

COUNTERNARCOTICS STRATEGY AND POLICE TRAINING IN AFGHANISTAN

HEARING BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTH ASIA OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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CONTENTS

	Page
WITNESSES	
The Honorable Thomas Schweich, Coordinator for Counternarcotics and Justice Reform in Afghanistan, U.S. Department of State	6
Mr. Mark Schneider, Senior Vice President, International Crisis Group	40
LETTERS, STATEMENTS, ETC., SUBMITTED FOR THE HEARING	
The Honorable Gary L. Ackerman, a Representative in Congress from the State of New York, and Chairman, Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia: Prepared statement	3
The Honorable Thomas Schweich: Prepared statement	14
The Honorable Dana Rohrabacher, a Representative in Congress from the State of California: Letter	24
Mr. Mark Schneider: Prepared statement	43

COUNTERNARCOTICS STRATEGY AND POLICE TRAINING IN AFGHANISTAN

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2007

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE MIDDLE EAST
AND SOUTH ASIA,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:36 a.m. in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Gary L. Ackerman, (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Committee will come to order. Two days ago a suicide bomber killed 11 people in Kabul. Last Saturday a suicide bomber killed 28 Afghan soldiers also in Kabul. These two incidents are part of a larger narrative about United States' efforts in Afghanistan. Since we removed the Taliban from power in 2001 and tried to establish a legitimate, functioning democratic state in their place the issues that have tormented Afghanistan remain the same.

There is no security in much of the country. The central government's writ does not extend much beyond the environs of Kabul. In the provinces there is no functioning local government and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime projects that 2007 will be another record year for opium production in Afghanistan.

That is quite a list of accomplishments after almost 6 years of effort and an investment of \$15 billion U.S. dollars. I have said before and I will say again, the President surged in the wrong country. The country where our money, and our diplomacy and our soldiers could have made the most difference is not Iraq, but Afghanistan. Osama bin Laden doesn't live in Baghdad. He is in the mountains between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The Taliban haven't been defeated. They have regrouped, joined forces with narcotics traffickers and imported suicide bombers to destroy the nation's institutions of state and terrorize the Afghan people. Afghanistan's borders are still uncontrolled. The Pashtun tribes, the Taliban and al-Qaeda have set up a new safe haven for training coordinating and conducting terrorist attacks in the northwest of Pakistan.

What is truly agonizing about the current situation in Afghanistan is that it could have been a success. Instead of running in place for the last 6 years the United States could really have helped Afghans recover from decades of senseless slaughter and destruction. The Afghans themselves were exhausted and sick of fighting.

The Afghan people went so far as to set aside, at least temporarily, their long-standing xenophobia and welcomed United States and coalition forces to rid them of the Taliban. We had the overwhelming support of the international community including, let us note, Iran, which either understood the justness of our cause or stood with us or were at least willing to cooperate with our efforts.

We had eager offers of assistance from around the world to help us rebuild the Afghan nation. Here at home there was robust bipartisan support in the Congress reflecting the fact that the American people knew we were doing the right thing. Yet the President walked away from Afghanistan.

Less than a year-and-a-half and to what under the best of circumstances would have been a monumental reconstruction task, the Bush administration decided it needed to make an example out of someone if they were going to transform the middle east, and Saddam Hussein, a noted detestable person, suddenly became the most dangerous man in the world.

So instead of committing every element of national power to the challenge of rebuilding the Afghan state the President quietly downgraded the mission to nation building on the cheap. Fecklessness unfortunately turns out to be not so cheap.

The United States has spent \$6 billion on Afghan police training efforts since 2002, yet the Government Accountability Office reports that not one, that is not one, not a single one unit of the Afghan police is capable of operating on its own. Not only that, we are not even sure how many Afghan police there are.

GAO says that the manning figures from the Afghan Ministry on the Interior are suspect and that the 76,100 Afghan police that are claimed by the Ministry represent the number that have been trained not the number who show up for duty, and certainly not the number who can actually do their jobs.

In addition, the Inspectors General from both the State and Defense Departments report that equipment distributed to provincial police headquarters is hoarded, insufficiently maintained and lacks end use accountability. So not only don't we know who is going to show up on a given day, we also don't know whether they still have their equipment.

The counternarcotic situation is equally grim. United States has spent \$3 billion on counternarcotics in Afghanistan and is on pace to produce yet another record breaking crop of opium bearing poppy. I could only assume that this massive failure occasioned by the Bush administration's so-called new counternarcotic strategy that was released in August, but from where I sit the so-called new strategy looks astonishingly similar to the failed strategy of 2005.

Same five pillars, check; same overall problems to solve, check; same interagency issues to work through, check; same disconnect from reality, check. Sadly, what is actually different about the new strategy is what is most distressing. It is positively rife with words like should or could as in the United States should improve assistance to the Afghan Attorneys General anticorruption campaign. Well, of course we should.

There is absolutely nothing in the document that gives me confidence that any agency of either government will achieve the objectives described. Should is not a direction, could is not a plan.

After 6 years of trying to put things right in Afghanistan we should be well beyond the point of suggestions. It is time for direction, it is time for action, it is time for the attention of the President, attention that as I noted earlier has been focused elsewhere with possibly even less progress to show.

Afghanistan isn't lost yet, but it is on its way. On the President's watch al-Qaeda and the Taliban have again found a safe haven and the continued failure to provide either security or governance throughout Afghanistan combined with growing exhaustion in NATO leads inevitably toward the kind of failed state that gave rise to September 11.

It didn't have to be this way. It doesn't have to be this way, but unless someone who can make and enforce decisions, for the sake of argument let us say the President of the United States, recognizes the danger we will one day find Afghanistan right back where it was on September 10. Now, that is a legacy.

Mr. Pence?

[The prepared statement of Mr. Ackerman follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE GARY L. ACKERMAN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW YORK, AND CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTH ASIA

Two days ago, a suicide bomber killed 11 people in Kabul. Last Saturday, a suicide bomber killed 28 Afghan soldiers, also in Kabul. These two incidents are part of a larger narrative about United States efforts in Afghanistan. Since we removed the Taliban from power in 2001 and tried to establish a legitimate, functioning democratic state in their place, the issues that have tormented Afghanistan remain the same. There is no security in much of the country. The central government's writ does not extend much beyond the environs of Kabul. In the provinces there is no functioning local government, and the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime projects that 2007 will be another record year for opium production in Afghanistan. That's quite a list of accomplishments after almost 6 years of effort and an investment of \$15 billion.

I have said before and I will say again, the President surged in the wrong country. The country where our money, our diplomacy and our soldiers could have made the most difference is not Iraq, but Afghanistan. Osama bin Laden doesn't live in Baghdad; he's in the mountains between Afghanistan and Pakistan. The Taliban haven't been defeated; they've regrouped, joined forces with narcotics traffickers and imported suicide bombers to destroy the nascent institutions of the state and terrorize the Afghan people. Afghanistan's borders are still uncontrolled; the Pashtun tribes, the Taliban and Al-Qaeda have set up a new safe haven for training, coordinating and conducting terrorist attacks in the northwest of Pakistan.

And what is truly agonizing about the current situation in Afghanistan is that it could have been a success. Instead of running in place for the last 6 years, the United States could really have helped Afghans recover from decades of senseless slaughter and destruction. The Afghans themselves were exhausted and sick of fighting. The Afghan people even went so far as to set aside, at least temporarily, their longstanding xenophobia, and welcomed U.S. and coalition forces to rid them of the Taliban. We had the overwhelming support of the international community—including, let us note, Iran—which either understood the justness of our cause and stood with us, or were at least willing to cooperate with our efforts. We had eager offers of assistance from around the world to help us rebuild the Afghan nation. And here at home there was robust bi-partisan support in the Congress, reflecting the fact that the American people knew we were doing the right thing. Yet the President walked away from Afghanistan. Less than a year and a half into what, under the best of circumstances, would have been a monumental reconstruction task, the Bush Administration decided it needed a to make an example out of someone if they were going to transform the Middle East, and Saddam Hussein, a noted detestable person, suddenly became the most dangerous man in the world.

So instead of committing every element of national power to the challenge of rebuilding the Afghan state, the President quietly downgraded the mission to nation-building on the cheap. Fecklessness, unfortunately, turns out to be not so cheap. The United States has spent \$6 billion on Afghan police training efforts since 2002.

Yet the Government Accountability Office reports that not one—not a single unit—of the Afghan police is capable of operating on its own. Not only that, but we're not even sure how many Afghan police there are. GAO says that the manning figures from the Afghan Ministry of Interior are "suspect," and that the 76,100 Afghan police that are claimed by the Ministry represent the number that have been trained; not the number who show up for duty; and certainly not the number who can actually do their jobs. In addition, the Inspectors General from both the State and Defense Departments report that equipment distributed to provincial police headquarters is hoarded, insufficiently maintained and lacks end-use accountability. So not only don't we know who's going to show up on a given day, we also don't know whether they still have their equipment.

The counter-narcotics situation is equally grim: the United States has spent \$3 billion dollars on counter-narcotics and Afghanistan is on pace to produce yet another record-breaking crop of opium-bearing poppy. I can only assume that this massive failure occasioned the Bush Administration's so-called "new" counter-narcotics strategy that was released in August. But from where I sit, the so-called "new" strategy looks astonishingly similar to the failed strategy of 2005. Same five pillars? Check. Same overall problems to solve? Check. Same interagency issues to work through? Check. Same disconnect from reality? Check. Sadly, what is actually different about the "new" strategy is what is most distressing: it is positively rife with words like "should" or "could." As in, "The United States Government should improve assistance to the Afghan Attorney General's anti-corruption campaign." Well, of course we should. There is absolutely nothing in this document that gives me any confidence that any agency of either government will achieve the objectives described. "Should" is not a direction. "Could" is not a plan.

After six years of trying to put things right in Afghanistan, we should be well beyond the point of suggestions. It's time for direction. It's time for action. It's time for attention from the President; attention, that as I noted earlier, has been focused elsewhere, with possibly even less progress to show.

Afghanistan isn't lost yet, but it's on its way. On the President's watch, Al-Qaeda and the Taliban have again found a safe-haven. And the continued failure to provide either security or governance throughout Afghanistan, combined with growing exhaustion in NATO leads inevitably toward the kind of failed state that gave rise to September 11th. It didn't have to be this way, and it doesn't have to stay this way. But unless someone who can make and enforce decisions—for the sake of argument, let's say the President of the United States—recognizes the danger, we will one day find Afghanistan right back where it was on September 10th. Now that's a legacy.

Mr. PENCE. Thank you, Chairman. Thanks for calling this hearing, and I especially want to welcome Ambassador Schweich to this subcommittee. Appreciate your leadership as our Coordinator for Counternarcotics and Justice Reform in Afghanistan, and appreciate your service to the State Department.

In the 6 years since our invasion of Afghanistan to overthrow the Taliban and destroy the state sponsor of al-Qaeda we have seen both successes and setbacks. I believe that this front in the war on terror is winnable, just as I believe that the Iraq front in the war on terror is also winnable.

Our second witness today, Mr. Schneider, correctly cites political will in his testimony as the key to curbing the Afghan drug trade. Similarly, our political will I believe will determine our success or failure in the war on terror. Our political will in winning in this theater must remain steadfast. We must succeed in Afghanistan.

Mr. Chairman, though, I share your concerns about the various unwelcome developments, many of which you cited in your eloquent statement: The exploding opium production that we will cover today in depth, slowed progress on reconstruction, the alarming growth in suicide bombings and insurgent attacks.

But I am troubled by yesterday's *Washington Post* article about the neighboring state entitled, "Pakistan Seen Losing Fight Against Taliban and al-Qaeda." Clearly this theater needs our fo-

cused attention and effort, and I appreciate the chairman's willingness to dedicate this hearing and this subcommittee's attention to just that.

I hope we also don't get too carried away with the bad news. Six years ago this month the *New York Times* declared in a cover story that United States involvement there was, "a military quagmire," referring to it as, "Afghanistan as Vietnam." There is some good news in Afghanistan.

Child mortality has declined 20 percent in the past 5 years, 80 percent of the public has access to basic healthcare, primary school enrollment has increased by 500 percent over 5 years, Karzai government has been a stable and mostly positive force for more than half of a decade.

Yet, unquestionably the opening problem overshadows all else. Afghanistan provides a staggering 93 percent of the world's illicit opinion comprising approximately 13 percent of the country's GDP. The trend is even more troubling, an estimated 63 percent increase since 2005. Even worse is the drug trade's use by the Taliban and probably by al-Qaeda.

I should add that in addition to being blood thirsty killers the Taliban is comprised of world-class hypocrites who claim to want to purify fellow Muslims but are also willing simultaneously to profit from and exploit narcotics trafficking in order to succeed. Hardly a pure cause in any traditional definition of the term.

It is clear from the growth of opium traffic and its close links to the insurgency that the war on drugs is a crucial piece of the war on terror.

Mr. Chairman, I, too, have concerns about our response to this problem. In February I joined our ranking member, Ms. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, and our ranking subcommittee members in a letter to Secretary Rice and Secretary of Defense Gates warning that our success in Afghanistan was threatened by the failure to develop a unified international strategy to combat opium production in the country.

I look forward to Ambassador Schweich's testimony on how the Department has addressed some of our concerns in its new strategy unveiled last month. I have serious questions. Are we pursuing the optimal strategy? Is our counterinsurgency and counternarcotic strategy integrated? Do our NATO allies and our military have the means and ability to tackle these challenges?

I was able to witness some of the early fruits of our efforts firsthand along with some of my colleagues in December 2004 when we visited Afghanistan. Unquestionably, this is a difficult area of operations. It remained so for some time.

I do remember, Mr. Chairman, flying in the direction of Jilalibad at that time of the year seeing the untilled fields and was informed by American personnel that accompanied us that those fields were we there at a different time of the year would be shining for a harvest illicit and inherently dangerous to U.S. interests and to American children.

Mr. Chairman, our success in Afghanistan will require a multi-tracked effort on numerous fronts. In order for the United States to stay on the offensive in the war on terror to stabilize this key ally is our shared struggle.

Thanks for calling this hearing, and I look forward to hearing from our witnesses. Yield back.

Mr. ACKERMAN. I thank the distinguished ranking member for his as usual thoughtful statement and penetrating questions.

We will proceed to our first panel. Ambassador Thomas Schweich assumed the position of Acting Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs in June of this year. Those responsibilities are in addition to being the principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of that bureau and the Coordinator for Counternarcotics and Justice Reform in Afghanistan, the capacity in which he appears before us today.

Prior to joining the INL, Ambassador Schweich was Chief of Staff to the U.S. Mission at the United Nations, and before joining the State Department, Ambassador Schweich was a partner in the St. Louis firm of Bryan Cave. Ambassador Schweich is a graduate of Yale, received his law degree from Harvard.

Welcome, Ambassador. Your full written statement will be made a part of the record, and you may proceed.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE THOMAS SCHWEICH, COORDINATOR FOR COUNTERNARCOTICS AND JUSTICE REFORM IN AFGHANISTAN, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Ambassador SCHWEICH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Congressman Pence, for your introductory remarks. Thank you for the opportunity to meet with you here today and discuss the counternarcotics program in Afghanistan, the new strategy that we put together, as well as police issues that are related to that counternarcotics strategy.

In January of this year there was a cabinet level meeting at the White House in which an initial briefing showed what you all have referred to today, that there would be another increase in the opium production in Afghanistan this year between 15 and 20 percent over last year.

This was very alarming to those who were present, and as a result they asked Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte and drug czar John Walters to convene an interagency committee to look seriously at the strategy for combating opium in Afghanistan, to develop new ideas and new approaches, to leave nothing off the table and to come up with a new integrated strategy that would help resolve the problem.

I had the honor of being appointed the coordinator of that effort. We had representatives at very senior levels from the Department of Defense, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Department of State, the Department of Justice, the U.S. Agency for International Development, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Office of National Drug Control Policy at a series of meetings in which we discussed the increase in production and how we might go about resolving that and developing a better strategy to do so.

What I would like to do today is talk to you about what the results of that set of meetings was and how it is reflected in our new strategy, how we have been able to take that strategy both to the international community and the Government of Afghanistan and how we are now in the process of implementing it.

I have to say I do believe I am optimistic this strategy will work if we allow it to proceed. The first thing we noted as we met to discuss how to refine the strategy was that while there is an overall increase across the country, approximately 17 percent this year over last year, there are new trends in opium production and trafficking across Afghanistan that had to be taken into account as we developed the strategy.

If you look at the map that is on the TVs and next to me here, for the first time ever we see a bifurcation of opium production in Afghanistan. If you look at the provinces that are in dark blue or light blue they are either zero poppy provinces or provinces that are experiencing sharp reductions in opium production, and that is basically a line about 10 o'clock on the map right across here, whereas in the south there are alarming increases in opium production.

So what we first realized was we cannot have a strategy that is Afghan-wide. It has to recognize that there is in fact a sharp downward opium production, particularly in key opium producing provinces like Balkh and Badakhshan, which are down close to zero poppy, and an alarming increase in Helmand, Kandahar, Farah and some of the southern provinces.

