

POLITICAL

172 PC 07 E rev. 1
Original: English



NATO Parliamentary Assembly

AFGHANISTAN AND NATO'S ONGOING TRANSFORMATION

GENERAL REPORT

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. AFGHANISTAN – RECENT DEVELOPMENTS	1
III. THE ALLIANCE IN AFGHANISTAN	4
IV. LESSONS LEARNED	5
V. THE NEED FOR MORE AND BETTER CO-OPERATION	8
VI. CONCLUSIONS.....	10

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Afghanistan remains the most important and most challenging mission for the Alliance. Its operations in the country are both a generator and a test bed for NATO's transformation processes, which started shortly after the end of the Cold War. This report provides a short update of the situation in Afghanistan and argues that NATO must apply its lessons learned by putting greater emphasis on reconstruction efforts after an intervention. Therefore, the paper endorses a new comprehensive approach towards security and suggests that the Alliance must develop a policy and the necessary tools to allow stabilisation immediately after a military intervention. To that end the Alliance must improve co-ordination among member states and deepen co-operation with other actors, particularly the UN, the EU, and partner countries as well as non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Moreover, the Alliance must discuss and agree on the if, when, and how before it takes on future operations that require longer-term, robust commitment.

II. AFGHANISTAN – RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

2. At the London Conference (31 January - 1 February 2006), the Government of Afghanistan (GOA) and the international community identified three crucial areas of activity for the next five years: security; governance, rule of law and human rights; and social and economic development. The implementation of this set of political objectives, the so-called Afghan Compact, has been put under the supervision of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB), consisting of Afghan and international actors.

3. 2006 has seen a number of changes in Afghanistan, NATO's key operation at present. The number of NATO forces on the ground has increased, as has funding for reconstruction and co-ordination among international organisations and with civil actors. The creation of the Policy Action Group (PAG) which is chaired by President Hamid Karzai and includes representatives of the international community as well as NGO representatives is beginning to improve co-ordination, which has been lacking in the delivery of international aid and assistance.

4. Moreover, the Afghan National Army (ANA) build-up and training has made significant progress. Today, the ANA is composed of more than 35,000 troops, with an end goal of 70,000. It is a relatively well-trained multiethnic force and has demonstrated its operational and organisational skills. The ANA is therefore gradually taking on more responsibility in joint operations. But the ANA continues to lack basic equipment, for ex. armoured vehicles, and is affected by logistical difficulties. Therefore, continued ISAF and NATO assistance is still necessary, for example in providing necessary air and artillery assets.

5. Economic achievements thus far are mixed. Domestic revenues continued to grow while inflation declined in 2006. GDP has grown by 8% over the last year and could increase by up to 12% in 2007 and 2008. But Afghanistan remains one of the poorest countries in the world.

6. However, the overall security situation has declined in 2006 and in 2007, particularly in the south of the country. The level of violence in Afghanistan has reached its highest point so far and the Taliban have adopted some new tactics, such as Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), used by insurgents in Iraq, and kidnappings which have become their new weapon of choice. The number of suicide attacks, practically absent in Afghan history, has increased six-fold from 2005. In 2006, suicide bombers killed 206 civilians, 54 Afghan members of the security services and 18 ISAF soldiers. The Taliban insurgents have regained strength. They have reorganised and are now applying more sophisticated tactics, they are threatening reconstruction of the country. Civilian casualties in Afghanistan have increased dramatically over the past 15 months, and "Human Rights Watch" has criticised insurgents' failure to respect the laws of war. Problems with deteriorating security are not confined to Afghanistan's southern areas. Rather there have been

more attacks on aid agencies in the north and west than in the south in the first quarter of this year.

7. Drug cultivation remains a key challenge and the last years have seen significant increases in opium production in the country. According to the latest Afghanistan Opium Survey released by the United Nations Office for Drug and Control Prevention (UNODC) Afghanistan will produced an estimated 8,200 metric tons of opium in 2007, an increase of 34% over the previous year, given the favourable climatic conditions and the deteriorating security situation in the South. According to the US State Department International Control Strategy Report, at the moment more than 172,000 hectares are cultivated with poppies in Afghanistan.

