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AFGHAN NARCOTRAFFICKING

Post-2014 Scenarios

ISBN: 978-0-9861751-1-4
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Post-2014 Scenarios

Joint U.S. - Russia Working Group on Afghan Narcotrafficking

February 2015

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Acknowledgements:

The EastWest Institute would like to extend special thanks to two working group members for their invaluable early contributions to this report: Ilnur Batyrshin, Head, Research Center, Federal Drug Control Service of the Russian Federation (FSKN); and Kimberly Marten, Ann Whitney Olin Professor of Political Science, Barnard College, Columbia University. We also want to express our heartfelt appreciation to every working group member—each of whom generously gave his/her time and expertise to make significant contributions to the project—and to the many other experts and officials in both Russia and the United States who took the time to offer their thoughts and feedback on our work.

This report would not have been possible without the significant support of our financial sponsors. We would like to convey our sincere thanks to the John B. Hurford Rapid Response Fund and the Kathryn Davis Peace Initiative for their financial sponsorship of this report. And finally, our deepest gratitude goes to the Carnegie Corporation of New York, whose generous support enabled not only this report but also the entire project.

Note:

This publication was made possible in part by a grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York. The statements made and views expressed are solely the responsibility of the author and contributors.

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Introduction

The future of Afghan narcotrafficking is one of the major shared interests of both the Russian Federation and the United States. It remains so even in the current political climate.

Early 2015 is a momentous time for Afghanistan, with deep uncertainty about the post-2014 environment. The mandate of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) has come to an end even as political transition from the administration of President Hamid Karzai is perhaps only partly resolved. The Taliban insurgency remains strong enough to pose a significant challenge to the Afghan government, and a negotiated end to the ongoing conflict seems unlikely in the very near term. Economic growth, heavily fueled by ISAF spending in addition to development assistance, may suffer significantly as those external sources of funding decline. Narcotics, a significant portion of the Afghan economy for the past decade, could be poised to assume even greater importance in these circumstances, with major consequences for Afghanistan, the region and the rest of the world.

Despite these concerns, post-2014 Afghanistan may not be a catastrophe. The political transition may yet result in a more broadly inclusive government that could help limit ethnic and regional tensions. Combined with significant reduction in the number of foreign troops, successful political transition might weaken the appeal of the Taliban and ultimately allow a negotiated settlement in the medium term. Reduced conflict could allow modest but sustainable economic growth. In conjunction with a robust counternarcotics campaign, these circumstances could at least limit a post-2014 expansion in Afghan narcotrafficking.

The future of Afghan narcotrafficking is one of the major shared interests of both the Russian Federation and the United States. It remains so even in the current political climate. Since 2011, the EastWest Institute (EWI) has organized and hosted meetings of the Joint U.S.-Russia Working Group on Afghan Narcotrafficking to discuss ways to constructively and jointly enhance bilateral and multilateral efforts against narcotics.

Joint efforts between the Russian Federation and the United States to assess and shape the post-2014 environment may be particularly fruitful given the prior Soviet experience with Afghanistan withdrawal and transition. Indeed, many senior Russian policymakers have personal experience with this process, which was much more successful than many analysts anticipated. Lessons from the previous withdrawal and transition are useful for the current context. As this report notes, political cohesion and external support were critical to both the surprising longevity and, subsequently, the equally surprising demise of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (DRA).

Poppy fields near Jalalabad.

The working group is working to produce consensus reports to inform the Russian and U.S. governments as well as Afghan, regional and international stakeholders. In *Afghan Narcotrafficking: A Joint Threat Assessment*, the working group comprehensively outlined the threats that Afghan heroin poses to the Russian Federation, the United States and the broader international community. A series of follow-up reports will focus on specific issues related to Afghan narcotrafficking, and this report is the first in this series.

