

The success of the intervention will be based not on the effectiveness of all these actors individually, but on the efficiency of their overall effort. At a certain point the overall co-ordination should pass to the indigenous authorities of the state, but it is likely to be years, if not decades, before the host authorities have the requisite capacity and/or authority to act independently of the external actors. The challenge for the international community is to get all those involved to adhere to an overall plan or at least a common vision of what the state should look like in order to produce a coherent solution to the crisis which takes into account the evolution of indigenous authority. This is not merely some managerial exercise for the sake of bureaucratic or military tidiness. The earlier this planning effort can take place and the more actors engaged in it, the greater momentum is likely to be achieved, particularly in the critical first few months of the intervention<sup>3</sup>. This requires strong leadership. The key issue, and therefore the question which this dissertation seeks to answer, is how diverse international actors formulate a single strategy for state-building and deliver that strategy in a coherent manner. In absolute terms they never have done and probably never will – any search for perfect unity amongst such diverse actors is likely to be a counter-productive wild goose chase; the practical limit is therefore the extent to which coherence adds value.

Although considerable work has been done on individual aspects of state-building such as humanitarian relief, reconstruction and development, security sector reform etc, the co-ordination of the diversity of actors in a failed state has tended to be done *ad hoc*, largely dependent on the personalities of the key actors. The interim stage of what may be termed protectorates<sup>4</sup>, where the international community exercises primary responsibility for the

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<sup>1</sup> Either before the intervention or post facto, as in the case of Iraq.

<sup>2</sup> Even in situations where military intervention opens the way for humanitarian assistance, such as Northern Iraq in 1991, some IOs and NGOs will almost invariably have operated in the area in some capacity.

<sup>3</sup> The importance of this initial period is a recurring theme in the literature on this subject: James Dobbins' *Beginners Guide to Nation Building* refers to the 'Golden Hour'; Paddy Ashdown defines this as the first 100 days in *Swords into Ploughshares*. The Brahimi Report ([http://www.un.org/peace/reports/peace\\_operations](http://www.un.org/peace/reports/peace_operations)) talks about the first 6-12 weeks. Not only are the foundations of reconstruction and governance usually established during this period, from which it is subsequently difficult to change tack, but progress during this 'honeymoon period' appears to be a critical measure against which the population decides whether or not to support the international community or revert to insurgency. The term 'post-conflict' state-building is therefore itself hostage to the ability to make sufficient progress in order to avoid reversion into conflict.

<sup>4</sup> The Cambridge University Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (CRASSH) hosted a conference from 6 to 8 June 2007 on international administration and the dilemmas of governance in what it described as 'new protectorates', defined as 'a diversity of contemporary efforts to build states under international tutelage which are often discussed under the more specific headings of international administration, trusteeship, or even peace-building' and encompassing Afghanistan.

administration and rebuilding of the state has been dealt with in the arguably unique case of Bosnia by, amongst others, Carl Bildt and Paddy Ashdown, but co-ordination throughout the transition from international intervention through protectorate to indigenous authority has received scant analysis. If individual aspects of the process or discrete windows during this transition are analyzed or planned in isolation, overall coherence is likely to be lost; a long term comprehensive approach is necessary in order to avoid early mistakes which set trends or patterns from which it is subsequently difficult or impossible to extract<sup>5</sup>.

In order to appreciate the difficulties of coherent planning, decision making and execution, 'it is hard to imagine a more difficult place for the would-be nation-builder to tackle than Afghanistan. It would seem – on paper at least – more challenging than Iraq. The third poorest country in the world, emerging from 25 years of war with 30 million heavily-armed, mostly illiterate people attracted to conservative Islam; barren, mountainous, and sustaining itself through the production of eighty per cent of the world's heroin'<sup>6</sup>. More than this, Afghanistan has a more diverse range of actors than any other comparable situation. If successful co-ordination of these actors can be achieved in Afghanistan, the lessons are more likely to be broadly applicable to future situations than, say, the much more defined challenge of Bosnia; there may even be a chance of 'meeting what I believe is the principal challenge for international relations scholars of my generation: finding the means to fix failing states and to de-radicalise violent societies'<sup>7</sup>.

In terms of methodology, the key co-ordination issues are how the actors routinely harmonize their activities before a crisis; this will not only educate the actors in working together: it will also establish relationships which will serve co-ordination well in the event of a crisis. Secondly what are the options for the legal and political framework within which the international community intervenes? This will determine the relationship between the actors and may dictate how co-ordination is to be achieved. And thirdly, the way in which the planning for intervention is conducted determines the overall strategy of the international community, or at least those elements which engage in the planning, in the failed state. My hypothesis is that the greater the routine co-ordination between actors, the more robust the framework of the intervention, particularly in terms of a single defined co-ordinating authority and the more inclusive the planning, and the more the international community is prepared to take a long-term view which takes account of the evolution of the target state, the greater chance there will be of rapid progress in re-building the state and transition to full indigenous control and safe international disengagement.

In order to test this hypothesis, this thesis will look first at the generic difficulties of co-ordination in such circumstances, then address the specifics of Afghanistan starting with the planning for international intervention in 2001. Chapter 3 will look at how that planning has been executed over the last 5 years, identifying where co-ordination has succeeded and where it has failed. Finally the thesis will attempt to draw lessons from Afghanistan which may be useful in similar circumstances in the future.

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<sup>5</sup> Such as the 2003 decision on disbandment of the Iraqi Army and de-Baathification of the interim Iraqi authorities.

<sup>6</sup> Rory Stewart, The Turquoise Foundation (NGO), Kabul. Stewart had previously been a UK Government coordinator in Iraq. From a personal practitioner's perspective it was without doubt the hardest co-ordination challenge in over 30 years of soldiering in failed states and peacekeeping missions.

<sup>7</sup> From Africa to Afghanistan. Greg Mills.

## HOW DOES THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY DECIDE WHAT FORM OF INTERIM ADMINISTRATION IS SUITABLE POST INTERVENTION?

Intervention in a sovereign state by another state or the international community is *prima facie* prohibited<sup>8</sup>. But ‘intervention’ in the context of failed or failing states is not the preserve of other states or the international community: there are numerous examples of involvement by IOs and NGOs in failing states which obviate, pre-empt or pre-date wider international intervention. Such ‘intervention’ is normally done at the invitation of the host state and is clearly preferable to wider intervention which, for the purposes of this thesis, is restricted to cases where the host state either does not, normally on the grounds that the issue is within the domestic jurisdiction of the state, or cannot, by virtue of its failure, agree. In such cases the most likely approach by members of the international community since the end of the Cold War has been under Chapter VII of the UN Charter<sup>9</sup>, not least because the Security Council’s definition of what constitutes a threat to international peace and security has broadened over time. That said, the cases of Kosovo and Iraq have demonstrated a lack of consensus on the legality of international intervention which necessitated retrospective Security Council action<sup>10</sup>. Nevertheless, ‘why was the UN established, if not to act as a benign policeman or doctor?’

Can we really afford to let each state be the judge of its own right, or duty, to intervene in another state’s internal conflict? If we do, will we not be forced to legitimise Hitler’s championship of the Sudeten Germans, or Soviet intervention in Afghanistan? Most of us would prefer, I think – especially that the Cold War is over – to see such decisions taken collectively, by an international institution whose authority is generally respected<sup>11</sup>. If this and my hypothesis are true, the logical deduction is that the UN should not only be the institution which decides whether an intervention should take place and sets the strategic framework, but that it should also take responsibility for greater routine co-ordination between actors, particularly in terms of a single defined co-ordinating authority inside the failed state. Indeed, the UN had aspired to this in the wake of the Cold War in its Agenda for Peace<sup>12</sup> proposals of January 1992: ‘a conviction has grown ... that an opportunity has to be regained to achieve the great objectives of the Charter – a United Nations capable of maintaining international peace and security ... The Organisation must never again be crippled as it was in the era that has now passed’. But, if anything, Somalia, Rwanda and Bosnia left it even more crippled than it had been. The 1995 Supplement<sup>13</sup> to the Agenda for Peace attempted to redress the deficiencies which had resulted in those failures and UN aspirations have been refined over the last decade in a series of papers which build on the Agenda for Peace: the 2000 Brahimi Report on UN Peace Operations<sup>14</sup> and the 2001 International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty<sup>15</sup> echo the laudable aspirations, but have largely fallen on deaf ears.

<sup>8</sup> Article 2 of the United Nations Charter.

<sup>9</sup> Article 2(7) of the Charter provides that “Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorise the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state or shall require the Members to submit such matters to settlement under the present Charter; but this principle shall not prejudice the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII’.

<sup>10</sup> Eg UNSCR 1483 on 22 May 2003 in respect of Iraq.

<sup>11</sup> Kofi Annan, UN Secretary General, in an address at Ditchley Park, 26 June 1998.

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.un.org/Docs/SG/agpeace.html>.

<sup>13</sup> A/50/60-S/1995/1 dated 3 January 1995 (<http://www.un.org/Docs/SG/agsupp.html>).

<sup>14</sup> [http://www.un.org/peace/reports/peace\\_operations](http://www.un.org/peace/reports/peace_operations).

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.iciss.ca/pdf/Commission-Report.pdf>.

Whatever the legal basis for intervention, there is, and can be, no single template for what Part VI of the Agenda for Peace described as Peace Building in a failed state; much will depend on how the failure occurs and on the umbrella organisation under which the intervention takes place. Several models have been used which merit analysis from the perspective of co-ordination:

In theory Chapters XII and XIII of the UN Charter create a system of International Trusteeship which could act as a template for international intervention, but the Trusteeship Council has no extant role<sup>16</sup>. Under Chapter VII of the UN Charter there are several sub-options:

The intervention may be UN-led as was the case in Somalia<sup>17</sup>. This has the advantage of being highly inclusive in terms of both the likely number of states participating in the intervention and also in terms of perception: it genuinely looks like the international community acting in unison. However, the apparatus of the UN, while optimised for inclusivity and consensus, is unsuited for the type of rapid decision making required in the failed state and tends to produce 'lowest common denominator' solutions reflecting the maximum which the UN market will bear. Moreover, nations have not resourced the capabilities aspired to in the Agenda for Peace. The UN was also designed to deal with states and, given that non-state actors are increasingly relevant both as contributors and threats to Peace Building, this type of mission has proved unwieldy for multi-agency co-ordination in a complex environment, especially where the security situation demands Chapter VII action<sup>18</sup>. The perceived failures of such a model, exemplified by Somalia, Bosnia<sup>19</sup> and Rwanda<sup>20</sup>, have led the international community away from UN leadership, towards the alliance and coalition options discussed below.

Alternatively the Security Council may authorize<sup>21</sup> an individual member state to act on its behalf. In terms of co-ordination this model has the legitimacy provided by the UN without many of the disadvantages, particularly inside the failed state where the lead nation, shielded by a higher national authority in its home state, is largely immune from the deliberations of New York. However, this is perceived by many as neo-imperialism<sup>22</sup> and it carries huge political risk; certainly the situation in Korea is unlikely to be repeated, irrespective of its efficiency. Moreover, few nations are individually capable of running a military theatre of operations, let alone the civil administration and co-ordination mechanisms which are implicit in such a task.

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<sup>16</sup> Although calls have been made for reform of the Charter to enable the Trusteeship Council to operate in failed states.

<sup>17</sup> The UN Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM).

<sup>18</sup> This option should, however, not be dismissed for less complex or more benign situations, especially those which are capable of resolution under Chapter VI of the UN Charter.

<sup>19</sup> The UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) was replaced by NATO's Implementation Force (IFOR).

<sup>20</sup> The UN Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR).

<sup>21</sup> Under Chapter VIII of the Charter as in Korea or Somalia under UNITAF (December 1992–April 1993).

<sup>22</sup> Especially if the lead nation appears intent on circumventing the supra-national co-ordinating mechanism as was apparent in US efforts to woo partners for intervention in Iraq during 2002.

A compromise which avoids the pedantry of the UN General Assembly and perceptions of neo-imperialism is a UN mandate which authorises a regional organisation to act on its behalf in co-ordinating the international response<sup>23</sup>. This model also has the distinct advantage of treating the issue as regional: the region is seen to be dealing with its own problems, applying regional factors in the solution. However, there may be no effective regional body capable of dealing with the situation, as with Afghanistan, and it presupposes that international actors from outwith the region will conform with the regional body. It also adds a further layer of bureaucracy which may dissuade actors whose structures are flat<sup>24</sup>, as opposed to hierarchical, from co-ordination.

Between the 2 extremes of Chapter VIII above lies a mandate which authorises a coalition or alliance to co-ordinate the international response. A military alliance, such as NATO, has the advantage in the early stages of the intervention of being most able to exercise the authority vested in it: it will have some sort of headquarters in the failed state with robust communications links to the outside world and potentially to non-military actors; it will have planning capacity; and it will be commanding the security force which is likely to be a key enabler for other actors in the initial stages. However, unless it can adapt both its structures and procedures, as proposed in Chapter 3 below, it will likely be perceived by non-military actors as a tool for military, as opposed to overall, co-ordination.

If a peace treaty already exists or is in prospect, the Security Council is likely to attempt to build a mandate around it. Ideally this would be under Chapter VI where the warring factions within the failed state are party to the treaty, but it can be under Chapter VII as in Bosnia where IFOR's mandate was built on the Dayton Accords. In terms of co-ordination, this has the likely advantage of greater security from the outset within which other actors can operate with confidence; but this does rely on the existence of some sort of residual or latent authority in the failed state, or at least in its external guarantors<sup>25</sup>.

#### HOW DO THE VARIOUS ACTORS TRADITIONALLY CO-ORDINATE THEIR ACTIVITIES IN THE FAILED STATE?

Within these overall frameworks there is still considerable scope for variation, depending on the situation. While the UN or other supra-national may be an appropriate forum for the setting of the strategy, the co-ordination of the delivery of the resulting plan needs an in-country forum. This may be an extension of the UN such as a mission headquarters, typically with a Special Representative of the Secretary General<sup>26</sup>. Others have written about the selection of the individuals within it, but it is the model which bears examination. It must encompass the majority<sup>27</sup> of the key areas of activity<sup>28</sup> implicit in the intervention, typically

<sup>23</sup> Under Chapter VIII of the Charter as in Kuwait and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

<sup>24</sup> Including most NGOs who would at least claim to be congenitally opposed to what they see as 'quill-pushing'; see the section below on characteristics of actors.

<sup>25</sup> In Bosnia the warring factions were externally supported by Serbia and Croatia who could be pressed to influence the behaviour of their surrogates.

<sup>26</sup> Eg UNMIK in Kosovo.

<sup>27</sup> It is unrealistic to expect it to encompass all, particularly small NGOs whose owe no allegiance.

the military, governance, economic and political; but it cannot operate effectively if it attempts to include representatives of all the organisations involved: it needs to be an executive steering group, the members of which have influence over, and ideally some form of responsibility for, the delivery of the plan. It is therefore axiomatic that some form of structure may be required in which sub-committees are established for respective areas or 'pillars', as they have come to be known. The structure must be capable of evolving, particularly as the institutions of the failed state are regenerated; they need to be integrated into the structure and eventually supersede it. As a result, individual solutions have been devised to co-ordinate such interventions. In Bosnia under Dayton a High Representative was appointed who exercised overall co-ordination through the Group of Principals: the heads of the key international organisations. UN administration arguably reached its apogee in Kosovo where UNMIK corralled most of the organisations involved in the civil aspects of reconstruction; even there, the military force remained under NATO command.

Moreover, the co-ordination construct must be capable of evolving. If external military intervention has taken place, the military advantage over other actors in terms of co-ordination, by virtue of its physical presence if nothing else, will or should be short-lived as the security situation is brought under control and the non-military actors are able to operate more freely. Furthermore in perception terms, military control should only be a temporary mechanism for co-ordination; the maturity of the international response and of the indigenous authorities, indeed the whole rehabilitation process in the failed state, is judged, at least in the majority of the international community, by the ability to transition as soon as possible to some sort of civil authority. But what happens when the military actors cannot achieve a secure environment in the short term? Or what is to be the co-ordinating mechanism in a country where the situation is sufficiently benign in parts to achieve democratic elections, but the resulting indigenous authorities are unable to exercise their new-found power? All of this, and more, pertained in Afghanistan.