8. Poppy production is a major factor in the Afghanistan's economy and for many farmers it is their only source of income. Poppy eradication programmes have merely alienated local farmers and reduced support for the GOA. Promises for financial compensation to local farmers were often not kept, thus the farmers' resistance to poppy eradication has grown significantly. Apart from the fact that it is a complex and a long-term process, persuading farmers to switch to alternative crops is difficult as they generally provide only about 1/10 of the income of poppy cultivation. Switching to alternative crops also requires considerable improvements in Afghanistan's transportation system as well as a more extensive market infrastructure.

9. Narcotics and insecurity are directly linked: According to the 2007 UNODC report "opium cultivation in Afghanistan is now closely linked to insurgency. The Taliban today control vast swathes of land in Helmand, Kandahar and along the Pakistani border." Poppy cultivation is spread in the southern provinces where there is a serious lack of security. Drug profits represent a significant part of the insurgency funding and are also used as an instrument of political influence for the Taliban. The Afghan drug industry is linked to criminal organisations that are connected to the Taliban insurgency as well as former warlords. The latter and local commanders continue to control key resources and infrastructures. It is also being alleged that individual members of the GOA are involved in the drug business.

10. The insurgency can also take advantage of rivalries between different Pashtun tribes. Most of the Taliban leaders come from the Ghilzai tribe which is not adequately represented in the national structures and which has frequent quarrels with the Durrani tribe to which President Karzai belongs. Moreover, high unemployment, rising crime and corruption and the lack of fundamental services in the southeast aggravate the situation.

11. More than 2,000 illegal armed groups continue to operate in the country. Because of the attacks of the insurgents in the South, the programme for the Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups (DIAG) is at an impasse as many in the South refuse to disarm. A report by the International Crisis Group Report called the DIAG "all but moribund"¹. Illegal private militia appear also to be rearming in the safer northern provinces, where local commanders and citizens are collecting weapons for personal security, as the police is widely considered as inefficient.

12. In contrast to the ANA, progress in building the Afghan National Police (ANP), which currently comprises some 62,000 officers, has been limited. A number of factors, particularly rampant corruption among the Ministry of Interior (MoI), where some officials have been accused of participating in criminal organisations and the drug trade, make police training a daunting challenge. The significant number of former militiamen who have joined the police ranks after demobilisation has exacerbated the problem of corruption. Moreover, the lack of training of police officers and the low pay provided by the GOA gravely limit the effectiveness of the ANP. 2007 has been the worst year ever for the police force as the growing strength of the ANA has prompted a

¹ International Crisis Group, *Countering Afghanistan's Insurgency: No Quick Fixes*, Asia Report n.123, November 2nd 2006.

resurgent Taliban to target the poorly equipped police officers, who each receive only slightly more than half a soldier's pay. The EU has taken over ANP training from Germany and dispatched 160 advisers. But much more needs to be done to train the police force, as well as provide adequate numbers, equipment, and pay. In comparison, the EU is sending 1,600 police officers to Kosovo. In addition to the lack of necessary support for building the ANP, the lack of a harmonised approach to police training assistance has hampered greater progress: while Germany has trained approximately 16,000 police officers in courses lasting up to three years for some €70 million until 2006, the United States have been training about 40,000 police officers in courses lasting three weeks thereby spending over US\$1.3 billion. Moreover, there are also police training schemes offered by the PRTs.

13. The inefficiency of the police has important negative effects for overall stabilisation operations. It is the police that secure the territories that the army has just gained. It is the ANP which has together with the ANA, primary responsibility for destroying poppy-fields and opium laboratories. Winning the hearts and minds of the people will be difficult, if not impossible without a functioning police. Police forces have the fundamental role of providing security and guaranteeing the rule of law.

14. Efforts to train a competent judiciary are also lagging behind, partly because the international community has not provided sufficient funding, partly because the number of Afghans proficient for the legal profession is small. Today, Afghans feel less secure and have even less confidence in the national judicial and law enforcement authorities. The lack of a well-functioning judicial system and a reliable law enforcement severely hamper efforts to deal satisfactorily with the narcotics trade. Moreover, the Karzai government must demonstrate a stronger political will to address this crucial issue. The international conference on the rule of law in Afghanistan in Rome in early July 2007 pledged US\$360 million for justice sector reform and rule of law sector reform, but it remains to be seen if the pledges will be implemented and if the additional aid is sufficient to advance progress in these areas.