This first follow-up report has a broad focus on the post-2014 environment in Afghanistan with an emphasis on how that environment will affect the challenge of narcotrafficking. The *Joint Threat Assessment* concluded: "The effectiveness of any development and enforcement strategies against illicit drugs is likely to hinge on improved security. That, in turn, may require tangible progress on a political solution to the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan."[1] As a result, the future of efforts to counter narcotrafficking is intimately connected to these broader developments. As this report discusses, the political and security environment in Afghanistan could become much worse after 2014 with a corresponding worsening of the narcotrafficking threat. This underscores the imperative need for Russian and U.S. policymakers to find the political will to resume and perhaps even increase cooperation despite ongoing differences on other issues. Together with regional partners and international organizations, renewed Russian-U.S. cooperation presents the best hope for a brighter future.

Although the high levels of uncertainty regarding the post-2014 environment make it impossible to offer definitive predictions, it is nonetheless possible to sketch likely scenarios. This report proceeds in three parts. First, it briefly reviews the Soviet experience of withdrawal and transition in the late 1980s in order to illustrate both previous lessons and potential pitfalls. Second, it offers a concise summary of the security, political and economic environment in Afghanistan as of late 2014. Third, using the first two sections as a baseline, it describes several possible post-2014 scenarios based on different assumptions about key variables, such as the outcome of political transition and how these various post-2014 environments would impact narcotrafficking. These scenarios can then inform policymakers in both the Russian Federation and the United States on key areas of cooperation in order to shape the post-2014 environment and to mitigate the expansion of the shared threat from Afghan narcotrafficking.

The Last Goodbye: Withdrawal and Transition in Afghanistan 1985-1992

Although the war in Afghanistan in the 1980s is significantly different from the war in Afghanistan in the 2000s, there are some striking similarities.

The post-2014 transition in Afghanistan is not unprecedented in recent history. A major international intervention in Afghanistan came to an end just over 20 years ago. Many of the participants in that conflict are participants in the current conflict (though old allies are now enemies and vice versa). It is thus instructive to explore the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan to help frame the possible outcomes of the end of the ISAF mission.

Although the war in Afghanistan in the 1980s is significantly different from the war in Afghanistan in the 2000s, there are some striking similarities. Most notably, the Soviet government, like the United States and ISAF, were confronted with the challenge of extricating itself from a long-running conflict while ensuring at least some stability for the government in Kabul. In both cases, the government in Kabul was divided along regional, ethnic and political lines. In both cases, the economy of Afghanistan was highly dependent on foreign aid, though to varying degrees, and the insurgents confronting the government relied on some level of sanctuary and support from outside actors.[2]

Most importantly, the post-withdrawal and transition prospects for Afghanistan were grim in both cases. Many analysts anticipated rapid collapse in Kabul following withdrawal in 1989.[3] While analysts are not quite as dour on the post-2014 prospects for the government in Kabul, there is still considerable concern for the future and even for the survival of the current government.[4] Given these similarities, it is worth examining the Soviet experience of withdrawal and transition from Afghanistan. First, this experience helps provide a framework for thinking about post-2014 scenarios. Second, it also highlights that the direst predictions about post-2014 can at least potentially be prevented by international efforts, including Russian and U.S. cooperation.

Beginning in 1986, the Soviet leadership began quietly planning its exit from Afghanistan, where it had combat troops supporting the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan since the end of 1979. In December 1986, the Soviets informed Afghan leader Mohammad Najibullah that Soviet troops would be withdrawn in 18 to 24 months. In July of 1987, he was informed that the withdrawal would be as early as a year later.[5] As this withdrawal and transition began, the security, political and economic environments were all challenging.

The security environment was marked by government security forces that had improved but were still far from perfect. By 1987, the Afghan army was still beset by desertions, and recruitment remained challenging. But overall, the force had stabilized and developed some competence. One Soviet military adviser commented that by 1987, "... the Afghan army had been more or less fully

Soviet troops begin their withdrawal from Afghanistan, 1988.

In terms of the economic environment, the Afghan government was highly dependent on foreign aid to maintain the economy and particularly to pay for security forces.

reconstructed" and that "[t]heir officers were not bad and they were well armed."[6] The Afghan intelligence service, known by the acronym KhAD, was also much improved.[7]

At the same time, the Afghan government and its allies worked to create militias or to bribe existing armed groups to support the government. There were a variety of local allies in this category, including "border militias" and "regional/territorial forces." These varied in size and competence from a few dozen gunmen to thousands of well-armed and motivated troops. These local allies were frequently better paid than their state counterparts. As withdrawal and transition continued, these militias took on greater security responsibility.[8]

Overall, the result of these improvements in government security forces and militias resulted in a stalemate-security environment. As withdrawal began, the insurgency was unable to seize any key terrain, such as the provincial capitals. Yet the government was unable to drive the insurgency out of its rural strongholds.