#### WHO ARE THE KEY ACTORS AND WHY IS CO-ORDINATION DIFFICULT TO ACHIEVE?

In order to effect co-ordination to the extent that it adds value, it is necessary to understand the differences between the actors in terms of their mechanisms and approaches to co-ordination. They fall into the following broad categories:

1. International Organisations (IOs). For the purposes of this thesis IOs are non-Afghan, non-humanitarian/charitable, civilian organisations. Some are legal entities in international law and can therefore be party to agreements, treaties and conventions. Their staff may be accorded diplomatic status. The United Nations is likely to be a key IO in any international intervention, not least in the legitimisation process. Depending on what structure the international community adopts for the failed state, some form of in-country mission is likely to be adopted with 2 primary purposes: to act as an umbrella organisation for the various organs of the UN and to co-ordinate the activity, at least of those UN elements and potentially of all the actors. One of the key challenges in co-ordination is that the UN agencies owe dual allegiance both

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<sup>28</sup> The military would describe these as lines of operation.

to their own parent body, with its head office in New York, and to the SRSG in country. If the SRSG is not the overall co-ordinating authority within the failed state, this adds a further filter or level of bureaucracy in the co-ordination process. Key IOs which are likely to operate in the failed state are:

- a. The UN Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) (formerly UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs) was established specifically to co-ordinate international emergency responses, drawing together UNHCR, UNDP, UNICEF, WFP and WHO. UNDP itself acts to promote effective and culturally appropriate governance through its Democracy, Governance and Participation Programme and may therefore play a co-ordination role in this area. However, NGOs may or may not recognise a co-ordinating function in their respective UN IO: Save the Children Fund and other children's charities will invariably attempt to co-exist and de-conflict with UNICEF but will not necessarily acknowledge any co-ordinating role. Likewise, Médecins Sans Frontières and others working to better the health situation in the failed state may act under general WHO guidelines, but are unlikely to see the requirement or advantage in having some sort of overall 'health supremo'. Interestingly this anarchic situation is in practice likely to continue as long as the NGOs are in country, even after indigenous authority is established<sup>29</sup>.
- b. The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is arguably in a unique position as an NGO as well as an IO. It encompasses the International Committee of the Red Cross<sup>30</sup> (ICRC) and other affiliated societies. Its mandate is derived from the 1949 Geneva Conventions and 2 additional protocols signed in 1977. Its purpose is to promote international legal norms particularly with respect to humane conduct. It works to secure and protect rights of prisoners of war, civilian internees, displaced persons and refugees. Funding comes from the Swiss Government, parties to the Geneva Conventions and from donations. In terms of co-ordination therefore, it is essential that the ICRC maintains a degree of independence. It can be a hugely influential ally; other actors therefore fail to understand and engage with it at their peril, but its mandate is equally applicable to the international actors themselves: it can be a double-edged sword.
- c. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is mandated with maintaining a stable system of currency exchange among its member states. It may lend money to members but invariably against conditions for use normally linked to public finances, economic management and the balance of payments. Membership is voluntary, with each member

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<sup>29</sup> Even a democratically elected government, in whose country NGOs are now guests, should not automatically assume the allegiance of NGOs. In Afghanistan several NGOs have shunned co-ordination with the Government of Afghanistan on the pretext of maintaining impartiality. See Chapter 3 below.

<sup>30</sup> The ICRC works to a board of governors drawn from prominent members of Swiss Society. It has observer status in the UN General Assembly and its chief delegate in New York has monthly access to the President of the Security Council.



state contributing a quota subscription based on its wealth and economic performance. Its Board of Governors comprises the finance ministers or heads of central banks of the members<sup>31</sup>. The World Bank borrows money from world markets and member states, all of which are members of the IMF, in order to make loans to nations for development projects. In terms of co-ordination it habitually works with UN agencies such as UNDP and leading NGOs. Co-ordination with both organisations requires engagement not just inside the failed state, where their representation is likely to be relatively light, but also at the international level. This perhaps best highlights the fact that co-ordination of international intervention cannot be achieved on a single level: effective co-ordination will only be achieved by engagement at the supra-national, national and sub-national levels. If the co-ordinating authority or mechanism at these various levels is not itself coherent, overall co-ordination of the intervention will suffer. This is a particular issue where a single nation, regional body or coalition is designated as the co-ordinating mechanism in the failed state; it will need strong support at the supra-national level if its work is not to be undermined by IOs operating predominantly at that level.

2. Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs). Thousands of private organisations are formally recognised as NGOs by the UN by virtue of their consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)<sup>32</sup>. However, in practice the term is applied to any private organisation involved in humanitarian or charitable activity. The number of NGOs has increased significantly since the end of the Cold War, as has the scope of their activity. NGOs see and express themselves purely in humanitarian terms: they baulk at any suggestion of their utility as an instrument of international power and yet most would accept the Danish Development Ministry's 1996 recommendation<sup>33</sup>, analysing the response to the Rwandan genocide, for the political dimension of complex emergencies to be properly factored into any humanitarian response. Moreover, the blurring of the separation<sup>34</sup> which traditionally existed between NGOs and the military during the Cold War has forced an uncomfortable but necessary accommodation of each other in situations such as Afghanistan. The paradox for the NGOs is that while co-existence is necessary and some degree of co-ordination is desirable, not least to avoid duplication of effort described in greater detail below, any association of an NGO with the military is at best perceived by the NGOs to be unhelpful: at worst it increases the physical risk to humanitarian workers<sup>35</sup>. And yet a weak mandate, such as UNPROFOR had in Bosnia in the first half of the 1990s does no favours for the NGOs: NATO's relatively robust intervention both in Bosnia and Kosovo was broadly perceived as conducive to humanitarian operations, even though most NGOs were squeamish about the concept of "humanitarian military intervention".

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<sup>31</sup> It is therefore susceptible to national pressures. See below for the broader influence of individual nations.

<sup>32</sup> Under Chapter X of the UN Charter.

<sup>33</sup> <http://www.um.dk/Publikationer/Danida/English/Evaluations/RwandaExperience/index.asp>.

<sup>34</sup> Sometimes expressed as 'humanitarian space'.

<sup>35</sup> Exemplified by Director General Save the Children Fund's letter of 11 October 2001 to the U.K. Prime Minister following the latter's exhortation of a coalition of actors in the wake of 9/11.

At the other end of the NGO spectrum, the role of private security companies (PSCs) has increased in general and in particular in Afghanistan over the last 5 years. This poses another co-ordination challenge, not just within the security area but across all lines of activity. The default setting is that PSCs owe allegiance purely to those for whom the company is contracted to provide security: inherent consideration of the impact of the application of their security function on the overall campaign<sup>36</sup> cannot be assumed. The lack of any formal control relationship with the international or indigenous military forces therefore potentially undermines the state as the sole authority for the use of force. The system of licensing of PSCs by the state is no guarantee of oversight, let alone control, particularly in the early stages of an intervention where the state has other priorities for its limited capacity, even assuming it considers the side-effects of private security company activity to be potentially destabilising.

3. Indigenous Organisations. The organs of the failed state will be in various degrees of disrepair at the point of international intervention. The end-game for the international community is normally the restoration of indigenous authority to the extent that the state does not subsequently fail. The evolution of this process, itself outwith the scope of this thesis, has a direct influence on the co-ordination of the other actors. The key issue is the transfer of responsibility from international to indigenous actors, especially its timing and sequencing. Failure to appreciate this dynamic is arguably the most significant hindrance on progress.
4. Military. In exceptional circumstances military intervention in a failed state may be conducted by a single nation, in which case the effect on co-ordination is described below under 'nations'; much more likely, given the international community's interest balanced against a desire to share the political risk and resource bill, is military intervention by a coalition or alliance<sup>37</sup>. The military could therefore be considered as IOs, but they merit classification in their own right as they have distinct roles and characteristics. In theory the United Nations Military Staff Committee has a role to co-ordinate the international military effort, but in practice this has seldom been more than a presentational role<sup>38</sup>.

The UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) has the co-ordination role for UN military interventions. The proliferation of UN peacekeeping operations since the end of the Cold War has resulted in an increase in the size and capability of the DPKO, but it has neither the mandate nor the capability to co-ordinate military intervention conducted under national, alliance or coalition auspices. So the degree of UN leverage and co-ordination of the military operation is dependent on the banner under which it operates. DPKO co-ordination tends to work better the more benign the intervention; it can generally cope with Chapter VI operations, but more

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<sup>36</sup> For example, civilian casualties inflicted in the course of protecting personnel to whom they are contracted.

<sup>37</sup> For the purposes of this thesis an alliance is defined as a standing group of nations, bound by treaty, whereas a coalition is considered as an ad hoc group formed specifically for the purpose of a single defined intervention.

<sup>38</sup> Attempts were made to reinvigorate the Military Staff Committee for Iraq/Kuwait but were short-lived.

robust intervention has proved a challenge, hence the Security Council's attraction under the right circumstances to coalition or alliance-led military interventions described above.

The co-ordination issues involved with military actors have already been alluded to, of which the perception amongst non-military actors that the military will attempt to 'command' them and the belief, amongst the international community at least, that military control can only be a temporary stepping-stone to civil authority are key obstacles to the military taking on the medium to long-term co-ordinating role in an intervention. The way in which the military can overcome such obstacles is described below in the context of Afghanistan, but it is worth stating as a principle at this stage that security requirement in a counter-insurgency situation differs significantly from war-fighting or forced intervention. An important lesson from the major interventions since the end of the Cold War is that defeat of the armed forces of a failed state is a relatively straightforward, quick and inexpensive task for nations whose armed forces were designed to take on the monolithic threat of the Soviet Union: effective counter-insurgency is a longer, more complex and resource-intensive business, particularly in terms of numbers of troops required.

5. Nations. Individual nations may affect the situation inside the failed state either by virtue of their direct relationship with each other, such as states in the same region or trading partners, or indirectly through national policies applied to nationally-directed external actors. As described above, the military organisations and, to a lesser extent, the IOs and NGOs are highly influenced by national agendas and goals which, again, merit effort to co-ordinate if an effective overall campaign is to be achieved. Both types of influence merit consideration in terms of co-ordination. The scope for national myopia at the expense of a successful campaign throughout the failed state and across all lines of activity should not be underestimated. Moreover, within the capitals of nations who intervene in a failed state, individual government ministries (and nationally-oriented IOs and NGOs) will act in a more or less coherent way, depending on their mechanisms for cross-government co-ordination.

Experience of working with the administrations in both London and Washington suggests that the more developed or sophisticated a democratic system of government becomes, the greater the challenge of effective co-ordination: large, powerful, independent ministries/departments conduct the majority of their tasks without the need for strong central choreography. Mechanisms for central government co-ordination, unless they are driven by the head of state or his deputy, tend to lack the power to rein in individual government departments<sup>39</sup>. Although not necessarily national in their influence, nationally sponsored fora, such as the Wilton Park series of conferences sponsored by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, can have a significant influence on situations where the international community

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<sup>39</sup> The UK's Post Conflict Reconstruction Unit, designed to address cross-government co-ordination in such situations and incorporating staff from the Ministries of Defence, Foreign Affairs and International Aid, and its US equivalent, the Office of the Coordinator of Reconstruction and Stability, are cases in point.

is interested or involved. To a certain extent the fact that such fora thrive in mature democracies counterbalances the difficulties of cross-government co-ordination described above; nevertheless they lack executive authority.

### PRE-CONFLICT ROUTINE PLANNING MECHANISMS

‘Planning is an unnatural process; it is much more fun to do something. And the nicest thing about not planning is that failure comes as a complete surprise, rather than being preceded by a period of worry and depression’<sup>40</sup>

Much by way of co-ordination can be achieved before a crisis emerges, but it cannot be forced: co-ordinated multi-agency planning, particularly prior to intervention, must be incentivised. Experience from international interventions in the Balkans during the 1990s suggests that those actors who do not have either the capacity or the incentive to work together in their routine activities before a crisis will face the greatest challenges and learning curve in co-ordinating their activities once a state has failed. However, many of the IOs and NGOs have traditionally considered that their focus should be on implementation rather than planning, not least because ‘planning’ in economic parlance has connotations of monolithic state control. However, there has been a growth in the fora for IO and NGO planning: NGO caucuses have flourished and much common ground has been found; however, these fora tend to be specific to either one aspect of nation building or one group of actors<sup>41</sup>. In any case, the military are likely to have the greatest capacity to plan, particularly in the early stages, but they are neither sufficiently expert in the non-military aspects of the overall plan, nor are they likely to be acceptable to the majority of actors as the overall co-ordinators of the plan. There may also be security concerns; the military are unlikely to publicise their plans in advance for fear of compromise and other actors may be unwilling to share information or planning for commercial sensitivity or for fear of being associated with one side in the conflict. Ideally the umbrella organisation should be the focus for this planning. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the United Nations has a mandate, but has traditionally been militarily focused and consistently understaffed in comparison with other military organisations, both national and supra-national.

Much can be achieved by bi-lateral and multi-lateral exercises involving the potential actors, designed to develop mutual understanding of respective organisations, planning capabilities etc. In recent years organisations like the ICRC have taken part in military exercises with forces prior to deployment on operations. As a result there is a greater willingness on the part of the military to involve other actors. Simon Brooks, the Senior Delegate of the ICRC in UK, holds the relationship developed between the ICRC and the Headquarters of ISAF IX as an exemplar of co-ordination: the ICRC were involved in all aspects of the training of the ISAF Headquarters and draft military standard operating procedures covering areas of ICRC interest were routinely submitted to the ICRC in Afghanistan for approval. Likewise, ‘at Save the Children Fund we engage constructively with the military in an attempt to find ways of co-existing peacefully – if not exactly

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<sup>40</sup> Sir John Harvey-Jones.

<sup>41</sup> For example, the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue was established to facilitate engagement with ‘terrorists’ in circumstances where this was unacceptable to nations or IOs (See [www.hdcentre.org](http://www.hdcentre.org)).

collaborating.<sup>42</sup> Moreover, fora such as Wilton Park can bring together the actors to exercise them in co-ordinated planning and decision making; however, the diversity of such fora and their inevitable national bent augurs against co-ordination, let alone the production of doctrine to which all actors could subscribe. There is a potential role for UN leadership here, not least in achieving a common lexicon to which all actors can subscribe. The different connotations applied to the word ‘planning’ have been mentioned above; this is but one example of an area where common vocabulary could reduce friction and facilitate co-ordination between actors.

### DEVisING STRATEGY - FIRST WORLD PRINCIPLES FOR THIRD WORLD PROBLEMS?

‘Do not try to do too much with your own hands. Better the Arabs do it tolerably than that you do it perfectly. It is their war, and you are to help them, not to win it for them... It may take them longer and it may not be as good as you think, but if it is theirs, it will be better.’<sup>43</sup>

Lawrence’s advice has proved enduring and applicable beyond Arabia. However, the failed state may be in no position to influence the formulation of the strategy for its recovery. Its leaders may be discredited, its administration inoperative and its legislature powerless. The international actors on the other hand will have some idea of what they are trying to achieve through intervention. They will also have access to advice from country and regional experts<sup>44</sup>. Moreover, in almost all such circumstances, some sort of government in exile or government in waiting will emerge as the disaster unfolds. However, those who are citizens of the state but have been in exile for some time may be unreliable sources of the reality of the current situation in country; they may see their former homeland as it was before its fall. This rose-tinted view may have been further skewed by a period of living in exile in a nation whose statehood is more developed, thereby heaping aspiration on inaccuracy. In devising a strategy for rebuilding a nation, this aspiration can be compounded by the international community’s tendency to set democratic standards which reflect its own society rather than those which either existed in the target state before it failed or which exist in the region<sup>45</sup>.

In an attempt at appetite suppressant, the governments, or at least the treasuries, of the nations which contribute to the intervention will invariably seek to minimise the cost of intervention by applying timescales and/or resource caps to the strategy. The worst outcome is an ambitious, but under-resourced, strategy that is never embraced by the majority of the population of the failed state. If diplomacy is the ‘art of the possible’<sup>46</sup> then devising a single strategy for rebuilding a failed state is one of diplomacy’s most extreme tests. Success

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<sup>42</sup> Sir Mike Aaronson, former Director of Save the Children Fund, on ‘A Holistic Approach to the War on Terror’, Pluscarden Seminar, St Anthony’s College, Oxford, 10 May 2007 ([http://www.sant.ox.ac.uk/areastudies/Aaronson\\_Paper\\_10\\_May\\_2007.pdf](http://www.sant.ox.ac.uk/areastudies/Aaronson_Paper_10_May_2007.pdf)).

<sup>43</sup> T. E. Lawrence. *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*.

<sup>44</sup> The challenge here is to distinguish good advice from partisan interests.

<sup>45</sup> This is a particular issue for NGOs whose funding is dependent on donations from evangelical zealots of the developed world.