15. The increased level of violence hampers reconstruction efforts. What is more, the high level of insecurity and the GOA's continuing weakness restrict Afghans' access to basic services, particularly healthcare and water. The support provided by the international community, at the political, military and economic level is essential. However, NGO assistance activities have been reduced mainly to urban areas. The continued and partially increasing insurgency is also undermining the legitimacy of the GOA. A majority of Afghans still support the GOA and is generally favourable to President Hamid Karzai, but this support is waning as their security and living conditions are not improving.

16. Poor governance poses at least as big a problem for the stabilisation of the country as the insurgency. The Karzai government has been criticised by the international community for not energetically acting against rampant corruption and drug production. The continued failings of the GOA and the declining public support for it present the Allies with a dilemma. NATO's role is to assist the Karzai government, but it must also urge it forward to better governance. The GOA must do more to overcome the lack of good governance and the Allies should be prepared to put pressure on the Karzai government, if necessary. To that end, the GOA needs to identify clear benchmarks against which the impact of its follow-up measures can be evaluated.

17. In contrast, the Afghan President has blamed the international community for insufficient support that slows the pace of reconstruction and he also blamed Islamabad for allowing insurgents to use areas on the Pakistani side of the border as safe havens. President Karzai is correct in pointing out that the comparatively small amount of international aid is one factor in the lack of progress in Afghanistan. Although international aid has recently increased, there has never been sufficient funding for Afghanistan. For example, Kosovo received US\$1.8 billion in international aid for a population of about 2 million in the first four years after fighting had ended.

In comparison, Afghanistan was pledged US\$15 billion for a population of 29 million, but received only US\$4.7 billion in the four years after the removal of the Taliban. In contrast to Kosovo, almost 30 years of Soviet occupation and civil war had left Afghanistan in ruins. The international community must accept a greater and more responsible role in Afghanistan. That said, it must be noted that widespread corruption and bureaucratic inefficiencies of the GOA remain major reasons why a significant part of the international aid does not reach the Afghan people.

III. THE ALLIANCE IN AFGHANISTAN

18. The United Nations (UN) provides the legal framework for the ongoing NATO mission in Afghanistan. ISAF was deployed under a mandate of the UNSC and NATO assumed command of ISAF in August 2003. Nearly 35,000 troops from 26 NATO countries and 11 NATO partners take part in ISAF. Its primary mission is to support the GOA both through counter-insurgency operations and stabilisation and reconstruction (S&R) efforts. Counter-terrorist operations, are the main focus of the 11,500 troops of the US-led Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), which remains under US command. However, the differentiation between counter-insurgency and counter-terrorist operations is blurred and both ISAF and OEF operations involve combat. In this regard, ISAF initiated a number of operations against insurgents in 2006, with the tragic loss of 191 soldiers. Four thousand people were killed in the fighting last year, most of them suspected Taliban, but also approximately 1000 civilians, many of whom were killed by suicide bombers. To tackle the insurgency, ISAF forces launched numerous operations in the southeast in 2006. Operation "Achilles" started in March 2007 to counter an anticipated Taliban Spring offensive and secure major development projects in the South.

19. But critics have said that NATO's military footprint is too small to secure Afghanistan. In comparison to 40,000 troops NATO deployed in Kosovo and the 60,000 soldiers in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the NATO contingent is considerably smaller and has to cover an area the size of France. As a consequence, ISAF's capabilities for rapid response rescue, should soldiers and civilian personnel find themselves under fire, are very limited.

20. The limited number of troops and the continuing insurgency attacks have also resulted in an increased reliance on air power. In fact, the number of air attacks increased after NATO took over the operations in the south. As a consequence, the number of civilian casualties has considerably grown. The stronger emphasis on air power and the limited number of soldiers has also led to a disconnection between military intervention and the delivery of aid, which allows the Taliban to fill the void. NATO is now perceived more critically than before and winning the hearts and minds of the people has become more difficult.

21. In addition to the insufficient troop numbers, national caveats, namely, the restrictions imposed by member states on their armed forces deployed in Afghanistan, have unnecessarily limited ISAF commanders' flexibility to adapt to the changing security situation.

22. NATO's contribution to Afghan security is more crucial than ever. We must remember that the ultimate success in Afghanistan will not simply depend on military victories. One key lesson for the Alliance is that it must go beyond providing "merely" military security. Without ISAF's continued and in fact increasing efforts, it will not be possible to reconstruct the country and win the hearts and minds of the Afghan people. Unfortunately, the lack of troops on the ground in Afghanistan has significantly hampered the S&R operations.

