

**CITpax INITIATIVE ON PEACEBUILDING  
AND GOVERNANCE IN AFGHANISTAN (II)**

*The Evolution of PRT Models*

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# CITpax INITIATIVE ON PEACEBUILDING AND GOVERNANCE IN AFGHANISTAN (II)

## *The Evolution of PRT Models: Towards the Pre-eminence of the Civilian Dimension?*

Madrid 16 - 17 October 2007

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## FOREWORD

The success of NATO's mission in lays in its capacity to fulfil the expectations of the Afghan people in the spirit of the 2006 Afghanistan Compact. This can only be achieved with the support and a regular consultation of civil society and civilian actors at large as well as a constant adaptation of PRTs structures to the needs of Afghans and the evolving reality on the ground.

Although NATO-ISAF is currently interacting with Afghan civil society via its PRTs, time is ripe to push for an enhanced cooperation that will fine tune and implement projects according to the aspirations of the local population as has been the case up until now. We believe that civil society could and should contribute substantially to the process of transformation of the PRTs and thus play a pivotal role in re-conceptualising the structures by which third States are directly acting throughout Afghanistan. New and enhanced cooperation structures at all operational and planning levels should therefore be explored to maximise the expertise and complementarities of PRTs and civil society. This will ensure that the voice of Afghans is heard and that plans are adapted to their needs.

In the past couple of years, the Toledo International Centre for Peace has been developing what it has named the *CITpax Initiative on peace-building and governance in Afghanistan*. Within the framework of this initiative, the Centre first tackled the issue of coordination, both at headquarters level and on the ground, among all actors deployed in Afghanistan, during the two international conferences in Madrid and Seville that marked the beginning of this initiative in February 2007.

On 16-17 October 2007 CITpax gathered a second meeting in Madrid with high level representatives from the major PRT Leading Nations, international organisations, Afghan civil society and high level Afghan officials. The first day of the meeting dealt, from the technical point of view, with the evolution of the PRT model towards and increasingly civilian structure, the current and prospective role of civil society in this process and its contribution to state-

building in Afghanistan. Building upon the views and conclusions of the first day, a high level political meeting subsequently explored the interface of civil society with other key players in Afghanistan, and particularly the future of NATO's mission. The final session was co-chaired by the Spanish Secretary General for Defence Policy and the Director General for Foreign Policy. The closing statements were delivered by Zalmay Rassoul, National Security Advisor of Afghanistan, and the Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Miguel Ángel Moratinos.

Many questions were raised during the intense two days meeting. Some were answered, but many others were left open, showing the complexity of the task at hand, the need for coordination and cooperation, strategic thinking and constant exchange of information amongst all actors. Here are some of issues raised during the debates:

What is a PRT? Do we have a clear understanding of what it is? Is there or should there be a dichotomy between the military and the civilian-political role of PRTs? Is a PRT a development face on a military effort? An exercise aimed at winning the hearts and minds of the local population? Is there such a thing as a PRT model?

Are PRTs a good vehicle for the international community's contribution in Afghanistan? Are they the right mechanism? Are they effective? Have they managed to align their strategies with the ANDS and National Programmes at large?

Wouldn't it be a better use of resources for PRT leading nations to, rather than channelling resources through their own PRTs in a specific region, make a "national" contribution through the Government and invest in long term solutions? What does Afghanistan really need in terms of security, development, counter-narcotics and governance?

This document seeks to summarise the rich debates that took place in Madrid on 16-17 October 2007: it includes the conclusions and recommendations

issued from the two-day meeting, a report drafted by Gabriel Reyes Leguen, Desk Officer at CITpax - which was distributed to participants prior to the meeting as a working document - the programme and the list of participants of the conference and excerpts of the keynote speeches.

Finally, we would like to take the opportunity to thank all participants and sponsors whose support and contribution made this meeting possible.



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## ACRONYMS

ANAP	<b>Afghan National Police</b>
ANDS	<b>Afghan National Development Strategy</b>
ANSF	<b>Afghan National Security Forces</b>
BMZ	<b>Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany</b>
CDC	<b>Community Development Council</b>
CDP	<b>Community Development Plan</b>
CIMIC	<b>Civil-Military Co-operation</b>
CS	<b>Civil Society</b>
ESC	<b>PRT Executive Steering Committee</b>
EU	<b>European Union</b>
FPs	<b>Facilitating Partners</b>
GTZ	<b>German Technical Co-operation</b>
I-ANDS	<b>Interim Afghan National Development Strategy</b>
INGO	<b>International Nongovernmental Organisations</b>
KLE	<b>Key Leader Engagement</b>
MRRD	<b>Ministry for Rural Rehabilitation and Development</b>
NATO	<b>North Atlantic Treaty Organisation</b>
NGO	<b>Non-governmental Organisations</b>
NSP	<b>National Solidarity Programme</b>
PDC	<b>Provincial Development Council</b>
PRT	<b>Provincial Reconstruction Teams</b>
QIPs	<b>Quick Impact Projects</b>
SSR	<b>Security Sector Reform</b>
UN	<b>United Nations</b>
UNAMA	<b>United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan</b>
US	<b>United States</b>
USAID	<b>United States Agency for International Development</b>



## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

Although many challenges remain, a lot has been achieved in the past five years and the time dimension and scale of the task at hand need to be taken into consideration. The international community must reach a common strategy, a common set of procedures and a clear definition of the problems and acknowledge that the central challenge and task in Afghanistan is state-building. The process will be lengthy and the required engagement will have to be multi-decade.

The Afghanistan Compact and the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) must be translated to working implementation mechanisms on the ground. Simplification of existing procedures and a movement towards the creation of an overall architecture of national programmes is highly needed.

The objective of enhancing and expanding the authority and legitimacy of the Afghan Government must remain the *raison d'être* of the international effort. The International community is urged to implement fully the Paris Declaration as it remains a distant goal rather than a reality on either coordination, alignment or government capacity-building.

The over-emphasis on the international community as donors rather than catalysts for assumption of responsibility by domestic actors should be reversed in favour of the latter, whilst ensuring that PRTs do not become a replacing mechanism.

### **- Information-sharing as a precondition**

The reality now in Afghanistan is that international and local actors know very little about what others are doing. A reliable information flow between the Government of Afghanistan, the international community (PRTs), civil society and NGO regarding their respective projects and activities must be reinforced as a precondition for actual coordination. Coordination must move from a question of lack of understanding to a question of sectional interests. A

programme approach based on the use of National Programmes as an implementation vehicle and establishing state-building as the common goal will be vital.

#### **- International financial support**

Returning to the central agenda of fiscal basis set by *Securing Afghanistan's Future* and the Afghanistan Compact is essential not only to work towards the original goal of raising the revenue by 1,5 billion dollars within 7 years but also and most importantly to reinforce the sovereignty of the Afghan Government and reassure donors that there is an eventual path to sustain domestic institutions and to gradual decrease of international support. This should be coupled with a strict and comprehensive anti-corruption strategy both at ministry and sub-national level.

Channelling international aid through the budget and the various existing trust funds such as the Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) and the Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOTFA) must remain a priority both for the Government and the international community as it has so far allowed to keep the ship afloat, ensured high returns and strengthened ownership.

There are currently two main models defining the relationship between the international community and local actors:

A first model of partnership between the international community, the Government of Afghanistan and the NGOs and civil society, based on channelling funding through the ARTF across the country through the vehicle of National Programmes such as the National Solidarity Programme and public works programmes. According to this model, the Government is both doing and contracting others to provide the service and both actually does and is perceived to be providing these services (the health programme being one major example).

A second model of funding, where each donor contracts an NGO or contractor that puts its own flag and acts outside the government budget.

A third, less conventional model could be developed further and would apply to the very specific examples of regions in the south and other parts of the country where speed is vital in the delivery of results. A model which provides the speed at the expense of going through central mechanisms. A model where the PRTs and the international community work in close cooperation with government departments to identify specific needs at the provincial and district level and earmarking money for that.

#### **- Sustainability of support**

There is a pressing need to reassess the mid- and long-term effectiveness and sustainability of the system of budget support, as donors will not be able to sustain it indefinitely. The Government of Afghanistan must look at increasing tax take at national and local level which is currently frozen due to a lack of capacity. The Government of Afghanistan must also look at improving domestic management and administration of programmes, so that effective use and implementation of domestic expenditure is increased. While some progress has been made, there is an “implementation gap” in the capability of the Government to manage and implement programmes in many sectors. Improvement is thus connected to main-streaming international financial aid through national programmes.

#### **- Afghan face is not Afghan ownership**

Afghan ownership of projects and programmes remains pivotal in the effort to increase the legitimacy and influence of the Afghan Government. The international community should work further towards linking their own successes to the Government of Afghanistan.

Putting an Afghan face on projects at provincial and district level is critical and should constitute a prime line of action. However, measures should go further

than mere appearances and the important distinction between ownership and face should be carefully managed.

#### **- PRT should not substitute local authorities**

Funding mechanisms must reinforce rather than undermine the public authorities' legitimacy. Aid channelling mechanisms, PRTs amongst them, have in the past substituted local authorities and created mistrust between local populations and local-central authorities. However, PRTs and other actors' support to national programmes is contingent on the national programmes being functional and able to deliver. Therefore, ensuring the right national programmes are in place, and removing the obstacles to their functioning is important.

PRTs must also beware of supporting local actors' illegitimate behaviour. The structure of the Afghan system is unitary, so governors exist within local administrations, not local governments, with powers that are carefully delineated and delimited by law. A greater focus on the rights and responsibilities of governors, police chiefs and other officials as enshrined by law, and paying attention to whether and how those duties are being fulfilled, is central to a rule of law agenda. PRTs should be encouraged to place this task as central to their mission, and could play a constructive role in monitoring the extent to which local actors are consistent with this rule of law agenda.