<sup>46</sup> Lord Butler.

requires statesmanlike leadership and personal commitment at the highest level<sup>47</sup>, not least because there is no standing forum in which strategy can easily be formulated: it has tended to be an ad hoc process, albeit under the auspices of the UN or a similar umbrella of legitimacy. At this stage in the process bi-lateral planning is more common than multilateral planning, particularly where the conflict is ongoing and multi-lateral planning is unacceptable. The military will conduct contingency planning but, in the early stages where there is as yet no official mandate, this will frequently be in isolation<sup>48</sup>. Shuttle diplomacy between parties to the conflict and the potential actors may be the only way forward, but agreements reached and compartmentalised planning nevertheless require pulling together in a co-ordinated fashion and often at foreign minister or heads of government level<sup>49</sup>. Even at this stage, there will be much behind-the-scenes co-ordination by officials in order to secure consensus and there is no guarantee that all the actors will be engaged. However, experience suggests that the likely outcome from this process will be a framework plan, the detail of which is left to others<sup>50</sup> to work out subsequently; and the devil, in terms of co-ordination, is invariably in the detail.

The requirement for policing in a failed state provides a good example of the conflicting pressures and the level of detail which needs to be agreed at an early stage. Much depends on the circumstances, particularly the state and standing of the existing police force. In principle, however, an international police force is required in the early stages, either to monitor or mentor the existing indigenous police force if it exists and if the policy decision has been taken to build on it or to create a new police force from scratch. The latter course, like the de-Baathification process and disbandment of the Iraqi Army in 2003, is hostage to the ability to create a viable alternative while ensuring that those former policemen who have been sacked do not become part of the problem. The Kosovo example stands up reasonably well, although differences in the national policing standards of the contributing nations become stark when they are operating in a multinational environment out of their traditional policing framework. Moreover, national police forces, at least those in western democracies, are expensive to maintain and therefore capped at the requirement for domestic policing; there is no spare capacity which can be rapidly deployed to a failed state. Military police may be available, and the US has made particularly good use of its better than average, but still insufficient, resources in this area. However it is essential to start a rapid training programme of indigenous policemen who can appear on the streets by the end of the first 100 days. In parallel a more sophisticated policing approach can be developed using the resources of contributing nations so that there is a seed corn of a more capable police force to replace the international monitors/mentors in due course.

If co-ordinating a strategy in a complex multi-agency situation is not difficult enough, communicating that strategy in a coherent manner to not one but numerous audiences, ranging from the Afghans to the domestic populations of donor states, is a formidable but essential challenge. External support needs to be maintained over the long term and internal ownership needs to be inculcated. The actors will have different ways of measuring success and different media through which to transmit their information. It is never going to be possible to achieve absolute coherence of a strategic information operation – if western capitals cannot achieve it in a national context, its illusive nature is certainly amplified by

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<sup>47</sup> Northern Ireland provides an example of sustained personal commitment from the highest levels of UK Government, but such examples are rarer where domestic politics are less at stake.

<sup>48</sup> So-called 'non-planning'.

<sup>49</sup> For example, the talks at Dayton (for Bosnia) and Rambouillet (for Kosovo).

<sup>50</sup> Typically the DPKO and SRSG and their staffs for UN operations or their equivalents.

multi-nationality, not least through translation into different languages in national capitals who apply their own filters and spin – but, here again, strong leadership coupled with an open approach both by those who devise the strategy and those charged with co-ordinating and implementing it, especially once the indigenous government assumes that mantle, is a pre-requisite for success. Without a proactive approach and an efficient information system, the best intentioned endeavours of the international community will be vulnerable to ‘divide and rule’ by the media and those who oppose the intervention.

## CONCLUSIONS

Generically, therefore, there is no single template for intervention in a failed state and, critically for this thesis, there is no inherent co-ordination mechanism for international and indigenous actors in such a venture. The greater the number of actors and the breadth of their activity, the greater the requirement for co-ordination. Furthermore in order to be effective, co-ordination must take place at the supra-national, national and sub-national levels.

Co-ordination at the supra-national level is necessary in order to devise a mandate and a framework plan to which all actors subscribe and to communicate that plan to those whose support is essential to the rebuilding of the failed state. A weak strategic framework or one which leaves key issues to be resolved on the ground merely serves to store up problems which invariably return to bite. Above all, effective, co-ordinated state-building requires robust and sustained political leadership and commitment, not least to address seemingly intractable issues.

Co-ordination inside the failed state at both national and sub-national level is essential for the detailed planning which is required to supplement the framework agreed at the supra-national level, to implement that planning in a coherent manner and to communicate progress to the indigenous population and the external actors. However, co-ordination is not an end in itself nor can all the actors be compelled to co-ordinate their activities; the objective must be to add value to the product of the actors, thereby enticing them to co-ordinate. Co-ordination must not become a self-serving process, lest elaborate co-ordination mechanisms create a dependency culture which the indigenous authorities are unlikely to replicate, even if they could, thereby making it more difficult for the international community to disengage.

The appointment of a single co-ordinating authority, ideally civilian and legitimised by the umbrella organisation under whose auspices the intervention takes place, facilitates early progress from either anarchy or military control. But the goal must be to transfer that authority back to an indigenous government as soon as practical. The international community’s plan must take into account this transition and may therefore require the international actors to morph from a position of primacy to one of support and facilitation of the indigenous authorities.

Not all the actors need proactive co-ordination – the activities of some are constant irrespective of the type or phase of intervention; the activity of others is insignificant at the federal level – and to attempt to choreograph all the actors would be unwieldy, even if the actors consented. The absence of formal co-ordination mechanisms invariably sprouts informal substitutes. These are frequently the result of force of character of the individuals concerned and they can be highly effective, more so in some cases than a pedantic formalised

bureaucracy. However, informal arrangements and force of personality are inadequate long-term approaches, not least because the individuals who forge the relationships tend to move all too quickly, particularly the military whose standard tour length of a year or, in many cases, less makes such informality a hostage to fortune.

In all of this the UN would appear to be the logical focal point, not necessarily directly responsible for the co-ordination – much could be delegated – but providing the essential framework and a common language. The Agenda for Peace and its progeny are a worthy attempt to establish such a framework. However, nations have consistently refused to resource its requirements. The resultant disillusion, exemplified by the perceived failure in Somalia, was therefore a self-fulfilling prophecy. By default rather than design, NATO has stepped into the area of complex Article VII Peace Building, but is neither optimised for such a role nor is a military alliance perceived as an appropriate overall co-ordinating authority by the majority of other actors. However, unless nations are prepared to place greater faith and commitment in supra-national organisations, co-ordination of peace building is destined to remain an *ad hoc* activity. If we conclude that we cannot do better, every intervention should, argues John Mackinlay, carry a health warning for potential actors: ‘you are about to become part of something which will collapse on contact with a serious adversary.’

## **CHAPTER 2 – CO-ORDINATION OF INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY PLANNING FOR AFGHANISTAN**

### **PLANNING FOR INTERVENTION 2001**

‘All men dream, but not equally. Those who dream by night in the dusty recesses of their minds wake in the day to find that it was vanity; but the dreamers of the day are dangerous men, for they may act their dream with open eyes, to make it possible’<sup>51</sup>

Afghanistan was different from other failed states in that it was already one of the poorest nations on earth; it had suffered continuous civil war for over 20 years; and its economy was dependent on one thing: opium. Although Afghanistan has a longer history as a nation-state than most Third World countries, its sense of nationhood was forged on defence against interference, external and federal: tribally and ethnically factionalised, the authority of Kabul had always been at best merely one of numerous institutions competing for the allegiance of Afghans, and not on the basis of its benevolence. The lack of infrastructure, the extreme nature of the terrain and climate, and the absence of any regional body that could assume the mantle of leadership made for a challenging intervention, even without the security situation. Nor can it be said that the international community was united in its aims for intervention. For the US it was primarily aimed at eliminating a base for terrorism.

For the UK and to other European nations it offered the prospect of reducing the import of opiates. For Pakistan, and to a lesser extent other regional states, it was an opportunity for self-enrichment from a weak and compliant neighbour. Moreover, the time scale for intervention was driven largely by the US reaction to 9/11: there was no period, as was the

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<sup>51</sup> T E Lawrence. Seven Pillars of Wisdom.



case in Bosnia, Kosovo and elsewhere, for extended planning or consultation. The US campaign plan was written in the month following 9/11, but it was primarily focused on the defeat of the Taliban regime. UN and NATO planning wheels inevitably turned more slowly<sup>52</sup> and the rest of the international community fell into Afghanistan in a haphazard way as the security situation permitted and as they overcame the inherent logistic difficulties of operating in Afghanistan. As a result there was little coherent inter-agency planning or co-ordination between actors. The civil war had generated no shortage of Afghan expatriates with varying claims to knowledge, solutions and power. There were also those who, as the evictors of the Taliban, considered themselves to be better placed to exercise control of whatever was to rise from the ashes.

The international community met in Bonn during late 2001. As Ahmed Rashid asked: ‘now as the US and its Western allies followed up their devastating attack on the Taliban and Al’Qaeda by helping to bring about secular rule, the question was whether there would be a political and economic strategy to support a stable new government in Afghanistan, that could handle the alienation and economic crisis that had only helped to fuel extremism and terrorism’<sup>53</sup>. The resulting plan, known as the Bonn Agreement, resulted in the G8 nations dividing up the key responsibilities. USA had already assumed primary responsibility for security by virtue of its lead of the military coalition which came together to overthrow the Taliban; it was therefore logical that the USA should develop that into the lead for the recreation of the Afghan National Army (ANA). From the outset it should be contended that Afghanistan does not need an army – there is no credible external military threat to Afghanistan and, even if there were, the international community by its intervention has assumed the responsibility for defence against such a threat.

The requirement for the ANA stems primarily from 2 factors. First, prestige as a nation, particularly in the Third World, appears to demand an army. Being generous, it is a sign that the state has a monopoly on the use of armed force, even if that is an illusion: in reality it is a token of state power and a comforting source of pageantry. Secondly, the creation of a national army, and particularly the determination of its size, was a compromise between the demands of the Northern Alliance for employment of their forces after their *raison-d’être* had disappeared with the Taliban and the requirement to put more boots on the ground than the international community was prepared to provide in order to counter the insurgency. The internal threat from insurgents primarily requires a police response, although many nations are compelled to use their armed forces for counter-insurgency because their police force is inadequate. So it was in Afghanistan. There were approximately 300,000 armed men in the Northern Alliance forces of 2001. The figure of 70,000 that became the planning target for the trained strength of the ANA was the minimum which the then Defence Minister, ‘Marshal’ Fahim Khan, would accept in 2002. The question of how such an army could be sustained by the Afghan economy was irrelevant at that stage, and largely remains so.

Japan assumed the lead for disarming, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) of the former civil war combatants<sup>54</sup>. The 300,000 armed men of the Northern Alliance, less those

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<sup>52</sup> Neither the UN nor NATO do co-ordinated ‘campaign planning’ across multiple lines of activity – it appears too difficult and too politically charged: ‘operation orders’ instead focus exclusively on the military aspects, and largely boil down to a series of tasks.

<sup>53</sup> Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia. Ahmed Rashid.

<sup>54</sup> Throughout many of the recent Peace Building missions Japan has tended to select a role where its financial clout can have effect, being constitutionally hindered from direct, particularly military, involvement. Japan tends to operate through the indigenous government where possible, or through a third

relatively few who would be recycled into the ANA needed to be disarmed, demobilised and, most importantly, reintegrated into Afghan civil society. But, unlike Kosovo where the Kosovar Albanian Army (UCK) had been recycled into a civil response force (Kosovo Protection Corps), there was little co-ordinated planning between DDR and the German police planners, and the concept of a civilian emergency response force appears not to have been given serious consideration.

Italy took judicial reform. The first challenge faced by a western democracy charged with leadership of a judicial reform programme in a failed state is not so much whose law to implement – any attempt to impose western European law on a third world Muslim state is destined for failure, although that has not stopped some from trying – rather it is how it can best assist in recreating an alien legal system which is effective in terms not only of its authority within Afghanistan but also in its perception to the outside world. There is a fine line between re-establishment of a legal system which meets the demands, both practical and legal, of Afghanistan and which does not offend the legitimacy of those in Italy and elsewhere on whose funding the reform depended. Moreover, the planning challenge for Italy in Afghanistan was not only to overcome the historical disdain of the majority of rural Afghans for edicts from Kabul, but it was also to create a legal infrastructure (courts, jails etc) which no longer existed, if indeed they ever had. Most of those involved in judicial reform in 2005/6 would admit that the challenge had been underestimated.

Germany took policing, the generic planning requirements of which were addressed in Chapter 1. There was no effective co-ordinated planning between the policing and Afghan National Army elements of security. UK led on counter-narcotics. Depending on whose figures you take, and the divergence is largely due to uncertainty over the illegal element of its economy, more than 60% of Afghanistan's GDP is generated from opium. Without the income from poppy Afghanistan would be even lower down the scale of the world's poorest 10 nations. However, the Taliban had clamped down on poppy growing during the latter years of their reign: the poppy crop in 2001 was the lowest it had been for years. There was a real opportunity to capitalise on one of the positive achievements of the Taliban regime by a co-ordinated approach to alternative livelihoods with IOs and NGOs; but it was not seized.

This thesis will examine the implementation of each of these areas from the perspective of co-ordination in Chapter 3 but, as a planning principle, the allocation of a pillar to an individual nation should be a more effective structure than avoiding specific functional responsibilities. However, there are 2 pitfalls inherent in this approach, and Afghanistan has suffered from both. First the definition of responsibility for the pillars was largely left to respective nations<sup>55</sup>. Nations were therefore successful in their respective bailiwicks to the extent that they were prepared to resource their activities and to the extent of their influence with those who would deliver on the plan. Secondly no supra-national body took the role of balancing the pillars so that progress across them all was in step or logical. The G8 is not established to play such a role; it could only have done so effectively by generating additional bureaucratic mechanisms. In theory the UN General Assembly had such a mandate, which could have been exercised through UNAMA, the mission established in Kabul; but it did not.

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party: in Afghanistan DDR was administered through the Afghan New Beginnings Programme. In practice Japan has also contributed much to the reconstruction effort in Afghanistan.

<sup>55</sup> The responsibility for leadership in these areas has been further diluted in the wake of the 2006 London Conference. The residual responsibility can at best be described as a co-ordinating role with little authority.

A continuing thread running through the planning of rebuilding Afghanistan is the requirement to rebuild governance structures at the same time as re-energising the economy. The history of development of western democracies suggests a sequential model of capitalist economic prosperity spawning democratic governance structures. Neither capitalism nor democracy is an instinctive Afghan trait. True, the Government of Afghanistan contains a majority of ministers whose western education has imbued those characteristics, but it is far from the case for the majority of Afghans. So not only was the international community intent on gifting Afghanistan a system of government and an economy which is alien to the majority, but it was also intent on doing so in a time scale which required rapid and simultaneous implementation of systems which evolved sequentially over centuries in the western world. This underscored the requirement for effective co-ordination between governance and economic development.

Religion may not appear as a separate line of activity in an intervention in a failed state, but its importance in terms of its potential to influence other lines of activity had been underscored in Kosovo. Religion plays an even more central role in the lives of Afghans; the way the clergy react and, more importantly, preach has a direct effect on popular attitudes to security and governance. If the clergy can be persuaded to extol the virtues of the Government of Afghanistan and the international community, the battle for the hearts and minds of ordinary Afghans, particularly the youth, is half won. In Afghanistan schooling is, for the most part, organised on religious or quasi-religious lines. Religious fervour underpins the Taliban insurgency and relies on the clergy, particularly in the Madrassars, for recruits. Religious support cannot be engineered – any hint of spin would be counter-productive – it needs to be rooted in substance, as with any credible information operation. However, a state-run education system in which informed, moderate Islam is preached would go a long way towards undermining religious extremism which can otherwise have a devastating effect. Education Minister Hanif Atmar's has proposed an 'Alternative Madrassars' scheme along these lines. Much could be achieved to get at the source of opposition to the overall strategy in an extremely cost-effective way. However, the international community's approach has tended to support the building of secular schools in the belief that this secular education would supplant religious extremism. On the contrary it has inflamed opinion and in some cases literally inflamed the schools. This exemplifies the generic co-ordination challenge described in Chapter 1 of knowing when and how to transfer primacy to the indigenous authorities. However, in order to make such a judgement, it is first necessary to have a deeper understanding of Afghanistan than the average westerner, including the majority of well-intentioned planners behind the Bonn Agreement. In Afghanistan (and regionally) it is best to fight religious-inspired extremism with religious-inspired moderation.