In terms of the political environment, Najibullah was faced with the challenge of maintaining control of a factionalized party while at the same time seeking to expand the base of support for the regime. The People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) was deeply divided between two factions: the Khalq (People) faction and the Parcham (Banner) faction. These factions had both political and ethnic differences, with Parcham more Tajik and Khalq more Pashtun. These divisions were deep and had led to fratricidal party conflict at various points.[9]

In May 1988, Najibullah named a non-PDPA member as prime minister and threw considerable support into trying to make him seem a viable non-communist part of the regime. Yet cracks began to appear in the regime, including the security forces, as Najibullah thwarted a coup attempt in late 1988 by Khalqi army officers and subsequently exiled other prominent Khalqis.[10]

In terms of the economic environment, the Afghan government was highly dependent on foreign aid to maintain the economy and particularly to pay for security forces. Tellingly, despite the agrarian nature of Afghan society, more than half of Afghanistan's food supply was imported. While governments in Kabul had been dependent on foreign aid since at least the eighteenth century, the scale of dependence by 1988 was much greater than at any previous time.[11]

As withdrawal concluded in early 1989, the insurgency launched a major assault on the eastern city of Jalalabad. However, the expectation of a rapid victory was dashed as mujahideen limitations in conventional combat were exposed and the cohesion and fire-

Following the attempted coup of August 1991, the Soviet Union abruptly shifted its position on aid to Afghanistan and agreed to cut aid to Kabul if the United States would cut aid to the insurgents.

power of forces loyal to the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (DRA) proved decisive. The victory at Jalalabad also helped boost the morale of government forces.[12] This period was, according to some observers, absolutely critical, as the psychological impact of withdrawal on the government and security forces was very serious.[13] A defeat at Jalalabad would likely have spelled the end of the regime.

Najibullah began to maneuver politically after the withdrawal, purging his government of all non-PDPA personnel. At the same time, he made a series of diplomatic overtures to the United States and offered the insurgents local autonomy in exchange for an end to the war. Najibullah also began to play up both his Islamic faith and his Afghan nationalism.[14] Soviet external support continued throughout 1989, and the result was, to the surprise of many, a stalemate rather than the collapse of Najibullah's government.

The situation in 1990 remained broadly similar to that of 1989, with some notable developments. First, there was yet another coup attempt, which highlighted the ongoing Parcham-Khalq split in the PDPA. Though it failed to oust Najibullah, it was nonetheless serious, as it included the defection of the defense minister to the insurgency.

External aid to the Najibullah regime from the Soviet Union continued at a rate estimated at over $300 million a month. A major component of external aid was oil and petroleum products, which enabled the security services to maintain aviation and other mobile operations, providing a major advantage over the insurgents. Najibullah continued to use aid to buy loyalty and/or neutrality from militias and to reward the security services such as KhAD. This often took the form of "informal reconciliation," where former insurgents stopped fighting against the regime without making a formal declaration of reconciliation. In addition to buying support, he shifted his stance on insurgency, offering to create a national reconciliation government, which would transition to elections. He even offered to give some security powers to the commission that would oversee the elections. The result was yet more stalemate, though Najibullah's regime did lose one provincial capital, Tarin Kot in Uruzgan province, as many of the security forces there surrendered without a fight to the insurgents.

At the beginning of 1991, the stalemate continued, but major changes were coming. In April, a coordinated attack on the provincial capital of Khost, led by Hekmatyar and Haqqani and supported by Pakistan, was the first successful conventional operation by the mujahideen, using both tanks and artillery.[15] Najibullah's response to the fall of Khost and rebel assaults on other cities was to continue attempting to refashion his regime to make it an acceptable partner in a transition government. He renamed the PDPA the "Homeland Party" and further embraced Islam. The alliances with local militias also remained vital to regime survival.[16] Informal or local reconciliation continued during this period.