#### **- No meaningful political power without capacity to deliver**

The current lack of Government funding that could be available on a discretionary basis for projects at provincial and district level is a source of frustration and, potentially, a source of instability. Community Development Councils (CDCs) at the local level have more credibility than the district leaders because they have money (they are the gravitational pole of large demands of money). The current plumbing system of funding needs to be reassessed as it limits the ability of resources that are channelled through central mechanisms to reach local levels. Consideration of a careful block grant scheme to provinces

where local administrations would have some decision-making authority coupled with careful accountabilities and rules for decision-making, could be valuable (such a scheme was proposed within the Afghanistan Stabilisation Programme and could be reactivated). Careful attention to procurement mechanisms, processes, and transparency would be necessary.

#### **- Partnership through the Government in different levels**

Whilst the ARTF is undoubtedly an extremely valuable mechanism that must be supported, more needs to be done to ensure provincial and district governments have the necessary implementing capacity to respond to the needs of the population on a week-to-week or month-to-month basis. This would reinforce the legitimacy of the Government at sub-national level by allowing it to credibly claim to deliver services in the provinces.

The model of partnership between the international community, the Government, civil society and NGOs based on channelling funding through the ARTF and where the Government is both doing and contracting others to provide services through National Programmes must be given preference and fostered at the expense of the alternative model which channels funds directly through PRTs.

International support to the National Solidarity Programme (NSP) must be increased and ensured as it empowers communities, reinforces the ties and the legitimacy of the Government as well as mutual accountability. These programmes now have the capacity to absorb significant additional financing, were donors to increase their support and some adjustments made to the design of the programme.

Whilst the Government of Afghanistan has gotten the funding mechanism figured for villages (mainly through the NSP), more needs to be done in order to come equally with programmatic levels directed towards each remaining level of Government, namely, districts, municipalities, provinces and centre.

## **- Police and Judicial reform**

Efforts should be made to ensure that the physical presence of the Government in the provinces goes beyond the police and the army, especially in the current context where the police is perceived more as a predator than a protector.

Judicial and police reform should currently be the top priority for both the Government and the international community, not only as a means to improve popular support for the Government, but also as a catalyst for other programmes, overall security and the effective protection of basic rights such as property.

Efforts directed at Security Sector Reform (SSR) and creating local capacity, such as the EUPOL mission and the US contribution should be praised and expanded in terms of human and financial resources. A scheme to ensure merit-based, open recruitment, at adequate wages, for administrative positions across the country could do much to restore inclusion, hope and trust in Government.

Both the international community and the Afghan Government should be responsible for the much needed reform of the Ministry of the Interior and work towards a comprehensive reform strategy that is realistic, flexible, feasible and most importantly, channelled through a commonly agreed national programme.

PRTs in turn should concentrate their efforts at provincial level and contribute to capacity-building of the police.

The Bonn agreement allowed to bring Peace in Afghanistan and have preference over Justice but also convened that injustice should not be perpetuated in the future. That promise of Justice must be back on track and judicial reform effectively implemented in cooperation with international partners.

The process of judicial reform should be simplified and existing capabilities and mechanisms effectively utilised: Afghanistan has a well established tradition of Islamic law that on issues like property or commercial law is one of the most developed. Efforts should therefore be oriented at working with and on this system and make deliver the justice the people want.

#### **- Unemployment is the driver of insurgency.**

National employment programmes must be developed to ensure the creation of local capacities, and avoid unemployed youth joining the ranks of the insurgency, or the current brain-drain of highly qualified Afghans joining international organisations as drivers or interpreters. This must be coupled with the identification of existing capacities and their effective utilisation by both the international community and the Afghan Government.

#### **- Narcotics**

The issue of narcotics should be addressed from both the producer and the consumer side. Furthermore, the eradication strategy should be reassessed as it does not seem to be fruitful and represents a misplaced strategy that mainly benefits western contractors. The blame game should be put aside and a coherent strategy that is fully global should be devised between the international community and the Afghan Government. PRTs should regularly provide information on narcotics at provincial level to the Afghan Central Government. Drug lords, who are well-known individuals in Afghanistan, should be named and brought to justice.

#### **- CS and peace-building and governance in Afghanistan**

Both the international community and civil society must develop and pursue a common vision for peace and development in Afghanistan. The reinforcement of the Government authority should be coupled with a steady support of civil society as a valuable partner and as a clear indicator of a functioning and democratic state. Limited implementing capacity is impairing progress and

capacity-building therefore remains critical to allow civil society to support or take a sizeable initiative by itself in the provinces. However, tense relations with the Government of Afghanistan needs to be addressed: the relationship started as cooperation within the framework of the NSP as the ultimate expression of a partnership of two emerging entities. Then a series of tensions arose that need to be explored and solved.

UNAMA should foster its role of coordinator and point of contact with civil society.

A broader approach to the concept of civil society must be taken. Civil society is deeply rooted in Afghanistan and goes far beyond NGOs. It is difficult to define conceptually, but concentrating on the functional aspect might shed some light: any structure or model that fosters good governance and conveys the voice of the people should be considered as part of civil society.

*Shuras*, *Jirgas*, CDCs and other traditional structures and representatives such as the *Ulemah* or *Maliqs* should be considered as part of civil society. CDCs, have contributed greatly in empowering marginalised communities and it is imperative that support to these structures through the funding of the NSP and other national programmes is maintained and reinforced.

The international community should overcome its fears and engage *Ulemahs* and religious leaders as a source of local capacity, potential implementing partners and contributors to nation-building. *Mullahs* also need to be part of the equation, and their role of social multipliers be seriously considered. A middle ground between marginalisation and monopoly of political power by religious representatives and structures needs to be found.

Existing obstacles within the NSP handbook that prevent individuals connected to religious activities from being part of certain programmes should be reconsidered in order to avoid exclusion. The international community needs to acknowledge that sustainable security also requires establishing an open dialogue with religious civil society which is extremely prominent in the current

context. Quality religious education through centres of excellence should be promoted and controlled by the government in an effort to avoid youth travelling to neighbouring countries.

### **- Insufficiency of a military driven response**

NATO's military response has been to some extent effective but it should be supplemented from the civilian political side to the same degree of effectiveness.

Reciprocally, NATO's unity is critical to Afghanistan and success in Afghanistan is critical to NATO. Its engagement is likely to continue being essentially military in the near future and while the use of force is necessary, it is by no means sufficient to solve the problems of Afghanistan.

The coalition needs to come to terms with a Status of Force Agreement and a legal basis for the use of force and mechanisms of co-decision-making between the international community and the Afghan Government.

### **- PRT role and challenges**

PRTs should be guided by the principle of acting through and with the Government authorities and avoid delivering services directly to civil society or the local population. Working with and through the Government allows PRTs to play the all important role of catalysts and contribute to increasing the prestige and legitimacy of the Government at local level. Contributing nations should therefore increase their support to Government capacity building in the provinces.

The most critical issue for PRTs will be to define the kind of service delivery mechanisms that will allow them to complement the work of civil society and the Afghan Government or to introduce a development phase for the military force.

PRTs should be considered as an instrument to support the national strategy level rather than instruments of strategic interventions.

Flexibility and mechanisms of maximum coordination between the civilian and the military components in the area of planning will be crucial for the success of the tasks at hand.

Ways of enhancing civilian capabilities to match those of the military need to be explored, although the use of robust force against the increasing insurgency across the country also needs to be born in mind and military plans drawn accordingly in order to ensure adaptation of structures to the security continuum which have changed dramatically since 2002. It has been pointed out, PRT structures have hardly evolved along the security continuum since they were established: having structures set as if they were acting in full blown conflict situations in areas that are relatively peaceful sends the wrong message to the local population. The signal indicating that the international community is on the way of progressing along the lines of greater stability can only be delivered through a progressive de-militarisation of PRT structures. Attention should therefore be paid to the current shift of gravity going in the direction of greater civilian approach to PRTs.

The asymmetrical patronage of the international community through PRTs which is deeply affecting the Afghan national cohesion must be addressed and redressed.

In this regard, there is a need to reconsider the question of whether it is possible or desirable to make a rigid distinction between civilian and military dimension of PRTs since both elements are part of a continuum. In any case, there is a need for the best strategic capabilities available to design a strategy that is tailor made to the evolving context on the ground.

In addition, contributing nations should discuss further whether the PRTs should gradually fade away or transform themselves into agents that could fit in the

future scenarios when Afghanistan finally moves from the emergency/humanitarian phase to the longer term development phase.

The Afghan Government should undertake a systematic study on the effectiveness of PRTs at provincial level in parallel to an analysis of the balance sheet of the Government on issues such as corruption and delivery of security. A comparative study of the different PRT models and structures should also be helpful.

#### **- Regional dimension**

The regional dimension of the problem and solution of the Afghan issue needs to be urgently tackled. Conflicts between Afghanistan and its eastern and western neighbours should be avoided at all cost. The international community must come up with a common strategy towards Afghanistan and Pakistan, and an international conference on the regional dimension as proposed by the Spanish Government should be convened in the near future.

#### **- International initiatives**

The London Compact needs to be pushed further and momentum regained. Gathering once again all participants of the conference in an attempt to evaluate the progress so far might contribute to reignite the spirit of the Compact and lay the basis for a more effective contribution in the coming years.

There is also an urgent need for an honest dialogue between the international community the Afghan Government in order to move forward, leave current differences aside, and make the effective partnership a reality.



# **Civil Society and Provincial Reconstruction Teams: The Unavoidable Synergy**

**Working Document**

*Gabriel Reyes Leguen<sup>1</sup>, Madrid, October 2007*

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## **Introduction:**

This paper puts forward a series of ideas and facts to spark debate in the international meeting organised by CITpax in Madrid (October 2007). It therefore does not aspire to produce an exhaustive analysis of Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) models and civil society (CS) participation processes, or a detailed study of their interaction.

International personnel deployed in Afghanistan and Afghan civil society (CS) representatives were consulted for the purpose of this paper. This was made through a SWOT<sup>2</sup> analysis which was designed to assess “PRTs’ contribution to the reconstruction of Afghanistan in cooperation with and according to local CS needs and expectations” and which was widely distributed by email to at least one representative of each PRT deployed in Afghanistan and CS members in August 2007. The result of this consultation was relatively successful in terms of quality rather than quantity and allowed to draw a broad picture and get the pulse of CS and PRTs regarding the complex issues of coordination and cooperation. It also helped to shed some light regarding the future of the PRT concept as a progressively civilian model. The current document looks therefore at the respective roles of PRTs and CS in the physical and institutional reconstruction of Afghanistan, their interaction, as well as their mutual perceptions, prospects and expectations.