## THE REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE

It is neat for the international community to consider issues in terms of nation states. Supranational organisations such as the UN deal comfortably with flags, governments and ambassadors from the 193 or so nations that are internationally recognised. Dealing with entities other than states is much more uncomfortable for the international community. Regional bodies fill some of this role but even so, consensus among differing sovereign bodies is notoriously elusive. The challenges faced by Afghanistan transcend its borders. Tribalism does not conform to neat lines drawn (frequently inaccurately) by former great powers. The Pashtu tribes, which contributed many of the Mujahaddin of the 1980s, spawned

the Taliban of the 1990s and continue the insurgency today, span the Pakistan – Afghanistan border. The Tajiks and others do not see Afghanistan's northern border and a limit for their allegiances and trading; indeed, the region is criss-crossed with trade routes which predate international boundaries. As a result the illegal weapons and opium trades are trans-national in nature, not least because their perpetrators know full well that the authorities which would stop them are themselves largely constrained by national boundaries. On the other hand, Afghanistan's legal trade is increasingly reliant on regional support, not least because land-locked Afghanistan is reliant on its neighbours for access to markets. Effective planning must therefore take into account regional factors and be co-ordinated with regional actors: the Bonn process was, for understandable reasons, focused on the internal workings of Afghanistan; there is one passing reference to regional organisations in the final paragraph of an annex.

There is no regional organisation that exercises sufficient clout to co-ordinate the rebuilding of Afghanistan in a regional context. Bilateral relations between Afghanistan and its neighbours were effectively non-existent in 2001. The boundary dispute over the Durand Line<sup>56</sup> is a symptom of a deeper mistrust, based largely on the way in which Britain and Pakistan (at least until recently) had treated the North-West Frontier Provinces. Control over this desolate mountainous region, in the sense that it was exercised over the rest of the sub-continent, had never existed: a *laissez-faire* approach was pragmatic. Afghanistan has more than 5000 kilometres of highly porous borders, predominantly desert or mountainous, which are impossible to police effectively, as the Russians (and now the rest of the international community) found out to their, and Afghanistan's, cost.

## CONCLUSIONS

At the strategic level the plan hatched at Bonn in December 2001 was perfectly feasible; it had potential disadvantages but these could have been counter-balanced by advantages to the G8 division of responsibility. However, the G8 construct was not designed to monitor what was happening in each pillar, let alone co-ordinate the overall plan. The weakness lay therefore in the operationalisation and detailed co-ordination of the strategy within Afghanistan and across the region. The US had the dominant role and the G8 nations focused on their respective responsibilities for lines of activity. The UN adopted a 'light' approach to co-ordination. The Government of Afghanistan would not be ready to assume the co-ordination role for years to come and little consideration had been given to the process by which Afghan institutions would integrate into the international community's scheme, gradually in order to build confidence and capacity. Informal arrangements therefore sprouted in Kabul and made up for some of the delta, but Afghanistan responds poorly to short-term informality. Relationships in Afghanistan are built on long-term trust and certainty. Afghanistan needed a robust co-ordination framework, particularly in the early days of its resurrection: it did not get it.

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<sup>56</sup> The international border between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

### CHAPTER 3 – CO-ORDINATION OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY’S PLAN IN AFGHANISTAN

#### CO-ORDINATION OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BONN PROCESS 2001-2005

The Afghan people themselves were always going to rebuild their lives in the aftermath of the Taliban’s demise, irrespective of the international community’s response; they have centuries of experience. In the early days of late 2001 and early 2002 there was therefore frenetic activity by both the Afghans battling to survive the winter and by the international community pouring into a region where the logistic challenges outmatched anything most of the actors had seen before. All involved had more than enough to be getting on with and, in fairness, much was achieved. However, the combination of a hasty planning process and the absence of comprehensive means of co-ordinating the implementation, imbalances between the pillars increased as time passed. Moreover, for the reasons outlined above, the international community was committed to early democracy in Afghanistan. Elections for a Transitional Authority<sup>57</sup> were held within the first year of intervention, with Constitutional, National Assembly<sup>58</sup> and Provincial Council elections within 4 years. This created both indigenous structures that needed to be incorporated into what had been established by the international community and an expectation in the Afghan people that their Government would be beneficial to them. Those involved in the government of Afghanistan, from the President down, needed to be seen to be exercising power, irrespective of their capacity. However, neither the President nor any of his ministers had any previous experience of government. What little experience of administration existed amongst the diminished ranks of bureaucrats was exclusively communist-oriented.

In the absence of any effective or legitimate Afghan authority in 2001 and with US eyes focused on defeating the terrorist threat, co-ordination of the actors in the reconstruction of Afghanistan for the first year was a loose process based on G8 arrangements hatched at Bonn in December 2001, backed up by the UN. The Tokyo Conference of 2002 had elicited sufficient pledges of support from the rest of the international community to see the Bonn Process through, but it was then largely left to individual actors to pursue their goals. A laudable National Development Framework was produced in early 2002 under the auspices of the Afghan Assistance Co-ordination Authority chaired by the Chairman of the Interim Afghan Authority, but UNAMA never exercised the same authority which UNMIK had done in Kosovo, partly because it was authorised only in March 2002, by which time US dominance of the security agenda had been established, and partly because it had set itself a demanding time scale for the election of a president in the Loya Jirga process which came to fruition in mid-2002. Most of the actors had their own agendas; they were doing what appeared to them to be right (and in most cases it was); and there was more than enough work to be done. But co-ordination between the actors inside Afghanistan was largely informal and personality-based. Once elected, President Karzai had limited ability to influence this process, not least because he had little in the way of apparatus of government around him. He was beset with advisors and had a Cabinet which was broadly representative but, with no Afghan tradition of a civil service, there was little capacity to turn the

<sup>57</sup> Emergency Loya Jirga 2002.

<sup>58</sup> Meshrano Jirga 2005.

international community's strategy or gratuitous advice, no matter how apposite, into concrete action. This situation persisted for the duration of the Bonn Process, with supplementary agreements, such as the Berlin Declaration of April 2004, providing amplification and fine adjustment where necessary. Dominant in the informal hammering together of actors throughout this period was the United States with the Ambassador, Zalmay Khalilzad, playing a pivotal role. A native Afghan with unrivalled military power and money, he became the driving force in the co-ordination of the rebuilding of Afghanistan between 2003 and 2005, arguably to the extent of undermining President Karzai.

In order to appreciate the complexity of co-ordination of the implementation of the rehabilitation of Afghanistan, and building on the generic examination in Chapter 1, it is necessary to understand the mandates of the various actors, how they approached their tasks and how they interacted with each other:

1. IOs. The UN Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA) was established on 28 March 2002 through United Nations Security Council Resolution 1401 under SRSG Lakhdar Brahimi<sup>59</sup>, but the UN had had a presence in Afghanistan since October 1988 when the UN good offices mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan was set up to monitor the Soviet withdrawal and co-ordinate humanitarian assistance. UNAMA's original mandate was aimed at supporting the process of rebuilding and national reconciliation outlined in the Bonn Agreement of December 2001. It acts as the in-country focus for all UN agencies, virtually all of which are represented in Afghanistan, including UNHCR which has been active in the region since the Soviet invasion of 1980, particularly in Pakistan where the majority of refugees went and have remained. UNAMA adopted a 'light' approach to the co-ordination role. Its relatively small size and late formation after most of the other actors were already established ceded the advantage of authority to co-ordinate to others, not least the US embassy as explained above.

The International Red Cross has operated both in Afghanistan and regionally. It continues to play a vital role in the refugee camps in Pakistan. In Afghanistan it has performed its habitual role as the guardian of the Geneva Conventions. This has resulted in confrontation, particularly with the US, over detention. The issue of detention highlights the role of nations in co-ordinating such interventions: nations determine the policies under which their security forces can detain Afghans. In a coalition or alliance this does not change. National legal advice will invariably trump any attempt at alliance or coalition policy unless it is well established, having been agreed beforehand. The attempt to agree a common NATO detention policy has been frustrated by national legal wrangling, none of which has encouraged the US to delegate a larger security role to NATO. Against this background the ICRC has assisted in advising nations and NATO on their responsibilities in the search for a common approach. Under ISAF IX draft policy in this area was vetted by the ICRC, much against the sensitivities of individual nations and NATO itself who had classified the policy and resented what was seen as interference.

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<sup>59</sup> Who had chaired the Panel on UN Peace Operations which in 2000 had advocated a more coherent approach ([http://www.un.org/peace/reports/peace\\_operations](http://www.un.org/peace/reports/peace_operations)).

2. **Military.** Security is the *sine qua non* of Afghan stability. Without it, progress towards economic or political maturity is at best slow and fragile, at worst impossible. But it is not a sequential relationship. Security creates the conditions for prosperity and better governance, and prosperity and better governance make security more attractive to Afghans and therefore easier to maintain. It is therefore a complex symbiotic interaction. Economic prosperity and effective governance are not without their own adverse side-effects, but once the population has an interest in preserving and improving its future, the roots of insurgency gain little nourishment. Moreover, security is not absolute, least of all in Afghanistan's case: it is a relative concept that enables other activities, including regeneration and governance, which therefore means different things to different people in different parts of Afghanistan.

In Afghanistan the co-ordination of security is further complicated in that there are 3 distinctly different military actors: NATO forces legitimised by UNSCR, coalition forces operating at the invitation of the Government of Afghanistan and Afghan military forces. All 3 operate under different mandates and chains of command. One characteristic of the non-Afghan military which has a disproportionate effect on co-ordination is the relatively rapid turnover of staff in comparison with the other actors. Most military tours of duty are one year or less and, while this policy allows the military to operate at an intense pace unmatched by other actors, it is out of kilter with the other actors and exacerbates the difficulties of co-ordination, particularly in Afghanistan, where time is an important factor in building relationships, trust and co-ordination.

The security situation has evolved since 2001, but it has not been a smooth or linear progression. Initial security was established by the Northern Alliance forces with US support over an expanding area during October and November 2001. But this security was secondary in importance to the combat operation and therefore in many ways less coherent and robust than security under the Taliban regime. The International Security and Assistance Force (ISAF) was authorised by the UN<sup>60</sup> and deployed to Kabul at the end of 2001. Its reach was restricted to the capital itself for practical resource reasons. The remainder of Afghanistan relied on traditional methods of security at district and village level, backed up with approximately 30,000 US and Coalition forces. As the DDR and ANA processes got under way, there was an increasingly coherent Afghan element to the security, but the density of security forces has never matched traditional norms of other similar situations. Vast swaths of Afghanistan saw little external or federal security presence, especially during 2002 and 2003. Furthermore, the Coalition effort, and that of its surrogate ANA, remained focused on combat operations against insurgents and terrorists, although the US and Coalition nations were establishing Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in western, southern and eastern provinces. PRT is a misnomer<sup>61</sup>, having little inherent construction capacity: the purpose of extending GoA influence has been embodied by NATO nations

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<sup>60</sup> UNSCR 1386.

<sup>61</sup> The originally proposed title, Regional Co-ordination Team, had been changed on President Karzai's direction.

in a co-ordinated tri-partite framework of military security, civilian governance advice (in many cases provided by public officials from the sponsoring nation) and reconstruction advice/funding (in many cases provided by NGOs of the sponsoring nation). The PRT concept was therefore an example of an informal mechanism being introduced to bridge the gap between federal and provincial co-ordination<sup>62</sup>.

Kabul began to thrive under ISAF; not directly because of it – the prosperity of Kabul is again a largely serendipitous mix of native Afghan enterprise in a market inflated by international presence – but the perception in many international eyes was nevertheless that ISAF's approach to security was more conducive to economic growth and social prosperity than that of the Coalition<sup>63</sup>. The international community talked of expanding the 'ISAF-effect' beyond the capital, but the estimated bill of at least 50,000 troops dampened any enthusiasm for anything more than the existing Coalition forces providing a very thinly spread security presence. It is worth comparing the troop density for similar interventions<sup>64</sup>:

Location	Peak Number of International Troops	Km <sup>2</sup> per International Soldier	International Troops per head of population
Kosovo	40000	1 per 0.3 km <sup>2</sup>	1 per 50
Bosnia	60000	1 per 0.85 km <sup>2</sup>	1 per 66
East Timor	9000	1 per 1.6 km <sup>2</sup>	1 per 111
Iraq	155000	1 per 2.8 km <sup>2</sup>	1 per 161
Somalia	40000	1 per 16 km <sup>2</sup>	1 per 200
Liberia	13200	1 per 8 km <sup>2</sup>	1 per 265
Sierra Leone	18000	1 per 4 km <sup>2</sup>	1 per 300
Haiti	20000	1 per 1.5 km <sup>2</sup>	1 per 375
Afghanistan	20000 (OEF) + 6000 (ISAF)	1 per 25 km <sup>2</sup>	1 per 1115

In August 2003 NATO assumed responsibility for ISAF and agreed in principle to expand the mission throughout Afghanistan. In theory this augured for better co-ordination; however, the European NATO nations showed no appetite for either the high-end counter-terrorism mission which the US had been pursuing, largely against Al Qaeda and its associates, or the financial responsibility for the ANA. Nevertheless, in 2004 ISAF expanded into the north of Afghanistan. There was little insurgency or terrorism, but that is not to say the north was entirely benign: it was an area where security was largely provided by traditional warlords who had reinforced their legitimacy by ousting the Taliban. The expansion of ISAF into the north was therefore focused on extending the influence of the central government in Kabul to areas which had traditionally considered themselves Afghan in name as long

<sup>62</sup> The concept of PRTs is not new: US experience stems from the Civil Operations Rural Development Support (CORDS) Programme run in Vietnam.

<sup>63</sup> This perception has been perpetuated by the controversy surrounding US detention of Afghans at Guantanamo and some unfortunate civilian casualties as a result of US air strikes which, even after the majority of US forces came under NATO command, were still associated with the Coalition as opposed to ISAF.

<sup>64</sup> Source: Afghan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU) 2004. It should be noted that the total number of international troops in Afghanistan has increased since 2004 and that indigenous forces are also a factor, but the principle that counter-insurgency demands more troops than forced intervention and the central argument that security forces in Afghanistan are spread thinly remain valid.



as it did not involve taxation or interference in interests they had pursued for centuries. PRTs became the backbone of the NATO force in the north and the means of co-ordinating governance, security and redevelopment. NATO nations picked provinces in which they sponsored a PRT, but they provided little capacity to enforce security other than the protection of the PRT itself. This process in itself gave rise to differences of approach based on the sponsoring nation's national approach to the task. In some cases it caused friction between the nations, but more so between the PRTs and NGOs outwith the PRT system who saw the PRTs as blurring the traditional distinction between military and aid communities. The 'humanitarian space' hitherto enjoyed by the NGOs was now encroached on by the military, their foreign affairs department colleagues and, in some cases, 'Quisling' NGOs who had 'sold out' to the system.

By mid-2004 it appeared that there might be sufficient commitment from European nations to expand ISAF into the almost equally benign western provinces; however, the UK's appetite to lead the ISAF expansion yet further into the south had been suppressed by the continuing requirement to maintain higher troop levels than anticipated in Iraq. NATO progress was grinding to a halt, not least because ISAF turnover was much more rapid than US<sup>65</sup> or the rest of the international community, and USA showed increasing disillusionment with its European security partners. The Italian and UK Prime Ministers took the initiative by announcing that their respective nations would lead ISAF back to back over the 18 month period from August 2005 to February 2007 in order to provide the continuity within which NATO expansion throughout the rest of Afghanistan could take place. In 2005 ISAF expanded into the west of Afghanistan, rolling out PRTs to replace those established by the USA<sup>66</sup> and adding others in provinces which had not hitherto had their own PRT<sup>67</sup>. But by the end of 2005 Afghanistan was still split 50/50 from a security perspective between the Coalition and NATO, with a burgeoning ANA overlaid<sup>68</sup>.

3. NGOs. There are hundreds of NGOs operating in Afghanistan, many pre-dating the wider international intervention in 2001. They range from large organisations with substantial budgets and international leverage to small organisations with narrow agendas. Their primary allegiance is to their charter

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<sup>65</sup> ISAF tour intervals averaged 6 months. In conversation during April 2005 with Lieutenant General David Barno, then Coalition Forces Commander in Afghanistan for the previous 20 months, he commented that he had already seen four ISAF missions come and go, each one taking more time and effort establishing itself in Kabul at the beginning of its rotation and then extracting itself at the end than in taking forward security and development of Afghanistan.

<sup>66</sup> Less for Farah (the province where security was arguably the greatest challenge) where the US retained the security lead, albeit under NATO command.

<sup>67</sup> Lithuania has sponsored a PRT in Chagcharan, Ghor Province.