The biggest change in 1991 was in terms of external support. External aid for Najibullah began to decrease as the Soviet economy faced its own troubles. Fuel deliveries fell, which helped ground significant portions of the air force. Following the attempted coup of August 1991, the Soviet Union abruptly shifted its position on aid to Afghanistan and agreed to cut aid to Kabul if the United States would cut aid to the insurgents.

At the beginning of 1992, the prospects for a relatively peaceful transition to a post-communist regime were good. In March 1992, Najibullah made a final concession that many insurgents had been waiting for: he agreed to step down from power. With this concession, reconciliation and peace seemed at hand.

Then things fell apart. In less than a month, Najibullah's regime would be militarily overthrown.

The rapid collapse began with a wave of military defections from the regime. Even as he agreed to step down, Najibullah sought to shore up the government's position by accelerating an effort to emplace his loyalists in key security positions. One of these moves was an attempt to replace Abdul Mumin, commander of the Khairiton garrison near the Soviet (later Uzbek) border and an ethnic Tajik, with a more loyal Pashtun. Mumin balked at being replaced and turned to militia leader Abdul Rashid Dostum for aid. Dostum defected from the government to join with Tajik mujahideen commander Ahmad Shah Massoud, and within weeks, the north of Afghanistan was under rebel control. Militias began to defect at an increasing pace, and by April, Kabul had fallen and the Najibullah regime was finished.[17] Najibullah was forced to resign by his own party. Unable to flee the country, he sought asylum in the United Nations compound.[18]

The end of Najibullah's regime highlights two key factors that will likely be critical to scenario outcomes in post-2014 Afghanistan. The first is the importance of political cohesion inside the regime and particularly in the security forces. The internal fighting, coup attempts and, finally, defection of security forces were far more dangerous to the regime than the direct threat posed by the insurgents. In more than two years of fighting, the insurgents had only seized two remote provincial capitals, while the defection of Mumin and Dostum led to the regime's collapse in a matter of weeks.

The second key factor is the importance of external support for regime survival. The Najibullah regime and its security forces fought much better than expected in the early battles of 1989, in part because they were well supplied, particularly with fuel. Likewise, the Afghan economy, though battered by war, continued to function with large inputs of external support and supplies. However, as aid began to shrink and then ultimately ended, both the security and economic environment began to falter.

These two factors are obviously intimately related. Although the decline of external aid did not cause the fissures inside Najibullah's regime, reduced resources meant there was both less available with which to buy loyalty and less fuel for the government's aviation assets. Fewer resources also meant that the insurgent's chance of victory, dim after the early successes of Najibullah's forces in 1989, began to look better, and therefore defection became more appealing.

Although post-2014 Afghanistan will be vastly different in many ways than post-1989 Afghanistan, these two factors will be central to all scenarios. Moreover, the post-1989 experience highlights that careful efforts at managing withdrawal and transition after 2014 can have positive effects. As U.S. analyst Les Grau notes, "the Soviet effort to withdraw in good order was well executed and can serve as a model for other disengagements from similar nations."[19] Yet at the same time, the post-1989 experience also illustrates that initial success in withdrawal and transition is no guarantee of future stability. Najibullah's regime lasted much longer than anticipated, but collapsed very quickly.

A final lesson from the Soviet withdrawal is the impact that such a rapid collapse can have on narcotics production. By late 1992, one assessment bleakly noted that "[t]he booming drug trade has become the only major source of revenue for the war-ravaged country."[20] Avoiding a similar outcome (to the extent possible) after 2014 must be a major policy goal of both Russia and the United States.

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The Current Environment in Afghanistan

The security situation in Afghanistan has worsened significantly over the course of 2014 in several categories.

The current security, political and economic environments in Afghanistan are shaky but far from catastrophic. This section assesses these environments and discusses possible post-2014 scenarios.