23. The 25 Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) under ISAF are the leading edge of NATO's S&R efforts. Because of their civil-military composition, PRTs are able to link security with concrete development projects. The PRTs undertake a broad range of reconstruction projects including road building to enhance economic development and irrigation networks to assist in agricultural development and diversification. What is more, some PRTs also engage in training

local officials and tribal leaders in governance and long-term reconstruction plans, thereby gaining the confidence of local populations. PRTs also address Afghanistan's regional, ethnical and tribal divisions which is important as the central government's power is limited. Although their approach differs, PRTs have, overall, been very successful producing tangible results in the reconstruction of Afghanistan.

24. However, there are still no common standards for PRTs. Every national PRT has a different mandate and PRTs can differ considerably in terms of allotted resources, rules of engagement, and reconstruction activities. US-led PRTs are generally better funded and have more personnel at their disposal. Moreover, there are also differences in the way the funds are being used and managed. The US-led PRTs dispense their funds directly to designated projects to avoid financial assistance disappearing in the hands of corrupt officials. Other PRTs provide little supervision of how their funds are managed and dispensed. Moreover, some PRTs suffer from restrictions on the rules of engagement, partly because of lack of equipment, partly because of continuing national caveats. US officials have criticised some ISAF PRTs for being too hesitant in their engagement and for not responding aggressively enough to counter threats.

IV. LESSONS LEARNED

25. Notwithstanding the important progress made both in the fight against the Taliban and in the reconstruction process of the Afghan institutions, NATO's Afghanistan engagement has underlined some major limits and problems that the Alliance must address in order to adapt itself to the security environment of the 21st century.

26. The situation in Afghanistan and the intensity of the current insurgency is the direct consequence of how state building has been implemented in the five years following the toppling of the Taliban. The US-led coalition and the international community failed to seize the opportunity to secure and stabilise Afghanistan after the quick victory over the Taliban in late 2001. The lack of a firm and shared international commitment to Afghanistan, the limited number of troops on the ground, as well as insufficient financial resources and delays in distributing them left a vacuum which allowed the Taliban to regroup.

27. With regard to NATO, we must remember that while the Allies agree on their overall mission to stabilise the country, they have often differed on the means to reach that objective and on the kind and amount of resources to be made available. We must ensure that our actual commitments match our political rhetoric. But difficulties in force generation continue and in a recent letter to the NATO Secretary General, the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) informed that the NRF has no longer full operational capability.

28. While national caveats have been significantly reduced, they still impose limitations on the planning and execution of NATO operations. Existing national caveats could have a debilitating effect on ISAF. While a few allies, i.e. the British, Canadian, Dutch as well as Danish forces bear the brunt of the fighting in the South, some countries do not allow their forces to be temporarily deployed there to assist their comrades in tackling the insurgency. Not only does this limit NATO's operational capabilities but it also undermines NATO's unity of purpose.

29. At an operational and tactical level, the importance of improved interoperability has been once again confirmed. NATO must strengthen its efforts to bolster key capabilities, especially in airlift, air-to-ground surveillance, and air-to-air refuelling. The "Strategic Airlift Interim Solution" (SALIS) is a first step for a future "NATO Strategic Airlift Capability (SAC)" but more is necessary. NATO's current system of funding and burden-sharing is also showing its limits. The mechanism according to which "the costs lie where they fall" is counter-productive since it is a disincentive for NATO members to sign on to military missions. NATO must urgently review the issue of common funding for operations. NATO member states have begun discussing new financing

arrangements, but no decision has been reached and the "costs lie where they fall" principle remains in place for most operations. In the view of the Rapporteur, the Allies need to find a new consensus on a fairer sharing of the cost of stability operations.

30. Afghanistan has demonstrated the need for increased civil-military co-operation. Although PRTs have proved to be a fundamental tool for effective reconstruction, they suffer from co-ordination and synchronisation problems between security and development projects. Unclear lines of command and the lack of minimum agreed standards of civil-military co-operation at the PRT level have further aggravated the problem.

31. We must recognise that Afghanistan's long-term security and stability cannot and will not be ensured by military means alone, but that they require good governance, justice and the rule of law, reinforced by reconstruction and development, as well as international and, in particular, regional co-operation.