The paper examines the role of PRTs and CS with regards to the development and implementation of the Afghan National Development Strategy and more specifically Pillar 1 (Security). The paper then addresses the increasing role of civil society in the reconstruction process with special emphasis on its contribution to national strategies and programmes through different consultation processes. The PRT concept is also analysed with the specific examples of the Turkish, German and US PRTs. Finally, the question of the synergy between CS and PRTs is developed.

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<sup>2</sup> SWOT: Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities and Threats

The pivotal question for the years to come would be how to bridge the capacity and policy gaps between what PRTs are and what the international and local communities want and ought it to be in order to meet their expectations. Security is certainly needed across the country, but allowing this factor to high-jack or monopolise the international contribution to the reconstruction of Afghanistan through its PRTs will perpetuate quick fix unilateral solutions in detriment of greater long-term sustainable contributions to national programmes. The answer to this question inevitably has to come from both the contributing nations and CS as their relationship, at least for the coming years, and is that of interdependency.

This document could have not been drafted without the valuable contribution from international staff from different PRTs and CS representatives, and refined based on the discussions that took place in Madrid in October 2007. The author would like to thank those who kindly took their time to provide the information, as well as those who participated in the discussions held in Madrid, and wish them luck in their important task of contributing to the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan.

**Provincial Reconstruction Teams or Provincial Security Teams: more than a conceptual conundrum.**

**The PRT model: united over the military component; divided in all other aspects.**

As the PRT Handbook<sup>3</sup> stresses, PRTs are “neither a combat nor a development institution. A PRT may perform such initiatives in the pursuit of stability, but these activities are neither the ultimate nor the penultimate goal of a PRT. A PRT, at all cost, must avoid confusing its activities (i.e. development, diplomacy, security sector reform, etc.) with its goal of stability”. This version of the Handbook, drafted four years after the first PRT was established in Paktiya (December 2002), clearly shows the will to develop PRTs as highly flexible structures (both from the mandate and structural points of view) in an attempt to allow contributing nations to better adapt operations and projects to security, and politico- and socio-economic dynamics at local level. However, it also crystallises the often criticised conceptual vagueness of the PRT model and the lack of a unified approach which is partly at the origin of the uneven results in terms of reconstruction and security that can be observed in different regions with similar starting points since the beginning of the operation. It nonetheless has the merit of trying to shed some light on the model by clearly stating the need to differentiate the two main areas of activity.

This open approach to the model has been exacerbated further at the operational level by the very different national approaches to stabilisation amongst PRT leading Nations. The composition of PRTs therefore has been deeply influenced by national policies and substantially varied depending not only on the wide-range of operational environments, but also and above all, on national caveats and priorities. The result is an eclectic group of structures with a greater or lesser civilian/military vocation, all under the umbrella of the NATO

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<sup>3</sup> PRT Handbook, Draft Unclassified, Executive Steering Committee, ISAF (July 2006).

ISAF<sup>4</sup> mission and in constant interaction with a multiplicity of actors, all of which work towards the common goal of reconstructing the country within the parameters and benchmarks set by the Afghanistan Compact and the ANDS.

However, the *ad hoc* approach to security and reconstruction fostered by the broad framework drawn by the PRT concept, has proved relatively successful in many parts of the country by granting contributing nations a greater capacity to tailor the structure and mandate of their respective PRTs to operational needs on the ground as the situation evolved. But it could also be argued that it has pushed PRTs, especially those with a predominantly military nature, to fall in what Hamish Nixon calls the “state-building paradox”: the complex “relationship between assistance and long-term measures on the one hand and aid dependency and short-term measures on the other”. Translated in practical terms: “long-term state-building processes [have] often [been] hindered [by] the acute short-term need to respond to the threats of insurgency, opium and popular discontent by means that do not allow for collective ownership by Afghan society”.<sup>5</sup>

The immediate result of this paradox has been a pre-eminence of quick impact projects (QIP) in detriment of governmental capacity-building and long-term sustainable projects. Humanitarian actors and local civil society sustain that the increasing emphasis on military intervention in humanitarian operations have led PRTs to jeopardise long-term development initiatives by undertaking humanitarian type activities that blur the lines of the so-called humanitarian space and therefore put NGO personnel (international and local) at risk.

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<sup>4</sup> See UN SC Resolution 1386 which ISAF was established and granted a mandate that allowed it to assist the Transitional Interim Government of Afghanistan through the establishment and maintenance of a secure environment in Kabul and its surroundings. UNSCR 1510 subsequently granted NATO command over ISAF which was later allowed to expand its mandate throughout the west and north of the country.

<sup>5</sup> Hamish Nixon, *Aiding the State? International Assistance and Statebuilding Paradox in Afghanistan*, AREU Briefing Paper Series, April 2007, p. 4; Holly Ritchie, *Aid Effectiveness in Afghanistan: At a Crossroads*, ACBAR Briefing Paper November 2006. Furthermore, ACBAR has decried the uneven distribution of resources across predominantly opium poppy intensive or highly insecure areas which has threatened sustained development in traditionally peaceful areas due to weak government capacity and limited funding.

NGOs and civil society organisations have traditionally treated QIP with suspicion and argued that “too often quick impact is synonymous with short-term and ineffective assistance”, which can “damage the reputation of genuine aid agencies operating on the basis of community trust and acceptance.”<sup>6</sup> Local and international NGOs have also decried the inadequacy of military personnel to tackle development projects, often deemed of poor quality due to the lack of experienced oversight, and the limited coordination of PRT activities with local authorities, civil society and INGOs, which on some occasions have described coordination as a one way process where they believe they provide more information than they receive. High turnover rates have prevented PRT personnel from securing a long-term relationship of trust with local stakeholders and have increased pressure to achieve results; and have also been raised as one of the reasons for the proliferation of QIPs with little or no sustainability, and limited community ownership. The cost effectiveness of aid delivered through PRTs has also been criticised by civil society, which accuses the military of implementing projects at a substantially higher financial cost than the same projects conducted by NGO partners.<sup>7</sup> This adds to the nearly “schizophrenic” nature of some PRTs that has led international forces in some parts of the country to be engaged almost simultaneously in combat and reconstruction tasks. Locals especially in the south have witnessed that those servicemen shooting the bullets are the same who have subsequently been putting up the bricks, adding to the confusion regarding the role of the international mission and discrediting its work.

This view of humanitarian type projects, and specially QIPs, undertaken by the military in non-permissive environments is far from new and has been for a long time at the heart of the bitter dispute between the military, NGOs, and civil society at large with the former decrying QIPs as political objectives of a specific military campaign.<sup>8</sup> Although many examples that would prove the above arguments can be found across the country, it should also be noted that, the military can, and have provided in the past, specific engineering capabilities to

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 14.

<sup>8</sup> See *Provincial Reconstruction Teams and Military Relations with International and Nongovernmental Organisations in Afghanistan*. Michael j. Dziedzic and Colonel Michael K. Seidl, USIP Special Report 147, September 2007

repair basic infrastructure in a genuine effort to improve the living conditions of locals. Limiting military reconstruction to these tasks, which are essentially specialised QIPs, might be the key to preserve a more or less clear division of labour in a move that would allow NGOs and civil society to work comfortably with little interference and competition from the military. The PRT's capacity to undertake more complex institutional projects aimed at strengthening the capacity of provincial institutions and actors, particularly in the field of security sector reform, should not be underestimated. This could provide an opportunity for PRTs to work together towards the development of ANDS Pillar 1 (Security) in close cooperation with civil society, and in a way that would best maximise their respective comparative advantages whilst avoiding competition. One should nevertheless be cautious and avoid reducing the possible role of PRTs to the field of security, since its civilian component, if granted enough autonomy and resources, can contribute greatly to other fields and Pillars of the ANDS. The key may lay in a clear division of labour between each and every actor and component (within and outside the PRT structure). Whatever the nature of the tasks performed, PRTs should be considered as an instrument to support the national strategy level rather than instruments of strategic interventions. It is therefore essential that contributing nations develop and deploy the best capabilities possible to design a strategy that is tailor-made to the evolving context.

### **Three different approaches, one goal: The US, German and Turkish PRT models:**

The extreme flexibility allowed by the relatively broad mandate, definitions and guidelines regarding the PRT model has led to a heteroclitic group of structures with little in common, but the end goal and a certain over-militarised approach in the means to achieve them. The search for practical solutions in a continuously evolving reality on the ground has led contributing nations to experiment with innovative approaches that occasionally involved a greater civilian perspective.

From the US robust force protection approach to the civilian Turkish PRT, contributing nations have tried to strike the difficult balance between the urgent

need to secure the provinces, expand the authority of the Afghan Government and contribute to the physical and institutional reconstruction of the country whilst being faithful to the needs and expectations of the local population. Many PRTs are working towards going beyond quick fix and cosmetic solutions and progressively tackle the more complex task of contributing to long-term national policies – although not without clashes with NGOs and CS, which struggle to preserve their privileged fields of action as well as local ownership of the projects. The most critical issue for PRTs is to define the kind of service delivery mechanisms that will allow them to complement the work of CS and the Afghan Government or to introduce a development phase for the military force.

