



Government
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CANADA'S ENGAGEMENT IN AFGHANISTAN

JUNE 2008



Setting a Course to 2011

Canada

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Foreword

We are honoured to table this report in Parliament on Canada's role in the United Nations-mandated and North Atlantic Treaty Organization- (NATO) led engagement in Afghanistan. We share, with all Canadians, enormous pride in the work of our men and women in Afghanistan, and in particular, in Kandahar province, and we note the positive contributions they have made, and continue to make, in the lives of the Afghan people. We are also mindful of the very high price that families across this country have paid for this mission. Our role in Afghanistan is essential for Canada's security. We are helping to ensure that Afghanistan does not again become a base for terrorism directed against North America. We remain steadfast in our resolve for a peaceful and secure Afghanistan and are convinced that Canada continues to have a vital role to play in that country.

As a Government, we have reaffirmed our commitment to Afghanistan and the Afghan people as we continue to stand with our allies as one of 40 countries in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). In doing so, it is to Canadians that we hold ourselves to account for this commitment. This first report, in a series of reports to Parliament, continues a dialogue with Canadians as we progress in our engagement toward 2011.

We have listened to the recommendations of the Honourable John Manley and the Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan as evidenced by the Government motion put forward in the House of Commons and approved by Parliament in March 2008. The Prime Minister established the Cabinet Committee on Afghanistan in which we all participate; and a Parliamentary committee has been struck and a task force created within the public service exclusively committed to this mission. We have progressed with our allies in securing more troops and capability for Kandahar and we continue to work with them and the Government of Afghanistan toward common goals.

In this first report, we highlight a renewed focus for our engagement with clear priorities and attainable goals for the 2008–11 period, and we outline signature projects that will illustrate to Afghans and Canadians, Canada's contribution to Afghanistan. We are also working on benchmarks to measure progress. These will flow from our work on priorities and programming and from ongoing efforts by the Afghan government to refine its approaches. The Government will announce the benchmarks and we will incorporate them into the next report, to be tabled in the fall.

It is with full recognition of the work that remains to be done that we table this report. Afghanistan is a country that faces numerous challenges, ones that Canada and the international community agree to face shoulder to shoulder with the people and Government of Afghanistan.

The goals outlined in this report are ambitious and not without risk but they are achievable through a Canadian effort that will remain sharply focused and closely aligned with the efforts of the Government of Afghanistan and our allies. We will continue to update Parliament regularly on the progress of this mission.



The Honourable David Emerson
Minister of Foreign Affairs and
International Trade and Minister for the
Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-
Whistler Olympics



The Honourable Peter Gordon MacKay
Minister of National Defence and
Minister of the Atlantic Canada
Opportunities Agency



The Honourable Stockwell Day
Minister of Public Safety



The Honourable Beverley J. Oda
Minister of International Cooperation

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Executive Summary

Canada is in Afghanistan at the request of the country's democratically elected government and in accordance with UN resolutions authorizing a NATO-led multinational security force. The Afghan people are rebuilding their nation after a generation of progress was lost to decades of Soviet occupation, civil war, drought and the brutal rule of the Taliban.

Originally focused on stabilizing Afghanistan's capital, Kabul, and its surrounding region, the NATO-led security mission in 2006 was expanded to the rest of the country, and Canada took the lead in the southern province of Kandahar. And now, acting on the recommendations of the Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan and the House of Commons motion of March 13, 2008, the Government has begun the transformation of our engagement there.

We have established mission priorities for the period of 2008–11. Diplomatic, development and security operations are being revised and coordinated more closely and concentrated in Kandahar for strongest effect. The Cabinet Committee on Afghanistan is leading this renewal, while Parliament has created a special committee on Afghanistan, which meets regularly. As well, the Government is providing frequent reporting on events in Afghanistan and Canadian efforts there.

The House of Commons, in its motion, called on the Government to table quarterly reports in Parliament on our mission in Afghanistan. Accordingly, this first report introduces the Government's policy priorities and sets out explicit Canadian objectives. At the same time, we are preparing specific benchmarks that will allow Parliament and Canadians to assess progress. These benchmarks will be presented in next fall's quarterly report, and subsequent reports will regularly measure progress against them.

The Government has identified six priorities defining Canada's engagement. The first four priorities focus primarily on Kandahar:

1. Enable the Afghan National Security Forces in Kandahar to sustain a more secure environment and promote law and order.
2. Strengthen Afghan institutional capacity to deliver core services and promote economic growth, enhancing the confidence of Kandaharis in their government.
3. Provide humanitarian assistance for extremely vulnerable people, including refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons.
4. Enhance border security, with facilitation of bilateral dialogue between Afghan and Pakistani authorities.