32. With regard to the latter, Afghanistan's neighbouring countries, Pakistan in particular, are fundamental to the stabilisation of the country. Unfortunately, the resurgence of the Taliban and the growing insurgency in the provinces bordering the Pakistan-Afghan border have created tensions between Kabul and Islamabad. What is more, the current political situation in Pakistan adds uncertainty about the country's future course, including its bi-lateral relationship with Afghanistan. However, close co-operation between Pakistan and Afghanistan is of vital importance for preventing Taliban fighters from taking refuge in the tribal areas between the two countries, where the Taliban recruits and trains new fighters. The Taliban are reportedly using the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and the border regions in Pakistan as safe havens for their activities. Pakistan's efforts to prevent cross-border movements of insurgents have thus far not been successful and some critics argue that Islamabad could do more to prevent illegal border crossings. However, Pakistan's plan to place land mines along its border with Afghanistan has received strong criticism, including by the UN and NATO Allies.

33. Islamabad's support is essential for the successful implementation of the Afghanistan Compact. But fencing or placing mines is not a way to build trust and confidence between Afghanistan and Pakistan. On the contrary, it would drive Pashtuns tribes who are located on both sides of the border into the arms of the Taliban and further weaken Islamabad's already limited control over the border areas. Pakistan's problems with the Taliban on its side of the border are also a result of internal difficulties i.e. a lack of security and investment in poorly developed regions. That said, NATO Allies and Partners, including the EU, should assist Islamabad by providing technical assistance for border monitoring.

34. At the very heart of the Afghan-Pakistani question there is also the unsolved problem of the Durand line that divides the two countries. So far, no Afghan government has recognised the Durand line as the international border between the two states. Unless Kabul and Islamabad address this issue, the frontier area will represent a source of permanent instability for both countries.

35. There was never a co-ordinated attempt by the Allies to deal with the sanctuaries of Taliban in Pakistan and most contacts with Islamabad have been bi-lateral between the US and the Pakistani government. Contacts between NATO and Islamabad on Afghanistan have developed only recently. There is now the beginning of a serious military to military dialogue with Pakistan. Following the recent visit of the Sub-Committee on NATO Partnerships to Pakistan, the Rapporteur suggests to initiate a more intensive political dialogue as well. We must encourage Pakistan to tackle the Taliban sanctuaries on their side of the border more effectively. Initiatives such as the Tripartite Commission between NATO, Pakistan and Afghanistan for intelligence sharing have to be encouraged and further developed. The report of the Sub-Committee on

NATO Partnerships by Ms Rasa Juknevičienė provides further detailed views on how the Allies could engage Islamabad more actively in the stabilisation of Afghanistan.

36. As to Afghanistan's western neighbour, Iran, there are no NATO contacts about Afghanistan's security. Iran also has an interest in a stable Afghanistan and shares our concerns about the poppy cultivation. However, Iran's nuclear programme and its links with terrorist groups remain major issues of concern for the Alliance and the international community.

37. NATO's mandate is limited: it is to assist the government in Kabul with the maintenance of security. In addition to providing sufficient funding for the reconstruction, Afghanistan needs a coherent strategy to tackle the opium production. As General Jones noted in a hearing to the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee, "Afghanistan does not need to be a narco-state, but it is unfortunately well on its way"².

38. Although the Alliance is clearly not in the driver's seat, it must address the drug production in Afghanistan. The Allies hold different views whether or not the military should have a role in combating drug production. Any successful anti-drug policy comprises a number of different policies and the military is neither equipped nor trained to do this. Therefore, the military should, in the view of the Rapporteur, not have a key role in anti-drug policy and drug eradication programmes. That said, the Rapporteur must note that NATO military forces could and should be used to interdict drug deliveries. NATO must do better in this area and the failure of Allied forces to do so has sent a bad message to the Afghani people that we are not serious about this problem. The UNODC Executive Director Antonio Maria Costa has suggested that NATO should help destroy heroin labs, close opium markets, seize opium convoys and bring traffickers to justice. NATO armies should at least have a common policy on the interdiction of drugs.

39. In more general terms, it is the GOA's responsibility, supported by the UN and the UK in its role as G-8 lead nation, to establish and implement an anti-drug policy. Apart from lacking funds, the Karzai government has shown to be too weak and too indecisive to combat poppy cultivation. Therefore, the international community should increase its assistance and better co-ordinate its policy towards the problem. Curbing poppy cultivation and drug production in Afghanistan will require doing more on alternative livelihoods for the Afghan farmers. A number of proposals have been made to address this problem, including the suggestion by the Senlis Council to buy the drug production and use it for medical purposes. However, according to the International Narcotics Control Board there is already an oversupply of opiates for medical purposes. Your Rapporteur would also like to caution that it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to separate "licit" from illicit cultivation, particularly given the weakness of Afghanistan's law-enforcement sector. Moreover, a strategy proposed like the one by the Senlis Council, if an international consensus could be reached on this, would require a functioning economy and society – which is not present in Afghanistan.