<sup>68</sup> The ad hoc nature of co-ordination between the 3 different military commands at the tactical level was amply demonstrated on 29<sup>th</sup> May 2006 when a Coalition convoy entered Kabul (an ISAF area of responsibility) unbeknown to NATO. A road traffic accident involving a Coalition vehicle sparked a civil disturbance which ISAF had to control with a multinational force, some of whose nations had forbidden their forces from engaging in public order tasks. At the same time the fledgling Afghan Ministry of Defence was exercising its new-found capability to reinforce the capital with ANA troops in support of the ANP while PSCs guarded key installations.

and their trustees and, while experience over the last 15 years has given them an understanding of other actors, they are (and should remain) focused and driven by individuals who are motivated in fundamentally different ways from the other actors, notably the military. Some NGOs who had been in Afghanistan during the Taliban regime have even refused to cooperate with the Government of Afghanistan for fear of being perceived as partisan. While control of NGOs is an illusory goal, the pursuit of which is dangerous and potentially counter-productive, many recognise the need for co-ordination and 97 NGOs are now members of the Agency Co-ordinating Body for Afghan Relief (ACBAR), funded by the Asian Development Bank ‘in response to the need for NGOs to co-ordinate their activities in order to maximise their efficiency and resources’<sup>69</sup>.

In addition but more informally, many of the larger NGOs act as umbrella organisations for other, smaller NGOs operating in the same field. ‘Kabul is the Klondike of the new century, a place where a young person can make, if not a fortune, then a stellar career riding on the tide of international money that is flooding in with every United Nations flight from Islamabad’<sup>70</sup>. Membership of ACBAR and co-ordination between the NGOs and other actors was again driven largely by personality, with some NGO administrators feeling able to seek advice and assistance particularly from the military, while others resented the PRT incursion into their ‘humanitarian space’ to the extent that PRTs became the whipping-boy for all the difficulties of conducting humanitarian intervention under such inhospitable conditions.

4. Nations. In addition to the regional aspects discussed in the previous chapter, all nations whose military forces or IOs were operating in Afghanistan posed the co-ordination challenges outlined above, but the key requirement for co-ordination was with the G8 nations who have consistently played a key role by virtue of their responsibility for the execution of pillars of the Bonn Agreement:
  - a. Japan: Disarming, Demobilisation, and Reintegration (DDR). At face value DDR has been a success: the process was declared complete at the end of 2005. In fact however, three important areas remain incomplete. First, although the Northern Alliance forces which swept away the Taliban in October and November 2001 have been largely disarmed and demobilised, there remain significant pockets of what are now termed Illegally Armed Groups, many of which are the private armies of warlords. As a result this aspect of the DDR process has been re-branded Disbandment of Illegally Armed Groups (DIAG) which is described below.

Secondly, the Taliban (and the associated HiG) were largely untouched by the DDR process as they fled south and east across the Pakistan border. They remain the prime source of insurgency. Ongoing attempts to disarm them, apart from the counter-insurgency operation

<sup>69</sup> <http://www.acbar.org> UNOCHA maintained that such a co-ordinating body was unnecessary.

<sup>70</sup> Empire Lite: Nation-Building in Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan. Michael Ignatieff.

described below, are focused on a reconciliation programme known as Takim-e-Sol. The aim of this programme is to persuade former Taliban to convert to the GoA cause, renounce insurgency and re-integrate into society. The programme is personally headed by Professor Sebghatollah Mojadedi, a highly respected and charismatic cleric who has frequently gone to considerable personal risk, including several attacks on his life, in his endeavour. It is funded by the international community, primarily US and UK, although no financial incentives are offered for potential converts. The successes of the programme is relatively minor in that a maximum of 2000 former Taliban had been converted by the end of 2006 (and it is practically impossible to tell whether they converted because of the programme or for ulterior motives; moreover, it is equally risky to assume that converts will remain true. Afghans are born survivors: changing sides to save ones neck is an acceptable and routine tactic<sup>71</sup>). Nevertheless, it has produced some notable successes, including former Taliban who are now provincial governors. Reconciliation programmes are inherently contentious – where to draw the line between converting and prosecuting a former insurgent – and several nations have eschewed involvement<sup>72</sup>. However, history suggests that reconciliation is an essential element in a counter-insurgency campaign. The difficulties of co-ordination, implementation and monitoring should not be excuses for its rejection. One of the main reasons for limited success thus far has been the relative comfort, safety and impunity with which insurgents appear to be able to exist in Pakistan which underlines the regional nature of the issues facing Afghanistan. If that existence can be undermined the potential for significant and cost-effective success in this area should not be underestimated, but it will require a change in some nations' approach to reconciliation and a co-ordinated regional approach if that potential is to be realised.

Thirdly, although disarming and demobilisation have been successful to the extent described above, reintegration into Afghan society has been less successful. Traditionally this is the most challenging, if least high-profile, aspect of DDR. Success is frequently declared when the former soldier gives up his sword, irrespective of whether there is a ploughshare for him and land to till. Unemployment was already high and demobilisation has added to it. Some have been re-employed in the Afghan National Army (see below), but others have become part of the problem, either a part of Illegally Armed Groups or as an additional burden on an already weak state. This is a classic example of one pillar being pursued without consideration of the impact on other areas.

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<sup>71</sup> Abdulrashid Dostum, former supporter of the Soviets, former Northern Alliance commander and now warlord is one of this tactic's greatest exponents.

<sup>72</sup> To the extent of esoteric debate over whether or not to work with Governor Munib of Oruzgan, a former Talib.

- b. Germany: Policing. The challenge of policing a failed state, encountered in Bosnia and Kosovo but now magnified in Iraq and Afghanistan, is two-fold: the requirement is immediate, in that policing is an essential element of both security and law and order, while on the other hand the population associate the former Afghan police forces with the oppression of the Taliban. Neither of these factors are serious issues in developed states where the police is well established as a positive pillar of society. The closest a western democracy gets to the challenges faced by policing in Afghanistan is dealing with either an internal security or ethnic minority situation in which the police are seen as repressive. But such experience is not the norm of policing in democratic nations. Moreover, the training for such policing operations is invariably an adjunct to a comprehensive police training programme which takes years to develop an effective and credible police force. Afghanistan did not have the luxury of time. In the event Germany found itself torn between creating a police force along traditional western lines with an added requirement for a Bundesgrenzschutz<sup>73</sup>-like capability, and a rapid sausage factory to produce large numbers of basic policemen. Western domestic opinion favoured the comprehensive approach. Moreover, Germany's police training resources were already geared to such a policy. Germany therefore concentrated on the long-term creation of a comprehensive policing capability. The immediate requirement lagged behind the creation of the Afghan National Army. By 2006 almost half of the required 70,000 ANA soldiers had been trained, primarily by the USA. The divergence between the ANA and the Afghan National Police (ANP) was widening with every ANA battalion passing off the parade square in Kabul. There were insufficient basic policemen, inexperienced in counter-insurgency and inadequate middle-management to co-ordinate an effective police response. The effect was that the ANA were increasingly being used for policing tasks for which they had not been trained in order to compensate for a paucity of policemen. The loosening of the Bonn Agreement responsibilities at the 2006 London Conference allowed the US to divert resources from the ANA to the ANP, but it will be some time before their respective capabilities are balanced.
- c. Italy: Judicial Reform. Judicial reform of Afghanistan proved to be not just a case of kick starting a legal system, it was equally, if not more, necessary to build prisons and court houses. The task was also indivisible from the recreation of the Afghan National Police, but the stove-piped division of responsibility between the G8 nations conspired against effective co-ordination. Italy had bitten off more than it expected to chew and has consistently under-resourced this area. As a result, prison conditions are dire and there are insufficient judges to deal with the case load. This situation is partially alleviated by the use of military detention facilities to cope with insurgents; however, this creates its own problems from international approbation

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<sup>73</sup> German Federal Border Security Service.

of the US over Guantanamo to a divergence in detention rules between individual nations which hinders the transfer of detainees to other nations' or Afghan detention facilities. A new prison is currently under construction at Pol-e-Charki on the outskirts of Kabul, but this will not alleviate the critical requirement for Afghan justice to permeate the far-flung regions if the Afghan judicial system is to be perceived by all Afghans – and this is the critical aspect if allegiance to GoA is to be fostered – as legitimate. Fine words at Wilton Park in 2005 have yet to result in an effective judicial system, let alone one which permeates all areas of Afghanistan.

- d. US: The Afghan National Army (ANA). The US, in taking on the responsibility for the ANA, effectively signed a blank cheque in terms of the duration of its commitment. And that commitment has largely been honoured. There is no realistic prospect of the Afghan economy paying for its own army, of whatever size, in the foreseeable future. The US has encouraged other nations to take on some of the responsibility for training the ANA; indeed, the provision of training and mentoring teams to the ANA was a pre-condition of US hand-over of responsibility of the south and east of Afghanistan to NATO in 2006. But the lion's share of the cheque is, and always will be, signed by Uncle Sam. Furthermore the US continues to attempt to suppress the Afghan appetite for the 70,000 benchmark, correctly insisting that a smaller and better equipped army would be more appropriate for the task. The offer of western equipment is highly attractive to the Afghans; soviet equipment, so long the mainstay of third world armies, is seen as inferior as well as being associated with occupation<sup>74</sup>. It is however, a difficult argument, especially when the ANP lacks the presence to defeat the insurgency.

The US established an ANA training centre in Kabul, designed to turn out battalion-sized (approximately 500) units, known as kandaks, on a regular basis. Once a kandak has been trained and equipped it is posted to an area of the country where it conducts counter-insurgency operations. It takes with it an American Liaison Team<sup>75</sup> which remains with the kandak thereafter, providing continuation training, logistic support and, most importantly in Afghanistan, access to US intelligence and airpower. When NATO undertook to expand the ISAF operation throughout Afghanistan, one of the tasks which NATO refused to take responsibility was the training of the ANA. NATO nations agreed to provide Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams (OMLT) to the kandaks based in their respective areas of responsibility, but declined to take on the basic training, the funding and administration and logistic support of the ANA. As a result a kandak now has an OMLT from the nation responsible for the area where the kandak is based and a US team responsible for its logistic

<sup>74</sup> When Romanian forces arrived in Qalat in mid-2006 their Soviet-style equipment was immediately likened by the Taliban information campaign to the Russian oppressor.

<sup>75</sup> A classic US Special Forces (Green Beret) task known as Foreign Internal Defence (FID).

support and funding. This unwieldy arrangement works but is inefficient and leads to divided loyalties of the kandak if there is a conflict of interest between the US and its NATO partner. Furthermore, differing standards between NATO forces inevitably rub off on their ANA partners, diverging from the coherent single-nation approach to training. Moreover, some nations have refused to allow their OMLT to accompany its kandak where the kandak is re-deployed to an operational area outside its original base location. This is a divisive restriction on the freedom of action and movement of the ANA. If NATO is to become credible as an intervention force in failed states, it must address the requirement to build an indigenous force in a more coherent way than it has so far done in Afghanistan.

- e. UK: Counter Narcotics. Given that poppy accounts for more than 60% of such a small GDP, any radical change to the opium industry would have a disproportionate effect on the already fragile economy. It would be difficult for any Afghan government to survive short-term eradication of poppy, even if that were practical and even if the financial loss were to be compensated by the international community. For one thing any attempt at mass eradication would alienate large swaths of the population who have no alternative income. That prospect would work directly against the goal of stability in Afghanistan, playing to the hand of the insurgents who have realised that providing protection to poppy farmers is both a visible demonstration that they offer an alternative to the Afghan and international security forces and source of shelter, food and, most importantly, income. Nevertheless, there continue to be calls for the eradication of poppy, using methods such as aerial spraying, especially from Capitol Hill where convenient but erroneous comparisons with Colombia are glibly seen as panacea. It has not helped that UK, whose leadership of this area had the considerable political attraction of reducing opium flow into UK, has so far failed to have significant impact; indeed, the 2006 poppy crop showed a significant increase over previous years, most markedly in Helmand where UK had chosen to focus its national security contribution<sup>76</sup>. As the G8 responsibilities for leadership of respective themes were loosened, UK has increasingly looked to the USA for support in the counter-narcotics area and while that has brought additional resources to bear, there is no common transatlantic vision of how Afghanistan should be rid of the scourge of opium. The closest example of reforming an opium-based economy appears to be Thailand; it took about 30 years to wean the economy off its dependency. Thailand had tourism and a stronger infrastructure than Afghanistan. It is therefore a reasonably safe prediction that international community support to the reformation of the Afghan economy will be required over decades; and while political commitment of that duration is not something with which western

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<sup>76</sup> In 2006 UN Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) figures show a 59% increase in opium cultivation from 2005 (104,000 hectares to 165,000 hectares), with a 162% increase in Helmand from 26,500 hectares in 2005 to 69,324 hectares in 2006. The 2007 figures show further increases.

politicians are traditionally comfortable, the reality is not lost on the World Bank and IMF.

There appear to be two potential solutions which are not mutually exclusive: legalisation of opiates for pharmaceutical use and/or elimination, not just eradication, with alternative livelihoods for those who currently grow poppy. Legalisation is politically charged. The requirement for commercial opiates for pharmaceutical use is met by several nations, none of which appeared enamoured at the prospect of transferring their quota to Afghanistan. In any case, this would require a degree of control over the Afghan poppy industry which currently does not exist. Moreover, the Afghan Government has responded to the puritanical pressure from the international community in vociferously condemning poppy; legalisation would therefore require a volte-face. On the other hand it could offer a short term solution to at least part of the problem which elimination does not offer for the simple reason that no other crop could currently be as valuable as opium to Afghanistan's farmers. Poppy grows well in the harsh conditions of many regions of Afghanistan. Any alternative would need a degree of infrastructure (especially water and roads) in order to make it commercially attractive. The process of building that infrastructure is a medium- to long-term challenge. The creation of alternative livelihoods for opium farmers needs to run in parallel with effective targeting of the traffickers. Trafficking runs across centuries-old trading routes that respect no international borders, particularly between Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran and onwards into Asia Minor to the markets of Europe. The traffickers are well equipped and heavily armed. They are inextricably linked to those who control these border regions and to the insurgents whose funding is reliant on the traffic. The insurgency and the trafficking therefore need to be tackled in a co-ordinated way on a regional, rather than purely Afghan, way.

5. Regional Co-ordination. Although border control on the main routes has been established – indeed the border post at Islam Qaleh on the main Herat to Mashhad road is an encouraging example of cooperation between Kabul and Tehran, albeit underpinned by the USA – the insurgency and drug-trafficking issues discussed above epitomize the regional security challenge. The solution lay not in trying to seal or police every potential crossing: the underlying issues must be tackled if both the insurgency and illegal trade is to be defeated. However, co-ordination mechanisms have been established at various levels which have led to increased effectiveness of trans-national issues. The Tri-Partite Commission, established by Presidents Karzai and Musharraf in April 2003 for security co-ordination between the Afghan Ministry of Defence, the Pakistani Ministry of Defence and the US-led Coalition forged links at both the military strategic and the tactical levels. The objective is an enduring and mutually beneficial Afghan-Pakistan security relationship that contributes to regional security. At the strategic levels it offers a bi-monthly forum for improvement of military to military relations.

At the tactical level it has enabled communications links which facilitate co-ordinated military action on both sides of the border. NATO ISAF became an observer in 2005 and a full member on 6 June 2006 since when it has increasingly taken over the responsibilities formerly exercised by the Coalition. Despite outbursts of acrimonious ‘megaphone’ diplomacy between Afghanistan and Pakistan, the Tri-Partite Commission has achieved significant progress. This in itself is not an effective solution to the majority of the regional issues, but it has spawned 2 encouraging developments: the concept of a joint campaign plan and the cloning of the Commission in other areas such as economic development. A joint Afghan-Pakistan-NATO campaign plan would address the issue at the heart of the insurgency: as long as the insurgents can recruit, train, raise funds and recuperate outside Afghanistan’s borders, and therefore to all intents outside NATO’s reach, the security situation will at best reach stalemate. NATO could chase ‘Taliban’ around the hills of southern Afghanistan for decades without defeating the insurgency.

For every insurgent killed or captured, there are another 10 potential recruits to the cause in the refugee camps and Madrassahs of the North-West Frontier Provinces and Baluchistan. Pakistan quite rightly argues that it has more forces committed to this area than NATO and the Afghan National Army combined have committed to the northern side of the international border. But with Kashmir as a continuing drain on its resources and innumerable other issues besetting the Government of Pakistan, it is both a lesser priority and a hornets nest into which there is understandable reluctance to poke further. Pakistan needs external (western) assistance if the issue is to be tackled effectively. If Musharraf is genuinely seen to be the west’s best hope of stability in Pakistan, Afghanistan’s issues must be tackled on a regional basis.