### **The US PRT Model**

The overall US approach to the PRT concept is that of robust force protection, partly explained by the fact that US contingents have traditionally been deployed to provinces where widespread insecurity remains an issue. US PRT composition varies depending on the area of operation, but generally comprises between 50 and 100 personnel, including military personnel (and Civil Affairs officers), State Department representatives, development-reconstruction experts (from the Departments of Agriculture and Justice as well as USAID), a representative of the Afghan Ministry of Interior (crucial in the contact with local authorities) and a number of interpreters, with all personnel under military command.<sup>9</sup>

In many scenarios, US troops are both engaged in combat operations and reconstruction efforts, especially through QIPs. This has pushed CS to perceive PRTs and more specifically QIPs as instruments of broader combat operations, in particular Operation Enduring Freedom.<sup>10</sup> The complexity of ascertaining the areas of responsibility of the civilian and military components has been exacerbated further by the existing interaction between US battle units and

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<sup>9</sup> See House Committee on International Relations (2004) *Statement by the State department coordination for Afghanistan William B. Taylor Jr. to the House International Relations Committee* as well as *The US Experience with Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan Lessons Identified*, Robert M. Perito, USIP Special Paper, October 2005

<sup>10</sup> *Provincial Reconstruction Teams and Humanitarian Military Relations in Afghanistan, Save the Children*, 2004

PRTs. In the light of current US PRT structures it is already difficult for the local population to distinguish between the civilian and military components, but the added factor of combat units operating independently from and in parallel to PRTs in many provinces does not help in the search for winning the hearts and minds of Afghans. In particular, the fact that up until recently US Civilian Affairs (CA) Officers wore civilian clothes, carried hidden weapons and used unmarked vehicles, contributing therefore to the confusion of military and civilian activities and putting aid workers at risk, was a matter of bitter disputes between UNAMA, CS and the US military. The end result is that while UNAMA has been actively involved in the development of the US PRT concept, many NGOs and CS organisations have avoided direct cooperation due to the former's combatant status,<sup>11</sup> in an attempt to preserve, at least formally, their independence and neutrality before the eyes of the local population they are meant to be assisting.

However, the US has successfully experimented with more innovative models that should be praised and encouraged. The US PRT in Panjshir is the only US civilian PRT currently deployed and one of the few examples of its kind in Afghanistan. It is comprised of a small military team of around 60, a USAID and USAD representatives, and a PRT civilian director (from the US State Department). The PRT relies heavily on local *mujahadeen* guards for its security and concentrates nearly exclusively on reconstruction, with the road as the main project (and with the largest impact for the province). Coordination is relatively easy in that there are very few actors in the area. The PRT has managed to build a strong relationship with the local leadership and villagers at large, who visit the PRT compound regularly. The civilian team concentrates a good deal of effort in tying projects to the Provincial Development Plan and focuses on assisting local dealers in their efforts to set their priorities and link them to the central level and down to the people. Just as their Turkish homologues, the US civilian PRT has managed to play the part of catalyser or development hinge between the different layers of the provincial and national governance structure. Nevertheless, the PRT has struggled, but finally managed at least in part, to avoid being used by the governor in the pursuit of

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<sup>11</sup> *Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan*, Wahlberg and Asplund (2004), p. 9.

particular political goals and projects and link the PRT resources and projects to the Provincial Development Plan.

The US PRT in Paghshir has proved the potential of civilian PRTs and opens the door for a progressively less military approach to physical and institutional reconstruction in the US contribution to ISAF. However, it should be noted that the relatively safe environment in the province is also at the origin of the approach and its good results. One should hope that security will progressively improve in other parts of the country, thus encouraging contributing nations to follow more civilian approaches, such as the one followed by the US in Paghshir (or Turkey in Wardak). Continual efforts to link projects to Provincial Development Plans is also an achievement on its own that should inspire PRTs across the country.

### **The German PRT model (Feyzabad)**

As opposed to other models, German PRTs represent a dual civilian-military concept that has achieved a separation between the two components - with the civilian branch (GTZ) deployed in separate offices and not formally part of ISAF<sup>12</sup> – which adds to the high level of autonomy provided by having both heads (civilian and military) with the same hierarchical rank, but raises the issue of coordination between the two components - which has proved to be weak.

As stressed by a GTZ worker interviewed for this report, Germany does not undertake any kinetic operations which therefore make it difficult to qualify it as a “combat” institution. But what could be an asset has sometimes triggered critics from local and international NGOs as well as local CS. This is due to the

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<sup>12</sup> Germany praises this division as a successful model which is perceived as the reflection of “the holistic approach of Germany’s Afghanistan Engagement” and assumes the commitment to “increase its tried and trusted civilian-military approach in the Northern Region in coordination with partner nations” Germany has committed itself to develop and foster what has been called “Provincial Advisory Teams” (PAT), to regions with no PRT in order to ensure a small but permanent presence. Germany hopes to set up the first German PAT in Takhar Province. See *The German Federal Government’s Afghanistan Policy*, 5 September 2007, <http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/diplo/en/Aussenpolitik/RegionaleSchwerpunkte/Afghanistan/AFG-Konzept2007.pdf> .

fact that military personnel has been reluctant to react to direct security threats posed to these actors in the assigned area of operations. This follows the well-established position among many contributing nations, according to which PRTs have to be considered a deterrent to insurgents and criminals rather than a means to provide security to aid workers or the local population. It could therefore be argued that there is a need to either re-assess or clarify current rules of engagement in order to avoid misunderstanding with CS and INGOs.

The German PRT cannot be considered a development institution since it has neither the personnel nor the sufficient financial resources to be a significant development actor in the province – a widespread situation among many PRTs. This exemplifies the complex dichotomy at the heart of the PRT model, which in this particular case has the positive effect of leaving the door open for the German PRT and the aid component (GTZ) to concentrate on their respective areas of expertise and therefore preserve a certain division of labour and fields of action. As a result of this separation, the German PRT only has the capacity to conduct QIP, with a limited budget at the disposal of the commander usually coming from donations from his home constituency, leaving larger projects and programmes in the hands of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the GTZ.

The PRT in Feyzabad (Badakhshan province) follows the model described above and is comprised of representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (civilian head of the PRT, and a deputy); the Ministry of Interior (one police trainer); Economic Cooperation & Development – BMZ (who lives outside the PRT compound co-located in town with GTZ representatives); and some 400 soldiers including a CIMIC team. Along with the German contingent, the Czech Republic has deployed a small number of troops including a CIMIC team with limited financial resources to fund its own projects and those of the local NGO community. Denmark is also present in Feyzabad along with the German PRT with 21 soldiers and a CIMIC representative, as well as a civilian development advisor. Croatia on the other hand has contributed with various police advisors and a civilian representative who acts as deputy civilian head of the PRT, in a coordinating role. Within the province of Feyzabad the Danish aid agency (DANIDA) has by far the strongest role in the development of local capacity

through the construction (and staffing for two years) of a civil service training centre for the provincial capital and the support to the Provincial Planning Department by paying the salary of an assistant for the planning director. Finally, it should also be noted that USAID maintains an office within the PRT mostly for security reasons.

The deployment of different contingents from various contributing nations within one PRT is extremely interesting since it allows both civilian and military personnel to be exposed to different approaches and methodologies. Important lessons can be learnt and experience exchanged within this multinational structure, and the model might be an example to follow in other regions where contributing nations lead PRTs and work on their own.

As in any other PRTs there is obviously more room for coordination from the internal (between the military and the civilian components) and external (with local actors) points of view, but mechanisms are in place and the civilian representatives within the PRT (German head of civilian part and Danish representative) attend coordination meetings held in Feyzabad with local counterparts. The relationship between GTZ and the PRT affords coordination opportunities through the Provincial Development Fund program (PDF), in which the Ministries of Defence, Interior, BMZ, and Foreign Office participate in regular project approvals sessions with the provincial authorities, facilitated by the GTZ. Pre-eminence in terms of coordination is given to the BMZ representative who is responsible for coordinating German aid and linking it with other agencies, and therefore making him/her the person with the strongest voice when it comes to coordination. Efforts are currently made by the civilian head to make the CIMIC understand how to link PRT activities with the ANDS and Provincial Development Plans.

The German PRT has shown the possibilities of a model based on a strict separation between the civilian and the military component which has allowed both the former and the latter to act with a great deal of autonomy. The German model allows each component to take advantage and maximise its comparative advantages and expertise, which opens to the door to a large number of

collaboration possibilities whilst avoiding the confusion between the military and civilian activities. But it also raises the widespread issue of improving coordination between the two components (with the military tied by strict national caveats on the rules of engagement).<sup>13</sup>

### **The Turkish Civilian PRT (Wardak)**<sup>14</sup>

The Turkish PRT in Wardak Province constitutes a unique example of a purely civilian structure. The Civilian Coordinator is the head of the PRT and responsible for all activities and duties except for the protection of the PRT compound and communication with the military authorities. All civilian personnel are under the direct authority of the civilian coordinator who also controls the overall development budget with the approval of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As a direct consequence of its civilian nature, the Turkish PRT does not have any combat duties. However, the PRT contributes to the enhancement of the security and the strengthening of the security institutions in several ways, and always under the guiding principle according to which Afghan institutions and State bodies are responsible in their own areas including security.

The overarching philosophy of this unique PRT is that it does not assume direct responsibility in neither of the areas mentioned above, but provides support to the police and ANA in different ways according to their needs. An example of this “catalytic” approach is the mentoring programme that allowed five Afghan students to receive training in the Turkish Police Academy during 2006-07 as a long-term investment.<sup>15</sup> As part of its capacity-building vocation, the PRT counts on one of the largest police training teams amongst its peers with 10 experienced police trainers. This has allowed the recruitment and training of ANAP and ANP personnel who have benefited from the construction of a Police Training Centre with a capacity to become a regional centre and in the near

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<sup>13</sup> Which has questioned its ability to provide security to international and national civilian staff beyond mere deterrence.

<sup>14</sup> Information provided by a Turkish PRT official in September 2007 within the framework of the SWOT analysis conducted by CITpax.

<sup>15</sup> Once they have completed the course, the students are obliged to work in the province at least five years.

future of the model police station, which will be supported and mentored by the PRT police team.

Its purely civilian approach has also allowed the Turkish PRT to work hand in hand with the provincial government and build a close working relationship at all levels. But most importantly, the PRT has been able to undertake projects that go beyond quick fix solution and meet the needs and expectations of the local population.<sup>16</sup> Priorities are being determined in close consultation with the Government, elected representatives and the local population at large. In that sense, the Provincial Council is considered a close partner along with the Head of the *Shura* (including the Women *Shura*) and its members are regularly included in activities and their contributions to achievements publicly praised. The PRT holds meetings with NGO's, provides equipment to cultural, youth, literary and sport associations and support their meetings. In addition, the PRT receives the visit of 4-5 delegations from different parts of the province daily. This proximity approach has fostered not only a great deal of interaction with the local population, but also the consolidation of a relationship of trust which has transformed the PRT into a point of contact and meeting place for the local population.