These Kandahar-centred priorities will be reinforced by two priorities to be pursued at the national level:

5. Help advance Afghanistan's capacity for democratic governance by contributing to effective, accountable public institutions and electoral processes.
6. Facilitate Afghan-led efforts toward political reconciliation.

Prominent among Canadian activities will be three "signature projects." As we progress in our efforts, Canadian contributions will significantly benefit the people of Kandahar with a shift from 17 percent to 50 percent of programming focused in the province. These efforts will be highlighted with three Canadian signature projects. In the first, Canada will support rehabilitation of the Dahla Dam and its irrigation and canal system, generating jobs and fostering agriculture. The second signature project involves the construction of 50 schools. Through the third signature project, Canada will expand support for polio immunization, with the aim to eradicate polio in Afghanistan by the end of 2009.

Canada alone cannot sustain security and progress in development in Afghanistan, a country struggling against a violent and tenacious insurgency. Afghan governance is weak and, despite development progress, Afghanistan remains one of the world's poorest countries. But we are participating in a large international partnership in support of an elected Afghan government under a UN mandate. By setting realistic goals, reporting results and adapting to changing circumstances, our objective is to make measurable progress in contributing to Afghanistan's security, governance and development.

I. Introduction

The transformation of Canada's engagement in Afghanistan has begun. Adopting the advice of the Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan, and following the motion passed by the House of Commons on March 13, 2008, the Government has undertaken far-reaching changes in the design and execution of its military and civilian activities in Afghanistan. Policy priorities for the period between 2008 and 2011 have been set. Diplomatic, development and security operations are being aligned more closely and altered for more immediate and lasting effect. This focused renewal has been led by the Cabinet Committee on Afghanistan, supported by the Afghanistan Task Force in the Privy Council Office and key government departments. The House of Commons has established a special committee on Afghanistan, which now meets regularly. And the Government is acting to provide Canadians with frank and frequent reporting on events in Afghanistan and Canadian efforts there.

One element of that enhanced transparency, as specified in the House motion, is the production of quarterly reports to Parliament on the Canadian mission in Afghanistan. This first report introduces the Government's policy priorities and sets out explicit Canadian objectives. The Government is currently preparing benchmarks for measuring progress toward these objectives. The benchmarks and underlying analysis will be provided in next fall's report.

These reports are intended to inform Parliament and Canadians about the Afghan mission, but they do not pretend to present a wholly comprehensive narrative of all that is happening in Afghanistan. Rather, they will present the facts of Canada's engagement, along with a straightforward system for judging the results and success of that engagement as it progresses.

Progress in Afghanistan is difficult, and the difficulties have not ended. Our engagement has imposed a particular sorrow on Canadian families who have lost loved ones to the conflict. We salute their sacrifice, honour their courage and share their grief.

Our ultimate aim is to leave Afghanistan to Afghans, in a viable country that is better governed, more peaceful and more secure. Our efforts between 2008 and 2011 will be focused on building a more secure Kandahar that is better governed and can deliver basic services to its citizens, supported by a more capable Afghan national government that can better provide for Afghanistan's security, manage its borders and sustain stability and reconstruction gains over the longer term.

To this end, as decided in Parliament, our military contribution is to be extended to July 2011. In addition to helping ensure the security of the Province of Kandahar, this military contribution will be increasingly focused on training and other efforts that will enable the Afghan National Security Forces to sustain a more secure environment; provide security for reconstruction and development in Kandahar province; and support the Canadian-led Provincial Reconstruction Team in Kandahar. At the same time, Canada's civilian contributions to Afghan security, governance and development are

being expanded and redirected for early, practical and sustainable results, particularly in Kandahar province.

In undertaking this rebalancing of military and civilian programs, we are mindful of the broader Afghan and international effort in which we are engaged. We fully support the renewed and complementary efforts of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) to focus on governance and development.

II. The Context: Security, Governance and Development

Security

Afghanistan is a state struggling to recover from catastrophic failure. After decades of conflict and misrule, Afghans in 2004 and 2005 elected a president and Parliament with a declared commitment to democratic governance and fairly shared development. Canada is one of 40 countries now participating in the International Security Assistance Force, which—at the Afghan government’s request—is helping Afghanistan against a tenacious anti-government insurgency. Chief among the insurgent forces is the Taliban, the movement that ruled most of Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001 and gave shelter to the terrorists of al-Qaeda. The ISAF counter-insurgency campaign is being waged under the authority of the United Nations Security Council.

Since 2003, ISAF has been commanded by NATO. At their April 2008 summit in Bucharest, NATO and ISAF leaders reasserted their “determination to help the people and the elected Government of Afghanistan build an enduring, stable, secure, prosperous and democratic state, respectful of human rights and free from the threat of terrorism.”