6. Indigenous Authority. The Bonn process established an Interim Administration in Afghanistan. By autumn 2005 the culmination of the Bonn Process in National Assembly and Provincial Council Elections (NAPCE) had resulted in a democratically elected Government of Afghanistan (GoA) with a sub-national system of governance and the organs of a relatively developed state, at least on paper. Admittedly the planned district elections had not taken place, but districts had largely sorted out their own governance in time-honoured fashion. The evolution of this process, itself out with the scope of this thesis, has had a direct influence on the co-ordination of the other actors. The economy had grown strongly, but the benefit was focused on Kabul and it was, if anything, more dependent on opium than it had been in 2001. The insurgency was at best contained, at worst growing in strength in the south. And there were disquieting noises from those in the north who felt that Karzai’s government had favoured the south in terms of economic and political advantage.



## CO-ORDINATION IN THE POST-BONN ERA 2005-2007

Although NAPCE in theory marked the end of the international community's original commitment to Afghanistan, it had long been realised by all the external actors that Afghanistan would need the support of the international community for many years to come. It was, however, an opportunity to take stock and re-assess the future requirement. The newly elected assemblies at national and provincial level needed to flex their wings and exercise the power which had been bestowed upon them. There was therefore a window of opportunity at the end of 2005 to advance the transfer of responsibility for the overall co-ordination of Afghanistan's future to the Afghans themselves. However, they did not have the capacity to plan their future, let alone execute it. On the one hand they had to be seen by the Afghan people to be running their country: on the other hand they still needed (and will continue to need for the foreseeable future) assistance and resources in order to govern effectively. This process had been anticipated by a conference at Wilton Park in May 2005, sponsored by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office and attended by the key actors together with 5 members of the Afghan Cabinet. It led to the London Conference in January 2006 at which the Afghanistan Compact was signed between the Government of Afghanistan and the international community laying down the objectives for the next 5 years together with pledges from the international community of support for the process. On the back of this the Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS), a more detailed road-map building on the work originated in the 2002 National Development Framework, was heralded.

The Compact, like its predecessors, was a child of the international community, foisted on the grateful Afghans. The principles that it enshrines are incontrovertible, if Panglossian. The ANDS, still itself under development, contains some wildly ambitious targets<sup>77</sup> such as the completion of the Disbandment of Illegally Armed Groups (DIAG) process by the end of 2007 and unrealistic expectations of the counter-narcotics strategy. But one significant advantage of the ANDS over the Bonn Process was the recognition that co-ordination in Afghanistan needed to be formalised through the creation of a Joint Co-ordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB). Below this 8 Consultative Groups reflect the sectors of the ANDS, and fall under 3 pillars: Governance, Justice and Human Rights; Security; and Economic and Social Development. The Consultative Group process, by bringing GoA, donors, civil society and international security forces together, was designed to promote the co-ordination of development activities, thereby enhancing aid effectiveness. However, the paradox of the JCMB process is that its creation immediately sparked heated debate over its membership. The initial concept of a small group<sup>78</sup> did not survive contact with its first meeting in April 2006, where it expanded and, as indicated below, continues to do so. The main reason for this is that the informal co-ordination mechanisms which had sprung up between 2001 and 2006 had given voice to a wide constituency who now claimed membership of the new formal co-ordinating body.

Pressure from donors to become members of the JCMB demonstrated its increasing relevance as a co-ordinating mechanism. At the third meeting in November 2006, the Nordic countries request was approved, and Norway is representing them in the first instance. The

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<sup>77</sup> Known as benchmarks.

<sup>78</sup> 7 Afghans + 7 IC members.

fourth JCMB meeting in Berlin in January 2007<sup>79</sup> admitted Spain as the 23rd member. Australia is also reportedly interested and the Afghan Finance Minister supported by the World Bank, made a plea for the IMF to be invited. It was agreed that when fiscal issues are discussed, the IMF would be invited to attend.

At the Berlin meeting, the international community and the Government of Afghanistan reaffirmed the JCMB as the central co-ordination mechanism for the implementation of the Afghanistan Compact. The meeting highlighted the links between subjects and across institutions and called for more intensive engagement. The government, supported by the international community stressed the need for increased national leadership and ownership – especially of the security, reconstruction and development processes, or ‘Afghanisation’. They recognised that this is a long-term proposition going well beyond the period of the Compact. The meeting discussed various ways to improve budget execution, namely to better align donor assistance with government priorities and through improved capacity development. The JCMB noted the progress on the 11 short-life benchmarks and accepted limited time-extensions in 3 of them, acknowledgement of the ambitious nature of the original benchmarks. In view of the ‘strengthened mandate’ received in Berlin, there was a perceived need to review how the JCMB will cope with this added responsibility.

The co-ordination challenges for the JCMB mirror the challenges of Afghanistan. It is proving impossible to decide whether to build capacity and institutions first, then systematically implement growth-inducing projects, or implement the projects to get growth moving, even though the institutions and capacity would be built more slowly. But it is clear that Afghanistan needs to move simultaneously and in a co-ordinated manner on both tracks and quickly. The Compact contains both elements with some benchmarks focused on setting up suitable mechanisms, developing institutional and regulatory frameworks and building capacity. Other benchmarks aim to deliver outcomes in infrastructure, health, education and other sectors. While Afghanistan has seen substantial macroeconomic growth, little progress has been made on critical issues such as employment generation, the availability of additional power, agricultural recovery, particularly in rural areas.

The JCMB’s role has to a certain extent revitalised UNAMA’s function in the co-ordination of the campaign under new leadership<sup>80</sup>, albeit in the context of increasing GoA primacy. UNSCR 1662<sup>81</sup> enshrined UNAMA’s mandate, renewed annually<sup>82</sup>, with six main elements: providing political and strategic advice for the peace process; providing good offices; assisting Afghanistan’s government towards implementation of the Compact; promotion and protection of human rights; providing technical assistance; and continuing to manage all UN humanitarian relief, recovery, reconstruction and development activities in co-ordination with the government. As at March 2007 UNAMA was manned at 74% of its 1500-strong establishment with an annual budget of US\$74M. But it is still acting independently, in parallel with the Government of Afghanistan rather than in support of it, long after the Government of Afghanistan has been empowered by the international community. It is at last attempting to perform the function it should have carried out from

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<sup>79</sup> The detail of the Berlin JCMB was, over and above the UNAMA website, provided by senior officials in UNAMA.

<sup>80</sup> SRSG - Tom Koenigs, Germany; DSRSG (Reconstruction and Development) – Ameerah Haq, Bangladesh; DSRSG (Political) – Christopher Alexander, Canada.

<sup>81</sup> 23rd March 2006.

<sup>82</sup> The current mandate runs from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008.

2002 onwards, but in the meantime alternative mechanisms have sprung up, not least the GoA itself; UNAMA and the JCMB have yet to adapt to this reality.

### CO-ORDINATION AND INTEGRATION OF SECURITY, GOVERNANCE, AND REDEVELOPMENT

In May 2006 the arrival of a British-led ISAF headquarters set the stage for NATO expansion into the south and east of Afghanistan. Meanwhile the security situation in the south of the country was deteriorating. The Taliban, realising that the Coalition forces were concentrated in the east and therefore unable to provide an effective security presence in the south, had infiltrated back into the southern provinces where they offered an alternative security in return for food, accommodation and a share of the profits of poppy farming. If NATO had not fully grasped the differences between the area in which ISAF already exercised control and the area which it was committed to inherit, it was about to. As a NATO brigade, built around 5000 Canadian, British and Dutch troops, together with a similar increase in ANA, formed up in Kandahar, Helmand, and Oruzgan, it encountered pockets of resistance which had remained largely undisturbed during a Coalition presence which had never numbered more than a few hundred on a permanent basis. It is questionable whether NATO nations would have signed up to this task in 2003 if the situation in the south had been as it was in 2006.

The greatest challenge to the execution of the international plan, however, lay in its adoption by Afghans. Unless the fledgling Afghan system of governance genuinely accepted ownership, the ANDS was destined to be at best a general guide to be discarded when it was no longer achievable or when more convenient international advice superseded it. Moreover, although the ANDS contained a series of objectives against timelines, much detailed implementation planning remained to be completed, particularly in the short term. The Commander of ISAF in early 2004, Lieutenant General Rick Hillier<sup>83</sup>, had recognised this planning gap between broad long-term policy and operationalisation and had embedded a team of planners in the Afghan Government to flesh out the detail. They had done much good work but needed to be reinforced; above all a sense of ownership of the plan needed to be instilled in the Government. The incoming commander of ISAF in the wake of the Afghan Compact, Lieutenant General Richards, gained support from UNAMA, EU and key ambassadors for sowing the seeds of a national security council with President Karzai. The council, formed of key ministers and backed by mixed teams of Afghan and international staff, could operationalise the ANDS oversee its execution. The idea was seized on by the President; it became known as the Policy Action Group (PAG), meeting every 2 weeks under Karzai himself and otherwise weekly under the National Security Advisor, Dr Zalmay Rassoul. The PAG devised Presidential objectives to complement the ANDS, key amongst which was the decision to “identify strategically important geographic zones (initially in the south and east) where improvements in security and governance will create conditions conducive to more effective, noticeable development”<sup>84</sup>. These zones, which became known as Afghan Development Zones, provided a framework within which the ANA and ANP would concentrate on the provision of increased security, allowing NATO forces to

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<sup>83</sup> Currently Chief of the Canadian Defence Staff.

<sup>84</sup> Presidential Directive No 7.

manoeuvre outside the zones in order both to defeat any external threat to the ADZs and to expand the zones wherever feasible.

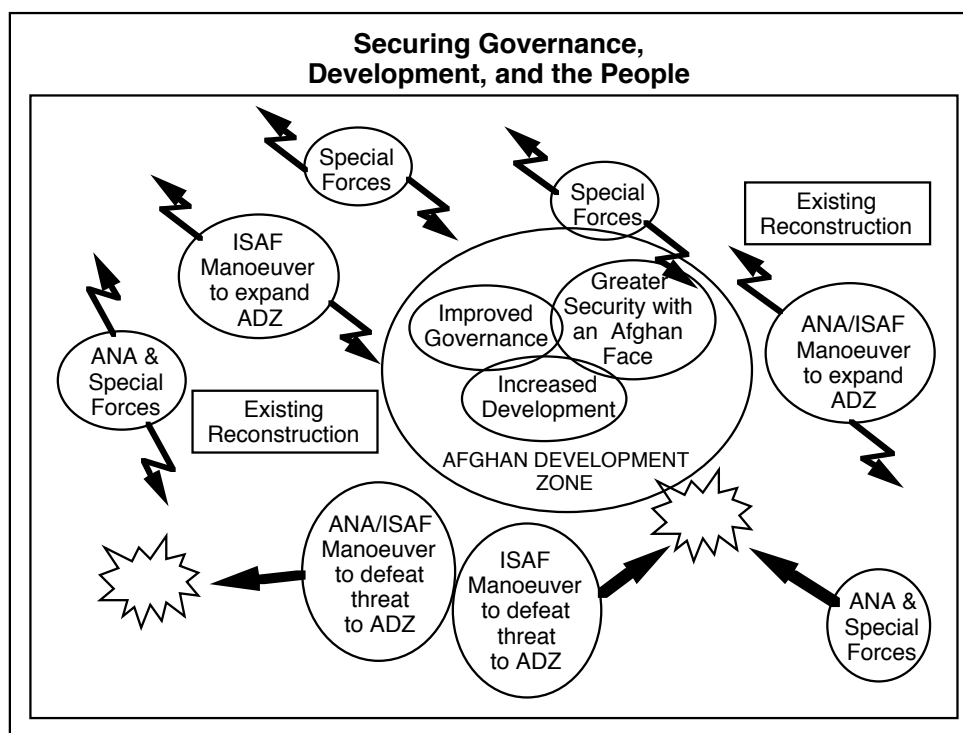


Figure 1: The Afghan Development Zone Concept.

Translating this onto the ground presented significant challenges. An area of co-ordination in which the US had achieved significant success in the south and east was the linkage within PRTs between US national policy, USAID funding for development, and security. In addition to the USAID funding all US military commanders had access to a Commander's Emergency Reconstruction Programme (CERP) fund. This enabled military commanders to achieve immediate effect to complement security, for example in a village which had been damaged during military operations, a US commander could conduct immediate reparation: it was key to winning the hearts and minds of the Afghans, not least as it played to the Afghan code of honour<sup>85</sup>. NATO however, relies on individual nations or groups of nations to make their own arrangements: there is no common source of funding from which to ensure continuity of the reconstruction funding which USAID had provided, nor is there a common approach to CERP funding. There was a real danger that NATO would lose the support of the Afghans in the south as the development funding dried up. In information terms, it would have handed the Taliban victory on a plate. Fortunately this weakness had been identified during the 2005 pre-deployment planning. The solution was to co-ordinate USAID's efforts with NATO; this was achieved by persuading the US that USAID development funding needed to continue in the south and east beyond the transfer of security responsibility to NATO and was cemented by the inclusion in Headquarters ISAF of a USAID official<sup>86</sup>. ADZs were 'designed to puncture the TB's claim that the GOA and IC

<sup>85</sup> This approach was part of the criticism levelled by some NGOs that military commanders were encroaching into their 'humanitarian space', but used in a timely and focused way, CERP funding achieved decisive tactical effect. The British had successfully employed a similar approach in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

<sup>86</sup> Michelle Parker, who had previously worked at the US PRT in Jalalabad, recognised as a model of co-ordination between the military and the development community.

were not delivering on their promises and that life would be better off under them. Within the Zones, we had to demonstrate sufficient progress with which to construct an information campaign that was rooted in substance and not spin. Our aim was to restore the confidence of the people and give them the resolve to stay the course. But I was always conscious that we were making the best of a bad job, one that reflected an under-resourced operation ... COIN<sup>87</sup> so much is dictated by troop numbers. The obvious example is the correlation between that number and air power. Too few troops means more dependence on air. This leads to more collateral damage and a rise in civilian casualties, with its implications for in-country as well as international support. Too few troops means slow progress with the securing of vital economic development, with the attendant gift this presents to your enemy's propaganda machine, and the risk of losing the support of a war weary population. To mitigate some of this, local soldiers and police will be prematurely used on operations for which they are neither properly trained nor equipped, with all the damage this can cause to long term goals.<sup>88</sup> Nevertheless, NATO assumed responsibility for the south on 31 July 2006. From the perspective of tactical and operational co-ordination it made sense to transfer responsibility for the east at the same time as the south in order to avoid an artificial seam down the centre of southern Afghanistan between NATO and Coalition forces, but the US wished to see whether NATO was up to the task before transferring control of the largely US force in eastern Afghanistan.

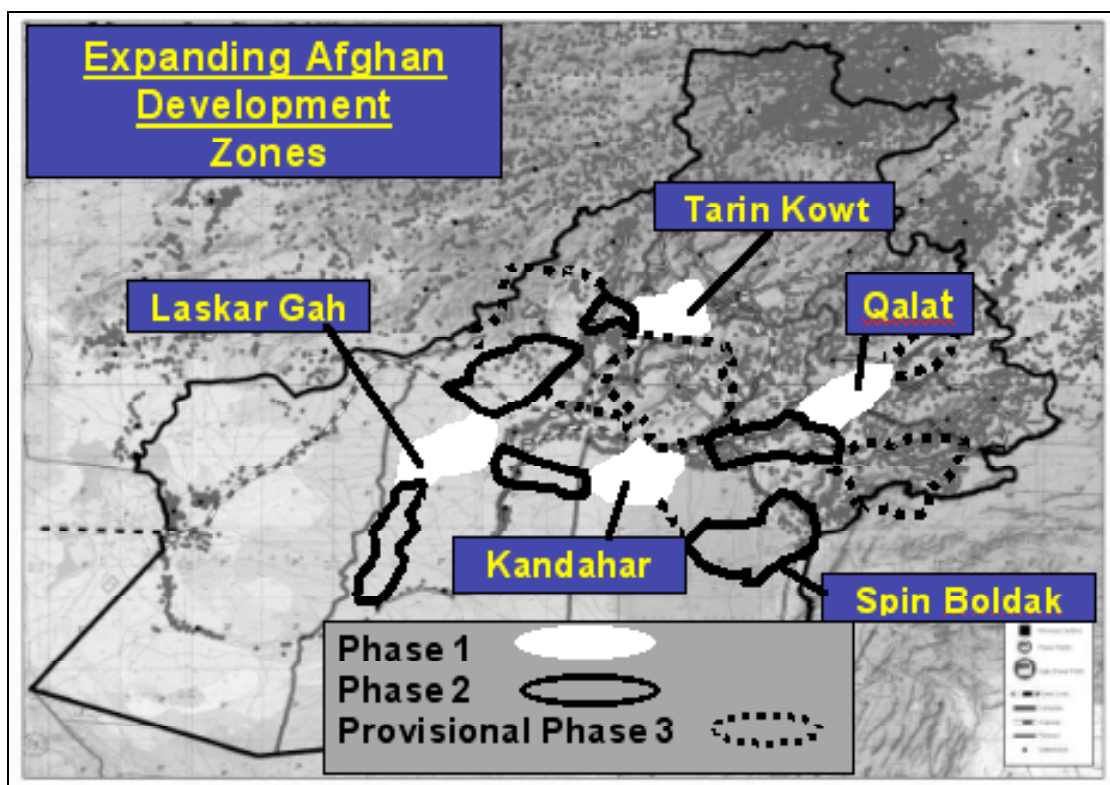


Figure 2: Expanding the Afghan Development Zones in Southern Afghanistan.