Another fact we noted as we were doing our deliberations for the new strategy was that those provinces which have reduced to zero opium or near zero opium, which are the blue and light blue provinces there, are among the poorest provinces in Afghanistan not the wealthiest provinces in Afghanistan.

It appears that the poor farmers in Afghanistan are now turning away from opium production in large numbers, whereas you look in Helmand province, one province that now has 53 percent of all the opium production in all of Afghanistan, there has never been anything close to that before, Helmand is the wealthiest province in Afghanistan.

There is infrastructure; there are roads, irrigation, access to markets and many alternative crops available to the farmers in Helmand. So we knew we had to look at things very differently than we had in the past, and in fact, the new U.N. survey that just came out 2 weeks ago or 3 weeks ago confirms that.

It says, "opium cultivation in Afghanistan is no longer associated with poverty." Quite the opposite. They have noted the same thing in their own activities and surveying that they have done.

So we wanted to develop a strategy that: 1) consolidated the gains in the north; made sure there is no resurgence in that area; we wanted to learn the lessons that have occurred from the successes in the now 13 poppy free provinces in the north; and we wanted to determine why the wealthiest provinces in the south, such as Helmand and Kandahar, are experiencing massive increases in opium production that offset the gains that we are experiencing in the north.

The answer was referred to I think in the statement of Mr. Pence and the chairman. It was pretty clear what was happening here. Poppy cultivation is no longer associated with poverty in Afghanistan. It is associated with two other factors. One, insecurity. In the north there is relative security, less incidence of bombings and at-

tacks, less Taliban presence, and we see people turning away from opium production because there is security.

In the south, particularly in Helmand province where more than half the poppy is grown, there is insecurity. The Taliban is more active there, there is less of an opportunity for law enforcement activity in Helmand and therefore there is an increase in poppy production. The other point that we noted was that it relates to the political will that was referred to by both the chairman and the ranking member in their statements.

In the north we have seen governors who for whatever reason and despite in some cases rather difficult pasts have decided to enforce the law and prevent poppy production. They have shown political will and even in poor provinces have been able to stop farmers from growing opium. In the south and in the central part of the country there has been less political will, more corruption on the part of police chiefs and less willingness to fight the opium trade.

So as we developed this strategy we wanted to make sure we consolidated the gains in the north, had greater political will and recognized that insecurity is the principal reason poppy is grown, and therefore, there would have to be a more coordinated effort with a counter-Taliban and a counter-opium effort.

Those were the principals that inform the strategy that you have in front of you here today that change the way we approach the poppy problem in Afghanistan. The first area we looked at was public information. The Taliban is the master of public information. They were defeated badly militarily over the past 2 years.

They have regrouped, they have gone more toward insurgency type tactics and most importantly, they have gone more toward an aggressive information campaign trying to convince farmers that the international community will not stay, that it does not have the perseverance to stay, that you ought to grow opium because that is the way to make money and don't side with the government or the law.

Therefore, we knew we had to have a much better public information campaign than we had in the past. It is a very vital part since the Taliban has such an effective campaign that we have an equally effective counter campaign on public information. In the past, the public information campaign has focused principally on what I would traditional advertising methods: Posters, billboards, radio advertisements, even television in those areas of Afghanistan that have television.

While that has had some effectiveness in some provinces it really isn't the way things operate in Afghanistan, and it isn't the way the Taliban operates in Afghanistan. The way the Taliban intimidates people into growing opium and convincing people that the coalition forces will lose is word of mouth, going from city to city, tribe by tribe trying to convince them on an individual basis that this is the way to go.

So we knew we had to focus more on word of mouth and individual activity as well. As a result, the new public information campaign focuses less on advertisements and radio and more on meeting tribe by tribe, village by village, surah by surah, engaging Islamic leaders. I know Congressman Rohrabacher has come in. He

has advocated that approach, and we have adopted that approach in all the provinces.

We now have poppy elimination teams expanding throughout the country meeting with tribes right now as we speak in several provinces, meeting with religious leaders, having forum, bringing various Muslim type kits, information about how it is against Islam to grow poppy, how it is causing an increasing drug addiction rate in the country, ruining relations with neighbors and undermining Afghanistan's standing in the international community.

This is what we did on a pilot basis last year in Balkan. Badakhshan, you see almost no poppy there this year. The U.N. survey that just came out said that was the principal reason opium farmers turned away was Islamic reasons and relations with surahs, and so we have expanded dramatically the public information campaign to do a word of mouth situation.

We couldn't get into Helmand last year which is why we weren't effective there. This year ISAF has cooperated with us, provided us force protection for these activities. From August 25 through September 6 of this year 300 Afghan police and 66 internationals with support from ISAF, the NATO forces in Afghanistan, spread out through Helmand province and issued the same message in the south that we were able to successfully issue in the north last year.

Now, they are going to Nangarhar, Kandahar and numerous other provinces where we were unable to get the message out adequately in the past. We are optimistic that the use of Islamic leaders, local surahs and the cooperation of the military is going to improve our public information campaign so that it rivals that of the Taliban, and that we will be able to get the message out more effectively this year.

It is actually going on as we speak. I had really good reports over the last couple of weeks of the activity, and I actually went out to Afghanistan 3 weeks ago to coordinate on those activities. So we think we have significantly refined the public information campaign to meet the Taliban threat and the way they handle things, and we do expect to see positive results.

ISAF, which shied away from counternarcotics messaging in the past, has now embraced it fully. There are biweekly meetings with ISAF to coordinate the public information campaign across the country, and we think the Afghan people finally are now getting a consistent international message and a consistent message between civilian, law enforcement and military authorities that as the ISAF posters say and the ISAF messaging says, poppy breeds insecurity, insecurity hurts your life. That is the messaging that is going across.

So the first refinement, which you see in the new strategy which is now being aggressively implemented, is to improve the public information campaign. We do feel optimistic that is occurring, and we will get the right message out this year across the country for the first time.

The next thing that has to happen is alternative development. The U.S. Agency for International Development has led that effort. Costs have been running roughly \$150 million a year to provide farmers with alternatives. Over 800,000 farmers have gotten seed,

and fertilizer and other things like that that have helped give them an alternative crop.

We think, and the U.N. has confirmed this, also, we always look to them for their sort of secondary look at our activities, that most of the farmers in Afghanistan now do have a viable alternative crop to grow. The problem is not having a crop, but as I go out and talk to farmers in places like Nangarhar and Balkh what they tell me is I actually have something new to grow now, something that gives me a relatively good income.

Not close to what you get from opium, that is basically impossible, but I can't get the goods to market. Opium keeps for 3 years, or 4 years, or 5 years. Peaches, and fruit trees, and nuts and other crops like that, they only keep for a few days. I have worked closely with Senator Bond's office and I have worked closely with others who are advocating agriculture extension services, buying cooperatives. USAID is working with us on all this.

There will be a shift in the alternative development effort now away from providing seed and fertilizer, which we think most farmers actually have now, and more toward providing access to markets: Roads, particularly buying cooperatives that guarantee a decent price, agents in Kabul that will now sell these goods to other countries.

It is interesting, if you grow lettuce in Jilalibad and you sell it in the local market you might get a few pennies for it. If you have a buying cooperative that can sell it in Dubai you get 10 or 15 times as much money for that.

That is where we are trying to focus our efforts now, which is access to markets not only in Afghanistan and not only improving the quality of the products that they grow with fruit trees and animal husbandry, but getting them to foreign countries, and to hotels in Kabul and places where the same crop can get more money.

That is a principal new change in the way USAID is focusing its efforts that was recommended by this group I have been discussing, and they are in the process of implementing that now.

The other problem we have heard about, and this is what we heard a lot about from several Senators and Congressman, is that once USAID's program is done there is no one to go to for advice to continue that, so agricultural extension services advocated by people like Duncan Hunter and Kit Bond are now a major part of our program. There is a new \$20 million RFP out for that.

We intend to have people from American land grant universities and other places in these areas after the main program is done to provide continuing advice on how to grow crops and get them to market. We are, again, optimistic that as we shift toward this access to markets and extension services approach to alternative development we will see increasing rewards and the capacity for sustained reduction in those provinces that have already turned away from poppy production.

The third piece and by far the most controversial piece is eradication. Crop eradication has been described as depriving poor farmers of their livelihood, turning hearts and minds to the Taliban and causing problems for the counternarcotics effort. It is interesting however, though, the new U.N. report advocates more eradication not less eradication.

They recognize that there is no crop we can offer the Afghans that even comes close to the price of opium. The best we can get is 40 to 50 percent with fruit trees which take several years to grow.

There is universal agreement among our Afghan partners who have it in their national drugs control strategy, the United Nations' report that just came out, the U.S. Government through the inter-agency, both the USAID people and the law enforcement people, and the international community, the U.K. which recently released a statement on this, that we do need to continue to crop eradicate, but it needs to be done differently than it has been done in the past.

In the past eradication has been done inadequately. There hasn't been enough to deter farming. The Director of the United Nations' Office on Drugs and Crime has told me you need to eradicate 20 to 25 percent of a crop in order to deter planting the next year. By the way, that is the objective of eradication is to deter planting.

You get your numbers down for the current year, but that is not really why we do it. The objective is to interject risk to the farmer so that he or she takes the alternative that is offered that doesn't pay as much money. You have to have that risk. We haven't done enough. We have gotten 10 percent instead of 20 to 25 percent. More importantly, it has not been done equitably.

Eradication has been by negotiation. The governor led eradication force and the central force, both of which are funded in part by the United States, will go into an area to eradicate, and they will be met by militia and powerful tribal leaders who are involved in the opium trade, corrupt officials, and they will be stopped.

First of all, there will be several days of negotiation where no eradication occurs at all, and then second what happens is they say okay, you can eradicate these three fields here but stay away from those five or six fields over there. As a result, the eradicators are moved toward the less powerful and away from the more powerful.

As I mentioned before, in Helmand province it is the richest province in Afghanistan. If it were a country it would be the fifth largest recipient of U.S. development assistance of any country on Earth. Most of the poppy in Helmand province is grown by corrupt officials, wealthy land owners and opportunists, but we don't eradicate them because they are too powerful and they are able to turn away the eradication force.

So this year the eradication effort will be dramatically changed. We hope to get increasing support from the military in terms of information intelligence, force protection activity. They don't participate directly in eradication activities, but we are optimistic they will help enable those activities where we would hit the wealthy people, the rich people, who are involved in poppy cultivation, which are vast tracts of land in Helmand province, rather than the poor people and the less powerful.

So there will be eradication this year. WE think it is an essential component to deterring poppy production, but it will focus on the wealthy farmers, the opportunists, the corrupt police officials, people who grow on government lands, and areas where we have to send a message that no one is too rich or too powerful to be im-

immune from the law which prohibits poppy cultivation in Afghanistan.

So we do intend to continue the eradication along those lines, and we have the complete backing of the Government of Afghanistan, our U.K. partners and the United Nations for that type of an approach this year. It is, in fact, recommended in the new United Nations report.

The next piece, which is very, very important and where more U.S. resources are going than any other area is taking down high value targets. So far there have only been four very high value targets who have made it into the United States and a very limited number who have been prosecuted in Afghanistan.

U.S. resources in 2007 will increase from \$137 million last year for taking down high value targets to \$355 million this year to taking down high value targets. So we will increase our efforts dramatically to bring down the high level traffickers because no matter how much you hit the farmers, unless the people see the traffickers and are vulnerable you will not succeed in this effort.

Let me explain very briefly, and I know I have only a little more time, why we haven't been able to get high value targets so far. We have information about many high level Afghans that are involved in the opium trade, but this is a democracy. The mere fact you have information does not mean you can prosecute them. There actually has to be evidence against them.

What we have not been able to do is substantiate that these people are high value targets with the kind of evidence you would want: Controlled deliveries, telephone conversations, take down operations with fingerprints, those types of activities that you would need.

So what has happened is the Drug Enforcement Administration has ramped up its efforts to increase its evidence gathering capability in a lot of very, very admirable ways. Recently, the National Interdiction Unit has trained 105 top level Afghan investigators who now are experts in gathering evidence, they have a sensitive investigation unit and a technical investigative unit that will be able to actually probe the cases against the high value traffickers that we have not been able to do.

So we are now developing very detailed lists. We would like to give you a classified briefing at some point on who those people are, but we are now optimistic. We know who the HVTs are, and we are gathering evidence that will stand up in court against them and there will be an increasing number of those activities going on.

Karen Tandy, the head of the DEA, is now in Afghanistan and Pakistan just finishing up a trip to coordinate with military authorities to get increasing Department of Defense and ISAF support for these activities. There will be a ramp up in take down operations for high value targets over the next several months.

Once you are able to actually gather the evidence against these people it is very important that you have access to them. Some of them are very well protected and well defended. The Department of Defense has now provided the six and soon to be eight MI-17 helicopters with trained Afghan pilots to go in and extract these people.

So we now have the capacity to gather evidence, and we have the capacity to extract them. The last piece then is the ability to prosecute them and put them in jail. The Afghan justice system was ravaged by the Taliban and by the Soviet predecessors. It was virtually nonexistent with the international community took over in coordination with the Afghan Government in 2002.

Over the last several months the Italian Government has hosted an international conference that pledged another \$100 million toward justice sector reform. There is now a counternarcotics tribunal in Afghanistan that has exclusive jurisdiction over all cases with three kilograms of heroin or more.

It now has 1,700 cases in it, and recently sentenced some Afghan officials to 17 years in prison as a result of being involved in a conspiracy to traffic \$30 million worth of heroin into the United States. It is up, it is functioning. There are new resources; there are vetted prosecutors, vetted investigators and vetted judges who are handling counternarcotics cases. Therefore, we now feel we have a place to try them.

We are also encouraging high value targets to be extradited to the United States and to Europe if possible so that our communities can see that these drugs are affecting our country as well. Now, I don't want to overstate the success of this effort. It is embryonic; it is at its beginning stages.

There now is a court that can do it, there are now investigators who can gather evidence and take down high value targets, there is now an airlift capability and there is a renewed commitment from the international military forces to enable these activities, so we are optimistic that we will be seeing more high value targets taken down in Afghanistan, tried in Afghanistan and tried in the United States.

In fact, we will soon announce a fourth HVT who will be extradited to the United States shortly. As I said, there are plans now to take down several more over the next few months. So I don't want to sugar coat this, Mr. Chairman, I don't want to say that we have total success here, but I want to be realistic about it.

There is success in the north of the country. There are 13 poppy free provinces and five more that are close to being that. That is more than half the country. There is a plan in place to take advantage of that situation and have sustained reductions with public information, better alternative development. We have a good performers initiative which will reward those provinces which stay poppy free with substantial additional development assistance.

We have a better eradication plan which will focus on wealthy farmers who are flaunting the law in wealthy areas of Afghanistan. We have increased evidence gathering capability, airlift capability and prosecutorial capability to take down the HVTs. We have a renewed commitment and specific coordination between the counternarcotics police of Afghanistan and the International Security Assistance Force, ISAF, the military authorities who are going in.

Very helpful in this public information campaign in the fall and in helping identify the high value targets which we will be after over the next 6 months. So while it is not a success story, I will admit that, it is cause for optimism with this new strategy. What

we are looking for now is to have the international community support us.

I have been to now I think 15 capitols of Europe and two more next week to try to enlist their support in terms of financing and people for this activity. I have been to Kabul in the past month working with the Ministry of Counternarcotics and Ministry of Interior. They are very, very optimistic about this new plan and its possibilities for success.

We are hoping to have continued strong congressional backing for the counternarcotics activity in Afghanistan. The last thing I would like to say in my opening statement is about police. You were right that there have been over 80,000 police trained, but only about 40 percent of them are equipped right now, and we don't know exactly how many are on the job.

That is why we are making major changes to the police program as well sending mentors and advisors out into the field to ensure that there is no corruption, that police who are on the job are staying on the job. We have an automated pay system now so their money can't be taken, which was happening. We have international ID cards for the police so we can identify who they are or where they are and making sure they are on the job.

We are trying to take that issue that you raised, Mr. Chairman, very seriously, too, because unless we can extend police into all areas of the country we can't succeed on the counternarcotics effort either. So that is basically a summary of where we are on this plan.

I do believe if we have strong international backing, good support from the military authorities and strong support from the Afghan Government, all of which I am optimistic about, that we will be able to see a turnaround not only in the north of the country but in the south of the country in the next 12 to 24 months.