The Turkish model demonstrates the huge array of possibilities offered by a civilian approach to reconstruction and security and provides an interesting example for the evolution of the PRT concept. The model has proved the PRT's capacity to engage effectively and constructively both local CS and authorities and work towards empowering communities through inclusive projects aligned with local and national needs and interests.

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<sup>16</sup> In its first year of operations the PRT has started 23 major reconstruction projects which has allowed sizeable private investment to be drawn to the province, and has undertaken training courses in Turkey, for instance in Malatya Horticulture Institute for apricot growers.

## **PRTs, Security and CS: towards a specialised delivery platform for the development and implementation of ANDS Pillar 1 (Political and Security)?**

Based on current and past projects undertaken by the different actors on the ground, from the German-led security sector reform (SSR) programme to the Italian-led judicial reform, and the deployment of EU missions for police<sup>17</sup> and judicial reform<sup>18</sup> one might argue that the future – not only of the ISAF but also of the nature of the capabilities deployed – might lay in the deployment of contingents capable of making an effective contribution to the implementation of the ANDS in close coordination with local actors, and in the case of the military, of Pillar 1 of the Strategy. Concentrating efforts on Pillar 1 might provide, at least in the case of highly militarised PRTs, a short-to-mid-term option that would not only preserve as certain division of labour and specific fields of action between civilians and the military, but maximise the comparative advantages of local CS, INGOs and PRTs in the benefit of greater national programmes and policies.

As Robert M. Perito states within the context of the US PRT model, “as primarily military organisations, PRTs are better suited to security-related tasks than to delivering development assistance. PRTs excelled at providing a security presence and performing duties related to disarmament, demobilisation and demining. They also made welcome contributions to SSR through police training and assistance and support for Afghan police and military operations”.<sup>19</sup> One should however take this statement with caution as it might apply to certain US PRTs and could be taken for granted in the context of other PRTs with a predominant military component, but it is difficult to sustain entirely in other contexts and models where the civilian component has proved to be highly

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<sup>17</sup> See Document 6039/07 (presse 18) Council of the European Union Press Release, General Affairs and External Relations, 12 February 2007.

<sup>18</sup> See

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/07/456&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>  
<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/07/456&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

<sup>19</sup> Robert M. Perito, *The US Experience with Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan, Lessons Identified*, Washington DC: USIP Special Report 152, October 2005.

efficient in its contribution to other areas such as long-term reconstruction investments, local capacity-building and civil institutional reform.

Activities related to the development of ANDS Pillar 1 do not necessarily require military solutions or personnel and include a large number of civilian security issues or *soft security issues* ranging from police training to capacity-building in the field of natural disaster preparedness and relief. This merely adds to the need to progressively increase the civilian component, even in security-related activities.

As security improves across the country and the results of quick-fix reconstruction solutions or quick-impact projects fades away, PRTs should push for a long-term strategy based on capacity-building and sustainable reform policies. One should hope that sooner rather than later, the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) gradually will take over all aspects of security in the provinces, and secure the monopoly of the use of force within Afghanistan. The achievement of this desired goal in the mid-to-long-term is likely to profoundly affect the composition and nature of the contingents deployed under the NATO ISAF umbrella. The international community's presence will most likely be needed in the foreseeable future even if the ANSF gradually take over the task of securing the country, but the nature of its work, the scope of action and the composition of PRTs will change as the situation evolves on the ground.

If PRTs are to become a privileged delivery platform, not only for the implementation of Pillar 1, but also effective contributors to the development of other lines of the ANDS, their structure will have to change gradually and the emphasis shifted to a greater, if not exclusively civilian component. This will in no way be incompatible with a leading role in the implementation of some aspects of ANDS Pillar 1, and certainly compatible with a greater interaction with local CS. New and enhanced cooperation structures at all operational and planning levels should be explored, fostered and/or improved, to maximise the comparative advantages, expertise and complementarities of the military, the civilian components of PRTs on the one hand and CS on the other. This could ensure the preservation of a much needed clear division of labour between

civilians and the military – one of the major friction points between NGOs, CS and PRTs – as well as speed-up the so important transition from immediate emergency assistance to sustainable development which is pivotal in any long-term state-building strategy.<sup>20</sup>

As long as PRTs will be deployed, they will continue to play, along with CS, a pivotal role in the implementation of the ANDS, the former as a catalyser or facilitator, the latter as service and information provider, as well as a guarantor of the PRTs' and local government's accountability at the provincial level.

### **The ever increasing role of civil society in the reconstruction process**

Support and engagement of civil society<sup>21</sup> will be critical in order to meet the expectations of the Afghan people. Its input should therefore be sought and its recommendations considered and incorporated into Provincial and National Strategies in a necessary move to preserve the spirit of Afghan ownership.

Just as the number of coordination bodies among and between international and national actors has grown considerably in recent years, there has been a myriad of attempts to assess the needs of Afghans at local level, especially through CS consultation processes. Although the aim of these processes is legitimate and undoubtedly needed, one should be cautious of consultation as a means to align policies with the needs of the people. Experience shows that the problem lays not in a lack of consultation initiatives, but in the lack of effective incorporation of recommendations to national policies. In the Afghanistan context this has been the source of great despair, frustration and disbelief among the local population who has seen how the Government and the international community apparently sought its input but has never subsequently

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<sup>20</sup> See *Aiding the State? International Assistance and Statebuilding Paradox in Afghanistan*, Hamish Nixon, AREU Briefing Paper Series, April 2007.

<sup>21</sup> For the purpose of the current project, the meaning of civil society (CS) should be understood in broader terms than the restrictive definition that equals CS with NGOs. As underlined by the Afghan Civil Society Forum (ACSF), civil society goes beyond these formal structures, and should include structures and entities such as Sufi movements, religious institutions such as mosques, *madrassas*, *takiakhana* (Shi'ite mosque); water management committees; cultural associations; artistic and professional associations; and non-profit, non-governmental assistance organisations. See the ASCF document *Understanding Civil Society in Afghanistan*, <http://www.acsf.af/>

seen its recommendations incorporated to the plans and strategies that are supposed to shape their daily lives. The gap between formal and real consultation has diminished rather than strengthen local ownership in the framework of provincial and national strategies (and more specifically the ANDS). As Hamish Nixon rightly points out,

The principle of recipient-country ownership embodied in the ANDS framework is unlikely to be fully realised. Ownership implies recipient-country participation in the design and implementation of policies. So far, participation has been limited to the elite-level process of Consultative and Technical Working Groups, with heavy international involvement...A successful integration and communication of the provincial, sector and cross-cutting strategies would be a vital step toward closing the gap between the process and the people<sup>22</sup>.

More should therefore be done in order to first seek the all important view of CS and the local population and then provide the guarantees for its effective inclusion in national and sub-national policies.

The CS-ANDS consultation constituted one of the most recent examples of initiatives aimed at engaging CS and sought the input of Afghans in the development and evolution of the I-ANDS. The Afghan Government launched, in cooperation with ACBAR, an innovative consultation process aimed at developing Full-ANDS<sup>23</sup> in an attempt to grant CS an unprecedented weight in the formulation and implementation of the country's reconstruction strategy. The consultation process initially focused on six provinces and sought to enhance

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<sup>22</sup> Hamish Nixon, *Aiding the State? International Assistance and Statebuilding Paradox in Afghanistan*, AREU Briefing Paper Series, April 2007

<sup>23</sup> The Interim ANDS (I-ANDS) allows for substantial but not comprehensive consultation with Afghan and international stakeholders planned for the Full ANDS (F-ANDS). Pilot consultations undertaken under the CS-ANDS process in 6 provinces (Daykondi, Herat, Kabul, Kandahar, Nangharhar, Faryab, Balkh, Paktia/Paktika) were planned to ensure that the Full NDS draws on lessons learnt during the Interim NDS. Although the project was finally never brought entirely to term. See [http://www.acbar.org/display.php?page\\_id=13](http://www.acbar.org/display.php?page_id=13). Within the framework the Civil Society-ANDS consultation process, CS was intended to provide input into four key themes covering the whole spectrum of ANDS Pillar 3 (Social and Economic). This raised questions regarding the possible consultation of CS regarding Pillar 1 (Political and Security) which includes critical issues such as SSR, Disarmament of Armed Groups (DIAG), capacity-building for judicial officials and accountability for PRTs among others.

the strategy's quality whilst strengthening accountability to their citizens, in a move aimed at shifting the development agenda from *Compact to Impact*<sup>24</sup> a goal that remains valid and legitimate. The sub-national consultation process was aimed at ensuring that Full-ANDS strategies are based on local realities and needs, as well as the effective identification of local priorities and plans. Other beneficial side effect of the CS-ANDS was the empowerment of local populations and further strengthening Afghan CS (which already played a key role in the pioneering National Solidarity Programme and consolidated its formal role in Afghan society thanks to the enactment of several pieces of national legislation).<sup>25</sup> This consultation process offered, and offers, an unprecedented opportunity to assess the needs of the people. The most important and pressing issue therefore will be how these inputs and proposed strategies are integrated into the larger scheme of the ANDS before Full-ANDS is developed.

Other recent grassroots consultation processes include the Afghanistan Pilot Participatory Poverty Assessment (APPPA) recently coordinated by ACBAR,<sup>26</sup> which seeks to move a step further and start planning for the future Poverty Reduction Strategy and the Afghanistan Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper that eventually will be presented by the Government to the Boards of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. The aims of the initiative include to better understand the scope, causes and impact of poverty as expressed by the poor, fulfil the required public consultation component of the ANDS and stimulate and develop CS Organisations' (and potentially the Government's) ability to engage with and monitor the ANDS by providing a platform for collective action. The project has been developed by ACBAR in cooperation with local and international partners, and the initiative launched in mid-2007.

