

THE WHITE HOUSE
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FACT SHEET: THE WAY FORWARD IN AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN

OUR MISSION: The President's speech reaffirms the March 2009 core goal: to disrupt, dismantle, and eventually defeat al-Qa'ida and to prevent their return to either Afghanistan or Pakistan. To do so, we and our allies will surge our forces, targeting elements of the insurgency and securing key population centers, training Afghan forces, transferring responsibility to a capable Afghan partner, and increasing our partnership with Pakistanis who are facing the same threats.

This region is the heart of the global violent extremism pursued by al-Qa'ida, and the region from which we were attacked on 9/11. New attacks are being planned there now, a fact borne out by a recent plot, uncovered and disrupted by American authorities. We will prevent the Taliban from turning Afghanistan back into a safe haven from which international terrorists can strike at us or our allies. This would pose a direct threat to the American homeland, and that is a threat that we cannot tolerate. Al-Qa'ida remains in Pakistan where they continue to plot attacks against us and where they and their extremist allies pose a threat to the Pakistani state. Our goal in Pakistan will be to ensure that al-Qa'ida is defeated and Pakistan remains stable.

REVIEW PROCESS: The review was a deliberate and disciplined three-stage process to check alignment of goals, methods for attaining those goals, and finally resources required. Over ten weeks, the President chaired nine meetings with his national security team, and consulted key allies and partners, including the governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan. The President focused on asking the hard questions, took the time to carefully consider all of the options, and united a variety of competing views in his cabinet before agreeing to send any additional Americans to war.

As a result of the review, we have focused our mission and developed a common understanding regarding our regional approach and the need for international support. We will deploy forces into Afghanistan rapidly and will take advantage of these additional resources to create the conditions to begin to draw down combat forces in the summer of 2011, while maintaining a partnership with Afghanistan and Pakistan to protect our enduring interests in that region.

The meetings were focused on how best to ensure the al-Qa'ida threat is eliminated from the region and that regional stability is restored. We looked closely at the alignment of our efforts and the balance between civilian and military resources, both in Pakistan and Afghanistan, and the efforts of the U.S. and the international community.

A number of issues were explored in depth: national interests, core objectives and goals, counterterrorism priorities, safe havens for terrorist groups in Pakistan, the health of the global

U.S. military force, risks and costs associated with troop deployments, global deployment requirements, international cooperation and commitments for both Afghanistan and Pakistan, and Afghan capacity in all areas to include Afghan security forces, central and sub-national governance and corruption (including the narcotics trade), and development and economic issues.

WHAT HAS CHANGED SINCE MARCH: Since the President announced our renewed commitment in March, a number of key developments led the Administration to review its approach in Afghanistan and Pakistan: new attention was focused on Afghanistan and Pakistan, new U.S. leadership was established in Afghanistan, Pakistan increased its efforts to combat extremists, and the situation in Afghanistan has become more grave.

The United States assigned new civilian and military leadership in Afghanistan, with the appointments of Ambassador Karl Eikenberry as U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan, and General Stanley McChrystal as the new Commander of ISAF military forces in Afghanistan. Upon arrival in Afghanistan, both Ambassador Eikenberry and General McChrystal recognized that after eight years of underresourcing, the situation was worse than expected. Together, Ambassador Eikenberry and General McChrystal published a new Civilian-Military Campaign Plan to integrate U.S. efforts across the country.

Afghanistan's difficult, extended election process and evident signs of the absence of rule of law made clear the limits of the central government in Kabul.

Meanwhile, in Pakistan, the Pakistanis showed new resolve in defeating militants who had taken control of the Swat Valley, just 60 miles from Islamabad. Pakistani political leaders – including opposition party leaders – came together to support the Pakistani military operations. This fall, the Pakistanis expanded their fight against extremists into the Mehsud tribal areas of South Waziristan along the border with Afghanistan.

THE WAY FORWARD: The President has decided to deploy an additional 30,000 U.S. troops to Afghanistan. These troops will deploy on an accelerated timeline to reinforce the 68,000 Americans and 39,000 non-U.S. ISAF troops already there, so that we can target the insurgency, break its momentum, and better secure population centers. These forces will increase our capacity to train effective Afghan Security Forces, and to partner with them so that more Afghans get into the fight. And by pursuing these partnerships, we can transition to Afghan responsibility, and begin to reduce our combat troops in the summer of 2011. In short, these resources will allow us to make the final push that is necessary to train Afghans so that we can transfer responsibility.