It won't be eliminated that quickly. It will take many years, like it did in Thailand, and Laos and Pakistan, but we do think we can see a sustainable turnaround such that the Taliban will be cut off of its source of financing such that narco corruption will not be polluting the political system that is in Afghanistan and such that the listed economy will be allowed to grow in a way that will not be burdened by the narco economy. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Schweich follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE THOMAS SCHWEICH, COORDINATOR FOR COUNTERNARCOTICS AND JUSTICE REFORM IN AFGHANISTAN, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Mr. Chairman, Congressman Pence, and other distinguished Members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to come before you to discuss our efforts to assist Afghanistan in curbing the production and trafficking of illegal narcotics. My testimony today will focus on the new U.S. strategy for counternarcotics in Afghanistan. I will begin with an overview of what has changed in Afghanistan and explain how the U.S. government has worked with our Afghan and international partners to develop a plan that addresses these new realities. I will specifically highlight our police training programs and their successes and challenges.

Combating the drug trade and instituting a professional, civilian police force are critical elements of our mission in Afghanistan. The drug trade has undermined many aspects of the Government of Afghanistan's drive to promote political stability, economic growth, and the rule of law and has also affected the Afghan government's ability to address internal security problems. Proceeds from narco-trafficking are fueling the insurgency and drug-related corruption is undercutting inter-

national reconstruction efforts. In order to sustain Afghan progress against these threats, a national police force is essential to secure the rule of law.

DEVELOPING THE NEW STRATEGY

Early this year, when we received information that Afghanistan's 2007 poppy harvest would likely exceed the previous year's record high, Office of National Drug Control Policy Director Walters and Deputy Secretary of State Negroponte asked that an interagency group be convened to evaluate the implementation of the existing U.S. counternarcotics strategy and to propose recommendations for a more effective interagency approach. As a result, a high-level interagency group was convened, comprised of the Departments of State, Defense, Justice, Agriculture, and Treasury; the Drug Enforcement Administration; the Office of National Drug Control Policy; and the U.S. Agency for International Development. This group's goal was two-fold: to adjust our strategy to ensure long-term success, while also looking for ideas to facilitate successes in the short-term. We coordinated our new strategy closely with the Governments of Afghanistan and the United Kingdom, and in July the 2007 U.S. *Counternarcotics Strategy for Afghanistan* was adopted as U.S. policy.

TRENDS IN THE 2006–2007 OPIUM CULTIVATION SEASON

The major difference in this year's poppy cultivation has been the growing divide between the north and south, with significant poppy reductions in northern provinces, including some that are traditional poppy-growing provinces like Balkh and Badakhshan, and substantial increases in the south. This year the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime reported that 13 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces were poppy free. This is up from 6 provinces last year. Unfortunately, the advances in the north have been more than offset by setbacks in the south, particularly in Helmand province, where the insurgency is most active and where poppy cultivation increased by 48% last year, accounting for over half of national production. Poppy cultivation in Oruzgan and Kandahar, which have also experienced increased insecurity, is also a serious concern.

The evidence from Afghanistan suggests that in the north, where we can deliver security, promote alternative development and effectively get out the anti-poppy message, our counternarcotics efforts have met with considerable success. Consequently, our new strategy—developed in coordination and consultation with the Government of Afghanistan and the UK, which serves as the key international partner on counternarcotics issues, seeks to build upon what has worked in the north, while redoubling our efforts in the south so our efforts there can be similarly successful.

The new strategy represents a refinement of our previous approach, with three principal elements:

- First, we aim to dramatically increase the scope of both incentives, such as development assistance and expansion of the Good Performers Initiative; and disincentives, such as interdiction, eradication, and law enforcement.
- Second, working with our NATO allies, we intend to improve coordination of counternarcotics and counterinsurgency information-sharing and operations.
- Finally, we will work to develop consistent, sustained political will for the counternarcotics effort among the Afghan government, our allies, and international civilian and military organizations. This will include working with the international community on a coordinated strategy to ensure that government officials in Kabul and the provinces appoint strong, law abiding officials and remove weak or corrupt ones.

It is also important to emphasize that the new strategy does not replace the pre-existing Five-Pillar Strategy. On the contrary, the U.S. has evaluated the soundness of the Five-Pillar approach and determined that it continues to provide the correct framework for comprehensively addressing the narcotics problem in Afghanistan. However, the implementation of the five pillars needs to be substantially refined and improved based on the changing situation in Afghanistan.

PUBLIC INFORMATION

In past years, public information focused on radio, television, posters, and other traditional communication methods. In spring 2007, we experimented with more word-of-mouth activities in the north by sending out poppy elimination teams that met with local *shuras* and discussed the benefits of reducing poppy cultivation. We saw significant successes in the north and decided to expand the program as part of the new strategy. Implementation of the strategy has already begun through the

fall pre-planting campaign. For instance, three *shuras* have been hosted in Helmand that were attended by hundreds of local farmers and also included the distribution of mosque kits to villages. These mosque kits are given to mullahs and religious leaders in recognition of their support for counternarcotics efforts and include loudspeakers, microphones, paint, rugs and other resources that will improve their mosques.

Southern Afghanistan also requires greater coordination of the counter-Taliban and counternarcotics message. This comes out of a recognition that there is a clear and direct link between the illicit opium trade and insurgent groups in Afghanistan. The Taliban and other anti-government elements exploit the opium trade to facilitate their financial, logistical, and political objectives, jeopardizing the prospect of long-term security, economic development, and effective governance. We have been working closely with the Department of Defense, ISAF, and our UK partners to ensure the dissemination of a consistent and tough message: poppy production breeds insecurity.

ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Alternative development continues to play a vital role in the new strategy. Afghans need viable economic alternatives to poppy, and in recognition of this reality, our alternative development programs include a robust array of both short-term and long-term development alternatives. One important component of the new strategy is to dramatically strengthen the Good Performers Initiative. The Good Performers Initiative provides timely, high-impact development assistance to provinces that achieve or maintain poppy-free status, significantly reduce poppy cultivation, or demonstrate exemplary cooperation with national interdiction forces. This assistance is funded by the U.S., UK, and other allies, and will be tied to specific benchmarks based on UN poppy cultivation figures. Villages that decide to become poppy-free during this fall's planting season will see an immediate result in the spring. Over the coming year, USAID will also be working closely with small, private companies in Afghanistan to secure market access for Afghan crops in high-profit regional commercial hubs. These and other programs to provide credit and infrastructure to the Afghan people will offer more viable alternatives to poppies.

ELIMINATION/ERADICATION

A recent UN report stated that opium cultivation in Afghanistan is no longer associated with poverty. Helmand, Kandahar and three other opium-producing provinces in the south are the richest and most fertile provinces in the country, and have served as the breadbasket and main source of earnings for the nation. Seventy-five percent of the poppy growth in Helmand Province did not exist two years ago, so it is clear that the cultivation is not being carried out by individuals who have relied on this activity for generations. Much of the cultivation in Helmand and other insecure areas is being carried out by wealthy landowners, corrupt officials, and opportunists who are exploiting insecurity for illicit profits. In order to interject greater risk into the trade, we need to make it clear to powerful poppy growers that they will be targeted for eradication. As a result, the new strategy also emphasizes the need to develop a force protection component that will allow eradication to occur in less-than-secure areas.

INTERDICTION

Assisting the Government of Afghanistan in improving interdiction capabilities—and, specifically taking down key high-value targets (HVTs)—is our highest priority under the new strategy. U.S. spending on interdiction increased from \$118 million in FY2006 to \$343 million in FY2007, *representing a greater funding increase for interdiction than for any other pillar of the strategy*. DEA and the special Afghan police units that it assists have been provided additional airlift assets in order to extend the reach of counternarcotics law enforcement operations. This activity also requires a force protection component to protect DEA and Afghan counternarcotics police operations. The strategy calls on increasing the number of arrests for high-value targets so that all actors in the production and trade of narcotics will recognize they are vulnerable.

LAW ENFORCEMENT AND JUSTICE REFORM

The justice sector now benefits from a counternarcotics tribunal which has exclusive jurisdiction over all cases of two kilograms or more. It presently has several hundred cases pending and recently convicted some mid-level traffickers. The new strategy recommends adding resources to the central criminal tribunal for narcotics

in order to increase the system's capacity to prosecute and incarcerate higher levels of traffickers. In the meantime, though, an extradition policy needs to be developed for the very high-level traffickers that Afghanistan may not yet be able to prosecute. Currently, three high-level traffickers are facing charges here in the U.S., and we expect this number to increase as we have better success in interdiction.

AFGHAN NATIONAL POLICE

The U.S. goal for the Afghanistan National Police (ANP) is to increase overall capabilities and enhance public security in Afghanistan. The Department of State works closely with the Combined Security Transition Command—Afghanistan (CSTC–A) and other international partners to train and mentor the Afghan Police, and to reform the Afghan Ministry of Interior. CSTC–A has oversight over the security sector reform programs, while the State Department retains policy responsibility.

Recognizing the critical role played by the Afghan police, U.S. and international efforts have focused on helping to develop the capabilities of this force. We welcome the creation of the European Union's policing support unit for Afghanistan (EUPOL) and look forward to coordinating closely with it. Together with our international partners, we have made substantial progress in developing a respected and institutionalized police force. Since May 2003, more than 83,000 ANP officers have gone through basic and advanced courses at the Central Training Center (CTC) in Kabul and seven Regional Training Centers (RTCs), and nearly 59,000 ANP officers have gone through advanced courses such as firearms and criminal investigation. In order to continue to develop police skills after initial training, more than 460 U.S. police advisors serve as mentors alongside Afghan police units throughout the country.

Progress continues in pursuing key reform objectives, such as pay and rank reform, which has now been completed to the company level. The recent Afghan decision to give the ANP pay parity with the Afghan National Army (\$100/month basic pay) will also help boost police morale and alleviate official corruption. The Electronic Payroll System (EPS) has been installed in 33 out of 34 provinces, and has been deployed in over 60 payment locations of the Ministry of Interior. The international donor body which funds police salaries, the Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOTFA), is also working to establish an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) system for the direct payment of police salaries to individual bank accounts. A program to provide police with secure identification for pay and accountability purposes has issued more than 43,000 identification cards out of a registered database. These cards include various security features, including a photo, an electronic chip, and a holograph. Over time, this program will improve the reliability and timeliness of police pay, which has been a particularly acute problem in outlying areas of the country.

One key challenge we face is to help Afghanistan recruit and train more female police personnel. There are fewer than 200 women in the ANP, and women account for less than 1% of all police in Afghanistan. INL has recently launched an initiative, the Women's Police Corp (WPC), to further develop training opportunities for women. The WPC will be based at RTCs in Herat, Konduz, and Jalalabad, and the CTC in Kabul. The curriculum will include basic police skills, basic and advanced computer skills, and conflict resolution.

Given the critical importance of the police to ensuring security and the rule of law, we will continue to work closely with CSTC–A and our Afghan and international partners to pursue ways to improve the program and ensure its continued success.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today, and thank you for holding this hearing on such an important topic. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Thank you, Ambassador. Seems as that out of a morass of a mess of failure you have been able to extract some nuggets to allow us some hope and some optimism. Let me ask a few questions if I might.

Ambassador SCHWEICH. Sure.

Mr. ACKERMAN. First, some numbers if you would or some guess-timates, and I understand that the Taliban most likely doesn't subscribe to the generally accepted accounting principles or neither do they allow for independent audits of their books, but give us a

rough idea if you could of how much money the Taliban actually receives from narcotics, and is that their prime source of income?

Give us an idea of what percentage of their revenue that narcotics might be.

Ambassador SCHWEICH. Mr. Chairman, I have read several reports on this issue and they vary widely. I will tell you what the ranges are. I have seen as little as 10 percent, and I have seen as much as 50 percent. That suggests to me that as you said we don't have any specific knowledge of the amount. I have heard numbers from \$30 million to \$100 million.

What we do know, though, is there is an alarming amount of intelligence about increased Taliban involvement. We know that there are instances now where we have taken down large quantities of drugs and found IEDs and other weapons in that activity, and we have learned about more sophisticated alliances between Taliban commanders and narco traffickers all in the last 6 to 10 months.

But the numbers range 10 to 50 percent of their income, \$30 million to \$100 million, and because as you said there is no accounting going on here we don't have a precise number. You are right to be alarmed on it, and we know it is on the increase.

Mr. ACKERMAN. What would you say the total value of the opium crop is?

Ambassador SCHWEICH. The farmers get about \$1 billion, and if you count in the trafficking value it is about a \$3-billion-a-year industry.

Mr. ACKERMAN. \$3 billion a year. So where is the rest of it going if not to the Taliban?

Ambassador SCHWEICH. Principally to opium trafficking rings in Afghanistan, in Pakistan, in Iran, up north through Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, into Russia, Albania, Turkey and all the way into Europe. You know, someone asked me once, point to the trafficking routes. I pointed north, south, east and west.

There are trafficking routes through all of those areas. Most of the money is going to traffickers in Afghanistan and in neighboring countries.

Mr. ACKERMAN. A look at the color coding of the map at first blush would indicate that the provinces that are blue of both shades are larger than the combined total of the provinces that are red, and that is good. We are trying to get more blue provinces, and that is a good thing. The numbers indicate that there is 193,000 more hectares in poppy production than last year, which is a 17 percent increase overall in the industry.

That is not good news. I mean, the color coding makes it look sugar coated, but when you examine the numbers that is massive. I mean, 17 percent of what is, I don't know, I suspect it is arguably the biggest industry in the country, opium production. You know, that 17 percent increase, you take an American industry, I mean, that would be cause for rejoicing and not for bragging rights.

We seem to be going backwards. When you color it in it may look a little bit better, but the fact of the matter is as you point out where there is no security, which is the direct correlation, it is not religious or anything else or moral, where there is no security is where they are growing this stuff. It seems from your testimony as

well as common sense that there is a lot of politicalization of the entire process.

If the people who are responsible for the eradication of the poppy fields are corrupt and are told by the local governor, eradicate this, that and that, but don't touch this guy, and people get paid off based on those decisions, who is ultimately responsible for dealing with that? Is that the leadership of the country? Is it the political leadership, the military leadership?

Do we give them a sense of direction sending 17 people, you know, banishing them from the country, or sending them to the United States, or putting them in jail, or whatever we are doing? Are these the right people? Because it seems to me that the right people get protection, and therefore, you get the increase.

Ambassador SCHWEICH. Mr. Chairman, I don't disagree with anything you have said. The 17 percent increase is what caused us to reformulate our strategy and focus more on security and political will, which as you all said at the beginning are the critical issues.

The only good news I can point to in this is that fortunately the licit economy is actually growing faster than the illicit economy, so the percentage of narcotics as a percentage of GDP is actually going down right now. You know, we talk about the 17 percent increase in the country. Most of that is because of a 53 percent increase in one province, Helmand province alone.

That is why our counternarcotics efforts are focusing so carefully on coordinating better with the military authorities, taking down the high value targets, eliminating the corruption in the police force down there, and then as you said the eradication has been inequitable because of a lack of force protection.

What we are trying to do is work with the Afghan Government to have the eradication force be powerful enough that it eradicates where it wants to eradicate, not where it is told to eradicate. That means it will be geared toward the corrupt officials and the wealthy land owners and away from the poorer farmers who don't have any power.

We do see a lot of interest on the part of the military authorities, the Afghan national army, police, and Ministry of Interior and President Karzai to go into these areas and show the government does have authority over them. We think if we can do that with sustained political will and the capacity to demonstrate government authority in that area we will be able to replicate in Helmand what we have seen in the north where there already is more security and more political will.

Mr. ACKERMAN. After all these billions of dollars we spent on this are we getting from Mr. Karzai as we should be getting?

Ambassador SCHWEICH. I was at President Karzai's counternarcotics conference a month ago in Kabul. He was asked to come up and give a 10-minute speech about poppy.

Instead, he stayed an hour, he veered away from his prepared remarks, he stood up with every governor in the audience and called them out by name complimenting those in Balkh and Badakhshan that had been able to eliminate the problem and asking those in places like Nangarhar and Helmand where it has increased, why haven't you been successful?

How are you going to improve this situation? What can we do to help you? This was a very impressive showing by President Karzai of a commitment to get rid of this problem. You know, in Afghanistan being called out by the President by name is a pretty big deal.

He was complimenting those that had been successful, he awarded additional development assistance right there to them, and then he asked those who were not being successful, what are you going to do about this? So I do think there is political will on the part of President Karzai, probably at a level we haven't seen in the past.

Mr. ACKERMAN. In addition to making shameful note of those who were not doing well for whatever the reason, corruption or ineptitude, is he willing to take action against those governors?

Ambassador SCHWEICH. I think he is, yes, and I think he is in the course of making decisions about those governors right now.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Can't he replace them?

Ambassador SCHWEICH. He is entitled by law to replace them, yes.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Can he replace them?

Ambassador SCHWEICH. Yes. He has, in fact, replaced governors before.

Mr. ACKERMAN. With good results?

Ambassador SCHWEICH. Well, with certainly less corrupt people. I mean, he replaced the governor of Helmand who had been found with all kinds of opium in his office. You know, I mean, he did replace him, and he replaced him with somebody who is not corrupt.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Ninety metric tons, I understand.

Ambassador SCHWEICH. Yes, that is right.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Got a big office.