Allies also formulated a comprehensive political-military plan that sets ISAF operations in a coherent and complementary relationship with governance and reconstruction.

NATO Summit

Bucharest Summit Declaration:

“The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission, currently comprising of 40 nations, is our top priority.”

“A firm and shared long-term commitment”

“Support for enhanced Afghan leadership and responsibility”

“Comprehensive approach by the international community, bringing together military and civilian efforts”

“Increased cooperation and engagement with Afghanistan’s neighbours, especially Pakistan”

April 3, 2008

Security in Afghanistan deteriorated through 2007 and early 2008. Levels of both insurgent and criminal violence rose in many regions, and more civilians were killed in 2007 than in any year since the fall of the Taliban in 2001. For the rest of 2008, security conditions are expected to remain stable at best, and might grow worse in coming months

in some provinces. This is asymmetric warfare: unable to stand up to ISAF in conventional battle, insurgents instead target civilians, Afghan forces and ISAF units primarily in small-scale attacks with improvised explosive devices, roadblocks and intimidation tactics. Kabul, the capital, has seen numerous high-profile attacks, including the April 2008 assassination attempt on President Karzai. In Kandahar, the Taliban's homeland, insurgents target the periphery of Kandahar City and seek to extend their influence across the province through fear and violence.

Governance

Governance—the government's ability to protect and serve its citizens effectively and accountably—is undermined by persistent weak capacity in Afghan ministries and other institutions. This is an area of particular concern to the international community. Notwithstanding the work of some strong and dedicated Afghan ministers and public servants, the authority and legitimacy of the Afghan government and provincial administrations are compromised and the public's trust is jeopardized by widespread governmental and political corruption. We are working with the Government of Afghanistan on this with the full recognition that public trust in government is fundamental to sustained progress in other areas of security, reconstruction and development.

The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan provides support to the improvement of Afghan governing capacity. UNAMA is also working to coordinate international humanitarian, reconstruction and development activities, and to strengthen cooperation with ISAF for better integration of security, governance and development operations. Canada supports the appointment of the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative to Afghanistan, which will bring renewed leadership of the international effort both in Kabul and New York.

Development

Afghanistan remains one of the world's poorest countries. While the Afghan economy has shown remarkable growth and gross domestic product has more than doubled in six years, it will take decades of sustained growth to reach reasonable levels.

The mortality rate for children under five (still among the ten highest mortality rates in the world) has declined by 26 percent since 2001. School enrolments have increased dramatically, from fewer than one million pupils to almost six million. A third of those pupils are girls, who were entirely excluded from formal schools during the Taliban regime. The reintroduction of girls into the

Socio-Economic Overview

- Population: 24 million
- Human Development Index Rank: 174/178
- Life expectancy: 43 years
- Under 5 mortality rate: 191/1,000* (among 10 highest in the world)
- Literacy rate: male 36%, female 18%**
- GDP/capita: \$24/month (\$290/year)
- Malnourished: 6.6 million

Source: 2007 Afghanistan Human Development Report
*Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, 2006
**The Afghan Central Statistics Office

formal school system will help break the cycle of illiteracy among Afghan women, resulting in numerous positive effects in all facets of life in Afghanistan for generations to come.

As partners with the Afghan government in the 2006 Afghanistan Compact, more than 50 countries are contributing to Afghan development. Even so, poverty, unemployment and illiteracy prevail in all parts of the country. Clean drinking water and other basic services are unavailable to most Afghans. Some 80 percent of Afghans have no access to electricity. The opium economy meanwhile helps finance corruption and insurgent violence while thriving in the social disorder it thereby incites. Development is an urgent imperative.

This, in brief, is the harsh context in which Canadian priorities will need to be pursued. To maximize prospects for contributing to a safer, better governed Afghanistan with a stronger economy, Canada must focus its energies and resources where their effects—however modest—can most likely produce early, lasting benefits for Afghans.

III. Canadian Priorities: Making and Measuring Progress

Simply put, the strategic objective of the Canadian engagement in Afghanistan is to make measurable progress between now and 2011 toward building a more secure Kandahar that is better governed and can deliver basic services to its citizens, supported by a more capable national government that can better manage Afghanistan's borders and sustain stability and reconstruction gains over the longer term.

There is a powerful logic to the 2011 timeline. First, Canada's military presence in Kandahar province is to end in 2011. And second, the Afghanistan Compact—the five-year international framework for cooperation between Afghans and the international community—concludes in 2011. By then, the Afghan National Security Forces should be assuming leadership for the country's security and the Afghan government should be taking a much stronger governance and development role, thus allowing Canada to establish a different kind of relationship with Afghanistan.