We will maintain this increased force level for the next 18 months. During this time, we will regularly measure our progress. And beginning in July 2011, we will transfer lead security responsibility to Afghans and start to transition our combat forces out of Afghanistan. As Afghans take on responsibility for their security, we will continue to advise and assist Afghanistan's Security Forces, and maintain a partnership on behalf of their security so that they can sustain this effort. Afghans are tired of war and long for peace, justice, and economic security. We intend to help them achieve these goals and end this war and the threat of reoccupation by the foreign fighters associated with al-Qa'ida.

We will not be in this effort alone. We will continue to be joined in the fight by the Afghans, and the aggressive partnering effort envisioned by General McChrystal will get more Afghans into the fight for their country's future. There will also be additional resources from NATO. These allies have already made significant commitments of their own in Afghanistan, and we will be discussing additional alliance contributions – in troops, trainers, and resources – in the days and weeks ahead. This is not simply a test of the alliance's credibility – what is at stake is even more fundamental. It is the security of London and Madrid; of Paris and Berlin; of Prague, New York, and our broader collective security.

We will work with our partners, the United Nations, and the Afghan people to strengthen our civilian effort, so that Afghanistan's government can step in as we establish better security. President Karzai's inauguration speech sent the right message about moving in a new direction, including his commitment to reintegration and reconciliation, improving relations with Afghanistan's regional partners, and steadily increasing the security responsibilities of Afghan security forces. But we must see action and progress. We will be clear about our expectations, and we will encourage and reinforce Afghan Ministries, Governors, and local leaders who deliver for the people and combat corruption. We will not reinforce those who are not accountable and not acting in the service of the Afghan people and the state. And we will also focus our assistance in areas – such as agriculture – that can make an immediate impact in the lives of the Afghan people.

CIVILIAN ASSISTANCE: A continuing significant increase in civilian experts will accompany a sizable infusion of additional civilian assistance. They will partner with Afghans over the long term to enhance the capacity of national and sub-national government institutions and to help rehabilitate Afghanistan's key economic sectors so that Afghans can defeat the insurgents who promise only more violence.

Growth is critical to undermine extremists' appeal in the short term and for sustainable economic development in the long term. Our top reconstruction priority is implementing a civilian-military agriculture redevelopment strategy to restore Afghanistan's once vibrant agriculture sector. This will help sap the insurgency of fighters and of income from poppy cultivation.

An emphasis of our governance efforts will be on developing more responsive, visible, and accountable institutions at the provincial, district, and local level, where everyday Afghans encounter their government. We will also encourage and support the Afghan Government's reinvigorated plans to fight corruption, with concrete measures of progress toward greater accountability.

A key element of our political strategy will be supporting Afghan-led efforts to reintegrate Taliban who renounce al-Qa'ida, lay down their arms, and engage in the political process.

OUR PARTNER IN PAKISTAN: Our partnership with Pakistan is inextricably linked to our efforts in Afghanistan. To secure our country, we need a strategy that works on both sides of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. The costs of inaction are far greater.

The United States is committed to strengthening Pakistan's capacity to target those groups that pose the greatest threat to both of our countries. A safe haven for those high-level terrorists whose location is known, and whose intentions are clear, cannot be tolerated. For Pakistan, we continue to encourage civilian and military leadership to sustain their fight against extremists and to eliminate terrorists' safe havens in their country.

We are now focused on working with Pakistan's democratic institutions, deepening the ties among our governments and people for our common interests and concerns. We are committed to a strategic relationship with Pakistan for the long term. We have affirmed this commitment to Pakistan by providing \$1.5 billion each year over the next five years to support Pakistan's development and democracy, and have led a global effort to rally additional pledges of support. This sizable, long-term commitment of assistance addresses the following objectives:

- (1) Helping Pakistan address immediate energy, water, and related economic crises, thereby deepening our partnership with the Pakistani people and decreasing the appeal of extremists;
- (2) Supporting broader economic reforms that are necessary to put Pakistan on a path towards sustainable job creation and economic growth, which is necessary for long-term Pakistani stability and progress; and
- (3) Helping Pakistan build on its success against militants to eliminate extremist sanctuaries that threaten Pakistan, Afghanistan, the wider region, and people around the world.

Additional U.S. assistance will help Pakistan build a foundation for long-term development, and will also strengthen ties between the American and Pakistani people by demonstrating that the United States is committed to addressing problems that most affect the everyday lives of Pakistanis as we work together to defeat the extremists who threaten Pakistan as they also threaten the United States.

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