Ambassador SCHWEICH. Yes. He claimed he was, you know, like you hear the kids, holding it for a friend. We didn't buy that. He was removed by President Karzai, as have several other governors who have been ineffective. So I do think President Karzai has the will to put the right people in place, but it is difficult, you know.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Who did he replace him with?

Ambassador SCHWEICH. He replaced him with a respected elder named Governor Wafah who has now asked for us, the U.S., the international community, to come in and be more aggressive on drugs.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Rohrabacher.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you, very much. I would like to apologize for being a bit late, and I also would apologize for that I have a press conference in about 10 minutes, 5 minutes from here, but I have some significant questions, and this is an important hearing. This is what we are stuck with with our prerequisites around here. We are scheduled about four or five different places at one point.

First of all, Mr. Chairman, I understand that there was a point made earlier, I will just touch on this, that in some way this administration was responsible for the Taliban. Let us just note that I spent the entire 1990s during the previous administration trying to undo what the Clinton administration was doing in Afghanistan.

The Clinton administration along with Pakistan and Saudi Arabia created the Taliban. Let me repeat that. This administration,

meaning the Clinton administration, along with Saudi Arabia and Pakistan created the Taliban. During the 1990s the Clinton administration stuck with that deal and undermined every effort for those of us who were opposed to the Taliban.

And so we now of course have the can kicked down the road, and this administration has tried to deal with it. After 9/11 of course this administration was forced to deal with the reality that was handed to it by the last administration. Now, finger pointing aside and blame game aside we need to make sure we get something done.

I am heartened by your remarks, Mr. Ambassador. It sounds like at long last we are taking this seriously, and I will have to say that at long last because this administration, the Bush administration, has not taken this seriously. In fact, this is where I probably would agree with the analysis of my friends on the other side of the aisle.

When we went into Iraq that seriously affected our ability to do what was necessary to finish the job in Afghanistan. The resources that would have been necessary to make sure that these regions didn't turn to opium production were siphoned away to the battle in Iraq, and perhaps this President made a bad strategic decision in that.

However, bad strategic decisions have been made for good reasons at times and that is just the hands that are dealt to us. We have got to try to do our best within that context. Let me ask you about the battle that you have been describing, the battle against heroin and opium production in the south.

Why hasn't the Patriot Act that we have approved that gives the right of our Government and our narcotics people to target what you call narco terrorists and to take them out without having to follow the legal procedures, which you described are hindering your operation? We are using that in Colombia to great effect.

We are actually targeting specific narco terrorist leaders and going after them and extracting them or killing them. Why haven't we been doing that in Afghanistan, and if we have, give me the names of a few people we have used that against.

Ambassador SCHWEICH. Congressman, first of all, we haven't extradited anybody pursuant to that provision. We appreciate the fact that Congress took the effort to define the climate of narco terrorism. The advantage of course is you don't have to have evidence that it is coming into the United States, which is a real help to us.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Right.

Ambassador SCHWEICH. In our interagency deliberations we talked about this issue. The reasons are simple. You might not be entirely satisfied with them, but be clear that we are now making that a top priority. The reasons are as follows: 1) initially there was some legal lack of clarity about whether the Taliban had to be designated a foreign terrorist organization to be subject to the jurisdiction of that law.

We now have the opinion that it does not have to be designated, so that solved that problem. The second case is, and I have a lot of sympathy for the Department of Justice lawyers who are looking at this, we wanted to make sure we had an iron clad case under that law before we used it the first time so we didn't lose.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Let me suggest that the Congress would be very supportive of your efforts, and there would not be some attack, well, didn't you follow the exact, right procedures in taking out these types of individuals?

My suggestion, Mr. Chairman, is that while taking the Ambassador's remarks at face value there are other reasons, like political reasons for concern about Pakistan, that have hindered this effort.

Would you say that the Pakistani ISI and other Pakistani officials are engaged in the drug trade?

Ambassador SCHWEICH. Our evidence is that almost any government that has this kind of flow of opium going through it has corrupt officials involved. That is true of every neighboring country that is involved, yes.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Okay.

Ambassador SCHWEICH. But I have not heard that Pakistan in terms of any governmental senses interfere with our ability to use the Patriot Act provisions. I will look into it, though.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Or sensitivity to Pakistan, perhaps. Let me just note, Mr. Chairman, that the Pakistani ISI, which is equivalent of their CIA, has been up to their necks in the drug trade for 20 or 30 years now, and it has been very clear to those of us who were on the scene. I have been in that area of Afghanistan years ago and it was well-known then. I do not believe that the Pakistani Government has done their part, and of course, that is a whole other can of worms.

Mr. Ambassador, for years I have tried to push the Department of State and others involved in this effort to utilize microherbicides, and to say there was a stall on that is to put it mildly. Eventually, finally we have had an agreement for at least a scientific review by the National Academy of Science of the microherbicide potential. Are you monitoring that, and if so where does that stand?

Ambassador SCHWEICH. Yes, I am, in fact. I remember we talked about this about a year ago when I was here and then testified. As you know, when I originally testified the concerns were about the legality of microherbicides, the science behind it and the political ramifications.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Right.

Ambassador SCHWEICH. We have done the following things since then. One is we have got the State Department's Bureau for Verification and Compliance coming out with a legal opinion on it—I think you will be happy with the result, I can't say it quite yet—but to see if it is even legal to do it.

I think basically, I don't want to speak for the legal authorities, but my understanding is that as long as the host government consents there is no longer a legal obstacle to the use of microherbicides. The second piece was the science, and there was inconsistent science on that. People were concerned about mutations, but you sent letters and showed there were people who thought it would be very good.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. If I could interrupt.

Ambassador SCHWEICH. Yes.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. That is why we should have done it years before. It took me 3 or 4 years to get the scientific review.

Ambassador SCHWEICH. Right, and that is what is going on now. In fact, there was a meeting between the Office of National Drug Control Policy and the National Research Council, which is going to be doing that study. Only a few days ago they laid out the parameters, they had your letter in hand about what you want to see from it and they are off and running. We expect to have that report in a few months.

I have asked them to use your letter as guidance for what kind of results we want from that. So I think we will finally see some clear explication of what the science is on that. Then, once that comes through, if it looks okay the question is finding a place to test it and the things we have talked about in the past.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Let me at this point ask the chairman to put my letter into the record about microherbicides and note that if its potential is proven scientifically that will give us the option of not having to send in troops into areas to eliminate massive opium production in a given area and that what would be dropped on it would only attack the opium plant and would render the soil not useable for only opium production for a number of years. Now, is this a silver bullet?

Mr. ACKERMAN. Without objection, the letter will be put in the record.

[The information referred to follows:]

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Dr. Ralph J. Cicerone
 President, National Academy of Sciences
 500 Fifth Street NW
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Dear Dr. Cicerone:

As the Ranking Member of the House International Organizations, Human Rights and Oversight Subcommittee of the Foreign Affairs Committee, as well as a senior member of the Science Committee, I am writing to urge you to expeditiously progress with the study of mycoherbicides as a possible solution to illicit drug crops. This is invaluable not only to science, but also to our national security.

The Congress passed PL 109-469 with an almost unanimous vote and it was quickly signed into law by the President. Sec. 1111 provides a "Requirement For Scientific Study Of Mycoherbicide In Illicit Drug Crop Eradication":

- (a) Requirement- Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy shall submit to the Congress a report that includes a plan to conduct, on an expedited basis, a scientific study of the use of mycoherbicide as a means of illicit drug crop elimination by an appropriate Government scientific research entity, including a complete and thorough scientific peer review. The study shall include an evaluation of the likely human health and environmental impacts of mycoherbicides derived from fungus naturally existing in the soil.
- (b) Study- The study required by this section shall be conducted in United States territory and not in any foreign country.

The topic of mycoherbicides as a means of illicit drug crop control has an extensive and somewhat controversial history, with most of the debate taking place in the government and NGO policy area. Recognizing that policy makers needed to be better informed by legitimate science, the Congress directed that this scientific study be conducted. We concur with the stated intent of ONDCP to request that the National Academy of Sciences convene a panel, under the auspices of the National Research Council to conduct the study.

We are pleased that the NRC is considering this project and look forward to a charter that addresses the specific and in-depth scientific issues and is completely devoid of policy, legal, international relations and political influences. Listed below are some of the scientific issues that we believe should be considered:

- Are the proposed fungal pathogens effective?
- Can the effectivity be improved through research?
- Does the Tashkent poppy research need to be independently replicated?
- Do the proposed fungal pathogens persist in soils?
- Do the proposed fungal pathogens kill other soil fungi?
- Are the proposed fungal pathogens host-plant specific?
- Do the proposed fungal pathogens harm licit crops?
- Do the proposed fungal pathogens mutate rapidly?

- Do the proposed fungal pathogens threaten biodiversity?
- Do the proposed fungal pathogens harm the environment?
- Does the mycotoxicity of the proposed fungal pathogens harm animal or human health?
- Must the proposed fungal pathogens be tested in tropical environments?

The NRC should develop an aggressive schedule that is responsive to the direction of law for an expedited study. It should review the state of the art by inviting presentations from experts and advocates of mycoherbicides for weed and illicit drug crop control (including proprietary information if required) from around the globe. As this is a highly specialized area, with much of the expertise residing outside of the United States, we believe that it is important for the NRC to invite the participation of international specialists. It should also request briefings from specialists from regulatory agencies, including the EPA and USDA's Animal Plant Health Inspection Service.

Finally we request that, as a minimum, the study committee incorporate the type of scientific expertise listed below.

- A chairman who is a plant pathologist and mycologist and who is familiar with the rapidly developing field of biological control of weeds. A distinguished member or former member of the American Phytopathological Society would seem an appropriate choice.
- Several plant pathologists with expertise in the research, development and practical utilization of mycoherbicides for biological control of weeds or plants. Given the small number of highly qualified practitioners in this area, we encourage the NRC to also consider international experts to participate.
- A bioherbicide development specialist with practical experience in development, production and licensing of mycoherbicides
- A specialist on biological control risks
- A plant disease epidemiologist
- An environmental mycologist (or mycoecologist) familiar with the epidemiology of fungal diseases
- A fungal geneticist knowledgeable about issues of mutability
- A mycotoxicologist familiar with the proposed fungal pathogens
- A human health expert familiar with fungal diseases

I urge you to convene this panel as quickly as feasible and to provide ONDCP and the Congress with a completed report as soon as practicable. I look forward to having further discussions with you about how best to focus and structure this effort.

Sincerely,



Dana Rohrabacher
Ranking Minority Member
International Organizations, Human Rights and Oversight

cc: John Walters, Director ONDCP

Mr. ROHRABACHER. It may be. My only lament now, Mr. Chairman, is it took so many years to get even a scientific analysis of that and plus a legal analysis. Again, while I disagree with those who would suggest this administration has any responsibility for creating the Taliban, it was the last administration. This administration has a lot of responsibility for not following through on opportunities like the one I am describing with microherbicides. Took years to get that even looked at properly.

I appreciate your testimony. It sounds like you have taken this much more seriously than this has been taken in the past, and we are gearing up. My only suggestion would be is that let us face reality in what is going on with the Pakistanis here.

Ambassador SCHWEICH. Okay.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Okay. Thank you very much.

Ambassador SCHWEICH. Thank you.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Scott.

Mr. SCOTT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and, again, I commend you for this hearing. It is a very, very important one.

Ambassador, this issue is indeed an illicit drug issue, but more than anything else to me it is an economic issue of huge dimensions, particularly when you consider that opium production now accounts for one-third of Afghan's GDP and the Afghans produce 93 percent of all the opiates in the entire world.

The United States and our allies and other international allies, we cannot do this without the full commitment of the Afghani elected officials. I am not so sure that we have that. We have had all kinds of reports where elected local officials in Afghanistan for fear of a backlash from their constituencies will not commit themselves to fully implementing the eradication program.

You have mention in your report, for example, that you favor strongly as a part of the strategy aerial eradication. However, during my recent trip over to Afghanistan we put that question to President Karzai, and he does not favor that. He does not want to consider aerial eradication.

So when you put all of this together, and you put the reports that are coming out of the local officials, I think we need to really put a realistic picture on just how serious and how committed the local and the elected officials of Afghanistan can practicably be given the economic scale of this. Then, I think that we might want to look at some other alternatives.

For example, the World Health Organization has clearly pointed out the huge cost for opiate derivatives such as morphine and codeine. Wouldn't it make sense to begin to view this in a more realistic way? I mean, I would love for it to go down, I would love for us to control, but the economy, the whole nature of this situation says this thing is going to be here.

Where is the effort to try to move and to get Afghanistan interested in realizing that this is such an important part of their economy and realizing that the high cost of those painkilling and reduction drugs are so desperately needed to bring that cost down that we could channel some of this into that area. So I guess my question is two-pronged here.

I don't believe that the local and the national elected officials of Afghanistan practically can do what we want them to do because of the political consequences to themselves and the huge economic benefit to that country. Then, secondly, why can't we begin to channel their interests into the more legitimate uses of their opiate production to help bring down the cost of codeine and morphine?

Ambassador SCHWEICH. Congressman Scott, these are two questions which we have grappled with very, very seriously over the past several months. You are right on the money; they are two really critical questions. One, how do we handle the lack of political will at the provincial and local level because there is rampant narco corruption? We feel the best way to do it is through better police training, better vetting of police chiefs and governors, and that is all in process right now.

The United States military and the Department of State working with Afghanistan and several international partners, particularly the Germans and the EU, are working to try to help the Afghans make sure they have less corrupt officials in place. It is going to

be a challenge, though. Wherever there is a lot of narco money there is a lot of corruption.

There has been success as I said. In the north we are seeing less narco corruption there. It is not eliminated by any means, but less. The issue about channeling the massive opium production into more licit channels is something I had about four or five people work for several weeks on and look into very, very closely.

The argument goes, and it has some appeal when you first look at it, is that you have got a shortage of painkillers in the third-world, particularly in Africa where people are suffering from AIDS, you have an abundance of extra excess opium in Afghanistan. Why not find a way to get that opium to those people? We think that is a very noble cause, and we looked into it very carefully.

Let me just outline for you the challenges with that approach and explain why at this point we don't think it is a feasible way to do it. You have the price for legal opium is less than half the price for illegal opium, so our initial problem is there is no incentive for a farmer, or a trafficker, or anybody to sell to the licit market when they can make two or three times as much selling it as heroin to narco traffickers who kill our children around the world.

So the first challenge we had was how do we deal with the fact that there is no incentive for a farmer to switch since we already offer crops that can make that kind of money at the price that you would get for licit opium. One thought that came up was possibly subsidizing the difference between illegal and legal opium so that the farmer would get the higher price rather than the lower price.

We looked into that possibility, too, and we were asked by very high level people in the State Department to look into that, so we took it quite seriously. The problem with that turned out to be that if you guarantee a high price, a price that is two or three times higher than they can get for any other crop in the world, there is only 14 percent of the population involved in opium production right now and based on experiences in Guatemala and some other countries where this was tried we felt that then everybody would start growing opium.

You basically would have this big opium state where everybody was subsidized to grow opium and 193,000 hectares, which is already an oversupply, more than the world needs of opium, would double, or triple, or quadruple, and everybody would be growing it, and it would cost many billions of dollars a year in subsidies in order to do that.

The third problem is the infrastructure. In India, for example, there are 6,000 or 7,000 hectares of legal poppy being grown. 6,000 or 7,000 hectares, not 193,000 hectares like you have in Afghanistan. Even in India where there is an established police, law enforcement mechanism, an infrastructure to process the opium, they have a 30 percent bleed off rate to the illegal market.

Right now Afghanistan with, you know, 20 or 30 times as much opium, much less of a central government presence, we don't think there would be any way to control it, to manufacture it or to distribute it. Finally, you might have read this article in the *New York Times* about the issue you were talking about about 3 weeks ago about opium in Africa.

They said the first obstacle is not lack of supply, the first obstacle is cultural. Many cultures in Africa frown upon use of painkillers, and so the first thing we would have to do before we could get that distributed into Africa would be, again, a public information campaign to get people to accept it. Then we would have to have a way to distribute it in a way that would get to the people and, again, not be bled off to the illegal market.

Our conclusion was, Congressman, that while the idea does have some appeal and we don't discount it at all, in Afghanistan at this time it is not a realistic way to go. We decided we would like to proceed more the way we have done it in Thailand and Laos, which also have large opium problems, and they did it with a balance of incentives through alternative crops rather than opium and disincentives through interdiction and eradication, so that is where we have decided to go.

Mr. SCOTT. If I may, Mr. Chairman, let me go back to one of the issues that I raised that you didn't respond to in terms of the difference.

Ambassador SCHWEICH. Sure.

Mr. SCOTT. Can you comment on why you continue to push for the aerial eradication and the President of Afghanistan is opposed to that? What is that all about?

Ambassador SCHWEICH. Yes. Actually, in our strategy we have advocated for nonnegotiated eradication, so we don't go to the poorer farmers, we go to the rich people. Although the strategy says there is two ways to do that, one is manually with force protection and the other is aerially, the policy of the United States is not aerial eradication.