To achieve measurable progress by 2011, Canada will focus on specific priorities that are mutually reinforcing and consistent with Canada's own strengths. We will continue to support the Afghan government at the national level, but we will expand our concentration of resources and efforts in Kandahar where Canadian soldiers, diplomats, police, development specialists and others can work together to best advantage. Just as crucially, activities will be chosen based on a realistic expectation of visibility and practical impact—benefiting Afghans in ways that improve their lives and strengthen their confidence in their own country's future. Again the logic is plain: as key districts in Kandahar become more secure and better governed, as Afghan institutions deliver more services and administer justice more reliably, then Afghans will trust their government more and advance their own development.

The Canadian government has identified six policy priorities that will define Canada's engagement in Afghanistan. The first four priorities are aligned with the Afghanistan Compact but focus primarily on Kandahar:

1. Enable the Afghan National Security Forces in Kandahar to sustain a more secure environment and promote law and order.
 - Afghanistan Compact: promote security and stability in all regions of Afghanistan, including by strengthening Afghan capability.
2. Strengthen Afghan institutional capacity to deliver core services and promote economic growth, enhancing the confidence of Kandaharis in their government.
 - Afghanistan Compact: strengthen and reform government machinery reflecting core functions and responsibilities.
3. Provide humanitarian assistance for extremely vulnerable people, including refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons.
 - Afghanistan Compact: develop an effective system of disaster preparedness and response.
4. Enhance border security, with facilitation of bilateral dialogue between Afghan and Pakistani authorities.
 - Afghanistan Compact: lower transit times through Afghanistan by means of cooperative border management and other multilateral or bilateral trade and transit agreements.
5. Help advance Afghanistan's capacity for democratic governance by contributing to effective, accountable public institutions and electoral processes.
 - Afghanistan Compact: create a resourced and capable Afghanistan Independent Election Commission and strengthen and reform government machinery reflecting core functions and responsibilities.
6. Facilitate Afghan-led efforts toward political reconciliation.
 - Afghanistan Compact: overcome the legacy of conflict in Afghanistan.

Making substantial progress in these priorities by 2011 calls for hard choices. The transition will be accomplished by reorienting Canadian programming, with some programs scaled back or stopped in order to invest resources in the most needed and promising initiatives. The Canadian Forces will increase their attention to improving the capacity of Afghanistan's own security forces in Kandahar and supporting government

and development work. Our redesigned civilian programs will bring new emphasis to fostering better government and sustainable development in Kandahar.

The Government is assigning more diplomats and development officers to Kandahar, and has appointed a senior-level Representative of Canada in Kandahar to strengthen operational management of the Canadian engagement. The number of Canadian civilians posted in Kandahar will almost triple this year, rising from 27 to 71; and at the Canadian Embassy in Kabul, the number of civilians is increasing from 24 to 32. More decision-making authority has been delegated to Canadian civilians in Kandahar, and it will be exercised with more effective civilian-military coordination.

Progress will have to be measured regularly to gauge results and adjust to changing circumstances. Quarterly reports will reflect the reality that while Canadians can directly influence the effectiveness and efficiency of our actions in Afghanistan, we will have less direct influence over final outcomes in Afghanistan's security, governance and development. We are playing an important role in Afghanistan, but Canada is one of dozens of countries and international organizations contributing to Afghanistan's recovery, in concert with the Afghan government. We cannot unilaterally determine the course of events. But by tracking and reporting progress toward meeting Canadian priorities, the Government will make the best use of Canadian resources devoted to the Afghan mission. And we will account to Parliament and Canadians for the results.

The following pages frame the dimensions of each policy priority in turn and provide more details. For each priority, we specify the Canadian objective to be reached in 2011, and we identify some factors to be considered as we develop the benchmarks of progress. Those benchmarks will appear in the next quarterly report.

Priority 1. Enable the Afghan National Security Forces in Kandahar to sustain a more secure environment and promote law and order.

A primary function of ISAF is to assist the development of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) with training and other support. The ANSF are composed of the Afghan National Army (ANA) and the Afghan National Police (ANP).

In Kandahar, the capacity-building function in support of the ANA is led by the Canadian Forces under ISAF Command. As well, the Canadian Forces lead counter-insurgency and other security operations in Kandahar and protect governance and development activities in the province. About 2,500 Canadian Forces personnel are currently in Afghanistan, most in Kandahar. The main elements include a battle group of about 1,000 soldiers, Operational

<p style="text-align: center;">Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF)</p> <p>Canada is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• working with the ANSF in establishing security;• training, mentoring and equipping the Afghan National Army and Police;• building capacity in administration and logistical support; and• contributing to a reformed justice and correctional system.