40. Moreover, we need to strongly encourage the Karzai government to tackle the drug production and the related problems of corruption and mismanagement, more seriously. NATO should therefore have a stronger presence in Kabul and the Rapporteur suggests placing a NATO Representative in Kabul who can speak with greater authority than the personal representative of the NATO Secretary General.

41. The operations in Afghanistan, but also in the Balkans and elsewhere have underlined the increasing importance of public diplomacy. Reports of excessive use of force and the failure to distinguish between civilians and legitimate military targets are undermining coalition efforts to win Afghan support. Moreover, media reporting and the political debates in our countries have the

² Statement of General (Ret) James L. Jones to the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee March 8, 2007

potential to undermine public support for the mission and thus also have a strong impact upon the operation. The insurgents in Afghanistan are using this to their advantage and are conducting an effective propaganda campaign. Although most NATO members have renewed their commitments to Afghanistan, the medium and long-term commitment is unclear. In some countries, calls for the withdrawal of troops are getting louder. This is due partly to continuing insecurity and mounting casualties, but also because citizens whose countries have deployed troops in the South feel that their nations' commitment to Afghanistan is "disproportionate". The Taliban understand this and pick out what they consider the weakest links in the Alliance one after the other, as Peter Bergen Adjunct professor at the School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University pointed out to the Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Relations during the visit to the US in July.

V. THE NEED FOR MORE AND BETTER CO-OPERATION

42. NATO's Afghanistan experience has led to a number of adjustments in the Alliance. At the November 2006 Riga Summit, NATO heads of state and government, have made further steps towards a new definition of NATO's role in the 21st century security environment. NATO members have endorsed the Comprehensive Political Guidance (CPG), a framework for political direction for NATO's continuing transformation. The document clarifies what the main priorities for the Alliance should be for the next 10 years in terms of capabilities, planning and intelligence. The CPG reaffirms the importance of stability operations for the future and the need for NATO to work closely with the UN and EU for post-conflict reconstruction efforts.

43. The Riga Summit has also recognised the need for increased co-operation with civil and international actors in order to address present and future challenges. NATO's new emphasis on a comprehensive approach to security is a highly welcome and necessary, if somewhat belated, development. The Rapporteur strongly endorses this policy. It is now up to NATO governments, as well as to the parliaments of NATO member countries, to follow up on what has been agreed to in Riga. This is crucial, for NATO's, and indeed the international community's, success in Afghanistan. Co-operation in Afghanistan has improved, but there is still a remarkable lack of co-ordination between the various international actors on the ground.

44. Particularly worrying is the continuing lack of co-operation between the EU and NATO. Because EU member countries Cyprus and Malta are not part of NATO's Partnership for Peace Programme, Turkey has blocked NATO from sharing intelligence with the EU. As a consequence, there is no tactical agreement between the Alliance and the EU and the latter is trying to forge separate agreements with the PRTs to provide EU police officers with access to NATO intelligence or logistics.

45. We must therefore improve co-ordination and co-operation among the Allies as well as between NATO and international actors and with NGOs. With regard to the former, co-ordination is lacking between national governments' ministries of defence and foreign affairs, as well as with the respective aid agencies. Moreover, nation states participate in different capacities in Afghanistan. In addition to their national policy towards Afghanistan, Allies participate as NATO members, as UN members but also as EU members and some also in a capacity as G-8 member states. We must make sure that our governments' policies in the different international organisations, particularly in NATO, the UN and the EU, are consistent. The role of parliaments is to ensure that our ministries and aid agencies co-ordinate their efforts on the national level as much as possible.