The policy of the United States is forced nonnegotiated eradication of wealthy land owners and corrupt officials. The Afghan Government will decide how to implement that, and we will defer to them. So we really aren't pushing for aerial eradication, we are pushing for nonnegotiated eradication. There is two ways to do it: On the ground or by the air. So whatever the Afghan Government decides, that is what we will do.

Mr. SCOTT. Okay. Finally, Mr. Chairman, if I may, I am a member of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly and we have a meeting coming up this weekend in Iceland where we will be going, so your answer to this question would be very helpful. Regarding the efforts of our fellow NATO members in Afghanistan would you comment on which nations are contributing a great deal to this effort, and also, would you share with me which nations in your opinion need to contribute more?

Ambassador SCHWEICH. I think that for the purposes of this situation and international relations I will comment more on the ones that are contributing significantly. If you want me to talk to you on the side about other issues, I am happy to do that.

Mr. SCOTT. Fair enough.

Ambassador SCHWEICH. The principal partner for us in fighting drugs in Afghanistan is the United Kingdom. There has been a lot of press about a rift between the U.S. and the U.K. on that. I just don't see it. I work with my U.K. counterparts on a regular basis. They come visit me, I visit them, we go to Afghanistan together. They have put hundreds of millions of dollars into the effort.

They have their troops in Helmand province, too, so they have a vested interest in getting rid of this problem since that is where more than half of the opium is. We are having more regular coordination meetings. They have gotten task force Helmand, which is the ISAF group in Helmand province, more involved in the counter-narcotics effort, and I have seen an even redoubled effort on the part of the United Kingdom over the past several months to help combat this trade.

So if there is one country I would say is helping the most I would say it is the United Kingdom.

Mr. SCOTT. All right. Thank you.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Costa.

Mr. COSTA. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and I, too, concur this is an excellent hearing this morning and something that this subcommittee needs to continue to keep its eye focused on. I have been frustrated that the administration until recently has taken their eye off the ball as it relates to Afghanistan. Clearly, they have been preoccupied.

The chances for success here I think are significant, but like anything else it can't be taken for granted. I was there 2 years ago, Mr. Ambassador, and my understanding, in many ways there has been a significant improvement over those 2 years, and in other ways there has been great frustration. Are you familiar with the most recent review that the Rand Institute did on Afghanistan?

Ambassador SCHWEICH. I don't think I have read that.

Mr. COSTA. Okay. Well, I suggest that you look at it. There is a number of conclusions there was raised, and I want to ask questions as it relates to it.

British General Sir David Richards who I met prior to him taking over when I was there 2 years ago indicated that as NATO's top commander in Afghanistan from February of this until previous October that the majority of Afghans he believes would decide within the year whether or not to ban the international communities' efforts and instead support a resurgence in Taliban militants.

It seems to me we are falling in the same trap that the Soviets did when they occupied this area in the 1980s. It is my sense that 25 percent or so of the population lives in the cities like in Kabul and Kandahar, which I visited in both cases, 75 percent or more live in the rural areas. The improvements primarily seem to be in the last several years in the cities.

Our ability to make progress in those rural areas I think have been frustrated in many sense, and I think the poppy production, the dramatic increase, now 193,000 hectares, substantiates that. I would like you to comment on the distinction between our progress in the cities versus the rural areas.

The Rand report goes on to further stipulate as it relates to nation building, which 6 years ago I remember clearly this President wasn't excited about but now of course we are very aggressively into nation building, that in examples of how much population you have in terms of troops to stabilize a population that when you compare Afghanistan to Kosova, when you compare Afghanistan to Iraq, when you compare Afghanistan to Bosnia, the gold standard being 20 security personnel per 1,000 inhabitants, or 2 percent of

the population, that in Afghanistan we have less than ½ of 1 percent.

Obviously problematic as it relates to reaching the rural areas. In addition to that, on a per capita basis in assistance when you look at what we have done in United States dollars, both, again, similar countries: Iraq, \$206 per capita in aid, in Kosova \$526 per capita per aid, in Bosnia \$679, in Afghanistan \$57, it just strikes me as being, again, taken for granted. Too little, and I hope not too late.

Certainly I think the heroin problem as discussed by the earlier members of the committee here is I think symptomatic of the larger problem, and that is we aren't putting enough emphasis in an area where we need to put it, and therefore, this narcotic criminal activity is taking up the slack for obvious economic reasons plain and to hand to the Taliban.

I would like you to respond to that, and then I want you to respond to the issue that I think is also pressing here when we look at Pakistan and the way in which they are playing in part because of their concerns with India's support for Afghanistan and the ability of the Taliban to be in the northwest territories and to use that as a basing operation for their continued efforts within Afghanistan.

Ambassador SCHWEICH. Thank you, Congressman. With respect to your initial point about cities versus rural areas, we don't disagree with that. Earlier in the hearing I discussed how USAID is changing its focus from providing seed and fertilizer to providing access to markets. If you look at areas where there has been a resurgence of poppy, for example, like in Nangarhar, almost all of that resurgence has been in the remote, rural areas.

You see the whole province is red, but really, if you put a big circle around Jilalabad that would be blue. It has gone down because nearer to the cities there is more access to markets, there is more capacity for farmers to sell their product. So focusing on roads, access to markets, buying cooperatives that can get crops to market has been a critical part of the new counternarcotic strategy to address the exact issue you just raised, which is we are having more success in the cities than we are in rural areas.

We are already seeing some positive results in the north of the country with those types of programs.

Mr. COSTA. I have been to Afghanistan when we were trying to complete the Ring Road. The fact is, what, 70, 75 percent of the population lives in the outlying areas.

Ambassador SCHWEICH. That is right, and that is why the emphasis has gone toward as you said completing the Ring Road, the Kajaki Dam, which would provide all this power to 1.7 million more people in the south. Everyone recognizes the problem you have said, and it is a key priority not just in the area I focus on, counternarcotics, but in the overall development area of Afghanistan.

I will try to respond to your comments about security forces recognizing that most of this should be answered probably by the military, but I will say that the \$10.8 billion that was put into the supplemental recently provides a big shot in the arm. I think over \$7 billion is going to be for security forces, Army and police. That is

going to allow us to accelerate the training of both Army and police and get them into the provinces where they need to be, so I think that is going to be helpful.

Mr. COSTA. Well, what level will that increase the numbers to on a per capita basis?

Ambassador SCHWEICH. Well, what it will allow is to get the numbers up to the authorized numbers which are not there yet. The Government of Afghanistan authorizes the number of police and Army, and our objective is to train them so we can get up to those numbers, which we have not been able to do so far. I think it is 62,000 Army and 82,000 police.

Mr. COSTA. Do you agree with Sir David Richards' analysis?

Mr. ACKERMAN. We will try to come back and have a second round if we can, but there are a number of members that are waiting and we do have a second panel today.

Ambassador, please, feel free to answer the question.

Ambassador SCHWEICH. With respect to Sir Richards, I have also had some conversations with hi. I am always reluctant to speak for somebody else, especially somebody from a different country, but I did hear him once say to a group that if you go to the south of Afghanistan you would have a small percentage that are pro-Taliban and a larger percentage that are pro-government, but a majority of the people there are pro whoever is going to win.

What we have to do is show we have the political will, the Government of Afghanistan has the political will, to go in there, tackle this narcotics problem, put noncorrupt police chiefs in place, establish government institutions to show that we are here for the long haul, and then we think we will win the hearts and minds by doing that.

Mr. COSTA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Wilson.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ambassador, thank you for being here today. I particularly appreciate you bringing us up to date. I am the co-chair of the Afghan caucus, and so we are working closely with members of their Parliament when they come visit, and however we can coordinate with visiting governors of the Afghani provinces and, again, I want the best and so does our caucus for the people of Afghanistan.

That is why I am so concerned about the poppy production, the potential for the narcotics trade and the terrorists to be working together on narco terrorism. I am very, very concerned. In fact, last week I was in Kabul, and we were briefed on this. I really was concerned by the briefing. I hope that indeed our efforts are coordinated and proactive. Additionally, when I was in Kabul last week I visited with the 218th Brigade of the South Carolina Army National Guard which I served with for 25 years.

I met with General Bob Livingston who explained what they were doing to train the Afghani police and how encouraging it is that we have 1,600 troops from South Carolina, the largest deployment since World War II, and our troops are very enthusiastic about helping the people of Afghanistan, but part of it obviously is what you are doing.

That is why I have a concern about the Afghan judicial system. What is the status of its ability to provide fair and corruption free

trials and prosecution of major drug kingpins, and if this doesn't occur does that mean that they need to be extradited to the United States or European countries?

Ambassador SCHWEICH. Yes. That is an excellent question. With respect to counternarcotics related crimes because of the level of corruption and also the fact that the system was decimated by the Taliban and the Soviets before it, there really was very little infrastructure, you have a system in Afghanistan now where there are many competing systems of justice.

You have a customary system, you have an Islamic system, you have the pre-Soviet constitutional system and you have the post-Soviet constitutional system, and they are not all reconciled. So first of all, you have competing systems, then you have the issue of corruption and lack of honesty upon the part of some people who are in the system.

So because that was going to take a long time to fix we worked with the Afghan Government to establish the Criminal Justice Task Force and the Counternarcotics Tribunal. That is run by the U.S. Department of Justice with the Afghans. They have vetted prosecutors, vetted judges, vetted investigators, they have a new building they are about to open, a very high tech facility for Afghanistan, they have now 1,700 cases in there.

A couple of their most recent successes were really quite impressive. I think I have got some information on that. Most recently Mezri Khan, a well-known narco trafficker, was convicted. He and two associates were sentenced to 17 years in prison for conspiring to bring 200 kilograms of heroin to the United States.

They recently convicted a lieutenant colonel on the police force for 10 years. In July 2007 there were five senior border police who were arrested in Paktika province with 123 kilograms of heroin, \$30 million street value. They have been indicted and are awaiting trial. I don't want to overstate the success, you are only talking about 30 prosecutors and judges, but there are active, they are functioning, they are not corrupt, and they are convicting people and they are putting them in jail.

For the higher level traffickers we have been trying to get more extraditions because we don't think the court system is quite ready for that. There will be a new announcement soon of a high level target that is being brought into the United States shortly. We have three here already. We are working with the Afghan Government to improve the capacity to extradite those people.

We also want people extradited to Europe. That is where much more of the drugs go than to the United States. Thus far we haven't found much interest, but we have a justice attaché, Mary Lee Warren, whom I am sure you know at the EEU, who is an expert in drug prosecutions, and she is going to work with them to try to get some extraditions to Europe.

Now, that is the kind of narcotics group. You would still have the overall judicial system which is not nearly as developed as this counternarcotics tribunal. In Rome there was a conference about 3 months ago where the international community met.

President Karzai was there, the Secretary General of the United Nations was there, Richard Boucher and I represented the United States at this conference, and we were able to work with the Af-

ghans in the development of their new 5 year plans, which you might have heard about. The Ministry of Justice, the Attorney General's Office, each of them have new 5 year plans, and the Supreme Court has a 5-year plan.

It is a really good plan. These are priorities of what they need in terms of personnel, vetting, infrastructure, equipment, buildings. We are asking the international community now to sign up, check off the box which one you are going to support. So there is a coordinated plan. Everybody sees what is needed. There were conflicting justice programs going on.

I was paying for two sets of prosecutor training, and I didn't even know it. So all this has now been reconciled. We have specific plans for the three main ministries and we are asking international donors to sign up to fund those plans. So this is all in its early stages. The counternarcotics tribunal is functioning and we are optimistic that the rest of the system will be able to catch up if we see sustained international support for this effort.

It is, by the way, easier to get international donors for justice reform than it is for military activities. So as I travel around Europe to capitals I am always asking them to contribute to this justice effort that is going on. There is actually going to be a trust fund set. It is going to be we think a subaccount to the Afghan reconstruction trust fund where international donors can fund these projects that I was talking about.

Part of my job is to push the international community to do this. So the structures are in place, but we don't have the results yet.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Thank you. Mr. Carnahan.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Ambassador, for being here and giving us this update. I wanted to I guess first begin with telling you how much I appreciate the work you are doing to ramp up the legal system there and the police reform. Obviously that is an important part of the strategy.

We are all concerned about the amount of dollars that we are spending, how effectively the strategies that focus primarily on eradication has really not shown a lot of results so far. I think there are obvious concerns about where those huge amounts of dollars from this trade are going to fund terrorist efforts, so I think we all get that picture.

I guess my concern is how we are focusing on a broader strategy. We have seen the local impacts even in my area of the country in St. Louis and around the Midwest with stronger strains of poppy have been more addictive, more deadly. I have heard from my police officials and health officials back home about that.

I guess I want to ask, you mentioned some other countries where different strategies have been utilized. You know, we have heard a lot of things about what was done in other countries, promoting alternative, legitimate markets.

We have also heard about altered plants in Australia that are morphine free, and we have local experts in St. Louis and around the U.S. from the field and plant science, from our pharmaceutical companies, that I think could bring a lot of expertise to bear in how this could be done.

So I want to get a feel from you on how much are we really looking at these other examples where there have been success and applying that to Afghanistan, and also to what extent you are working with some of our experts from the pharmaceutical companies and our plant scientists to look at ways we can have a more comprehensive strategy than focusing so heavily on eradication only.

Ambassador SCHWEICH. Thank you, Congressman. Actually, I share your concern found in your district, and I was actually there 2 weeks ago talking to Washington University about this exact issue.

Mr. CARNAHAN. You know, the Danforth Plant Science Center.

Ambassador SCHWEICH. Right.

Mr. CARNAHAN. And we have a long list of nationally renowned institutions there that I think would bring a lot of expertise to bear.

Ambassador SCHWEICH. Yes. So I have actually been in St. Louis just in the last 2 weeks on these exact issues you are talking about, and I appreciate that. I wanted to make a couple of issues clear. Our policy really isn't eradication focused. It is one part of it. We feel that because there is no crop that equals the amount that opium can bring there has to be a deterrent.

We focus on the wealthier farmers, not the poorer farmers. I talked about that a little bit before you came in. We are more focused now on taking out high value targets and traffickers and access to markets for those who don't have access to markets. We are actually using members of the Missouri Air National Guard who are agricultural experts out there in Afghanistan.

I had dinner with them when I was in St. Louis, to talk about what they can offer the farmers in terms of agricultural extension services, and I am working with Senator Bond on the same issue. So I absolutely share your concerns and appreciate all that is going on from our home state of Missouri to support that effort.

The issue with the pharmaceutical companies is more problematic because Afghanistan is so unregulated and there is so much opium we have not been able to come up with a scheme that would work like you have in India, for example, or Turkey where you could actually regulate this and bring it to the licit market.

The other problem we have with it is that the price for legal opium is so much lower than the price for illegal opium, so we have been unable to find incentives for farmers to switch. I would like to work with your office on this, and talk to some of the people you have been speaking with and make sure we have a good dialogue on it.

Mr. CARNAHAN. I would really like to try to make those connections, but also, you know, I guess I am hopeful that the measures you have described here today will help drive up the risk for those illicit producers, drive up the cost, in combination with the incentives, the police reforms.

Ambassador SCHWEICH. Right.

Mr. CARNAHAN. I think having those in place could really help stabilize things to the point where it is really important to look at some of those alternate markets, altered plant possibilities that could really be part of this overall strategy.

Ambassador SCHWEICH. Yes. The altered plant possibility is something I would definitely like to talk to you further about. We will follow-up on that. I know all the work that goes on in St. Louis about those. When you talk about the incentives and disincentives, right now our policy is focused on rewarding provinces that remain poppy free with this new good performer's fund that has been so generously funded by Congress.

Then, as I said, while eradication isn't the top focus, more money is going into interdiction, we do think the eradication component has to be there to deter people from growing illegal drugs. That will remain a part of the strategy for the foreseeable future. That has worked actually in Thailand, and Laos, and Pakistan and some countries where they have eliminated the problem.

So it has got to be a balance of these incentives you are talking about and making sure people know if they don't take the incentives that are offered there is going to be a downside to continuing to cultivate.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Thank you for the work you are doing.

Ambassador SCHWEICH. Thank you.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Ms. Jackson Lee.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Let me express my appreciation for much of the testimony that I have heard, and let me say that I think this is such an overwhelming problem. Frankly, I am disappointed over a period of time of the absence of our attention to Afghanistan, the conflicted responsibilities that the United States military has with the continuing conflict in Iraq, and frankly, I think that we are climbing up the very rough side of the mountain.

I have been to the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan. I have seen the difficulties of dealing with the rising Taliban presence and other issues that are different from the narcotics issues, so I think we have a compounded problem. Because we are wrongly in Iraq we obviously are distracted from what really should have been our main attention.

Frankly, I want to put on the record that we should not have had this retreat if you will, this failure, after 9/11 when we went in defending our Nation and basically cleared the way for opportunity. I was one of the first Members of Congress to visit with then Mr. Karzai even prior to the time that he had been officially elected, and there was great hope, and there was great hope for the people of Afghanistan, and there was great hope for the women.