Mentoring and Liaison Teams (OMLTs) attached to the ANA, and units assigned to the Canadian-led Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team.

A well-led, well-trained and well-equipped ANA is essential if the Afghan government is to exercise its sovereignty and maintain enough security to allow productive governance and development to proceed. OMLTs are a critical tool for preparing the ANA for that responsibility. The Canadian Forces are currently mentoring five ANA battalions (each comprising, in theory, about 650 soldiers) and one brigade headquarters, all in Kandahar. The current ANA complement in Kandahar is approximately 2,400 compared with just 600 in 2006. Nationally, the current ANA complement is approximately 50,000 compared with approximately 20,000 in 2006. Progress has been significant with considerable improvements in both numbers and quality, but challenges remain. ANA leadership, administration and logistical support are weak, and the numbers of ANA personnel made available for training tend to fluctuate with the seasons. Some ex-Soviet equipment will need to be replaced with NATO-standard material and weapons.

The Canadian Forces in Kandahar, working in close cooperation with the international community, are intensifying efforts to train and prepare the ANA to plan, execute and sustain independent operations by 2011. The recently announced U.S. deployment of 1,000 more troops to Kandahar by February 2009, and arrangements to acquire more helicopter-lift capacity and unmanned aerial vehicles, will strengthen the Canadian Forces' capacity to pursue this objective while better protecting Canadian soldiers and civilians.

Still demanding is the establishment of an increasingly professional and effective ANP, which must be supported by sufficient justice and corrections capabilities in order to contribute to security and promote the rule of law. The ANP, at a minimum, must be able to recruit, train, retain, pay and equip its members. But the ANP faces sizable impediments, among them an insurgency that systematically targets police. The ANP has also displayed high rates of illiteracy, corruption and drug abuse within its ranks. For many Afghans, local police personify the government itself; police failures alienate communities from the government and hold back development progress.

More than 600 ANP members have been trained in Kandahar City in activities led by the RCMP, while a Police Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team, led by the Canadian Forces, has improved the ANP's ability to work and survive in outlying areas of Kandahar province. Major initiatives to support the ANP are also being organized by the United States and the European Union, in partnership with the Afghan government. We will continue to contribute to these efforts and intensify training of ANP members, assist in the development of security infrastructure and provide salary support.

Improving the institutional capacity and performance of the Afghan justice sector and correctional services, including prisons, is an important component of the security priority. Canada has been able to improve inmate care and the administration of prisons in Kandahar. More specifically, Canada has worked to ensure proper treatment of detainees transferred to Afghan authorities by the Canadian Forces, and we will continue

our efforts in this area. In the justice sector, Canada has engaged judges, prosecutors and others in workshops and other training exercises. We are currently exploring new areas of programming, including additional support for training, salary support, and the provision of security for judges and prosecutors.

Canadian Objective for 2011 (ANA):

- By 2011, we expect that the ANA in Kandahar will demonstrate an increased capacity to conduct operations and sustain a more secure environment in key districts of Kandahar, with support from ISAF allies.

We will measure progress toward this objective using indicators such as the ANA's success in securing and stabilizing key districts, its ability to conduct near-autonomous security operations and its maintenance of effective brigade strength.

Canadian Objective for 2011(ANP):

- By 2011, we expect that the ANP will demonstrate an increased capacity to promote law and order in key districts of Kandahar, supported by justice-sector and corrections capabilities.

We will measure progress toward this objective using indicators such as the ANP's provision of effective police services with trained and paid officers in key districts, supported by a functioning court system and improved correctional facilities.

Priority 2. Strengthen Afghan institutional capacity to deliver core services and promote economic growth, enhancing the confidence of Kandaharis in their government.

Building the confidence of Afghans in their own government is crucial to enabling them to assume responsibility for security, governance and development in Kandahar. But that public confidence will depend on the ability of Afghan authorities to deliver essential services. The Canadian priority of strengthening institutional capacity to deliver these services in key districts therefore reflects two interlocking imperatives: to improve lives and livelihoods in Kandahar; and to build institutions of effective, accountable government.

Institutional Capacity Building in Kandahar

Canada is working with the Government of Afghanistan nationally and in Kandahar to:

- deliver basic services;
- provide functional literacy training and vocational skills training;
- create jobs for Afghans; and
- rehabilitate infrastructure for irrigation and potable water.

Schools, accessible water and sanitation, electricity, health and job generation are cited by Kandaharis themselves among their most pressing needs. Safe drinking water, health

and sanitation are basic human needs. Irrigation is vital in arid Kandahar to promote legal agriculture and improve food security. Education and job generation lead to higher incomes and empower people to meet their own needs, while advancing the security and development of their communities. Ready employment in agriculture and other sectors helps reduce incentives to join the opium economy and discourages recruitment into the insurgency.