46. What is more, parliaments also have the critical role of providing transparency of our governments' decisions through educated debate. This is a key aspect that is all too often underestimated. If we want to succeed in Afghanistan and in similar operations, we need stable, long-term support from our publics. Engagements like Afghanistan require that we demand of our

people to provide significant resources, in the military, diplomatic, financial, aid and other areas – and from our soldiers to risk their lives, if necessary. Therefore, we must be able to question the engagements of our governments. We must question them, not because we want to abandon the commitments we have made, but to ascertain that the decisions made are in the best interest of our people and in the best interest of those whom we want to support. Some may argue that parliamentary public debate about military operations could encourage our enemies because they might interpret this as a sign of “weakness”, but we need to inform our publics about the risks of intervention as well as non-intervention. They have the right to know, and a good deal of the “fatigue” about our operations in Afghanistan and elsewhere stems from the fact that we have not provided sufficient information to our own people. Governments and parliaments need to do better and they need to do more in this regard. This is a crucial role that parliaments play and we, the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, provide an excellent forum for exchange on these important issues.

47. NATO will be asked to intervene in future stabilisation missions and we cannot afford not to have clear institutional arrangements that specify the different roles for different actors. It simply would cost too much time, too much money and most important of all, too many lives. It is vital that we eliminate unnecessary duplication and overlap, as well as reduce friction between national and international bureaucracies for future missions. The experience in Afghanistan has again demonstrated that military stabilisation measures must from the very beginning go hand in hand with political and civilian processes. The efforts need to be synchronised as much as possible. As far as the Alliance is concerned, it must therefore also co-ordinate better with partner countries as well as with international organisations and NGOs.

48. We need to ensure that military efforts are immediately followed up with the needed reconstruction and development activities in the short run. Although the Alliance is not an aid agency – and will never be – NATO has to devise a better mechanism to distribute aid in a war zone. Proactive engagement is always cheaper than reactive engagement and for the Alliance this would mean that NATO should be able to provide immediate basic infrastructure improvements after a military intervention. It should focus on a limited number of key areas where NATO can have a direct, immediate impact, such as the transportation system, energy production and irrigation. NATO should focus on immediate, short-term activities for about six months. The Alliance would not necessarily have to build additional NATO reconstruction capabilities of its own, but could devise a planning and control capability which would pool and prioritize member and partner countries’ national military reconstruction capabilities. After the initial period, when the security is established, reconstruction efforts should be tasked to the UN or the EU, which have the capability for longer-term reconstruction and development. Moreover, a NATO strategy should also include the NGOs.

49. With regard to the latter, NATO has expanded its dialogue with NGO’s in the last years, primarily on the ground in Afghanistan and in South-Eastern Europe but also by organizing seminars and conferences. However, NATO does not yet have a strategy that would allow for a more structured dialogue and co-ordination with them. Therefore, the Rapporteur suggests to create a central point for NGO dialogue at NATO Headquarters. Such a unit could be embedded in NATO’s Operations Directorate.

50. In addition to providing security and immediate, short-term reconstruction after a military intervention, NATO can take on another role in which it has developed considerable expertise, namely security sector reform. But here too, more co-ordination and co-operation is necessary, as this is an area in which the EU is also becoming increasingly active. While it is welcome that the EU is planning to develop capabilities in security sector reform, the EU must avoid duplicating what NATO as an organisation is already doing. Rather, the EU and NATO should work together so that the EU could build on NATO’s expertise and develop additional capabilities. More specifically, NATO would increasingly take on responsibility for military training, while the EU could

develop its capabilities in police and legal training. There must be more and better co-ordination and co-operation between NATO and the EU and as parliamentarians we must monitor that our governments do not establish duplicative structures in this area. With its developing "Global Partnerships" NATO can bring additional weight to bear. For example, Japan's DIAG and Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration of former military combatants (DDR) efforts are among the most successful projects in Afghanistan.

51. If NATO is to develop and strengthen capacities to provide for short-term reconstruction and also its instruments for security sector reform the international community can and must do more with the long-term issues. For example, the question of the long-term fiscal sustainability of the ANA must be addressed and the international community could provide assistance in this field. While the security situation requires the further expansion of the ANA, Afghanistan can ill afford an army of 70,000 as its resources are very limited. NATO, and indeed the international community, must pool its resources and work according to an integrated political-military strategy. Another key area where the international community must do more and must do better is judicial reform. Afghans have little faith in their courts and prosecutors. A major problem with judicial reform is the low pay of prosecutors, which makes them susceptible to corruption. The average salary of prosecutors is about 1/10 that of an interpreter working for the UN and a top Afghan judge earns less than the cost to rent an apartment in Kabul and much less than what the Taliban pay locals to support their military operations.

