

THE ENEMY IN AFGHANISTAN

- ▶ The Quetta Shura Taliban (QST) and the Haqqani network pose the greatest threat to stability in Afghanistan.
 - The QST is an insurgent group responsible for Taliban operations in Afghanistan. The group is led by Mullah Mohammed Omar. Following the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001, Omar relocated the senior leadership council to Quetta, Pakistan. Though the QST is most active in southern Afghanistan, its operations have spread into areas of the north and west.
 - The Haqqani network, named after its leader Jalaluddin Haqqani, is an insurgent group that operates in eastern Afghanistan—in Paktia, Paktika, Khost, Ghazni, Wardak and even Kabul provinces. It also retains a base in North Waziristan in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan. Sirajuddin Haqqani, the son of Jalaluddin, is reported to be in charge of the day-to-day operations of the movement given his father's ill health.
- ▶ Historically, the Taliban and the Haqqani network have been strategic enablers for al Qaeda.¹
 - Prior to 2001, Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda's success was dependent upon support from the Taliban and Haqqani network.
 - In the 1980s, Jalaluddin Haqqani met bin Laden while fundraising together for the mujahedeen in Saudi Arabia.
 - In the 1990s, Haqqani invited bin Laden to establish training bases in Paktia, Paktika, and Khost (known as Greater Paktia).
 - During the rise of the Taliban in the mid-1990s, Haqqani joined Mullah Omar as a minister in the Taliban regime. Together, they welcomed the continued presence of bin Laden and gave sanctuary to al Qaeda training camps.
 - Despite the fall of the Taliban in 2001, the relationship between the Quetta Shura Taliban, the Haqqani network, and al Qaeda continues.
- ▶ Given the integral links between the Taliban, the Haqqani network, and al Qaeda, it is necessary to pursue a counter-insurgency strategy that prevents these groups from expanding their control and influence in Afghanistan.

THE MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN

- ▶ On March 27, 2009, President Obama said his goals were, "...to disrupt, dismantle and defeat al Qaeda in Pakistan and Afghanistan, and to prevent their return to either country in the future."
- ▶ Currently, President Obama is conducting a review of U.S. strategy in Afghanistan. Several options are being debated, such as a more limited counterterrorism strategy and the adoption of a robust counterinsurgency strategy (advocated by General Stanley McChrystal in his assessment).

STRATEGIC OPTIONS

COUNTERTERRORISM IN AFGHANISTAN²

- ▶ The U.S. Department of Defense defines counterterrorism (CT) as, “Operations that include the offensive measures taken to prevent, deter, preempt, and respond to terrorism.”
- ▶ Given the range of Predator UAVs and the requirements for Special Forces teams, the conduct of CT operations using either requires bases in Afghanistan or Pakistan.
- ▶ While an over-the-horizon CT approach is feasible using long-range, precision-guided munitions, this approach relies entirely on Signals Intelligence (SIGINT) and CIA networks to locate targets.
- ▶ The enemy has become increasingly savvy with its operational security, making SIGINT targeting more difficult.
- ▶ Even now it is difficult for CIA networks to provide targetable intelligence on key enemy leaders.
- ▶ CT operations have been the primary cause of civilian casualties in Afghanistan. Outrage over civilian casualties has damaged the perception of the United States in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

COUNTERINSURGENCY IN AFGHANISTAN³

- ▶ Counterinsurgency Strategy (COIN) has at its core the protection of the population from insurgents by military and political means.
- ▶ To achieve the President’s stated objectives, one must fully resource and implement a counterinsurgency strategy in Afghanistan.
- ▶ This will require additional forces, as there are currently not enough troops to execute a proper counterinsurgency.
- ▶ Even with additional forces, it is necessary to prioritize objectives within Afghanistan and then mass forces in critical areas to protect and positively influence the population. The insurgency is most dangerous in RC (South) and RC (East). Counterinsurgents must focus on the critical population centers in: the central Helmand River Valley; Kandahar City and its surrounding areas; Tarin Kowt in Uruzgan Province; and Khost, Paktia, and Paktika provinces (Greater Paktia).
- ▶ Coalition counterinsurgency operations must be coordinated and mutually-reinforcing to achieve decisive effects and prevent the enemy from fleeing during the operation, only to return to the area later.

AFGHAN NATIONAL SECURITY FORCES (ANSF)⁴

- ▶ “The role and responsibilities of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) must be clearly articulated. There has been an overreliance on the Afghan National Police (ANP). The ANP are simply not equipped for the combat-intensive initial phases of counterinsurgency. The appropriate role for the ANP should be maintaining order once the insurgency has been reduced to a manageable level and effective rule of law has been established.”
- ▶ “The Afghan National Army (ANA) are appropriate for the combat-intensive phases of counterinsurgency, though they are not present in sufficient numbers. Growing the size of the ANA and advancing its capacity to carry out mission-critical counterinsurgency operations in Helmand will help to relieve some of the burden that is currently shouldered by coalition forces.”
- ▶ “The best way to rapidly increase the size and capacity of indigenous forces is to partner coalition units with them together in combat”
- ▶ “Dramatically expanding the size and capacity of the ANSF is only one part of a strategy. It must be paired with steps to defeat the insurgency and improve the legitimacy and capability of the Afghan government.”

ENDNOTES

¹ Frederick W. Kagan and Kimberly Kagan, “How Not to Defeat al Qaeda,” *The Weekly Standard*, October 5, 2009.

² United States Department of Defense, “The Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms,” *Joint Publication 1-02*, April 12, 2001 (as amended through August 19, 2009); Frederick W. Kagan and Kimberly Kagan, “Afghanistan Force Requirements,” joint publication by the *American Enterprise Institute* and the *Institute for the Study of War*, September 19, 2009.

³ Frederick W. Kagan and Kimberly Kagan, “Afghanistan Force Requirements,” joint publication by the *American Enterprise Institute* and the *Institute for the Study of War*, September 19, 2009; Jeffrey A. Dressler, “Security Helmand: Understanding and Responding to the Enemy,” *Afghanistan Report 2*, Institute for the Study of War, September 28, 2009.

⁴ Frederick W. Kagan and Kimberly Kagan, “Afghanistan Force Requirements,” joint publication by the *American Enterprise Institute* and the *Institute for the Study of War*, September 19, 2009; Jeffrey A. Dressler, “Security Helmand: Understanding and Responding to the Enemy,” *Afghanistan Report 2*, Institute for the Study of War, September 28, 2009.