Without a doubt, the National Solidarity Programme (NSP) represents the most successful effort to incorporate communities in both planning and implementing the rural reconstruction and development programmes. The NSP was launched and supervised by the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development

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<sup>24</sup> See speech by ANDA Director, Adib Farhadi, *The Role of Civil Society Organisations in the ANDS Process*, Kabul, 6 December 2006. Available at: [www.ands.gov.af](http://www.ands.gov.af)

<sup>25</sup> See Law on Social Organisations 12 January, 2003 and Law on Non-Governmental Organisations.

<sup>26</sup> Information kindly provided by ACBAR, May 2007.

(MRRD) in 2003 in an attempt to lay the foundations for strengthening community-level governance and to support community-managed sub-projects comprising reconstruction and development that improve access of rural communities to social and productive infrastructure.<sup>27</sup> The figure of Community Development Councils was established as the cornerstone of this pioneering programme: they were elected democratically through universal suffrage among local communities<sup>28</sup> (not with some difficulties in a country with complex and well established power structures and a limited female access to the community participation processes). Facilitating Partners (FPs) provided the technical support and expertise for the election of its members and its president. FPs also played and currently still do so, the important role of providing technical support and teaching assistance to CDCs for the design of projects.

The CDCs offer an unprecedented opportunity to local communities to be actively involved in the unique inclusive process of identifying projects according to local needs which are subsequently translated into Community Development Plans. Once they were agreed upon, they were proposed to the MRRD which in turn provides the necessary funds for the community to develop the project. Money is directly transferred to the CDC in 2 to 3 instalments and both the project and the budget are supervised by the CDC which reports to the MRRD and the local community. AREU has underlined the large problems faced by CDCs in the implementation of projects, caused among others by serious problems of cash flow. Delays in the instalment payments by the MRRD has already jeopardised many projects that have failed due to lack of funds.<sup>29</sup> In that sense, the current plumbing system of funding needs to be reassessed as it limits the ability of resources that are channelled through central mechanisms to reach local levels. Consideration of a careful block grant scheme to provinces where local administrations would have some decision-making authority

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<sup>27</sup> NSP Strategy Document for the National Solidarity Programme, June 2004. For an extensive analysis of the NSP see *Fine-tuning the NSP: Discussions of Problems and Solutions with Facilitating Partners*, Palwasha Kakar, AREU Working Paper Series, November 2005

<sup>28</sup> The concept of community is used here in the widest of senses, since they can span from groups of 25 families to 2000.

<sup>29</sup> NSP see Palwasha Kakar, *Fine-tuning the NSP: Discussions of Problems and Solutions with Facilitating Partners*, AREU Working Paper Series, November 2005.

coupled with careful accountabilities and rules for decision-making could be valuable.<sup>30</sup>

Despite some more or less obvious malfunctions, the NSP has materialised the concept of Afghan Ownership through local consultation, participation and implementation. Credit should therefore be given to this pioneering example. Much can be learnt about the NSP which has inspired Afghans and their Government and should inform the international community's contribution and approach, and more specifically that of the PRTs as elements of the sub-national development strategies just as CDCs, PDCs and CS. As ISAF's 2004 Operational Plan clearly underlines, the civilian components of PRTs are tasked with supporting the Government's development programmes (National Priority Programmes) and UN activities, whilst calling for a clear division of labour with the military component tasked with security related activities.

As a general guideline, international support to the NSP must be increased and ensured as it empowers communities, reinforces the ties and the legitimacy of the Government as well as mutual accountability. That programme now has the capacity to absorb significant additional financing, and donors should increase their support for it whilst some needed adjustments to the design of the programme are introduced.

Afghan ownership of projects and programmes remains pivotal in the effort to increase the legitimacy and influence of the Afghan Government. The international community should further work towards linking their own successes to the Government of Afghanistan. Putting an Afghan face on projects at provincial and district level is critical in that sense and should constitute a prime line of action. However, measures should go further than mere appearances and the important distinction between ownership and face should be carefully managed.

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<sup>30</sup> As noted by one of the participants during the October 2007 CITpax meeting held in Madrid such a scheme was proposed within the Afghanistan Stabilisation Programme and could be reactivated.

As a starting point and a simple but effective way to achieve the above mentioned goals, PRTs could work more towards providing Afghan local authorities and CS with the necessary support and mentoring that would show them the way to navigate within the hugely complex and bureaucratic administrative system put together by the Afghan Government and the international community. If there is one thing CS and local authorities share with PRTs and international staff at large is that they all have to deal with complex bureaucratic machineries in order to secure the funds and the authorisation to implement their respective projects and daily activities. PRTs could for example help CDCs to plan and process their projects according to the hugely complex procedures established by the NSP. It would of course be imperative that these activities are coupled with the support to national literacy strategies and close cooperation with local CS in order to reinforce or create the local capacity needed to undertake these tasks alone in the near future.

This would allow PRTs to strengthen their role of state-building catalysers and foster cooperation and the integration of local CS and provincial representatives in the development of larger national programme (the ANDS in particular). PRTs could therefore become a powerful tool for the empowerment of local CS and provide the means that would allow their full integration in the State structure, strengthening by the same means the authority of the central Government through inclusive policies.

### **Civil Society and PRTs: the unavoidable synergy**

Just as civil society should gradually assume the role of check and balance on the State, it should also do so with regards to PRTs (including the planning and implementation phases), at the very least in the civilian sphere of their work. If PRTs want to be faithful to the principle of Afghan ownership, contributing nations should not only work with the Government, on the Government and through the Government,<sup>31</sup> but also with CS, on CS and through CS within the

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<sup>31</sup> “THROUGH – by using Afghan financing channels and institutions particularly the budget and programs. WITH – in a partnership where responsibilities are clearly demarcated but there is joint responsibility for the results. ON- by recognizing that government institutions are not yet fully functional, and that where government action is not yet aligned to the standards of the

framework of the projects undertaken at provincial level. A close look at the PRTs' role and mandate shows to what extent CS input, and a gradual shift from security and QIPs to a sustainable civilian capacity building and support roles will be crucial for the success of the tasks at hand<sup>32</sup>. However, the above mentioned principle according to which PRTs should act through and with the Government Authorities should prevail, and delivering services directly to CS or the local population should be avoided at least at this stage where building and strengthening Government capacity and legitimacy should be considered the main task.

CS has limited implementing capacity, which is impairing progress. Capacity-building remains therefore for the time being critical in order to allow CS to support or take a sizeable initiative by itself in the provinces in the near future.

Lines of communication and consultation strategies have already been established in order to know from the bottom the primary requirements and necessities. This has allowed PRTs to draft both yearly Master Plans and Intervention Strategies that theoretically would best suit the needs of the local population. These strategies are supposed to be based on Key Leader Engagement (KLE), which should include contact with most of the representatives of the local population, as well as regular exchange of information and consultation with the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSFs) concerning the requirements of reconstruction and development on the basis of requests stemming from the local population. This is thereafter translated into Provincial Development Plans (PDPs) and steered by the Provincial Development Committees.

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international community and the expectations of the Afghan citizens, that a number of mechanisms, including capacity-building, holding the Government accountable to certain standards may be necessary."

See *Conclusions and Proceedings* of the CITpax Initiative on Peacebuilding and Governance in Afghanistan p.3 and as stated by Hanif Atmar, Minister of Education of Afghanistan during the meeting organised by CITpax in Madrid and Seville on 6-7 February 2007. see <http://www.toledopax.org/pry/doc/Conclusions%20and%20proceedings%20CITpax%20meeting%20Afghanistan%20Feb%20.pdf>

<sup>32</sup> PRTs role include; assisting in establishing stability and security, strengthening and extending central government authority, but also and most importantly, providing accurate and timely local assessments of area needs and enable reconstruction efforts –particularly in areas that are considered too unstable for development agencies to operate.

The procedure has proved relatively successful, yet far more needs to be done to improve consultation and coordination with CS which has accused PRTs on numerous occasions of either acting unilaterally or not translating their recommendations to the final plans. The question of the nature and structure of PRTs – especially their civilian and CIMIC components – raises questions not only regarding the role of PRTs themselves but also and above all, regarding their capacity to tune in with local CS. It also raises questions regarding the level of adequacy of the PRT plans with CS expectations and the contribution of the latter to their work.

Just as the Afghan Government has repeatedly fostered the implication of CS and proactively sought its input, PRTs should mimic or at least bank on existing community consultation processes and fora in order to allow CS to play a greater role in the implementation and the planning of the tasks at hand. As stated by Hamish Nixon, in its analysis of the ANDS:

Participation by society and citizenry has been largely limited to consultation in the form of meetings and workshops with little decision-making power. Excessive consultation may have an undesired effect on state legitimacy: People do not only want to be asked what they wish for, they also want to be listened to and have their opinions incorporated visibly into decisions. A successful integration and communication of the provincial, sector and cross-cutting strategies would be a vital step toward closing the gap between the process and the people.<sup>33</sup>

A harsh statement aimed at the Government that is not less valid or true for the international community and PRTs in particular. Another possible question raised by this recommendation would be related to the role of CS in the design and implementation of the PRT model and its mid-term evolution in the light of a possible, and plausible, international presence in the next decade or so: shouldn't CS be extensively and systematically consulted regarding this issue? What shape could civil society's input take?

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<sup>33</sup> *Aiding the State? International Assistance and Statebuilding Paradox in Afghanistan*, AREU briefing Paper Series, April 2007.

CS has so far contributed, to a greater or lesser extent, to the work of PRTs. Time is now ripe to push for an enhanced cooperation that will ensure on the one hand that projects are aligned with the needs and expectations of the local population, and that CS is effectively included as a substantial contributor to the process of transformation of PRTs.

As local realities evolve on the ground and the PRT model does so accordingly, the need to re-activate and strengthen the mechanisms and fora (such as the PRT ESC) where the model is discussed and developed, will be crucial for the survival of the PRT concept and its adaptation to the tasks at hand. By putting once and again the issue of the ever needed strategic and operational thinking regarding the PRT model on national and international agendas, contributing nations will be able to fully take advantage of the opportunities offered by this flexible model and better contribute to the tasks at hand. Creative thinking and systematic analysis of lessons learnt should also regularly be part of national agendas and ministerial meetings. New means and roles for PRTs should be explored, which could include community mediation -which has proved successful in the case of British PRTs- or capacity-building and support to locals tackling the difficult task of navigating through the complex Afghan bureaucratic system of programme planning and implementation.