Now, we see a very visible retreat. They need our help, and the narcotics are something that is frightening because it is so expensive, it is so widespread. Even as we isolate certain areas it is even difficult to topple this massive problem. So my question to you is dealing with the actual people there.

We were with the World Bank yesterday and noted that some of their educational funding might not be as high as it should be in some areas around the world. My question would be is what role could improving educational opportunities at all levels for men and women play in combating this dastard problem, this terrible problem, and also, to ask what is your perspective on when we will accomplish what we would like to accomplish?

Is this a disease that we will be continuing to treat or do we have the mechanism, the money, the wherewithal, to stamp it out

completely by giving options for these farmers that they would be willing to take?

Ambassador SCHWEICH. Thank you, Congresswoman. With respect to educational opportunity, that has been one of the predominant efforts of the U.S. Agency for International Development. There are orders of magnitude more people going to school now in Afghanistan than in the past. With respect to counternarcotics education, that is a critical part of our public information campaign.

What resonates very much with the Afghans when they are considering whether to grow poppy is when you tell them that this poppy is poisoning their own people. We are trying to get that message out in schools, and in surahs and with religious groups there. When they realize that this is not just a cash crop, this is a poison they are growing that kills people not only in remote places in the world but in their very own country, we found that the message resonates.

So increasing overall educational opportunity has been actually quite successful. That has been a success story in Afghanistan in terms of the number of girls that are going to school now who were forbidden from it.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. So what kind of money has been put into this? When you say increasing educational opportunities what is the amount of money the State Department has worked with Congress to get?

Ambassador SCHWEICH. In terms of specifically for education I will take that for the record and get back to you. One thing I do know is that the number of Afghans going to school is many, many higher than before. Of course, girls weren't even allowed to go to school. I was in Kabul 3 or 4 weeks ago and you see girls with backpacks on and heading off to school.

I think I will be able to show you with both the numbers in terms of how many are going to school and the funding that has been pretty successful. Where I think we need to be more successful is in the counternarcotics education piece of it rather than the general education. I am happy to get some more information for you on that.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Well, let me just say this. You say that going up you were in Kabul, but we are talking about in the places that are away from Kabul that are controlled by the Taliban where there is brutality against women, where girls are not going to school, where the poppy is growing.

That is really the real question, and the question is whether or not we have any wherewithal, any possibility of overcoming, or making, or creating any success story because we are looking at several issues. We are looking at the issue of the small number of military there because of Iraq and because you have to combine the presence of force with what you are attempting to do.

Ambassador SCHWEICH. Yes. Well, there is no doubt that in places like Helmand in the south where the Taliban is very active that they have been intimidating people, they have been killing people who go to school. There is no doubt about that. So bringing security to that region is obviously a top priority. Once the security is there they will be able to get more educational opportunities there.

I am not going to sugar coat it. That is a huge problem in the south. Now, it is not just in the cities, though, where there is good education. Throughout the north where there is relative security we are seeing much more education. Sort of the blue provinces on this map here educational opportunities are increasing, and even in rural areas in those places.

The problem are these red and these pink provinces where there is such intimidation of anyone that cooperates with any sort of improving of education for women and for anybody really because they don't want to see any success, and so they are undermining it, they are attacking schools, killing teachers and those types of things.

Obviously the priority is to bring security so that we can then bring education.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Well, let me just conclude by saying that I am not hopeful, and I wish I was. I think this is a massive problem that we have contributed to ourselves by lessening our military presence and allowing the Taliban to resurge and giving these farmers a sense of hopelessness so they have an opted for an economic engine that they think is the only source of survival.

We have got to replace that mindset, but we have also got to replace it with something concrete. I don't see that. I hope that you would be able to set in writing sort of a methodical timeframe of how the U.S. Government is looking toward solving this narcotics problem with a substitution for these farmers that you view that might be successful and the timeframe that your goals are toward being successful.

Ambassador SCHWEICH. I concur with your concerns about establishing the security down there so that we can make people not feel intimidated, but with respect to the actual poppy cultivation the provinces that you see that are poppy free or near poppy free are the poorest provinces in Afghanistan.

It doesn't seem to be associated so much with poverty anymore, the growth of opium, it seems to be associated with insecurity, so that is why our new strategy focuses on rewarding those that remain poppy free but really looking more toward combining the security and the counternarcotics efforts so we are able to provide the security people need so they don't feel they need to grow opium.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Well, I look forward to working with you and I am working on a restoration plan to hopefully put in legislation for Afghanistan. Thank you.

Ambassador SCHWEICH. Thank you.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Thank you, Chairman.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Inglis.

Mr. INGLIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Ambassador the August drug strategy said that "additional HVTs are being targeted, they are directly associated with Taliban terrorist activity and are being supported by the illicit drug trade." Do you agree with that assessment?

Ambassador SCHWEICH. Absolutely. There are well-known Taliban leaders who are deriving income from narcotics, and we are working closely with ISAF right now to find ways to arrest them.

Mr. INGLIS. Another question is: Have the DoD tactical support missions for DEA to carry out this proposal increased or even begun as yet?

Ambassador SCHWEICH. Well, yes. Most recently several MI-17 helicopters were provided by the Department of Defense to the counternarcotics police of Afghanistan. They have now working with DEA trained Afghan pilots and they are actually now flying missions.

Mr. INGLIS. Great. And how many DEA tactical support mission requests were made in the last 6 months, and how many did DoD grant?

Ambassador SCHWEICH. In the last 6 months I am not aware of the numbers. I will have to get back to you on those. Mostly what has been going on in the last 6 months has not been tactical missions, though. I do know that. It has been training for future tactical missions.

Mr. INGLIS. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Did Mr. Costa have one additional question?

Mr. COSTA. Yes. You made reference to it in several of your comments about the level of improvements within the police force. I had all sorts of anecdotal stories when I was there 2 years ago about the level of corruption, the lack of a payment system, passing the uniform on from a brother to, you know, when someone wouldn't show up.

Because it seems to me as you talk about the integrity of eradicating the poppy forests having a police force that historically has been kind of to the victor goes the spoils and has not had a great level of integrity, given the tribal nature, whether it is Tajik or Pashtun and the areas you are working on, are the police reflecting the tribes that are in those rural regions and gaining some level of credibility and respect?

Ambassador SCHWEICH. I think I could easily answer the question yes, and that would be an accurate answer, but I think I would like to give you a more complete answer than that. The challenges to training police in Afghanistan are huge, and they are very different than the challenges we face in training Iraq police, which our bureau and State Department also assists with.

First of all, they have never had a national police system, so they don't really know how to do it, and they need a lot of education on how to establish a Federal police system. The recruits, 75 percent are illiterate. When they come into there they aren't first trained to be police, they are trained to turn on lights, and use plumbing and things like that.

So you start from a very eager and enthusiastic group of people who have no background at all, so the training has to be much more comprehensive than you would find in other countries where we train police. So you start with that. The second piece is that the salaries are so low that they are susceptible to bribery, everybody at all levels.

The PAN RANK reform process that is going on now which reduces the number of generals, colonels and majors but increases their pay and then increases the number of sergeants and patrol people and increases their pay as well we think will really be a

major factor in rooting out corruption because it makes them less susceptible to bribery.

The final piece is you still have in provinces in remote areas not enough of an international monitoring presence to make sure these police are on the job and that their police chiefs aren't taking their money. The CSTC OFF, the military authority that we work with out there, is planning to deploy more mentors out into the fields to police stations to use this automated pay system we have and these national ID cards to monitor where these police are.

Mr. COSTA. So they don't have to leave for 3 days to take their back to the—

Ambassador SCHWEICH. Exactly, and that has been a problem, but now that is being addressed very aggressively and I more optimistic. In fact, there are already, I think I have some numbers here, about I think 10,000 police who are now part an automated pay system and 40,000 who have ID cards.

So we are working on it, and we are going to increase it so that people can't take their money away, they get a better salary, it isn't so officer heavy, everybody being a boss and nobody out there doing the patrols. These are the changes. This is not just a United States initiative, this is something the Afghan Government and Ministry Interior have been very eager to do, and we are now implementing that.

Mr. COSTA. Thank you.

Ambassador SCHWEICH. Thank you.

Mr. ACKERMAN. It appears that we have begun a series of six votes, and I think what we will do rather than begin the next panel and then interrupt what promises to be an equally important panel, we will recess now for at least ½ hour.

Want to thank you, Ambassador Schweich for a very important contribution to our understanding and dialogue on the issue. The committee is in recess subject to the call of the chair.

[Whereupon, at 11:17 a.m., the subcommittee recessed, to reconvene the same day subject to the call of the chair.]

Mr. ACKERMAN. Subcommittee will come to order. Our second witness is Mr. Mark Schneider, senior vice president of the International Crisis Group, where he has worked since 2001. Prior to joining ICG, Mr. Schneider served in the Clinton administration as Director of the Peace Corps from 1999 to 2001 and as the Assistant Administrator for Latin America and the Caribbean at USAID from 1993 to 1999.

Mr. Schneider was chief of the Office of Analysis and Strategic Planning at the Pan American Health Organization World Health Organization from 1981 to 1993, and was a principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs from 1977 to 1979.

He has also served as a foreign policy advisor to Senator Edward Kennedy, received a bachelor of arts degree in journalism, the University of California, Berkeley, an M.A. from San Jose State University, an honorary doctorate of law degree from American University.

Welcome, Mr. Schneider. Your full statement will be made a part of the record. We thank you very much for your patience, and you may proceed as you will.

**STATEMENT OF MR. MARK SCHNEIDER, SENIOR VICE
PRESIDENT, INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP**

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the invitation to participate in this morning's hearing. I would ask that in addition to the statement that the recent report of International Crisis Group entitled Reforming Afghanistan's Police be included in the record.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Without objection.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Afghanistan is in danger of becoming a failed state in part because it is in danger of becoming a narco state controlled of critical points in its security structure by those who do the bidding, willingly or unwillingly, of drug traffickers. That was my judgment several years ago when I went to Afghanistan, and it now is also the judgment of the head of the United Nations Office's Drug Control, Antonio Maria Costa, who said the same thing.

Unfortunately, the U.S. response has been very late and unfortunately I think in many aspects it is very questionable. It fails to incorporate elements that would more directly provide an opportunity to improve interdiction and to succeed more directly in limiting opium cultivation.

I have testified before on the security threats facing Afghanistan and noted that unless they were dealt with they would undermine every effort to establish democracy and reconstruction stability in that country.

There was a failure to commit sufficient resources, military and civilian, early on by the United States international community, a continuing greater failure to require the Pakistan Government to close down Taliban command and control centers, sanctuaries and recruiting and an absolute failure up until very recently to recognize the links between opium trafficking, insecurity and the corrosive culture of impunity in Afghanistan.

Now, I have put at the back of my testimony several maps that underscore the seriousness of the security situation. These are all from the U.N. The first shows the increase in high risk areas from 2003 through 2004. In 2005, they had to change the rating so that there was also an extreme risk category, which is the black areas. In 2006, you notice that is spreading.

The final map there that I have shows on September 24, 2 weeks ago, the area that is I guess pink is now extreme risk. If you look at the map here, Mr. Chairman, it follows exactly the area of the south and east of the country. That is now categorized by the U.N. as extreme risk, meaning they cannot get reconstruction activities in there, they cannot get support to NGO, they cannot undertake efforts to provide extension of the legitimate Afghan state.

The situation right now is clearly one in which the failure to deal with those security problems is linked directly to the increases of opium production in the south and east of the country.

I also would add that while you were told earlier that in the north the situation has improved significantly, even the dark blue areas there, while they have had significant reductions they still have significant amounts of cultivation, and even more seriously you still have heroin producing laboratories in those areas as well as along this frontier.

Those high value assets rather than the farming areas need to be placed much higher on the priority in a counter drug strategy, particularly when we have 50,000 American and NATO troops there. We simply have not taken advantage of the capability that they have with respect to intelligence gathering to identify where those high value targets are of warehouses and labs and then support the Afghans to go after them.

Perhaps the most urgent area is the area of comprehensive rural development to prevent farmers from going into opium in the first place and then to reward those who are not involved in the second place. We have given about, in terms of all the funding in Afghanistan if you include military and police it is about \$24 billion. Of that, about \$16 billion is nonmilitary and police.

In the area of rural development alternative livelihoods about \$600 million over the course of the entire period of the last 2 years, which has not begun to be expended yet, is the bulk of it. So it is somewhere under 10 percent of the economic and social investment and perhaps I would say somewhere in the neighborhood of 2½ percent of the total invested by the United States in Afghanistan goes to this purpose.

If you want to deal with the problem over the long term of opium cultivation you have to provide not just alternatives but a rural development strategy nationwide. Let me just go on in terms of what the nature of the security threats and how very real they are. You mentioned the suicide bombings in the last couple of weeks.

I think it is important to recognize that in 2005 there were only 27 suicide bombings in Afghanistan, last year there 123, this year to today, in fact a week ago, there were already 123. It is clear that the Taliban have adopted the tactics of Iraq and are beginning to use those significantly throughout Afghanistan.

Let me also note that the number of direct attacks on both United States and Afghan military and civilians have jumped from 1,500 in 2005, 4,500 in 2006 and already this year there are 20 percent more than last year. I think that one looks at Afghanistan we still have an opportunity it seems to me to try and rescue that country from becoming a failed state.

It is clear that this is both military response, but it is also the need to support the Karzai government in extending transparent and noncorrupt governance into the regions of the country that traditionally are unaffected by the writ of Kabul. The people there must become convinced the national government will bring them vital services and promote the rule of law.

They are not convinced today. There is no question that this point people in Afghanistan, too many areas view the police as corrupt, they view much of the government as responsive not to an independent rule of law but to political and ethnic interest, and the result is that the Taliban are succeeding not only militarily but politically.

Every corrupt official, every corrupt police chief is essentially a recruiter for the Taliban. The new U.S. strategy on counter-narcotics has five pillars. None of those pillars is political will. You heard it mentioned today, but political will needs to be the first pillar. There has to be an end to people being appointed to govern-

ment positions, whether it is governor, or senator, or police chief, who are known to be engaged with drug trafficking.

Earlier today you heard about a governor who had been removed from office. That governor was appointed senator, the one who had 20,000 pounds of opium in his office. That is not the message that tells the people in Afghanistan that there is a determination to end corruption, to end impunity, to end drug trafficking.

The fact is that when the local people see counternarcotics efforts directed at them, at the farmers who usually don't even own the land, while the well-connected flaunt their drugs wealth with lavish houses and SUVs, this fuels discontent. So that has to be number one. There has to be a rule in Afghanistan, and it has to start sometime, that you can't keep your day job as a government official if the night job is to enable or conspire with drug trafficking.

That still hasn't been done. That turns to the question of the Afghanistan national police. What has to happen, again, is that you have to put into effect measures that ensure that the police are seen not only as enforcing the law but obeying the law. That still is not the case. You heard of the 70,000 that think currently are in the force. About 83,000 have been trained.

We don't know exactly how many are really out there, and the ones that are out there, they have had been 2 and 8 weeks of training. When the United States changed with Germany in terms of who is going to take the lead there was not an agreement on what kind of a force needed to be developed. The U.S. is using the police as part of the military operation against counterinsurgency.

They are putting police out as part of the military effort. That is not the role of the civilian police. You need to increase the size of the military if that is what you need, not put police who are not trained for that task in front of that kind of situation. The result has been between last year and this year about three times the number of police have been killed as military in Afghanistan.

At the same time the police that are being placed around the country in terms of district police chiefs are not being assigned on the basis of merit, as was agreed with the international community, that there would be in a sense a joint vetting operation that would determine those who were named to both high, middle and district police chief positions. That has not been followed.

You heard mention of the pay rank reform. That has not been instituted fully. Those are the kinds of things that really should be required. In our report we go through a series of those requirements. I would just simply stress, right now every policeman who receives a salary in Afghanistan is paid by the international community.

There is a trust fund. Money goes from the United States and others into that trust fund to pay their salaries. It should continue, but there should be a requirement that those who are appointed meet minimum criteria and that they meet those criteria and that they include not engaging in drug trafficking. At this point, if that doesn't happen there is no way to institute the rule of law in Afghanistan.

As I said, we have made a series of recommendations. I will let you review them, but I am prepared to answer any questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Schneider follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MR. MARK SCHNEIDER, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT,
INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP

I want to thank the chairman and the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia for inviting me to participate in this morning's hearing on "Counternarcotics Strategy and Police Training in Afghanistan." In that regard, I would ask that the recent report of the International Crisis Group "*Reforming Afghanistan's Police*" be included in the Record.

Afghanistan is in danger of becoming a failed state, in part because it is in danger of becoming a narco-state, controlled at critical points of its security structure by those who do the bidding—willingly or unwillingly—of drug traffickers. That was my judgment at the end of my first trip to Afghanistan nearly four years ago. It now is the conclusion as well of the executive director of UNODC Antonio Maria Costa, who said, "the threat is definitely there that the country will become a narco-state."