Security in Afghanistan

The security situation in Afghanistan has worsened significantly over the course of 2014 in several categories. First, the performance of Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) has been mediocre at best. On a positive note, ANSF—the broad category that includes the Afghan National Army (ANA), the Afghan National Police (ANP) and the National Directorate of Security (NDS)—have decisively taken responsibility for fighting the Taliban, an important step. According to the most recent official U.S. government figures, the ANSF are fighting without ISAF involvement roughly 90 percent of the time.[21]

In addition, ANSF were able to secure the first and second rounds of the 2014 presidential election. Although there was significant violence on the day of first-round voting in April, it did not substantially disrupt the election, and turnout was reasonably high.[22] The same was generally true of the second round of voting in June, though in both cases some analysts believe the Taliban deliberately chose not to launch major attacks.[23]

ANSF, in conjunction with ISAF, have also been able to limit (though not eliminate) the threat posed by insider attacks. This joint effort required significant counterintelligence and vetting efforts as well as efforts to promote understanding between ANSF and ISAF personnel. While a U.S. two-star general was killed in an insider attack in August 2014, the overall threat has been greatly reduced over the past 18 months.[24]

However, these bright spots in ANSF performance are offset by setbacks during the summer fighting season. Across the country, the Taliban have been able to push ANSF out of various key positions. Though these losses are often temporary, they highlight continuing limitations in ANSF capability. In the northern province of Faryab, for example, the Taliban were able to seize key parts of the strategic Qaysar district for three weeks in April and continued to threaten the overstretched ANSF over the summer.[25] Similar offensives in eastern Afghanistan were ongoing throughout the summer, particularly in the vital province of Nangarhar.[26]

Most worrisome from a counternarcotics perspective has been the heavy fighting in key opium-producing regions. Even according to the latest U.S. military data, six of the ten districts with the most Taliban-initiated violence are in Helmand and Kandahar. According to the same report, fully 17 percent of the recorded Taliban-initiated violence nationwide was in just four districts in Helmand.[27]

By early September 2014, media reports indicated that Taliban offensives in two of those districts in Helmand, Sangin and Musa Qala, had come close to pushing the ANSF out. These are significant opium-production areas, and the Taliban have allegedly been aided in the fighting by narcotics traffickers. In addition, Taliban spokesmen have candidly not-

ed that due to the greatly decreased risk of ISAF airstrikes, they have been able to mass for ground assaults, a worrisome admission for the post-2014 environment.[28]

The heavy fighting has contributed to significant attrition in the ANSF as both casualties and ANSF personnel becoming absent without leave (AWOL) take their toll on the force.[29] Again, this trend is most pronounced in some key opium-production areas. The official attrition for the ANA 215th Corps, which is based in Helmand, was 4.1 percent in March 2014, well before the fighting season was fully underway.[30] This figure has likely increased over the course of the summer fighting season, as the ANA (and other components of ANSF) have been hard hit in the fighting around Sangin and Musa Qala.

Moreover, the official figures for attrition may understate the problem. Independent assessments of ANSF have highlighted the continuing problem of "ghost" personnel—security force members who are on the payroll but either do not exist or never report for duty.[31] Although the scale of this phenomenon is difficult to estimate, it probably means that the actual number of personnel in some units is lower than the number on paper. Therefore, although the absolute level of attrition may be accurate, this attrition may represent a larger percentage of the actual force.

In addition to the burden of heavy fighting, the ANSF remain underdeveloped in several critical functions. Perhaps most critical is logistics and maintenance, leading a U.S. military report in April 2014 to bluntly note:

> From the ministries down to the tactical level, GIRoA [Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan] faced a major challenge in developing an effective, integrated logistics and sustainment system for the ANSF. A lack of trained maintenance technicians combined with a logistics system that struggled to resupply units in the field adversely affected every component of the ANSF.[32]

Although ISAF has been able to mitigate some of these logistics and maintenance issues, such mitigation will be much more difficult in the post-2014 environment. Without effective logistics and maintenance, the ANSF will simply not be able to resist the Taliban.