The pivotal question for the years to come would therefore be how to bridge the capacity- and policy- gaps between what PRTs are and what the international and local communities want and ought it to be in order to meet their expectations. Security is certainly needed across the country, but allowing this factor to hijack or monopolise the international contribution to the reconstruction of Afghanistan through its PRTs will perpetuate quick-fix unilateral solutions in detriment of greater long-term sustainable contributions to national programmes. The answer to this question will inevitably have to come from both the contributing nations and CS- and the Government of Afghanistan- as their relationship, at least for the coming years, will be that of interdependency.

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## **ANNEXES**



# The Evolution of PRT Models: Towards the Pre-eminence of the Civilian Dimension?

*Meeting between Afghan Civil Society, PRT and International Organisations Representatives*

## AGENDA

Madrid 16 - 17 October 2007

Centro de Estudios Políticos y Constitucionales  
Plaza de la Marina Española, 9

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## **Tuesday, 16 October 2007**

### **9:00 – 9:30 Welcome remarks:**

Bernardino León, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Spain  
Juan Pablo de Laiglesia, Secretary General, Spanish Agency for International Cooperation (AECI)

### **10:00 – 14:00 The role of Civil Society consultation processes and fora in the PRT strategic and operational planning: short term and medium term prospects**

#### **Introductory interventions:**

Fahim Hakim, Vice-President, Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC)  
Kanishka Nawabi, Managing Director Cooperation for Peace and Unity (CPAU), Afghanistan

#### **Discussants:**

Hakan Abaci, former civilian coordinator of the Turkish PRT in Wardak

**Chair of the session:** Clare Lockhart, Director, State Effectiveness Initiative

- How can CS contribute to the work of PRTs? Are the existing civil society consultation fora effective? To what extent do PRT master plans reflect CS recommendations and therefore meet the expectations of the local population?
- Wrap up session, conclusions and proposals.

### **14:00 - 15:30 Lunch**

### **15:30 – 19:00 The civilian role of PRTs: towards a specialised delivery platform for the development and implementation of ANDS (Afghan National Development Strategy) Pilar 1 (Political and Security)**

#### **Introductory remarks:**

Bernardo Álvarez del Manzano, Commander of Operations Command, Spain  
Aziz Rafiee, Managing Director, Afghan Civil Society Forum (ACSF)

#### **Discussants:**

Gavin Buchan, former Political Director, Kandahar PRT; current Special Advisor to DG International Security Policy, Department of National Defence, Canada  
Colonel Norton, Head of UK PRT in Helmand

**Chair of the session:** Jawed Ludin, Afghan Ambassador to Norway and former Chief of Staff to President Karzai

- Short term vs. medium term strategies: from security and quick impact projects to a sustainable civilian capacity building and support role. How should the PRTs evolve in order to contribute to ANDS Pillar 1? And how can civil society help in that move?
- PRT models: the difficult balance between the civilian and military components. How does this affect the articulation of the PRT-CS relationship? How can it be improved?
- Working with civil society, through civil society and on civil society?
- The PRT and CS perspectives: what role do they see each other playing in the medium term?
- Wrap up session, conclusions and proposals.

**Closing speech:**

Alessandro Minuto-Rizzo, former NATO Deputy Secretary General

**21:00 Dinner**

**Keynote speeches:**

José Antonio Alonso, Minister of Defence, Spain  
Zalmay Rassoul, National Security Advisor, Afghanistan

**Introduction:**

Shlomo Ben Ami, Vice-president, CITpax

**Wednesday, 17 October 2007**

**9:00 - 14:00 Future prospects on Afghanistan**

*High level political representatives of PRT Leading Nations' will join the rest of participants for this session*

**SESSION I**

**9:00 – 11:00 The stance of the International Community**

**Welcome remarks:**

José Álvarez Junco, Director, Centre for Political and Constitutional Studies (CEPC)  
Emilio Cassinello, Director General, CITpax

**Moderator:**

José Eugenio Salarich, Director General for Asia-Pacific Foreign Policy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Spain

**Speakers:**

Daan Everts, NATO Senior Civilian Representative in Afghanistan  
Francesc Vendrell, Special Representative of the EU for Afghanistan

**Discussants:**

William H. Duncan, Political Counsellor and First Secretary at the U.S. Embassy to Spain  
Paul Turner, Relations with Afghanistan, DG External Relations, European Commission

**SESSION II**

**11:30 – 14:00 New means for new challenges?**

**Moderator:**

Luis Peral, Director, Conflict Prevention and Resolution Programme, CITpax; Researcher, CEPC

**Speakers:**

Fahim Hakim, Vice-President, Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC)

**Discussants:**

Jan Knutsson, Director-General for International Development Cooperation, Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs  
Kanishka Nawabi, Managing Director Cooperation for Peace and Unity (CPAU)  
Aziz Rafiee, Managing Director, Afghan Civil Society Forum (ACSF)

**13:30 – 14:00 Keynote speech:**

Ashraf Ghani, Chairman, Institute for State Effectiveness; Senior Fellow, Brookings Institution; former Finance Minister of Afghanistan and Chancellor of Kabul University

**14:00 – 15:30 Lunch**

**15:30 – 19:00 Lessons learned from different PRT models: identifying best practices and most successful models for the future**

**Welcome remarks and Chair:**

Rafael Dezcallar, Director General for Foreign Policy, Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation  
Luis Cuesta, Secretary General for Defence Policy, Ministry of Defence, Spain

**Opening remarks:**

Ashraf Ghani, Chairman, Institute for State Effectiveness; Senior Fellow, Brookings Institution; former Finance Minister of Afghanistan and Chancellor of Kabul University

**Report out on Tuesday's meeting and open debate with PRT Leading Nations' Representatives**

Clare Lockhart, Director, Institute for State Effectiveness  
Francesc Vendrell, Special Representative of the EU for Afghanistan

**Open debate:** Exploring mid-term prospects and expectations from the contributing states and the CS perspective

**19:00 Closing speeches:**

Zalmai Rassoul, National Security Advisor, Afghanistan  
Miguel Ángel Moratinos, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Spain.

## LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

**Hakan Abaci**, former Civilian Coordinator of the Turkish PRT in Wardak

**Celia Abenza**, Director of Institutional Relations, Ministry of Defence, Spain

**José Antonio Alonso**, Minister of Defence, Spain

**Bernardo Álvarez del Manzano**, Commander of Operations Command, Spain

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**Bernardino León**, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Spain

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**Clare Lockhart**, Director, Institute for State Effectiveness

**Jawed Ludin**, Afghan Ambassador to Norway and former Chief of Staff to President Karzai

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**Ricardo Martínez**, Director General for Cooperation with Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe, Spanish Agency for International Cooperation (AECI)

**Alessandro Minuto-Rizzo**, former NATO Deputy Secretary General

**Miguel Ángel Moratinos**, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Spain

**Kanishka Nawabi**, Managing Director Cooperation for Peace and Unity

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**Luis Peral**, Director, Conflict Prevention and Resolution Programme, CITpax; Researcher, CEPC

**Aziz Rafiee**, Managing Director, Afghan Civil Society Forum (ACSF)

**Zalmai Rassoul**, National Security Advisor, Afghanistan

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**José Eugenio Salarich**, Director General for Asia-Pacific Foreign Policy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Spain

**Andrew Tesoriere**, British Foreign Office Adviser to Commander Royal Command South, Helmand Province

**Paul Turner**, Relations with Afghanistan, DG External Relations, European Commission

**Como Van Hellenberg Hubar**, Ambassador of the Netherlands to Spain

**Francesc Vendrell**, Special Representative of the EU for Afghanistan

**Kalman Zsigmond**, Colonel/ Commander of PRT1, Hungary



## SPEECH EXCERPTS

### Excerpts from the speech given by Ambassador Alessandro Minuto-Rizzo, Former Deputy Secretary-General of NATO

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

[...] I believe that our engagement in Afghanistan is an engagement for moderate Islam. Every school we build, every development project we protect, moves this country away from the reach of the *ihadists*. Let me be clear: we are not implanting our values on the Afghan culture. We are simply giving moderate Islam the chance it deserves. Indeed, the Afghans themselves shed the Taliban regime as soon as they were given an opportunity to do so. It demonstrates that the future belongs to moderate Islam, and that the international community provides support to those who want to wrest themselves from the grip of radicals and extremists.

So the stakes are high – higher, perhaps, than some of us are ready to admit. But this begs the question of how we are doing. Are our efforts faltering, as parts of the press seem to imply? Are they even futile, as some segments of our publics seem to believe?

I am the first to admit that the international community should do more. And I am also the first to admit that our operations have revealed differences in our national “strategic cultures” that sometimes put into question the very notion of Alliance solidarity. But gloom is unfounded. Thus so far, NATO and the broader international community have done very well. And we will continue to do well, if we stay the course; if we don’t lose our patience, and above all, if we get rid of the myths and misperceptions that have formed around our Afghanistan engagement.

[...] Our approach towards Afghanistan is still much too compartmentalised. We very rightly extol the virtues of a comprehensive approach. Yet there is too little coordination, and sometimes also too little trust, between the various military and civilian actors. We cannot succeed with two distinct cultures at work. [...] And we must continue to push to make this comprehensive approach a reality.

And this brings me to the main theme of this meeting: Provincial Reconstruction Teams. PRTs are the litmus test for the comprehensive approach. [...]

[...] Let me, at this point, share with you some ideas of my own on how to ensure the continued success story of the PRTs.

First, we need to increase the unity of effort. [...] There is no doubt that a “one size fits all” approach will not work. However, the PRTs also reflect distinct national approaches. So the problem is obvious: The more countries that establish PRTs, the more we need to ensure that there is a consistency of effort and as much of a common approach as possible.