This year, when he released the 2007 World Drug report, he said that poppy cultivation is directly linked to insecurity and "inversely related to the degree of government control." That report shows that from virtually no opium cultivation in the final year of the Taliban regime in 2001, today Afghanistan produces 93% of the world's opium, cultivated on 193,000 hectares or 500,000 acres of land, a 17% increase after last year's 59% increase. Afghanistan opium poppy now grows on land equal to nearly the size of the state of Rhode Island. Equally worrisome is that potential opium production in 2007 probably hit a world record at 8200 metric tons, a rise of 34%.

Let me just add that the executive summary of the new U.S. Counternarcotics Strategy for Afghanistan introduced this past August also states that "the drug trade has undermined every aspect of the Government of Afghanistan's drive to build political stability, economic growth and rule of law. . . ." In that regard, at least that statement frankly acknowledges the seriousness of the problem—a recognition that is very late in coming. The response also still contains several questionable elements—to be conducted by private contractors—and fails to incorporate others that are likely needed both to limit cultivation and to improve interdiction.

I have testified before the Congress on Afghanistan several times in the past. Each time, I warned that the failure to deal effectively with security threats would undermine democracy, reconstruction and stability. I emphasized that there was a disturbing failure to commit sufficient resources—either military or reconstruction aid to Afghanistan—by the U.S. and by the international community; an even greater failure to require the Pakistan government to close Taliban command and control centers, sanctuaries and Taliban recruiting in Jihadi mosques and madrassas; and an absolute refusal to recognize the links between exploding opium trafficking, insecurity and a corrosive culture of impunity.

Part of the capacity of the insurgents to operate goes back to the decision to have a "light footprint" in the aftermath of the removal of the Taliban, relying instead on warlords and militia leaders—despite their record of past abuse.

As Rand and others have noted, in the first two years after the Taliban were ejected from Afghanistan, the international commitment in dollars was only \$52 per Afghan versus \$1400 in Bosnia and the commitment of peacekeepers was 20 per 1000 Kosovar Albanians contrasted with .2 of one peacekeeper per 1000 Afghans. Clearly there has been an effort to catch up recently with international US, NATO and other forces going up to some 50,000 and some \$10.5 billion requested by the US alone over the past two years for military and police and about \$2.4 billion for all other reconstruction aid.

Several recent maps from the United Nations (annexed to this testimony) underscore the rising levels of insecurity in Afghanistan and the overlap between opium poppy cultivation and drug trafficking. Based on the UN assessment of where security concerns obstruct reconstruction and stabilization efforts, one can see a devastating rise in high and extreme risk areas—now reaching almost the whole south and east of the country.

I also would note that high risk districts now virtually encircle the capital of Kabul. The analysis essentially says these areas are largely out of bounds for civilian internationals involved in the reconstruction efforts. But they can and are being reached by Taliban and drug traffickers. The percentage of financing of Taliban activities coming from drug trafficking is unclear but it is high and it is growing. In fact in Helmand, Kandahar, Kapisa, and Nangarhar as well as Uruzgan one sees that overlay between opium production or trafficking and significant insurgent activity.

If the combined efforts of the international forces and the nascent Afghan security forces cannot guarantee enough security for investment and governance to establish

roots into these communities and state institutions cannot be extended across the country, it is extremely difficult to see how the reconstruction effort in Afghanistan can succeed.

The UN Secretary General reported to the Security Council barely two weeks ago that “the boldness and frequency of suicide bombings, ambushes and direct fire attacks have increased.” He cited an average of 548 attacks a month in 2007 already 20 per cent higher than the year before which if continued along this trend could mean closer to 6000 attacks by insurgents, up from 4542 in 2006 and 1558 in 2005.. The Secretary General reported the number of civilian deaths through August 31 at 1000, the bulk intentionally targeted by Taliban and al Qaeda but more than 300 the unintentional result of coalition, ISAF and Government responses, primarily ISAF or OEF airstrikes. On the morning of 27 September the UN further reported that suicide attacks for 2007 had reached 123—the same number as the whole of 2006, compared to 27 in 2005.

Dealing with the challenge of security means not only effectively countering the military and propaganda operations of the Taliban and al Qaeda. It also means assisting the Karzai government in extending transparent and non-corrupt governance into regions of the country traditionally unaffected by the writ of Kabul and traditionally unprotected by that government. They must become convinced that the national government will bring them vital services, promote the rule of law and offer positive economic incentives.

If there is a single message, it is that all concerned have to recognize that there are no silver bullets, no quick fixes that can solve the problem of opium cultivation in an impoverished nation where the state security forces remain of limited size, limited capacity and very limited quality. There has to be a long-term commitment to building the institutions of the rule of law—police, judiciary and prisons—that are trained adequately, paid decently, equipped sufficiently and required not only to enforce the law but to obey the law.

There also has to be a clearer understanding that with rural wheat prices a fraction of the farmgate price of opium poppy, a comprehensive rural development program has to be more than simply alternative crops. It has to be rural investment and infrastructure and services along with full provision of credit, seed, fertilizer, market help for farmers and off-farm income opportunities in districts before they start to grow poppies. Remember that today only 4 per cent of Afghanistan’s farmland is being used to grow poppies but some 14 per cent of the population is involved.

Finally there is a need to question a proposed U.S. strategy that is heavily tilted toward forced eradication, most reminiscent of Bolivia, and to reject completely its obvious desire to import the aerial eradication methods from Colombia. In Bolivia, it took a decade for the consequences of the policy to impact on political instability. In Colombia, it has not worked. With the Taliban growing in capacity to undermine stability already, any actions that further alienate the population are misguided—such as sending helicopters to spray poppy fields that would bring back memories of Soviet helicopters strafing villages at will. It also should be clear that the Taliban have been using propaganda effectively already and the adoption of an aerial spraying approach surely would result in every dead cow and every unexplained illness being blamed on the U.S. and Karzai government use of chemical spraying.

A New Yorker magazine article cited an Uruzgan farmer complaint to the DynCorps eradication team that they had not only destroyed the poppies but also wheat and vegetables. They also charged that only tribes alienated from the Karzai government had their fields eradicated while those political aligned with the government were “missed.”

Buried in the U.S. anti-drug five pillar approach, in fact it is listed as a sixth element, is something called political will. It should be number one on the U.S., NATO and United Nations hit parade. Without clearer evidence of political will with the very top of the Afghanistan government setting down an absolute bar on holding public office and engaging in drug trafficking, counternarcotics efforts are doomed to failure.

It is not just the Taliban and other insurgents who benefit from the drug trade. Corrupt government officials, warlords in and outside the government are also facilitating the drug trade and financially benefiting from it. Currently local people see hypocrisy when most counter narcotics efforts appear directed at poor farmers—who may not even own the land—while the well-connected flaunt their drugs wealth with lavish houses and big SUVs. This further fuels discontent.

Narco-corruption is present at all levels of the Afghan government. This has to change if the insurgency and drug traffickers are to be defeated. Every corrupt governor, police chief or ministry official is a recruiting agent for the Taliban. Public

officials trying to build a new transparent Afghan state where impunity is no longer the rule are directly undermined by corruption around them.

The new rule in Afghanistan has to be that no one can keep their day job as a government official if their night job is to enable or conspire with drug traffickers. A fundamental arm of the law in implementing that kind of policy as well as offering basic citizen security in Afghanistan is the Afghanistan National Police. In some ways, the Crisis Group report last month on *Reforming Afghanistan's Police* underscores the flaws in some key elements of the statebuilding endeavor in Afghanistan. While there have been important achievements, and the goals of the Afghanistan compact “. . . to work towards a stable and prosperous Afghanistan, with good governance and human rights protection for all under the rule of law” remain valid, the magnitude of the problems faced in moving Afghanistan toward stability after more than a quarter century of war cannot be underestimated. However, the current strategy needs major corrections.

On police spending, after 2001, the U.S., despite its awareness that the German-led program was long on quality and short on numbers, did not seek to intervene to support the German effort in ways that would increase the numbers of trained police on the street. In 2002, the U.S. contributed barely \$25 m; in 2003, \$5 m.; and then a jump to \$223 m. in 2004 and now \$3.6 billion in requests last year and this.

But again, the U.S. answer was a quick fix, failing to obtain a single vision with the Germans or the Europeans, failing to engage the UN so that perhaps it could have fostered the needed coordination. Now while the number of deployed police stands at some 70,000, many patrolmen have had only two weeks training, the most about eight weeks. As a point of reference, even in Haiti, where there are fairly high standards for entrance, a four-month training session at the national police academy is required before putting armed police into communities. A few weeks is simply not enough.

Policing goes to the very heart of state building, since they are critical to providing citizen protection and justice for the population. However Afghanistan's citizens often view the police more as a source of fear than of security.

One of the equally disturbing aspects of the U.S. view has been to see the police as part of the military response to the insurgency rather than as police protecting citizen security and trained for that purpose as part of the justice sector. The result is clear in the outcome: four times more ANP police were killed from May 2006 to May 2007 in comparison with the number of military killed, and the disparity worsened in June 2007. A clear delineation of the roles of the different services is urgently required.

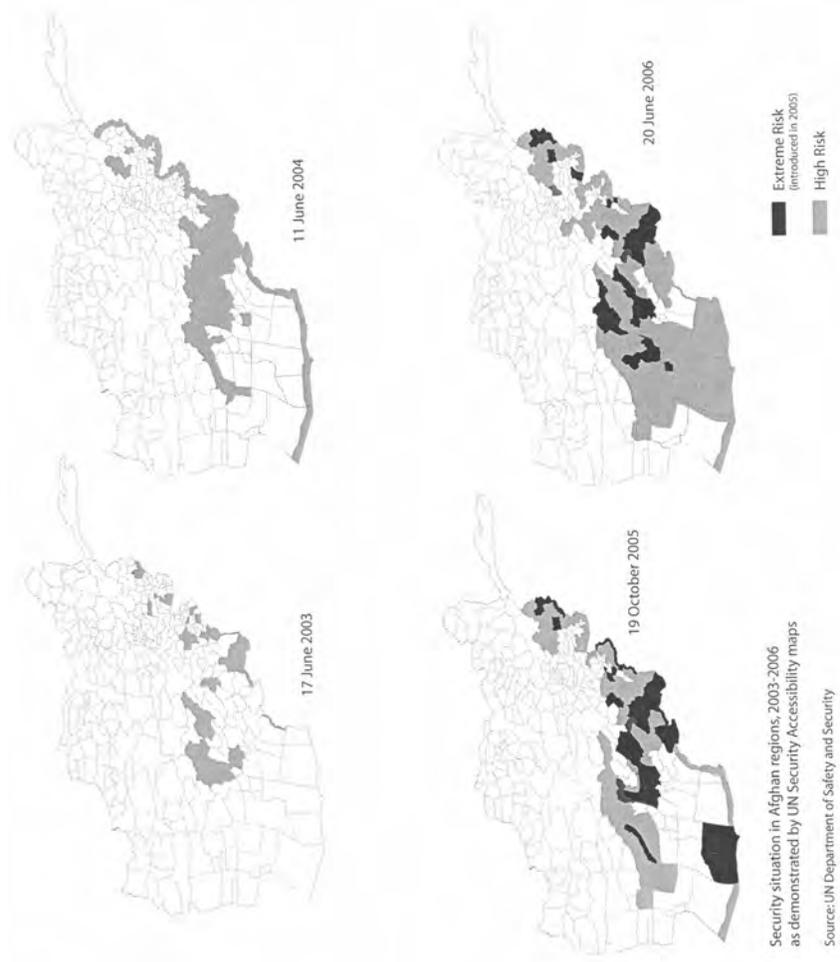
There are key problems with the police stretching to the very top which require high level attention on reforming the Ministry of Interior and ensuring strong, accountable leadership. It has been particularly disappointing to see the vetting mechanism agreed to with respect to police appointments become mired in political maneuvering. The pay and rank reform process was aimed at promoting professionalism through testing and vetting every level of the leadership followed by large salary increases to help overcome any need for corruption. It has stalled as it has reached district level appointments.

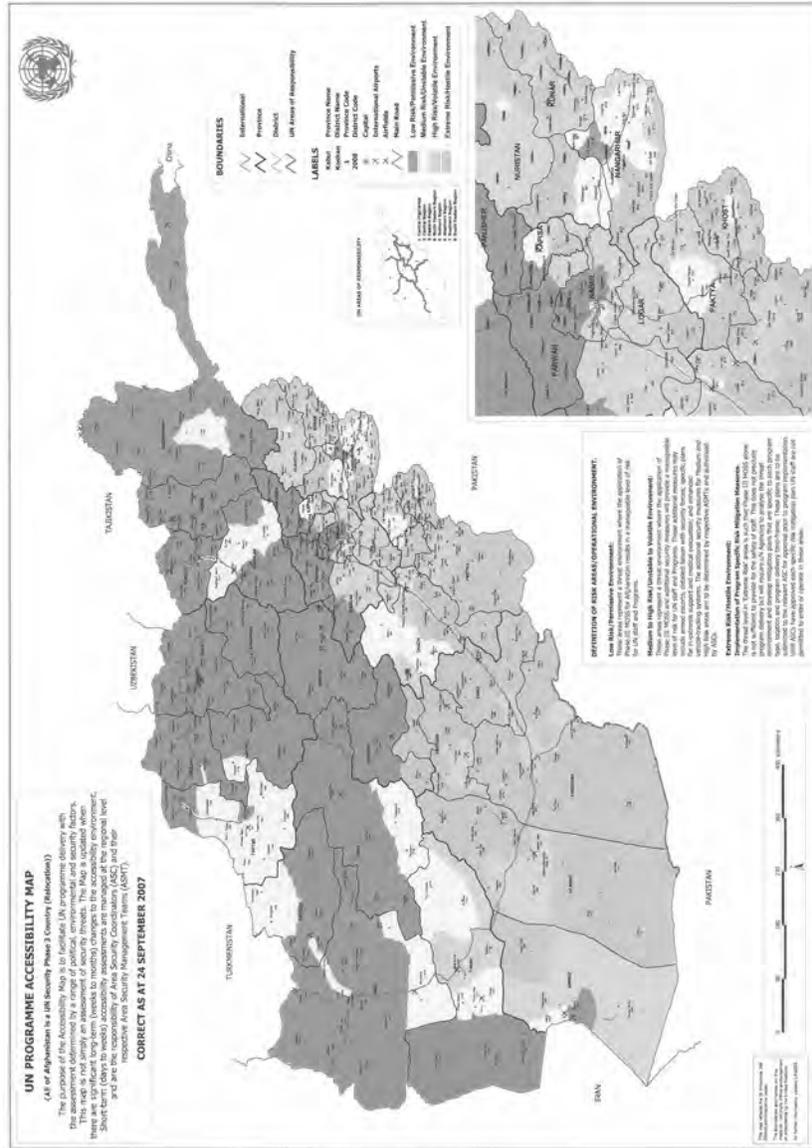
If professional police forces are the object, then the decision to name some 11,000 auxiliary police and to give them weapons and uniforms after 10 days of training seems highly dubious, and a waste of U.S. taxpayer spending. The lack of a command and control element to supervise their work—no one knows what has happened to over 40 per cent of auxiliary police in some areas since their initial training—only highlights the need for a renewed emphasis on training field level junior leadership, particularly in the Pashtun southern areas. Currently all officer training is conducted in Kabul and the new leadership coming through remains disproportionately Tajik. In July 167 of the 223 non-commissioned officer graduates were Tajiks.

Just as with the government as a whole, the failure to use approved coordinating entities such as the International Police Coordination Board undermines the possibility for coherent action. Crisis Group also has recommended that the IPCB determine nationwide that those who pick up checks for police work are actually working in a police program. The police have to be more professional and more linked to their communities with the training and equipment that both will raise their pride and protect their lives. Without a police force that people can trust and a judiciary that is independent, it seems doubtful that the rule of law can be solidly built in Afghanistan.

Our 30 August 2007 report *“Reforming Afghanistan's Police”* has a series of recommendations for different branches of the Afghanistan government, for donors, and the international community. Let me just summarize some key ones:

1. Press for complete adherence to agreed upon screening mechanisms to vet appointments from the top of the Ministry of Interior down to district police chiefs.
2. Expand international participation in monitoring police abuses, corruption and narcotics involvement and support establishing civilian police liaison and review mechanisms.
3. Insure that a common vision of police reform and a common voice come out of the International Police Coordination Board and the U.S. should immediately make good on all of its promised staff assistance to the board.
4. Make long-term commitments to the Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan to bring police salaries on a par with military; parallel to the full implementation of the Pay and Rank Reform to ensure that police appointments are merit-based.