In addition to logistics, ANSF will continue to have limited intelligence capability. At present, ISAF is able to mitigate this shortfall as well, primarily through technical intelligence. But as with logistics, this will be more difficult after 2014. Moreover, intelligence sharing between ANA, ANP and NDS is still limited by bureaucratic issues. Thus, even when one component of ANSF gains intelligence, the intelligence may not be properly exploited.[33]

The Taliban have also made targeting ANSF intelligence capabilities a priority in the 2014 fighting season. This has been particularly evident in attacks on the NDS, which is focused on intelligence collection. In less than two weeks in late August and early September 2014, the Taliban launched major attacks on NDS provincial headquarters in Nangarhar, Wardak and Ghazni.[34] Combined with the existing weakness in ANSF intelligence, this targeting of NDS could result in a significant post-2014 shortfall.

Beyond these specific shortfalls, ANSF are almost entirely dependent on external support for funding. Maintaining the current ANSF force level and structure requires roughly $6 billion annually, with Afghanistan able to provide perhaps $500 million each year. The remainder must be provided by external supporters, who are reluctant to continue such support levels indefinitely.[35]

Finally, corruption, patronage and politicization continue to plague ANSF. Although political issues are discussed in more detail in the next section, these issues are reflected in the ANSF. The result is that ANSF leaders are often chosen much more for their ability to pay bribes and garner patronage than for their combat effectiveness. As with the earlier Najibullah regime, these issues are intertwined with the ethnic divide between the country's largest ethnic group, the Pashtuns, and the minority Tajiks, Uzbeks and Hazara.[36]

All of these general ANSF issues affect the capabilities of Afghanistan's Counternarcotics Police. Most notably, even before the summer fighting season and heavy fighting in Helmand, the level of narcotics interdiction had already dropped significantly in the south. This was in part due to the drawdown of ISAF forces that enable counternarcotics but also simply due to the poor security environment. It is most likely that interdiction dropped even further over the summer.[37]

Without effective logistics and maintenance, the ANSF will simply not be able to resist the Taliban.

Several key leaders of the ANSF are also alleged to have ties specifically to opium production or smuggling.[38] Most notably, the provincial police chief of Kandahar, General Abdul Raziq, has been alleged to have significant and long-standing ties to opium smuggling. Similar accusations were leveled at the police chief of Uruzgan.[39] Although these allegations have never been proven, it highlights the continuing challenge of using ANSF for narcotics interdiction and eradication.

As challenging as the security environment in Afghanistan has become in 2014, the political environment is at least as troubling.

Beyond the ANSF, the security environment has worsened considerably for the civilian population. Civilian casualties are up significantly through mid-2014, according to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). The source of casualties has also changed, with more resulting from civilians caught in the crossfire between ANSF and the Taliban and fewer resulting from improvised explosive devices (IEDs).[40] This underscores the improved Taliban ability to mass and conduct military operations instead of (or in addition to) relying on the harassment of lines of supply and movement.

Finally, transition will have significant implications for the variety of private and semi-private security providers that have proliferated in Afghanistan since 2001. Estimates in 2012 put the number of such private security providers at 30,000 to 70,000. As ISAF departs, many of these contractors are or will be unemployed. This creates the potential for banditry, predation or recruitment into the insurgency. At a minimum, it ensures that there will be no shortage of armed men willing to provide "muscle" for narcotraffickers.[41]

Politics in Afghanistan

As challenging as the security environment in Afghanistan has become in 2014, the political environment is at least as troubling. The presidential election was intended to usher in the post-Karzai era, which at least some hoped would reduce simmering tensions both within Afghanistan and between the Afghan government and the West. Instead, it has provoked a crisis that could undermine the viability of the post-Taliban political order.

The central feature of the crisis is the confrontation between two coalitions that have coalesced around candidates Abdullah Abdullah and Ashraf Ghani. Abdullah is the

Member of Afghan National Security Forces in Helmand province.


AFGHAN LOCAL POLICE

presidential candidate most closely associated with the Northern Alliance and particularly the Panjshiri Tajiks. In addition to his own supporters, Abdullah has appointed Engineer Mohammad Khan, a Pashtun from the Islamic Party, and Mohammad Mohaqiq, a Hazara with longstanding ties to the Northern Alliance.[42] This coalition did well in the first round of presidential voting but fell short of the threshold to avoid a run-off. In the second round, Abdullah picked up additional endorsements from some of those who did not make the second round, including the candidate believed to have the strongest backing from Karzai, the former Foreign Minister Zalmai Rassoul.