The establishment of ADZs, shown as Phase 1 in Figure 2, was relatively simple as it was based on existing PRTs, centres of government, roads and reconstruction. However, the planned expansion of ADZs, shown as Phase 2 on Figure 2, could not be achieved without

<sup>87</sup> Counter Insurgency.

<sup>88</sup> Lieutenant General David Richards at RUSI 5 June 2007.

confronting the Taliban who had, over the period 2002-2006 filtered back into areas from which they could exert leverage on the Afghan population and authorities. They had selected Kandahar, their spiritual home, as the focus of their effort to discredit the Government of Afghanistan. Their plan was to cut off the city from the rest of Afghanistan by controlling the main roads initially to the west and subsequently to the east and north of the city (shown in red or red/white in Figure 2). As previously argued, the military could chase so called 'Taliban' around southern Afghanistan for the next 20 years and still not end the insurgency; for every insurgent killed or captured there are 10 more potential recruits in the refugee camps of Quetta. The killing of Taliban military commanders, such as Mullah Dadullah in May 2007, may be a tactical set-back for the insurgency, but there are plenty who will gladly step into his shoes.

The key to defeating the insurgency is to make the Taliban irrelevant by instilling in the average Afghan, particularly in the south, a sense of prosperity flowing from the Government of Afghanistan. Picking a fight with the Taliban was something which General Richards saw as a matter of choice, and when tactical defeat could be turned into operational advantage. The area to the west of Kandahar, where the Taliban had chosen to make their stand, was such an opportunity. In General Richards' view: 'If the Canadian led Battle of Medusa in Kandahar had failed last summer, and it was a close run thing, the whole NATO operation would have foundered. The Taliban would have entered Kandahar, the consent of the Pashtun population to President Karzai and the IC would have been lost, he would almost certainly have fallen from power, the old Northern Alliance would have taken over Kabul and the whole NATO operation would have failed. Yet, despite this, very few nations, over-focused on their own narrow problems, were prepared to come to the Canadians' assistance.' However, Medusa in military terms was still a tactical action: its success lay in the extent to which co-ordinated redevelopment and improved governance could be injected into the area. The battle concluded a week before the start of Ramadan and less than 2 months before winter makes relief operations difficult, if not impossible. The success of the operation was testimony to the ability of the international community in country to pull together; however, it would not have been possible if reconstruction projects had not already been planned in the Kandahar region with sufficient flexibility to re-direct into the affected Pashmul area.

On 5 October 2006 the Coalition forces in the east of Afghanistan transferred to NATO command. Afghanistan now had, after 5 years of separate control of the security responsibility, a single security structure, in theory. However, the ANA remains under national command and the US maintains more than 10,000 troops in Afghanistan under national command for the counter-terrorist and ANA training missions which NATO had rejected. Moreover, co-ordination within the security line of operation is not an end in itself: 'Our specified military task of expanding the NATO operation into the troublesome south and east was demanding certainly but relatively straightforward by comparison. The real measure of success would be the degree to which we were able to turn military success into something with wider operational impact. To create the right operating 'environment' for this to occur we had, without having many levers to pull other than sound thinking and good advocacy, to achieve much greater unity of effort. Along with something called the Afghan Development Zone concept, this was done principally through the creation of a new mechanism of government that brought key Afghan and International Community players together, systematically, to discuss and agree the way ahead ... In Afghanistan, there are 37 nations formally linked militarily within ISAF; there are another 25 plus that are represented in Kabul including big states like Japan and Iran that play important roles; and there is a sovereign head of state who believes he is actually running his own country. It does not count

for very much if little old Whitehall is joined up but only playing with itself. It is in theatre that all the different strands of a huge international and Afghan effort must be joined up and made complementary. The PAG sought to achieve this but nations must devolve greater responsibility to their representatives in theatre if their individual let alone collective aims are to be properly met.<sup>89</sup>

In terms of co-ordination of such a complex intervention, the US had concluded from its experience of Afghanistan in 2002/3 and Iraq in the summer of 2003 that the security function at the tactical level – the day to day implementation of security, including the immediate reaction to events on the ground – should not be conducted from the same headquarters as the ‘operational’ or theatre level functions of integrating the military activities into the overall campaign. Two headquarters emerged in both theatres; indeed, NATO had adopted a similar approach in Bosnia in 1996. The debate had re-emerged as NATO focused on its expansion into the south and east of Afghanistan. However, one of the difficulties of attempting to re-shape an existing military operation is that vested interests are already enshrined in existing structures and procedures; and iconoclasm by ‘new kids on the block’ is unwelcome. The situation in an alliance, where proposals for change are frequently seen as attempts to gain advantage for one element or nation, is doubly resistant to change. NATO had taken years following the end of the Cold War to change its structures to reflect new security requirements. It had given its static Cold War command structure responsibilities for new operations in order to perpetuate the justification for headquarters and staff: NATO’s Southern Region Headquarters in Naples assumed the co-ordinating function in respect of the Balkans and its Central Region Headquarters in Brunssum, Netherlands, was made responsible for co-ordination and continuity of operations in Afghanistan. This had distinct merits in terms of co-ordination, given the rapid turnover of NATO headquarters in Afghanistan itself; however, its location thousands of miles from Afghanistan rendered it unable to influence co-ordination other than on an occasional basis and in a way in which both the military and other actors in Afghanistan itself recognised as one step removed from World War 1 ‘chateau generalship.’

NATO was unwilling to change this structure to reflect US experience: the tactical military function and the operational level integration of security with all other lines of operation would be controlled from one headquarters. In order to achieve this, the headquarters needed to be substantially reorganised. It was already designed to balance the application of traditional kinetic military power with the non-kinetic soft power of information operations so important in counter-insurgency. Staff branches of the headquarters would spend less than 50% of their effort on their traditional military functions: the majority of their effort, however, was focused on integrating all elements of military power into a campaign in which the military did not have the lead role<sup>90</sup>. ‘In the UK we do not use the phrase “War on Terror” because we can’t win by military means alone’<sup>91</sup>. The ISAF headquarters in Kabul was consistently more coherent by virtue of the framework

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<sup>89</sup> Lieutenant General David Richards at RUSI 5<sup>th</sup> June 2007.

<sup>90</sup> The Engineer Branch, for example, became the means of integrating military effort into the economic and reconstruction work being conducted largely by IOs and NGOs; the branch traditionally responsible for co-ordination of hard and soft power additionally took on the integration of counter-narcotics.

<sup>91</sup> Hilary Benn, UK Secretary of State for Development, in a speech in New York on 16 April 2007 (<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/news/files/Speeches/foreign-policy-april07.asp>). His experience was informed by the contrast he noted between London and Kabul in terms of co-ordination of the lines of operation in the Afghanistan campaign. During a visit in June 2006 he remarked to the author that the level of integration between the development, military and foreign affairs elements would not be possible in a national capital.

nature of its headquarters provided by a single nation than Brunssum which provided continuity at the expense of coherent staff effort. However, US perseverance with 2 separate levels of headquarters throughout made for no easy transition: indeed, it merely confused the other actors, who, having worked out which headquarters did what under Coalition management, now had to come to terms with some NATO functions being driven from the Netherlands. Nor had the co-ordination difficulties of such a construct escaped the NATO leadership in Brussels; but instead of simplifying the situation, the Secretary General appointed a Senior Civil Representative with a direct reporting chain back to Brussels for non-military aspects of Afghanistan's reconstruction. Such a construct can be made to work; indeed NATO's success in assuming leadership of the security function in Afghanistan suggests it did. However, it was inefficient and exacerbated the challenges of co-ordination. The recognition of this situation by the US was manifest by the appointment of a 4 star general to command ISAF in 2007, thereby further marginalising the function of Brunssum.

Unified US command of both the NATO and Coalition aspects of security from February 2007 should have theoretically improved co-ordination. However, there are worrying indications that divergence between the 2 elements is still a cause for concern. 'Fighting an insurgency while building a working state from the ruins of Afghanistan was never going to be easy with a coalition of 37 countries including both battle-hardened Americans and battle-shy Germans. But the allies have hobbled themselves by creating two separate forces – both dominated and led by American generals – that at times work at cross-purposes ... the two forces are supposed to co-ordinate their activity ... But local ISAF commanders complain that, unbeknownst to them, OEF troops often operate in their areas and undermine their work. Whatever the truth of this, everybody suffers the consequences of mistakes, none more so than the government of President Hamid Karzai'.<sup>92</sup>

The increased role of PSCs in Afghanistan throughout this 5 year period posed a potential destabilising effect if their activities were not carried out in the context of the overall campaign. ISAF therefore established an informal co-ordination mechanism with the private security organisations; the carrot for the PSCs was information on the security situation: the stick was the influence ISAF had with the Government of Afghanistan in terms of renewing the PSCs' contracts; and that itself could only be done through assisting the Government of Afghanistan to improve its system of monitoring PSCs.

### AVOIDING STOVE-PIPED THINKING

Co-ordination also benefits from individual actors and the co-ordination authority considering problems not only from the perspective of that actor but also from the perspective of other actors and, probably most importantly, from those who would oppose the proposed solution to the problem. 'Thinking outside the box' is not something that all organisations can do in terms of having the ability or affording the resources. Nevertheless, experience suggests it pays to do this from a military perspective; US and UK military headquarters, certainly at the theatre level, routinely employ an independent 'red team' reporting directly to the commander in order to test the planning effort of the staff against likely enemy courses of action. In the complex circumstances of Afghanistan this capability expanded both in terms of breath of activity – not purely military but transcending all areas

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<sup>92</sup> The Economist 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2007, Leader p 15.



of activity – and also in its utility; the ‘Prism Cell’ of ISAF IX brought together expertise in economics and governance with the ability to reach back to a vast pool of knowledge in UK and elsewhere.

### MEASURING PROGRESS

‘A crisis-driven response to conflict that measures success in terms of arresting disease and starvation and achieving a ceasefire must be embedded within the painstaking tasks of relationship and confidence building, and of the design of and preparation for social change’<sup>93</sup>.

Until the Afghan Compact mandated the JCMB to report back to the UN and the nations involved in the Compact on progress with its implementation, accurate statistics on the rebuilding of Afghanistan were difficult to obtain and frequently contradictory. The Afghan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU), an NGO, was the most comprehensive source of data; however, individual actors were often better resourced in this respect and, moreover, were frequently reluctant to divulge their data. It is primarily for the co-ordination authority not only to establish its own methods of measuring and transmitting progress, but also to weave in the methodologies and data of the individual actors in order to present a coherent picture.

Without a coherent and objective picture, progress in the rehabilitation of a failed state will invariably be sapped by opposition elements and the media to the detriment of support from both the indigenous population and the international community. There does not have to be any spin in this: the less the better. Here again, the operational analysis assets owned by the military and traditionally used to assess the risk of particular military courses of action were, as had been the case in Bosnia and Kosovo, used to augment the Afghan Government’s assets. The purely military element of their work was minimal: much more important was the work on ‘normality indicators’ and projects such as the Afghan Country Stability Picture, a common database of reconstruction and development, which influenced not only military decisions but also the activities of the Afghan Government and the opinions of the international community<sup>94</sup>.

### COMMUNICATING PROGRESS

All of this co-ordination and monitoring is valueless unless progress is communicated to the various domestic and international audiences, as argued in Chapter 1. The Afghan Government apparatus of information was fractured, if it had ever existed: there is no Afghan

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<sup>93</sup> Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies. J P Lederach. United States Institute of Peace Press. 1997.

<sup>94</sup> Considerable work in this area has been done under the auspices of the Lester Pearson Peacekeeping Centre in Canada, not least by the Cornwallis Group of leading operational analysts. See particularly ‘Our Seven Wars in Afghanistan’, N N French, 2007, the Pearson Papers, Volume 10, Issue 1 and ‘A NATO Collective Strategy Proposal and Practical Planning and Analysis – Experience from Operations in Afghanistan’, Michele Fisher, 2006, Cornwallis Group X Analysis for New and Emerging Societal Conflicts, Pearson Peacekeeping Centre.

culture of information as a means of government accountability. A vital element of the JCMB and PAG work is therefore the information campaign. However, the weaker the co-ordination of all aspects of rebuilding Afghanistan, the more difficult it is to produce a coherent and credible message; and hard won gains in information terms are easily undermined by news-worthy headlines: ‘Afghan aid groups estimate that foreign and Afghan forces have killed 230 civilians so far this year – as many as in the whole of last year’<sup>95</sup> has a disproportionate effect, not least on President Karzai, who on several occasions has berated Coalition commanders for unnecessary civilian casualties, even before it is further distorted by the relatively sophisticated Taliban information operation which uses Islamic media more effectively than either the international community or the Government of Afghanistan.

#### WHAT ASPECTS OF CO-ORDINATION ARE WORKING?

Despite the security constraints some notable progress has been achieved. The machinery of government is functioning: service delivery in areas such as education, health, agriculture, rural development, public works, and public administration has continued, albeit subject to security constraints in parts of the country. Legislation, rules and regulations are being drafted and approved by the cabinet and Parliament subject to capacity constraints; and economic governance is being closely monitored so as to achieve the benchmarks and targets set by the Compact and the international financial institutions.

Development planning at the national and sub-national level is taking off, with some areas moving quite fast and others lagging behind. Nationally, the 8 Consultative Groups and 40 odd working/ sub-working groups are preparing sector strategies for the full ANDS. Following presentation of 8 of these strategies at the meeting of the Afghanistan Development Forum on 29 and 30 April 2007, GoA is now undertaking sub-national consultations to discuss these sector strategies and prioritize provincial development needs. Facilitated by the Governor's office and the provincial departments of the line ministries, the consultations intend to reach Provincial Development Councils, Provincial Councils, District Councils and Community Development Committees, as well as NGOs, donors and traditional sub-national structures (shuras etc).

The original date for the completion of the ANDS is 2008. However, the IMF encouraged the Afghan Ministry of Finance to request early completion of the ANDS document in order to kick-start a multi-lateral initiative for debt relief. Afghanistan's IMF programme – the Poverty Reduction Growth Facility – expires in March 2009 so the Ministry of Finance is keen to have completed a year of ANDS by then. Sub-nationally, 32 of the 34 provinces have established provincial development councils (PDCs). These are beginning to co-ordinate provincial plans which will feed into the national planning and resource allocation process. 15 provinces have prepared provincial development plans (PDPs) in a participatory manner and submitted them to the Ministry of Economy. Others are at various stages of development but generally most have prepared prioritized lists of projects. While costing and linkages with national plans and budgets are issues, the Government is piloting provincial budgeting in 3 provinces, and plans to extend them to 7 provinces over the coming year.

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<sup>95</sup> The Economist 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2007, p 70, Unfriendly Fire.

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### WHAT ASPECTS OF CO-ORDINATION ARE NOT WORKING AND WHY?

The delivery of services, especially in remote areas is either not working at all, or is not working well. Despite many good intentions and in some cases adequate resources, many of the projects cannot take off. In particular, key infrastructure critical for making a difference in people's lives is not being developed at an acceptable pace. The Report of JCMB III identified a number of factors contributing to the slow delivery of services: security, especially in the south and the southeast; a lack of adequate financial resources through the core national budget for development; a lack of government capacity in light of the challenges and ineffectiveness of international assistance, particularly in capacity development; inability of the private sector to fuel growth and employment creation leading to high unemployment and entrenched poverty; and the slow pace of development in passing legislation in critical areas.