52. NATO's relationship with the UN should also be expanded and deepened. Stronger institutional links between NATO and the UN would be beneficial in many areas. For example, UN Security Council backing for future NATO operations will be desirable, if not necessary, to obtain the broadest international support. In addition, because it is viewed as neutral, the UN can often facilitate dialogue between warring ethnic, religious, political and other groups. Moreover, as Paul Kennedy has pointed out, the UN and its various agencies can provide international early-warning and assessment mechanisms for failing states and can also operate as response and co-ordination bodies. NATO has become the key partner for the UN in peacekeeping operations informed Hedi Annabi, UN Assistant Secretary General for Peace-keeping Operations, members of the Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Relations during a visit to the UN Headquarters. Mr Annabi also welcomed more UN-NATO co-operation in security sector reform, as the UN is also involved in police reform but does not have experience in defence sector reform. In Afghanistan, the UN, through UNODOC, could take on more responsibility in tackling drug production. The NATO-UN relationship would be strengthened if the UN would sign the UN "Joint Statement" that was drafted in September 2005. It must be noted that not all UN member countries hold a positive view of the Alliance. A significant number of UN member states prefer to keep NATO at arms length as they consider the Alliance either an "imperialistic-militaristic" organisation, a US "puppet" while others question its out of area activity. We must therefore do more to inform about NATO's roles and its capabilities. The rapporteur wants to iterate that NATO's presence at UN Headquarters should be increased, and the Alliance should also establish a presence at UN organisations, such as UNODOC.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

53. There is broad agreement that the ultimate success in Afghanistan will not simply depend on military victories, but if NATO does not provide the necessary security the reconstruction of the country will fail. Our engagement in Afghanistan remains a collective NATO responsibility and we need to commit the necessary forces and apply the lessons learned. We need to demonstrate willpower and show solidarity. That said, the security umbrella provided by NATO and the international community cannot be open-ended. Thus, success, or possible failure, will ultimately be determined by local forces and institutions. The Allies should therefore put additional emphasis on expanding NATO's capacity as an exporter of global security training.

54. In addition to improving security in the country it is crucial to improve governance and reconstruction. Success, therefore, will depend on the efforts of the international community and the Karzai government. Development and reconstruction activities must meet the expectations of the Afghan people. Progress in education, agriculture, economic development, public services and health must go hand in hand with providing a stable and secure environment.

55. Success in Afghanistan and in future post-conflict operations requires the broadest possible international collaboration. NATO can deploy powerful forces in large numbers and it can provide the necessary military and security expertise. It also can provide limited, immediate reconstruction and the Rapporteur suggests that the Alliance develops the necessary capabilities to allow for this in the future. However, the Alliance cannot provide the economic, financial, legal and other assistance that is essential to the success of any state-building operation. NATO should therefore develop closer institutional relationships with other international actors, first and foremost with the UN and with the EU. Both have expertise and assets that are vital for the long-term success of post-conflict operations. Regrettably, closer formal relationships with the EU and with the UN are still pending and we must urgently address this problem. NATO and the UN should therefore finalise the UN "Joint Statement" that was drafted in September 2005 and which is under review at the UN Headquarters. Moreover, the Alliance and the EU should discuss and conclude a more comprehensive framework agreement that would clearly delineate tasks between them and thereby allow for a seamless transition from combat operations to peace-enforcement and peacekeeping.

56. The operations in Afghanistan are a "test-bed" for NATO's transformation. While NATO's fundamental role to defend its member countries against attacks remains the same, the way NATO is dealing with threats has significantly changed since the end of the Cold War. Preventing states from "failing" and exporting stability has become much more important and Allied actions in Afghanistan anticipate the future of NATO's operations. NATO operations in Afghanistan reflect the difficulties of the Allies to define and agree on a comprehensive, sustainable long-term strategy. As it is shifting its focus from regional to global security threats, it is crucial that the Alliance discusses and agrees on the if, when, and how of possible operations (and the respective exit strategies) before they take place. Moreover, commitments, especially those that require longer-term, robust ones need to be understood and accepted by the public. Incremental engagements by governments without broad public awareness should be avoided. The national parliaments of NATO member countries and the NATO Parliamentary Assembly have a crucial role in providing transparency to the security engagements of our governments. Moreover, parliamentary monitoring and control is crucial to help reduce and eliminate possible duplication of efforts by national institutions. What is more, the NATO PA provides a forum for direct exchange among parliamentarians, governments, and international organisations and this should be used to the maximum.