According to some analysts, this division over political candidates reflects an increase in the tension between Tajiks and Pashtuns. Although this tension is not new, it may have reached a new high for the post-2001 era.

Ghani's coalition includes supporters of General Abdul Rashid Dostum, who retains formidable political support among the Uzbeks, and Sarwar Danish, a Hazara from the central province of Daykundi. Although not performing quite as well as Abdullah's coalition in the first round, Ghani's coalition also picked up supporters from some of the candidates that did not make the second round. Most notable among these was Ahmad Zia Massoud, a Panjshiri Tajik who had been one of Zalmai Rassoul's vice presidential candidates in the first round.

The second round of presidential voting was closely contested, with accusations of fraud coming from both camps but most loudly from the Abdullah coalition. An arduous recount led to an agreement that would make Ghani the president while appointing Abdullah to a new "chief executive" position. This power-sharing arrangement is still tenuous but could potentially resolve the conflict between supporters of the two candidates. Both men were sworn in at the end of September 2014.[43]

The two quickly signed the crucial Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) with the United States, a key element in maintaining some level of post-2014 international support, including nearly 10,000 troops. The BSA is open-ended in terms of the roles and numbers of U.S. forces in Afghanistan. It does prohibit U.S. forces from undertaking combat operations except by mutual agreement with the Afghan government. However, in November 2014, the Obama administration decided that, at Afghan request, U.S. forces would continue to conduct some combat operations, especially providing air support to the ANSF, after 2014.[44] In addition to the BSA, the Afghan government has signed a parallel agreement with NATO to provide roughly another 5,000 international troops, though at present those forces will not be participating in combat operations.

According to some analysts, this division over political candidates reflects an increase in tension between Tajiks and Pashtuns. Although this tension is not new, it may have reached a new high for the post-2001 era. Pashtun nationalism in particular is singled out by some as having experienced an awakening or rebirth that helped propel Ghani to the presidency. This broader tension will limit the room for political maneuver, particularly for Ghani. If he fails to satisfy his Pashtun constituents, he may soon be deeply unpopular.

In addition to the turmoil surrounding the election results, there have been other significant political events in 2014 that have contributed to instability. Perhaps foremost among them was the death (from diabetes) of Marshal Mohammed Qasim Fahim, one of Karzai's vice presidents. Fahim, a Panjshiri Tajik, was widely viewed as the enforcer of discipline, through both carrots and sticks, among the sometimes fractious components of the Northern Alliance. In particular, he was believed to be important in keeping the powerful governor of the key northern province of Balkh, Atta Mohammad Noor, in check. He was also a longstanding link between the government and the Northern Alliance.[45] His absence as both enforcer and mediator makes the current political crisis more troubling and harder to resolve.

These divides highlight one difference between the Soviet and ISAF experiences with withdrawal and transition. The Soviets had a partner who was, according to some, charismatic and strong-willed even if he confronted similar divides between the Parcham and Khalq factions. His strong base in KhAD further reinforced his position. In contrast, Ghani faces a political environment that is at least as factionalized and may or may not have the level of charisma, ruthless will and security-service support that Najibullah enjoyed.[46]

The linkage between political factions and elements of the ANSF makes the political crisis deeper, as it raises the possibility of ANSF fragmentation or even an attempted coup. In August 2014, the Afghan government ex-

pelled a reporter from *The New York Times* for allegedly falsely reporting rumors and intimations by some Afghan officials about the possibility of a coup attempt.[47] Although it is impossible to verify coup rumors, they have not been confined to just *The New York Times'* reporting.[48]

Politics below the national level reflects the divisions at the top but with additional rivalries and conflicts stemming from local conditions. As noted, the governor of Balkh, though aligned with Abdullah, has his own agenda. These intra-ethnic divisions are present in all the major groups in Afghanistan to varying degrees. Thus, even if the power-sharing arrangement holds at the national level, it would not resolve all political issues. Center-periphery divides and clashes are a recurring, almost continuous, theme in Afghan political history, and the post-2014 period is unlikely to be any different.[49]

These political issues, like security, are linked to opium production. In Balkh province, successful poppy eradication has depended heavily on its importance to Governor Atta, who has persisted in efforts despite seeing little in terms of outside support. His efforts to limit poppy have been bolstered by his overall concentration of power and the relatively robust health of the provincial economy. Fighting poppy is both within his power and interest.