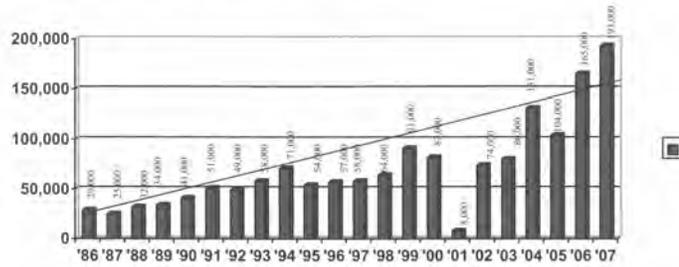


Afghanistan opium poppy cultivation increases to a record level of 193,000 hectares

Figure 1: Afghanistan opium poppy cultivation, 1994 - 2007 (hectares)¹

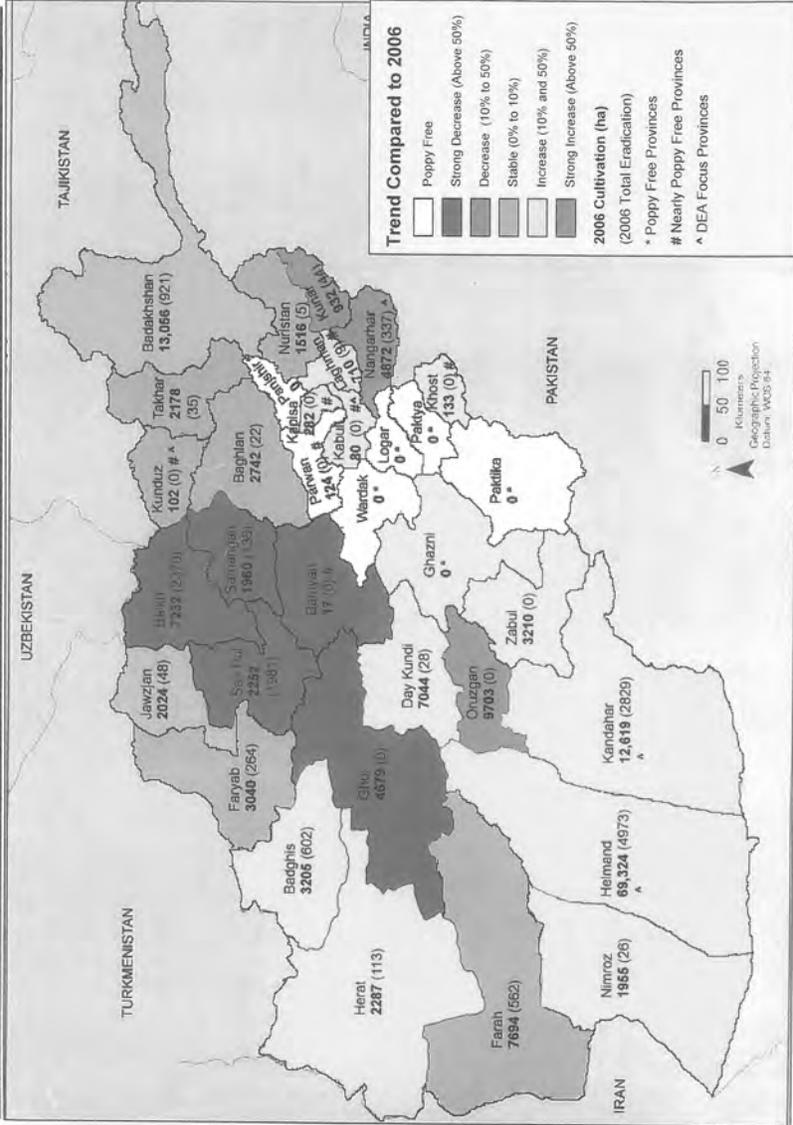
1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
71,000	54,000	57,000	58,000	64,000	91,000	82,000	8,000	74,000	80,000	131,000	104,000	165,000	193,000

Figure 2: Afghanistan: Opium poppy cultivation from 1986 to 2007 (hectares)



¹ Figure 1 (1994-2006), UNODC Afghanistan Opium Survey 2006, September 2006.
 Figure 1 (2007), UNODC Afghanistan Opium Survey 2007, August 2007

Afghanistan 2007 Poppy Rapid Assessment Survey in Comparison to 2006 Figures



Mr. ACKERMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Schneider. The ICG's report on police training has been criticized as the perfect being the enemy of the good, meaning that the ICG expected too much from these efforts and should applaud the progress that has been made. What is your reaction to that? Are the expectations too high or are the police really that bad?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. I don't think the expectations are too high, but they have not put into effect the measures that would provide an opportunity for the police to become a legitimate part of the rule of law in Afghanistan. I should add that one other thing that I didn't mention is that the decision to create an auxiliary police force with only 10 days of training and then to give them weapons and send them out also is a mistake. The U.S. is funding that.

There is no command and control over that auxiliary police force either.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Your testimony points out that the new counternarcotics strategy has several questionable elements and fails to incorporate others that are needed. Could you elaborate on that point, which elements are questionable and which should be there or not?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. One more time, Mr. Chairman?

Mr. ACKERMAN. I just wanted you to elaborate on the questionable elements that are in the new counternarcotics strategy.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. I just didn't hear.

Mr. ACKERMAN. The questionable elements.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Yes.

Mr. ACKERMAN. You point out questionable elements in the new narcotics strategy.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. The decision to put the highest priority on forced eradication and to emphasize the desirability of aerial eradication seems to us to be unwise. There is no question that you need to have an integrated program in the counternarcotics area, and particularly there needs to be much more attention to rural development investment in infrastructure and in our view to the rule of law to establishing law enforcement that targets the top leaders within the drug trafficking networks in or out of government.

Congressman Rohrabacher mentioned earlier the kind of targeting of top leadership has existed in other countries. I think that needs to be done in Afghanistan. We need to support the attorney general in Afghanistan to go after the leadership wherever they are. Similarly, at this point we don't have the kind of interdiction involvement by the forces that are there, U.S. and NATO, that we should.

At the very least we should be providing active intelligence to the Afghans to be able to go after the warehouses and the crystal heroin laboratories. That is the high value part of the drug trafficking chain. We are not doing that.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Is there a lack of will on the part of the Afghans to do that?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. There is a lack of will up to this point on the part of the Afghans to go after the top leaders, yes.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Why would you take out a governor who has all these thousands of pounds of heroin in his office and then put him in the senate?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Well, that is what I am saying. That seems to me to be a lack of political will.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Is that a compromise? Is that because he is innocent until proven guilty? Is that the maybe opium is a vegetable theory?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Clearly, that should be a case where you prosecute as opposed to promoting.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Why wouldn't that happen? I mean, you know, we scratch our heads sometimes when other Presidents not in Afghanistan take somebody who has totally failed at a job and then gives them a medal and we come up with political reasons and all kinds of theory. What is theory behind taking somebody who is obviously waste high in opium traffic and then putting them in the senate?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. The theory is that there is insufficient political strength.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Does he need his vote? Is this part of a coalition of survival?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. The theory is that whether it is votes or support that at this point is of sufficient value so that they haven't decided that when you make a judgment of what is more in the interest of the country and the political future that should be to prosecute those who are engaged in drug trafficking.

What I am saying is that the U.S. and the international community needs to ensure that President Karzai sees he has full support to prosecute those individuals and provide help in doing it.

Mr. ACKERMAN. And how does he come to see that he has full support?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Let me give you one example. There is an international police cooperation board that is supposed to be determining who should have the high positions in the police. We promised that we would staff it. We have given one, we have promised 12 people. We haven't provided the kind of resources at each level that would indicate that we are determined to make this happen.

Even on the counter drug effort. This is very recent. I mean, we really did not want to get into this for several years. So there has to be a change in convincing those at the top of the Afghanistan Government that this has to happen, they have to go after these drug traffickers.

Also, I think that there needs to be a review of the question of what kinds of activities are permitted within the rules of engagement of NATO and the United States with respect to intelligence gathering aimed at the high value elements of drug trafficking and then to support the Afghans and going after it, warehousing, and labs and convoys.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Is the suspicion that we are not telling the Afghans where the high value assets are or that we are telling them and they are doing nothing?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. My understanding is that that is still not within the rules of engagement for U.S. military or NATO, and NATO is even less willing, the NATO contributors, to be involved in any way in this. I will say that the Secretary General of the U.N. a week ago specifically urged that the international community focus on

the government must prioritize interdiction and bring drug traffickers to justice.

He basically said that the international community needs to support that. That isn't happening fully yet with respect to interdiction.

Mr. ACKERMAN. We have spent billions of dollars on these efforts. Listening to the previous panel it would seem to the casual observer that there should be a lot of confidence in what we are doing or doing now. Is that the case?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. I don't see how we can have that confidence if a year ago there was a 59 percent increase in cultivation, and last year another 17 percent increase in cultivation. And last year, it wasn't mentioned, but there was a 34 percent increase in production of opium. There has never been in history 8,200 metric tons of opium produced anywhere.

So whatever is being done it is not adequately being done or the elements are not there. Again, I would emphasize that it has to start at getting rid of those who are in government or in the police forces and are linked to drug trafficking because with that demonstration that is unacceptable it is very hard to get the local farmers and local officials to change their way of operating.

Mr. ACKERMAN. In your view, is President Karzai the individual that is capable of doing this? That has the will to do it and who will do it?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. I think that in some instances he has demonstrated that, and one would hope that we would be emphasizing that is in his essential interest, and in the essential interest of building a state in Afghanistan and avoiding the return of the Taliban. It has to be done.

Mr. ACKERMAN. The theory of not pushing General Musharraf too far or too hard is that he is in a very precarious position, and if we do he falls and worse is yet to come to replace him. Is that theory applicable in any way to President Karzai in Afghanistan?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. I would reverse it and say the problem in Pakistan has been that we have been too tied to General Musharraf and not focused again enough on the things that we think are necessary in order to prevent the Taliban from continuing to operate, and that thus far the government in Pakistan has not carried out the activities that we think are necessary to close down the command and control centers of the Taliban in major cities.

Mr. ACKERMAN. I am addressing the point of why we are not pushing Karzai hard enough. What is the theory behind not pushing him hard enough?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. No, I understand. I think it is part of the same theory, that is that they are afraid what comes next. I think accurately that he has attempted in many areas to move the political process forward.

It is this one area on the question of going after some of those who had positions of power earlier in Northern Alliance and that are still involved in drugs, some of the new appointees who have shown, as we just heard about the former governor, that are involved in drugs, that these people have to be removed. He needs support in doing that.

Mr. ACKERMAN. In your written testimony you talk about the eradication experiences both in Bolivia and Colombia and you imply that the effects were detrimental to the overall efforts. Perhaps you could describe how people in those countries reacted to eradication and how you think the Afghans would react to a similar program?

If eradication isn't the answer to convince farmers not to grow poppy, what is?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. What I was saying earlier was that the additional elements in the counternarcotics strategy have to be given greater priority, that is the rural investment in infrastructure, the rule of law, law enforcement, interdiction. Those in our view need to be given higher priority. Our concern about the strategy is not whether there is eradication at all.

The question is whether it becomes the major element of the strategy, and particularly the indication in the strategy that if they can they would like to move to aerial eradication.

In the political situation in Afghanistan we are arguing that would be counterproductive in terms of the political objectives of countering the recruitment capacity of the Taliban, it would be counterproductive in terms of demonstrating that the United States international community and the Karzai government are concerned about the well-being of the average Afghan farmer.

Mr. ACKERMAN. In your statement you note that the U.S. view has been to see the police as part of the military response to the insurgency. Would you explain how we should see the police and what their role should be?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. The police should be part of the civilian law enforcement. They should be viewed by the community as somebody that you go to to avoid when there is a crime, that they carry out the investigations of criminal violations and they support local communities in assuring peace and security in that community.

The issue in terms of confronting a military threat from the Taliban is something that the Army has to provide, and there needs to be probably additional troops provided. The point is that the police if well-trained and, again, if noncorrupt can give the communities a sense that they are in fact moving to a point where the institutions of government are providing benefits to them. That simply has not been the case.

That is why we argue for a stronger training program, and one in which the police are seen as part of the civilian rule of law.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Ambassador Schweich spoke to the issue of the public information campaign and placed a reasonable degree of emphasis on the moral message of the religious leaders and opinion makers in telling people that it was against the faith to participate in the opium trade in any way, and that this was not in the interests and it was detrimental to the Afghan people,

Does that moral/religious message translate into a winning argument or not?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. By itself, no. Clearly, though, in the case of Afghanistan more than other places that message is an important one and should be part of the effort. Until it is paralleled by the message that officials cannot remain in office and engage in drug trafficking then the message is not going to be credible.

So if the local Imam is giving this message but at the same time he is seeing that the local police chief who has just been appointed and that district police chief is engaged in drug trafficking, the community is just, how can it take the message from the Imam and believe that this represents the national view? It is hypocritical.

That is why it is so important to have an effort focused on, as I said, political will on getting rid of those who are engaged in drug trafficking, not allowing people to think that it is acceptable. At that point the message then from Imams and others that this is immoral, I think that is an important message.

I actually think from what we understand from our researchers that the farmers and the communities do respond to that message. Right now there is confusion in the message.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Should in any way our economic support be related to or performance based?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. I think you have to establish benchmarks in all of the assistance programs in our view, but particularly in the area of support in the area of police and justice, that he benchmarks are that we see some of these indications that the government is moving to end impunity. For example, at the end of my testimony I mentioned four things.

One is that the agreed upon mechanisms for vetting and screening of officials be enforced. That the pay and rank reform commissions be utilized throughout, that the international police board's recommendations and monitoring of conduct be carried forward. Those are the kinds of things that we think should be benchmarks for continued support. In the case of the economic development support if you will I think there are two things there.

One is that hopefully you would provide comprehensive rural development. I guess I do disagree a little bit with Ambassador Schweich's earlier comment. The rural communities still do need seed and fertilizer. They also need credit, they also need technical assistance in terms of markets, and they also need farm to market roads and they need support on infrastructure.

That kind of program I would simply go forward with and try and expand that to as many communities as possible. As you heard, some 75 percent of the population, probably more than that in terms of the labor force, is involved in agriculture and rural activities.

Mr. ACKERMAN. One of the points that were made by the Ambassador which I thought were very important but it was basically just skimmed over and allowed to escape mention if not notice was that despite the fact that opium production was up it becomes a smaller percent this year of GDP because the economy has eventually expanded.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Is growing.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Should we be, and this in back up of the statement that you just made about seed, et cetera, paying more attention and giving more support to economic development than we are doing right now so that the economy expands even further, and how does that affect this particular industry?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. The answer to that is yes, and particularly I would say the rural investment, rural infrastructure, the rural economy, that is where I think we need to find ways to expand our

investment, and also, off farm income generating activities because the fact is as you know you are not going to get the same kind of revenues from wheat or other crops as from opium, but if you balance it with other activities, support for off farm income generating activities to provide those communities with infrastructure including further health clinics and schools, then it becomes a much more even choice for the farmer as well as if he knows that if goes the other way there are penalties.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Do we have enough assets and resources dedicated to this proposition so that if we concentrated in the areas such as the province in which there is a 53 percent increase, which accounts for a great deal of that expanded new number, that we just don't allow the balloon to be squeezed there and the poppy production pop up somewhere else in a greater percentage?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. I mean, I think we do need to provide more resources. I think one of the most important things is to demonstrate that it is a long-term commitment. It took 15, 17 years to really change Thailand in terms of a producer of opium poppies. I think that in terms of overall sustainable counternarcotics that it is going to take that long.

Right now I think that you have a challenge as well of demonstrating to significant forces of the country that this is a long-term international commitment not only for the next 2 or 3 years, and so I would argue that to the degree that you can find ways to make that kind of long-term authorization at significant levels that would have a great deal of benefit.

Mr. ACKERMAN. The last question is an easy one. If I had the power to appoint you, and I do because there is nobody to object, as the President, chief iman, head of the military and poet laureate of Afghanistan, what would be the first three things that you would do, maybe four if you want, in sequential order that would have the greatest impact on this problem?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. I would first establish the rule that no one in government, in the police forces and in the military could maintain their position if they engaged in corruption or drug trafficking. Then, I would look for those who are at the top of the ladder and I would go after them and say that you have got one choice: It ends now or tomorrow you are going to be prosecuted. That is the first thing. That may also be the second thing.

I think the third is that I would try and make a much more significant effort on the rest of the rule of law. We are investing the next 2 years \$3 billion on the police. You ask the question: What are we investing on the judiciary? I would say we are going to make the entire rule of law police, justice, judiciary and corrections, a significant part of a new clean, noncorrupt Afghanistan, and I would take the actions to do that.

The third is I would ask the international community to make a long-term commitment to development and say that it is going to take me 10 years to do this, I need to have a 10-year commitment to be a partner with us in this effort. Finally, I would say you have 50,000 troops here, the Afghan military and the Afghan police are prepared to go after the high value narcotics assets, we need your help in doing that. That is for starters.

Mr. ACKERMAN. As I ponder the appointment and you prepare for the confirmation process I thank you for your very important contribution to our deliberations and for all of the information that you have contributed to the record. I thank you sincerely, and the committee stands adjourned.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 1:02 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