Kandahar is a province in a poor country. Scarcely 5 percent of Kandahari women can read; and the literacy rate among men is an estimated 26 percent. Basic public services remain inaccessible to most of its population. Nor have formal government institutions established a significant presence outside Kandahar City and a few larger rural communities. Governmental performance is further undermined by corruption and inefficiency. Plainly, successful development will require better governance, especially in the delivery of essential services and in job generation.

Canada's programming in Kandahar province to date has been delivering concrete results in critical areas such education and community development. We will continue to work with the Government of Afghanistan in Kandahar in these areas and significantly expand our efforts to support economic growth in the province. For stronger and more immediate impact, more authority over programs will be delegated to our staff in the field. We have already set up the Kandahar Local Initiatives Program, a responsive and flexible instrument giving the Canadian-led Provincial Reconstruction Team the ability to act quickly on project proposals from local Afghans. We will also deploy more senior-ranking civilians in Kandahar.

Two of the three signature projects will be prominent among Canadian investments in Kandahar. In the first, Canada will support the urgent rehabilitation of Kandahar's Dahla Dam and its irrigation and canal system—generating jobs and promoting agriculture. Refurbishing the Dahla Dam ranks among the highest priorities of the Afghan government. In the short term, the project will generate more than 10,000 jobs. As work is completed, irrigation will allow farmers to shift from poppy cultivation to legal crops.

The second signature project will involve the construction and rehabilitation of 50 schools over the next three years. This will be supported by the training of up to 3,000 teachers. As a result, children in key districts will have increased access to schooling while literacy and vocational training becomes available to adults.

Canadian Objective for 2011:

- By 2011, we expect that Kandahar's provincial administration and important ministries of the Afghan government will be better able to provide basic services in key districts of Kandahar.

We will measure progress toward this objective using indicators such as number of hectares irrigated; schools built or rehabilitated; teachers being trained; infrastructure projects implemented; and jobs generated.

Priority 3. Provide humanitarian assistance for extremely vulnerable people, including refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons.

Afghanistan continues to suffer natural and conflict-induced emergencies. In Kandahar and throughout the country, millions of Afghans face life-threatening deprivations. Ensuring that humanitarian assistance alleviates suffering and meets life-sustaining needs gives expression to fundamental Canadian values and preserves Afghan opportunities for more secure development. Helping to rescue vulnerable populations from emergencies is essential if hard-fought security gains and development progress are to be maintained.

Humanitarian Assistance

Canada is:

- clearing land of mines in Kandahar and providing education and awareness training on landmines to locals;
- providing food to vulnerable persons in Kandahar;
- providing non-food packages of necessities (blankets, kitchen utensils, etc.) to vulnerable populations in Kandahar; and
- providing health care to children through therapeutic feeding and polio vaccinations, and vaccinating Kandahari women and children against measles and tetanus.

Canada is already a leading contributor to humanitarian assistance in Kandahar province. Our support to the World Food Programme has fed more than 6.7 million Afghans in southern Afghanistan, including Kandahar. We also support the efforts of the International Committee of the Red Cross, UNICEF and the UN Refugee Agency to meet the needs of internally displaced persons, refugees and vulnerable populations in Afghanistan. In addition to food aid, Canadian humanitarian assistance funds are providing people in need with essential non-food supplies such as cooking sets, blankets and clothes.

Over the next three years, Canadian humanitarian support will focus on the delivery of food and non-food aid and essential health services to vulnerable people, including Afghan refugees, and returning refugees and internally displaced persons in Kandahar.

In the third signature project, Canada will dramatically expand support for polio immunization in Kandahar and across the country. This project aims to eradicate polio entirely from Afghanistan by the end of 2009, with the vaccination of more than seven million children under the age of five. (Afghanistan is one of the last four countries in the world where polio is considered endemic.)

In all our humanitarian assistance, Canada will contribute to extending access to basic health care, especially among women and children and in under-served areas of the province. Support for the clearance and disposal of landmines will be intensified in collaboration with the United Nations Mine Action Service. These and other efforts will be reinforced by engagement with authorities in Kabul to improve the Afghan government's service to these vulnerable groups.

Canadian Objective for 2011:

- Humanitarian assistance will continue to be accessible to Afghan refugees, and to returnees and internally displaced persons in Kandahar.

We will measure our progress toward this objective through the demonstrated capacity of Afghan institutions to plan, coordinate and deliver emergency assistance with indicators such as the number of vulnerable people reached by humanitarian aid in key districts; a reduction in the number of landmine victims; land made safely accessible by demining; and the number of children vaccinated against polio.

Priority 4. Enhance border security, with facilitation of bilateral dialogue between Afghan and Pakistani authorities.