A major requirement, in this regard, is to encourage greater information sharing and coordination among PRTs. NATO will continue to play its part in ensuring such greater transparency and cooperation. This conference here in Madrid will promote the same objective, and I hope that it will be followed by similar initiatives to bring interested parties together and coordinate our efforts. This will be important, especially, as we seek to gradually reduce the military element of PRTs in favour of their civilian role.

We must also make sure that PRT activities are in line with the Afghan National Development Strategy [...]

[...] Afghanistan has already provided NATO with a host of lessons to learn – from the need to minimise caveats on the use of our forces to a review of our force planning and force generation processes. We have consistently increased our troop strength – to levels that few would have deemed possible just a few

years ago. And we have successfully integrated non-NATO troop contributing nations from literally around the globe.

One other, crucial lesson is the need for a comprehensive approach. Security and development- including the development of a civil society – are two sides of the same coin. They must go hand in hand, and strengthen each other. One cannot flourish without the other. And that means that NATO's efforts must be carefully calibrated with those of other, civilian actors, such as the UN, the EU and the World Bank [...]

**Excerpts from the speech given by H.E. Zalmay Rassoul,  
National Security Advisor of Afghanistan**

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**“Regaining the people’s trust”**

[...] Where we have been:

[...] For almost five years, Provincial Reconstruction Teams have been an effective tool for stabilisation in Afghanistan, and have to some degree, strengthened provincial and district-level institutions and empowered local leaders who support the duly elected Government in Kabul. One key objective was to improve governance at the sub-national level. PRTs have helped this objective by shifting the centre of gravity for security, reconstruction and governance to our outlying provinces. This objective to strengthen sub-national governance needs to remain foremost in our minds and our top priority [...]

Where we are:

[...]As the character of provincial reconstruction teams is determined by individual nations and the disparity of funds available to them, the activities of the teams are not always aligned with the benchmarks and timelines of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy. We must ensure that all PRTs

have a common understanding and approach to the strategy, in concert with the national Government in Kabul.

Where we need to go:

Certainly, stability in Afghanistan depends in large measure on continuing progress building and operating a professional Afghan National Army, reforming the police and judiciary, and improving local governance. An important lesson from Afghan history is the difficulty in administering a central Government throughout the country, so that for Afghan democracy to succeed, it must be built from below. It is critical, therefore, to act at the provincial level through concerted and coordinated actions of the National Government and international institutions.

It is time to regain the trust and confidence of the Afghan people by enhancing the cooperation between the civil society and provincial reconstruction teams. We have explored and will continue tomorrow to find new mechanisms for consultation and cooperation - to transition between the current PRT activities of quick impact projects and security, to a future function characterized by mainly civilian activities aimed at supporting local democratic institutions in a visible and sustainable way. Community development councils and provincial development plans are the mechanisms through which PRTs can identify the needs of the local communities. PRTs need to help local authorities to be more responsive and to take increasing ownership of their governance responsibilities. Jointly developing a multi-year strategic plan in each province for sensible and needed projects, coordinated with national authorities, will help focus their impact and create a unifying synergy in governance throughout Afghanistan.

The NATO strategy to achieve stability in Afghanistan begins with winning the trust of the Afghan people. This hearts and minds strategy understands that military means alone are not sufficient to achieve stability in Afghanistan. The PRTs therefore, have to work together with local Afghan authorities. This effort to develop governance and stability requires time, flexibility, commitment and

patience. Each PRT must evolve to offer even greater support to local police, to public prosecutors and judges, to hospitals and schools, and to municipal Government - not by replacing local capabilities, but by promoting their creation and strengthening those that already exist.

The finalization and the future funding of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy must remain the overriding focus of donor engagement. Careful management of public expectations, follow-up at the provincial and district levels, and further outreach that builds on the initial consultations will be crucial to the credibility of the strategy. If the strategy is to become an enduring vehicle for partnership between the Government and the people of Afghanistan, it must be seen to deliver genuine results in response to priorities defined by the communities themselves.

I am not here tonight to give you all the answers because I do not have them. But I am here with you to represent the resolve of my people, to climb with you along that path to the highest mountain, and together, to increase the speed of the wind that will eventually move that Taliban tree from blocking our path to a better and more prosperous future.

**Excerpts from the intervention by H. E. Ashraf Ghani  
Former Minister of Finance of Afghanistan,**

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[... ] These are the basis of an emerging consensus:

- 1- Agreement that engagement with Afghanistan will be multi-decade.
- 2- NATO is going to be required as a military force depending on the nature of change in the insurgency and the regional context.
- 3- NATO's unity is crucial to Afghanistan; success in Afghanistan is critical to NATO's unity.

- 4- While the use of force is necessary, it is by no means sufficient to solve the problems of Afghanistan. Troop levels deployed are low and the use of force in that scale is not desirable.
- 5- The centre of legitimacy in Afghanistan is constituted by the people of Afghanistan. A constructive and meaningful partnership with the international community is desired by Afghans.
- 6- NATO has been effective in the military area, but it has not been supplemented from the civilian political side to the same degree of effectiveness. That has forced the alliance to assume a range of activities that it neither wants to neither it is necessarily prepared for. This might force NATO to fight battles repeatedly without winning the war.
- 7- There is a lot of interest and a lot of resources from the international community. However, the efficiency of the use of these resources needs to be addressed and analysed. But this has to be done in parallel to an analysis of the balance sheet of the Government: corruption needs to be addressed, security is declining, and there is a loss of momentum and trust.
- 8- Major accomplishments on the Civil Society side: the establishment of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC), effectiveness within the National Solidarity Programme (NSP) all of which has proved that effective partnership between the Government, international organisations, bilateral governments and Civil Society for the delivery of services can take place [...]

**Excerpts from the speech given by H.E. José Antonio Alonso**  
**Minister of Defence of Spain**

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[...] Afghanistan is a country whose stability is indeed pivotal for the stability of the region at large and therefore for the stability of the planet as a whole.

The people and institutions gathered here today in Madrid share a set of goals and convictions. Firstly, we share the goal of reconstruction. We want Afghanistan to leave behind the difficulties it has suffered in the past. We seek a certain environment, an environment of peace, safety and well-being; and we want a future of freedom, and development for the Afghan people. We want this to occur while being conscious of the difficulties these tasks entail, and while being perfectly cautious and sensible [...]

We have been in Afghanistan several years. We have been part of ISAF since the very beginning under the UN mandate, and when it was necessary, with the wide support of the Spanish Parliament. As such, the way in which we designed our participation therefore counts on extremely important political support within our country, which I am pleased to say. [...]

It is important to stress that when the United Nations established the ISAF mandate, I believe it meant essentially two things: that we need to help the Afghan society to develop essential levels of well-being for a stable basis to exist in which freedoms and security could germinate; and congruently, as both go hand-in-hand, to help the legitimate Government of Afghanistan to develop its own security structure. [...]

Consequently, we contribute commitment; we contribute a good PRT model: a Provincial Reconstruction Team that is working, that has the military and civilian components perfectly coordinated, in which the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation (AECI) is doing a great job. We have carried out a long list of humanitarian reconstruction and development tasks that personally

fill me with satisfaction. All of this would not have been possible without the security provided by our military.

All projects tackled by our PRT have been agreed upon as well – and that is very important – and prioritized in common accord with the Afghan authorities. I insist that we must involve them in the daily management of the different aspects of national life, in the life of Afghanistan. We are not there to substitute the Government or State of Afghanistan, but rather to provide assistance so it may develop sufficiently to take charge of its own destiny in the future.

This is an idea I would like to put special emphasis upon, because if this idea had not been very clear to us, we would not have a clear future to walk towards. We are therefore there to help for as long as it takes, with the political will and vocation to help the Afghan State and society develop fully and be able to assume responsibility for their own destiny. [...]

**Excerpts from the speech given by H.E. Miguel Ángel Moratinos  
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Co-operation of Spain**

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[...] Spain's first engagement, via a maritime presence within the "Operation Enduring Freedom" (OEF), later shifted after the Istanbul NATO Summit (2004) to the new phase in which we are currently involved, and which is precisely what we are discussing today: the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs).

PRTs constitute a model, an example and an experience that will represent a qualitative change with regard to Spain's future presence in various international scenarios [...].

[...] I believe that the Spanish PRT model has been a success, recognised by the Afghan authorities and the North Atlantic Alliance. The PRT model aims to expand projects to include road infrastructure and institution-building in the line with the pact agreed upon in London by all of us. This model is a positive one,

which highlights and emphasizes the participation of Afghans, whereby local authorities and local populations participate with an ever increasing intensity [...]

There is no magic formula. This is not about reducing the military presence. Cooperation is not enough. Many ingredients are needed: a wide range of actions are needed, armed forces are needed, more reconstruction is needed, more counter-narcotics, more dialogue between Afghan political groups, to reinforce the political authority of President Karzai and his colleagues as well as a Government presence in all corners of Afghanistan. All this is logical, long, and painful, and needs a clear political strategy

For these reasons, in our latest meetings with the Afghan authorities we expressed our desire or willingness for a UN High Representative to be nominated to better coordinate the tasks of the various Afghan, UN and other international agencies, in order to improve the efficiency of the international community's contribution.

We also call, more specifically, for greater participation from neighbouring countries. We believe that neighbouring countries, adjacent to Afghanistan, have a greater responsibility. Thus far, they have contributed logistically, especially on military issues, but have not developed enough border, economic and energy cooperation, as could have been done between these countries.

And logically, cooperation in the field of security – I am referring to the need to improve the relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan. The *Jirga* meeting was a good first step, and we need to keep moving in that direction. In any case, we believe that a regional conference in which political issues, and not only economic or development cooperation, could be discussed, and which would increasingly involve other countries of the region, would be, from the modest Spanish perspective, positive.

My last reflection would be to mention that perhaps the time has come for the London Pact to be given a new impulse. The three pillars of this positive pact,

which have inspired our engagement, are security, economic development and reconstruction. I believe, whether it be in the region, or in London itself, and when the Afghan Government deems it opportune, it would be good to reunite once again this impressive line-up that was convened in London almost two years ago around the same table. It could be the moment to make an assessment: the situation is better, but lines of actions need to be found to ameliorate the international presence in assisting the Afghan authorities [...]