Security may now be better co-ordinated with other lines of activity, although there is still room for improvement, but internally within the security pillar there is considerable scope for better integration of the NATO, coalition, Afghan and PSC elements: 'unity of effort requires much more than rejigging command structures; it is about managing the complexity of nation-building. The problem is not just the strength of the Taliban, but also the weakness of the Afghan government, and disillusionment with corruption and slow reconstruction'.<sup>96</sup>

The Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups (DIAG) programme has achieved little since its launch on 1 May 2006. The government and international stakeholders have thus redirected their efforts toward a joint review and restructuring of the programme. The total number of weapons collected by DIAG – including those submitted mandatorily by candidates for the National Assembly and Provincial Council elections – stood at 29,251 as of 25 February 2007; of these, approximately 60 percent were assessed as operational. By the end of 2006, Illegal Armed Groups (IAGs) in just 3 districts of the 5 target provinces were deemed by the Joint Secretariat of the Disarmament and Reintegration (D&R) Commission to have complied with the DIAG programme objectives<sup>97</sup>. Compliance certification for these districts permitted the release of development funds earmarked for DIAG and initiated the related processes of project assessments and issuance of tenders; the first project to be implemented, a hydroelectric power plant in Farkhar district, will be launched shortly.

Proposals for the programme's revitalization from Afghan and international principals were tabled for consideration at a special session of the DIAG Steering Committee on 25 September 2006. Vice President Khalili and the chairs of the D&R Commission mandated the formation of a joint Review Panel; its task was to assess progress in the programme's implementation and propose corrective changes. Discussions in the Review Panel, which met for the first time on 26 September, pointed to convergence between the Afghan and international principals on a number of points: the need for renewed commitment to the programme on the part of the Afghan Government; the need to distinguish between Illegal Armed Groups (IAGs) that were actively engaged in criminal activities and those former commanders who were not adversely affecting security; and the need for flexibility in

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<sup>96</sup> The Economist 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2007, Leader p 16.

<sup>97</sup> Farkhar district in Takhar province, where 407 weapons were collected, and Kohistan 1 and Mahmud Raqi districts in Kapisa province, where a combined total of 141 weapons were collected.

awarding development projects to districts where IAGs were positively engaged with the programme. Subsequent discussions pointed to the equally critical need for effective ministerial co-ordination on DIAG. On 12 November 2006 President Karzai convened the first of 3 meetings of ministers and international stakeholders to co-ordinate the DIAG programme and ways forward. At the second meeting, held on 22 November, the President restated his government's support for DIAG and invited the prominent jihadi party leaders to secure support for the programme. The recommendations of the Review Panel were reflected in an Action Plan that the President endorsed on 7 February 2007. The Action Plan gives the National Security Advisor a ministerial co-ordination and reporting role and designates the Ministry of Interior as having the eventual lead in DIAG implementation. The DIAG Joint Secretariat will continue to exist until the Ministry is deemed to have sufficient capacity to lead DIAG implementation. The UNDP implementing arm for DDR and DIAG, the Afghanistan New Beginning Programme, would accordingly undertake capacity-building of the Ministry of Interior and other concerned ministries and departments. In a related development, the Ministry of Interior is in the process of drafting an enforcement plan for IAGs in Takhar Province who had not complied with the programme; the plan will include specific requests for support from the Ministry of Defence and NATO-ISAF. There is therefore some co-ordination in this area but there is more process than product.

The GoA's updated National Drugs Control Strategy (NDCS), which was launched at the 2006 London Conference on Afghanistan, sets out the GoA's counter narcotics policies over the next five years and highlights four key priorities where activity is likely to make the greatest impact in the short-term: targeting the trafficker and the trade; strengthening and diversifying legal rural livelihoods; developing effective CN institutions; and demand reduction<sup>98</sup>. However, the UK's approach to its CN role under the Bonn Agreement has spawned at least 10 organisations who are actively engaged in CN activities in Afghanistan without effective co-ordination under a single Inter-Agency Operations Co-ordination Centre.

## CONCLUSIONS

The plethora of committees, review panels, joint secretariats and action plans described above reflects the *ad hoc* nature of co-ordination amongst the international community and the way in which it has developed over the last 5 years. There is nothing inherently wrong with such an approach as long as all aspects are covered – in many ways the international community's co-ordination mechanisms reflect the lack of structure inherent in Afghan methods of co-ordination – but it has taken a long time to achieve even this level of co-ordination. The creation of the JCMB has finally applied a formal co-ordination and monitoring structure, but the existing *ad hoc* mechanisms and the emerging Afghan ones, such as the PAG, detract from the JCMB's impact. A stronger UN co-ordinating authority from the outset could have achieved more in a shorter time and, more importantly, could have given the Government of Afghanistan a firmer platform from which to start the process of taking over the lead role. But the election of the Government of Afghanistan and its empowerment through the PAG effectively marks the point where primacy of co-ordination shifts to the Government. Parallel international organisations are not only unnecessary; they add to the co-ordination challenge and confuse the information situation. What is required

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<sup>98</sup> Taken from UK Foreign & Commonwealth website.

now in terms of integration is a concerted effort by the international actors to stand full-square behind the Government of Afghanistan in capacity-building, coherent mentoring and in channelling their efforts and resources through Government conduits.

#### CHAPTER 4 - LESSONS FOR THE CO-ORDINATION OF REHABILITATION OF FUTURE FAILED STATES

‘Predictions are tricky, especially where they are about the future.’<sup>99</sup>

To return to my original hypothesis<sup>100</sup>, the first conclusion is that there can be no fixed template for the co-ordination of international intervention in a failed state. Those who in 1999 simplistically advocated from ivory towers in western capitals that the Bosnia model could be transposed without amendment to Kosovo were naïve in their understanding of the differences – cultural, historical and geopolitical – which underpinned the new challenge. There have been similar attempts to mirror in Afghanistan models adopted in Iraq and vice versa. That is not to say that experience from one failed state cannot be usefully transposed to another: it is, however, essential that the model is calibrated against the individual circumstances of the target state and not just applied *mutatis mutanda* to a totally new situation.

That said, the experience of co-ordination in Afghanistan, Iraq and the Balkans suggests that any intervention should be founded at supra-national level on a co-ordinated framework plan which spans the complete intervention and concludes only when responsibility for the failed state is completely transferred to an indigenous government. The greatest challenge for those who are charged with co-ordinating the implementation of the plan has stemmed from the glib tendency in western capitals to apply First or Second World solutions to Third World problems: the result is invariably disillusionment on the part of its protagonists and rejection on the part of the indigenous population. The international actors may therefore have to accept lower standards of security, governance and economy than they or their publics would accept at home, at least in the short term. This has serious implications in terms of domestic messages for western governments whose own legitimacy will be based on highly developed democratic models. Explaining to domestic audiences that democracy or women’s rights in a failed state may not be a short-term priority demands strong leadership at heads of government level in order to ensure a common and pragmatic vision of progress within the failed state<sup>101</sup>.

Without a long-term, realistic, co-ordinated plan with a coherent communication mechanism, such interventions are hobbled from the start. The UN was designed, in theory at

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<sup>99</sup> Donald Rumsfeld, former US Secretary of Defense.

<sup>100</sup> The greater the routine co-ordination between actors, the more robust the framework of the intervention, particularly in terms of a single defined co-ordinating authority and the more inclusive the planning, and the more the international community is prepared to take a long-term view which takes account of the evolution of the target state, the greater chance there will be of a rapid progress in re-building the state and transition to full indigenous control and safe international disengagement.

<sup>101</sup> Although such prioritisation may appear harsh, in practice there will always be NGOs who do not conform to the common vision, not least because of their mandates; they will at least enable some progress to be achieved in areas which, while outside the periphery of the common vision, allow the international community as a whole to claim with justification that blind eyes are not being turned to lesser priorities.

least, as the ideal forum at supra-national level to co-ordinate this strategic kick-start to an intervention; however, it can only realise the laudable aspirations of the Agenda for Peace if its constituent nations are prepared to invest faith and resources in it. The UN's opportunity to stamp its authority may have passed in Afghanistan, but it should be the default setting for similar ventures in future, and not just in the face of a crisis: much effective co-ordination can be achieved in relative peace and comfort. The 2006 US Quadrennial Defense Review talks about 'new concepts and methods of interagency and international cooperation'<sup>102</sup>, but if nations act independently in this respect, or even in restricted alliances, they will never achieve the buy-in which could be generated through an effective UN capacity. In order to be effective, however, the UN requires significant reformation. Not least, the Chapter VIII aspiration to delegate to regional bodies is destined to remain a gesture, certainly for Third World regional bodies, unless the mechanisms for resourcing such missions do not automatically assume that the regional body is willing and capable of conducting the mission without wider assistance. If organisations such as the AU are to have a chance of success of co-ordinating such interventions, nations cannot 'push the problem upstairs' without resources. Realistically, however, Somalia, Rwanda and Bosnia suggested that there is a limit to the UN's ability to reform itself sufficiently to handle complex Peace Building. The United States is unlikely in the foreseeable future to allow the UN to conduct co-ordination of the security aspects of a complex Peace Building mission, and other nations will follow suit. It is too simplistic to draw a firm line between Chapter VI and Chapter VII interventions, not least because the distinction is increasingly blurred and what starts out as a Chapter VI intervention may<sup>103</sup> require more robust action, but it is a useful yardstick. Beyond Chapter VI it is therefore useful to have a default setting for co-ordination of interventions. Single nations and ad hoc coalitions are not ideal for this role for the reasons analysed above. NATO, on the other hand, is a respected and capable alliance which, since the end of the Cold War, has been looking for a role. This is not to suggest that NATO should co-ordinate all aspects of an intervention; practically that would require too great a paradigm shift which is, in any case unnecessary.

The example of Afghanistan suggests that it is capable not only of assuming such a role under a UN mandate but of expanding the role to lead the co-ordination of the security aspects of a complex Peace Building mission. But that is not enough: if NATO is to be the default setting for such missions and not degenerate into an increasingly irrelevant political talking-shop, it needs to be capable of taking on additional military tasks, such as the training of indigenous security forces, but most importantly, it needs to change its structures to be more coherent with the UN so that it can automatically dovetail with an SRSG or in-country civil co-ordination authority in a way which worked well, albeit in an ad hoc way, in Kosovo, but has not worked smoothly in Afghanistan.

Critically, within the overall plan for the rehabilitation of the failed state Afghanistan suggests that the lack of a single co-ordinating authority has at best resulted in slower progress than was envisaged at Bonn; the second bite of the cherry in London in 2006 was designed to sweep up unfinished business, but the benchmarks established have already slipped. But it has wider implications: the opportunity for the UN to re-establish its credibility has been squandered. In future authority for co-ordination in a failed state should

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<sup>102</sup> <http://www.defenselink.mil/qdr/report/Report20060203.pdf> and echoed by the NATO Riga Summit communiqué in November 2006 <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2006/p06-150e.htm>.

<sup>103</sup> As in Rwanda when UNSCR 929 imposed the Chapter VII French-led Opération Turquoise on top of the existing Chapter VI UNAMIR mandate.

be clearly established. It is both unlikely and unnecessary for the co-ordination authority to be vested in the same person or body throughout the duration of the international community's intervention, but coherence must be ensured during any transition of co-ordinating authority. The plan should work backwards from the end-state of transferring co-ordinating authority to the indigenous government as soon as practical; practicality in this respect should be based on the capacity of the indigenous authority.

Before the indigenous government is capable, even with international under-pinning, of exercising the co-ordination authority, responsibility for co-ordination inside the failed state may have to transition through several forms. It may initially fall to the military by default, but the international community's plan should anticipate that and legitimise the military's authority to co-ordinate all actors. 'In Afghanistan today, and even in an American dominated Iraq, the theatre commander can achieve unity of effort at best and will need to involve himself in a range of political and diplomatic activities in order to achieve it. This is not something we soldiers should shy away from. The 'Soldier Statesman' is in our genes. Templer was one in recent history; Wavell, Mountbatten, and Macarthur are but three more. We lost some of the required skills, and perhaps confidence, in the Cold War but in certain phases of a conflict, a soldier may be best suited to playing the lead role. Often only he has the organisational strength to pull the issues and players together. If a commander does not take the risks involved in trying to achieve this, then he can hardly blame others when the conditions needed to exploit narrower military success are not in place. In Sierra Leone, an essentially Malaya-like single nation's effort prevailed, at least in the important early stages and thus, as long as one was prepared to act out of the military box, creating a favourable broader environment was not too difficult'<sup>104</sup>. However, as soon as feasible<sup>105</sup>, primacy for co-ordination should be transferred to a civilian administration which has the authority and confidence of all the actors to co-ordinate the implementation of the rehabilitation of the failed state.

Whatever the single co-ordinating authority inside the failed state, the initial stages of its reign should be characterised by robust co-ordination – a 'light footprint' invites anarchy; it must also have an efficient co-ordinating and monitoring mechanism which embraces all actors in a way which is inclusive but not unwieldy. The JCMB in Afghanistan, imperfect and 5 years too late though it may be, is a model worthy of development for the future, but it must be established at the outset and remain close-knit. The international community should be clear on how the emerging indigenous authority will be progressively integrated into the co-ordination of the plan and define the conditionality of the transfer of primacy for co-ordination. Parallel but separate international and indigenous mechanisms are not conducive to effective co-ordination: an integrated approach is required. Once the decision is taken to transfer co-ordinating authority to the indigenous government, the interim international authority should be prepared to fall in behind the indigenous administration to ensure its success.

Eventual transfer of the co-ordinating authority to an indigenous government places a high premium on a co-ordinated international effort focused on capacity building. From a security perspective this means an indigenous police force and army, in that priority. But that may be simplistic; the clarity of distinction between these 2 forces cannot be taken for

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<sup>104</sup> Lieutenant General David Richards at RUSI 5<sup>th</sup> June 2007.

<sup>105</sup> Feasibility should be expressed as conditional in terms of, for example, a sufficiently stable security situation.

granted in western societies, let alone failed states. The requirement must be carefully defined. By its intervention, the international community has legally and morally taken on itself the responsibility for external security of the state. The internal security must therefore become the priority for indigenous forces, not least because successful policing requires intimate knowledge of the local people. This may require differing types of police forces: a gendarmerie may be required for internal security; border police may be necessary, especially where smuggling would otherwise hinder economic revival. There may be pressure from former warring factions to create an indigenous army, and this is both an attractive solution to the regulation of former combatants and an established outward sign of statehood, but this must be judged against the actual requirement and cost of an army as against the requirement for a police force. Moreover, there may be alternative civil functions which are suited to former combatants. In this respect, the Kosovo model which turned the Kosovo Liberation Army into the Kosovo Protection Corps may be judged more successful than the Afghan model which has created an army which is unsustainable without ongoing massive external funding, and which has developed out of kilter with the police force, thereby encouraging the use of the army for policing duties.

From the perspective of governance, capacity building implies a system at both national and sub-national levels which is capable of co-ordinating the execution of the plan which the indigenous government will increasingly assume ownership from the international community. In Afghanistan this required a civil service which was neither present nor in the culture of previous Afghan regimes.

From the perspective of economic development, co-ordinated capacity building implies provision of the infrastructure to facilitate economic growth. At its most basic level, this means roads, electricity and water. Successful co-ordination requires a balance to be struck across the failed state such that one region, tribe or faction does not perceive itself to be unduly disadvantaged. The reconstruction plan must not be allowed to be driven by what the international community finds easiest; in Afghanistan this created an imbalance between the rural areas and the capital, the relative prosperity and self-sustaining economy of which reinforced the perception amongst many Afghans that the Government of Afghanistan is Kabul-focused. In an interview in June 2006 with the Deputy Governor of Ghor Province, he sought nothing more than one decent road to connect what is one of the least accessible and poorly resourced provinces to the rest of Afghanistan.

If the Government of Afghanistan can, with the help of the international community, co-ordinate such a programme of development under its Afghan National Development Strategy, there is a real chance that the expectations of both the international community and the Afghans can be met. But this is not a short-term endeavour which matches any western (or western-imposed Afghan) political term of office: the timescale will be measured in decades. Periodic reminders may be necessary of Tony Blair's commitment in the House of Commons on 8 October 2001: 'we will not walk away from [the Afghan people] once the conflict ends, as has happened in the past.'<sup>106</sup> The nature of the international community's involvement will evolve over that period as Afghan structures becomes more robust, but the commitment will remain in some form until Afghanistan can walk independently of its current crutches. The greatest threat, however, to this programme is probably not international commitment donor fatigue – organisations such as the World Bank and the IMF have few delusions of the scale and duration required, irrespective of any apparent lack of

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<sup>106</sup> <http://www.pm.gov.uk/output/Page1621.Asp>.



international political commitment: the greatest threat is the loss of faith of the Afghan people in their own government and institutions who now have to show that they can coordinate the plan for rebuilding their country, albeit with substantial but increasingly understated international assistance. President Karzai is acutely aware that he is the only head of his state not to have been deposed (or murdered) in the last 100 years. Effective coordination is not just an abstract concept.

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