The Province of Kandahar is Afghanistan's southern gateway to Pakistan for trade and travel, refugees and insurgents. Its future, like its past, will be shaped by cross-border relationships between the people and governments of both countries. A secure and effectively managed border between Pakistan and Afghanistan, with greater economic opportunities for border-region residents, is necessary for the stability and security of both countries.

Border Security and Dialogue

Canada is:

- contributing to a dialogue between Afghanistan and Pakistan;
- facilitating discussions of border officials from both sides of the border;
- training border and security officers; and
- providing critical infrastructure and equipment.

It is therefore a Canadian priority to help strengthen Afghanistan's capacity to manage the border and promote stability and economic development in the border area. This can only be achieved by facilitating a regular and constructive dialogue, formal and informal, between Afghanistan and Pakistan at national and local levels.

Developing this dialogue will mean overcoming the uneasy relationships that have prevailed between the two countries. The uneasiness has several sources: Afghanistan's non-recognition of the internationally accepted Durand Line as the border; the presence of Pashtun and Baluch populations straddling the border and continuously moving across it; the failure in Pakistan to control extremist groups using Pakistani bases for attacks into Afghanistan; and the presence of 2.15 million Afghan refugees still in Pakistan. Mitigating Afghan-Pakistani antagonisms by addressing these and other issues will demand sustained, coordinated diplomatic efforts.

Canada has been active in several initiatives with Afghans, Pakistanis and the international community to contribute to a better dialogue between Afghanistan and Pakistan and to improve border management. Canada has facilitated a series of Pakistan-Afghanistan Cooperation Workshops in Dubai, Islamabad and Kabul where senior border officials of both governments convened for the first time to discuss collaboration in

customs, migration, security, narcotics and development. Canada has also given technical support to Afghan and Pakistani border agencies; funded the start-up of the Afghan Peace Jirga Secretariat (a shared Pakistani-Afghan undertaking); facilitated dialogue between Afghan and Pakistani military officers; and been working within the G8 to promote international support for border-region development. To support border-area economic development in Kandahar, Canada will conduct security operations and invest aid in the Spin Boldak district—an important centre of legitimate trade, and of trafficking by criminals and insurgents. We will also focus our efforts on building border management capability at key crossings between Kandahar and the Province of Baluchistan in Pakistan.

Canadian Objective for 2011:

- By 2011 we expect that Afghan institutions, in cooperation with Pakistan, will exercise stronger capacity to manage the border and foster economic development in the border area.

We will measure progress toward this objective with indicators such as deployments of trained Afghan border officials, installation of infrastructure at border crossings, and improved cooperation between Afghan and Pakistani authorities.

Priority 5. Help advance Afghanistan’s capacity for democratic governance by contributing to effective, accountable public institutions and electoral processes.

In the words of the Afghanistan Compact, “democratic governance and protection of human rights constitute the cornerstone of sustainable progress in Afghanistan.” Building Afghanistan’s democratic capacity, with stronger institutions and electoral processes, is a Canadian policy priority—not least because achieving better governance is necessary for achieving the other Canadian priorities in Kandahar. Formal governing authority in Afghanistan is relatively centralized; provinces, led by governors appointed by the Afghan President, rely heavily on provincial branches of central government ministries and institutions to provide public services. As a consequence, Canada will focus on building capacity in national institutions that are critical to promoting Canadian priorities in Kandahar province.

Capacity for Democratic Development
<p>Canada will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide financial support to the election process; • work with other donors to mobilize technical and financial resources for the Independent Elections Commission; and • work with key national institutions to build administrative capacity.

Canada contributed money and expertise to support Afghanistan’s 2004 presidential election and the 2005 parliamentary and provincial elections, and we are assisting preparations for the next round of presidential elections in 2009 and parliamentary elections in 2010. Assistance will include support for a comprehensive voter registry and an electoral complaints mechanism. This second round of elections will be a pivotal point

in Afghanistan’s democratic history. Successful elections will signal to Afghans and the international community a capacity and commitment to the democratic process.

In Kandahar, Canada has supported several successful national governance programs that benefit the province, including payment of civil service and police salaries through the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund and the Law and Order Trust Fund. Canadian support has also been given to the Education Quality Improvement Program, the National Area Based Development Program, and other governance endeavours. At the local level, Canada will continue to support Community Development Councils, in which Afghans in their own communities have successfully taken charge of economic and social initiatives. We will engage district assemblies, provincial councils and national institutions such as the Independent Directorate for Local Governance—all to build democratic capacity for service delivery at every level of government. This goes to the heart of the democratic governance priority: helping to strengthen government institutions that are effective and accountable to the women and men of Afghanistan.

