

The Future of Afghanistan: and what do we need to do to get there

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What are the possible futures?

1. Intensification of conflict and disorder:
 - NATO alliance withdraws, GIROA unable to maintain territorial control, further criminalization of polity and economy, intensification of inter-regional conflict
2. Fragile peace established
 - Northern Alliance- Taliban backed-government
 - Poverty and corruption continue
 - Low level insurgency remains
 - Neighbors maintain hedging policy
3. Afghanistan as a neutral state on a trajectory to its own nation building
 - Peace process established
 - Internal investment in people and organizations
 - Regional economic and political processes

The fundamentals

A peace “deal” between narrow elites (with false claims for representation)

or

A broad based consensus process based on convening larger stakeholder interests, and redress of grievances

A vision of Afghanistan as a source of instability and poison that needs to be contained

or

A neutral state and regional economic hub

Assets in place

Location

People

Institutions

-Last century

-1950s

-2001-5

Natural assets and economic potential

International commitment:
leadership, forces and resources

Risks

Deepening/ spreading of the insurgency

Narco-mafia elements: inside and outside government

Neighbors

Failure to support/ mobilize positive networks: NSP, microfinance, civil servants etc

Lack of sustainment of international partnership

Learning from the last decade

Bonn Process 2001 to 2005

Broad political process, with key milestones

Afghan-led developmental plan

Management (not coordination) mechanisms

Public financial accountability and ARTF as dual key system

Sources of destabilization:

Under-resourcing of *appropriate* civilian strategy

Support to criminal elements

Shift of economic coordination role to UN

Learning from other contexts

Leadership and management

National Accountability Systems

Broad based citizenship / consensus building

Investment in youth: vocational and higher education tailored to country's needs

Investment in domestic firms

Design of financial instruments

Key principles

A one year, five year and ten year path to restoration of sovereignty

Creating legitimate stakeholders in stability (across private sector, state, communities) e.g. micro hydro, construction industry

Use forces and resources as a driver of this process

Understand existing system

Support legitimate actors and diffuse illegitimate networks

A peace-building framework

Understand and address grievances (especially detainment) at national and local level: ombudsman system

Reconcile and reintegrate at local level: link release with local unilateral ceasefire

Witness Protection Scheme for ex-Taliban

A phased process: regain initiative, then move to catalyst and partner.

The governance approach: A system-building approach

National Accountability Systems
Revenue (esp customs, minerals, land),
budget, payments, licensing and
procurement, accounting and auditing
National Programs:

Village (CDCs), District, Municipality,
Province, Center

Key sectors: Health, Education,
Irrigation, Power (including micro),
Sanitation

Human Capital: A skills audit

Flexibility in approach: typologies of
provinces

The why has been figured: now need for
focus on the how

Dealing with 3 insurgencies (Taliban,
Haqqani, Hekmatyar), and a predatory
government

Distinguish Washington time from
insurgency time

Goals must be feasible not desirable
Make use of Afghan assets