Canadian Objective for 2011:

- By 2011, we expect that national, provincial and local institutions in Kandahar will exhibit an increasing capacity for democratic governance in the deliberation and delivery of public programs and services, and in carrying out democratic elections.

We will measure progress toward this objective with indicators such as the demonstrated ability of Afghan ministries to design and deliver public services in Kandahar, evidence of public confidence in governing institutions, and the successful conduct of the 2009 and 2010 elections.

Priority 6. Facilitate Afghan-led efforts toward political reconciliation.

Afghanistan cannot secure peace or realize its governance and development objectives by military means alone. An Afghan-led, internationally supported reconciliation process can serve to weaken the insurgency, heal communal divisions and foster a sustainable peace. For its part, the Afghan government has been pursuing reconciliation with support from donor governments and ISAF partners. Programs encouraging the demobilization of former armed fighters count among these reconciliation initiatives. Canadian efforts to improve security and strengthen governance and the economy in Kandahar would benefit from reconciliation successes.

Political Reconciliation
Canada will support: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the development of mechanisms that will encourage dialogue;• the improvement of capacity to communicate with citizens; and• the strengthening of civil society capacity to promote reconciliation.

Canada will seek opportunities to fund new and dynamic Afghan-led national and local initiatives to encourage dialogue and reconciliation, particularly in Kandahar. We will fund efforts to build the Afghan government's capacity to better communicate with its citizens, particularly in Kandahar.

Canadian Objective for 2011:

- By 2011, we expect that national and provincial Afghan government initiatives will encourage political reconciliation and receive timely support from Canada.

We will measure progress toward this objective with indicators such as effective communication by the Afghan government with its citizens, evidence of political reconciliation among Afghans, and broadened popular support for Afghan institutions.

IV. Conclusion

These are the objectives of Canada's engagement in Afghanistan—to contribute to Afghanistan's future as a better governed, more peaceful and more secure country. We are conducting our engagement in a large, international partnership under a United Nations mandate, a partnership founded on the full participation of the elected Afghan government.

Canada alone cannot control outcomes in Afghanistan, a country at war. There will be setbacks along with successes. But Canada can focus its military and civilian efforts where they likely can do the most good. The Government has identified policy priorities for Canadian engagement and is concentrating more of Canada's efforts in Kandahar.

This first report to Parliament describes these six priorities and sets out Canadian objectives. Benchmarks are being prepared that will allow Parliament and Canadians to assess progress made toward these objectives, and will be presented in next fall's quarterly report. Future reports will measure progress against those benchmarks to 2011. By setting realistic goals, reporting results and adapting to changing circumstances, Canadians can make the most of our contributions to Afghanistan's security, governance and development.

Appendix A: Action on Manley Report Recommendations

Manley Panel Recommendations	Government Action to Date
Canada's efforts should be supported by a special cabinet committee on Afghanistan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cabinet Committee on Afghanistan formed in February 2008
There should be a single task force to direct the activities of all departments and agencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Central Task Force formed in February 2008
Canada should assert a stronger and more disciplined diplomatic position regarding Afghanistan and the regional players.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A more robust diplomatic strategy is being developed ○ Canada is engaging key allies and the newly appointed UN Special Representative ○ Canada's interests have been more forcefully represented at the Bucharest summit and the run-up to the Paris summit
Canada should continue with its responsibility for security in Kandahar beyond February 2009, with increasing emphasis on training the ANSF.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Government motion on Afghanistan extending Canadian engagement to 2011 passed ○ New priorities emphasize training to allow ANSF to take responsibility for security in Kandahar and nationally ○ An additional battle group has been assigned to Kandahar by NATO
Canada's contribution to the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan should be revamped to give higher priority of direct bilateral project assistance addressing immediate and practical needs, especially in Kandahar province.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Programming realignment reflects a higher priority of direct bilateral project assistance that addresses the immediate, practical needs of the Afghan people ○ An enhanced civilian presence will be rolling out over the summer, to include more senior civilian positions in Kabul and Kandahar
There should be an assessment of the effectiveness of Canadian contributions and the extent to which the benchmarks and timelines of the Afghanistan Compact have been met.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cabinet Committee is establishing benchmarks and indicators to measure the practical effects of Canadian policy and changing realities on the ground, and to evaluate Canadian performance
The Government should provide the public with franker and more frequent reporting on events in Afghanistan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ March 2008 Parliamentary motion passed to ensure greater oversight by the House of Commons ○ Government providing regular technical briefings to the media, including involvement of ministers that sit on the Cabinet Committee on Afghanistan ○ Government committed to providing quarterly reports ○ Benchmarking framework being developed to allow for more regular assessments of success against policy priorities

Map of Kandahar Province