In contrast, in neighboring Badakhshan, field research by David Mansfield finds the state unable to extend its writ, and poppy eradication varied widely by geographic area.[50] Power in Badakhshan is fragmented, with a group associated with Tajik Defense Minister Bismillah Khan confronting those loyal to Parliamentarian and local strongman Zalmei Khan. Mansfield notes: "Such is the competition and antipathy between these two forces that the incursion of insurgent groups in the province are in part attributed to the actions of both sides as they attempt to undermine the patronage networks of their rival."[51] Taliban have certainly gained popularity in some areas of Badakhshan by blocking opium eradication.

Political divisions are not the exclusive province of the government. There are a variety of factions within the broader Taliban, perhaps most notably the semi-autonomous Haqqani Network. In addition, the same sort of center-periphery challenges the central government faces also confront the Taliban. Analysts have noted a divide between the senior leadership, based in Pakistan, and the field commanders in Afghanistan.[52] A similar divide was noted in the insurgency in the 1980s and may have contributed to the chaos after 1992. Indeed, the following quotation from 1991 could soon be applicable today (albeit perhaps with reference to opium rather than marijuana):

> Not surprisingly, many of the field commanders, disillusioned by the constant in-fighting among the leadership, have asserted their autonomy and pursued their own ambitions, either by fighting with the government forces or by entering into secret deals with Kabul. In many of the so-called "liberated" areas the field commanders have established their respective "spheres of control", levying taxes on passengers, trucks and buses that pass through their territories, and not infrequently funding their bands of mujahidin through the lucrative cultivation of marijuana.[53]

These divides may mean that the Taliban after 2014 will be less rather than more formidable, as internecine struggles may come to the fore with ISAF gone. Indeed, David Mansfield argues that in many areas, it is already difficult—if not impossible—to speak of "the Taliban" as a single entity.[54] At present, the Taliban appears to have sufficient cohesion to mount significant attacks even as 2014 draws to a close, but the possibility of further loss of cohesion remains real.

The Afghan Economy

The Afghan economy has not done well in 2014, which has compounded the need for external support as government revenues have contracted.[55] According to the World Bank in 2013, consumer and investor confidence were already contracting due to uncertainty over the post-2014 environment.[56] It is unlikely that this confidence has increased significantly given the security and political problems experienced this year.

Indeed, a July 2014 survey of businesses by the Afghan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) found that business was worse than business owners had anticipated three months earlier. In addition, the report noted:

Politics below the national level reflects the divisions at the top but with additional rivalries and conflicts stemming from local conditions.

"A considerable number of companies reported to be closed or downsized. At least 9.9 percent of the employees of the surveyed companies had lost their jobs in a most favorable season of the year, which is unprecedented in our surveys."[57]

A significant portion of Afghanistan's gross domestic product (GDP) is reliant on international assistance, both from foreign governments and non-governmental organizations.[58] This includes spending on ANSF, which indirectly benefits the economy through both ANSF salaries and local acquisition of goods like food. It also includes ISAF spending in Afghanistan for local acquisition, facilities rental, transportation and the like. The result is an economic bubble that could burst if international aid shrinks significantly in the post-2014 environment.

A significant portion of Afghanistan's gross domestic product (GDP) is reliant on international assistance, both from foreign governments and non-governmental organizations.

This potential bubble collapse is compounded by rising Afghan expectations. Some analysts have observed a seemingly genuine belief by some Afghans that Afghanistan will be a rich country within a few years. This has been driven by both international and local rhetoric about Afghan mineral resources, as symbolized by the Aynak copper mine near Kabul. Yet this mine, like the broader possibility for Afghan mineral development, is likely to be more image than substance in at least the near-term future.[59] The gap between expectations and reality is dangerous because it has the potential to fuel dissatisfaction with the government.

Although these broader trends affect the entire Afghan economy, there is substantial regional variation. The economy of the north, centered on Mazar-e Sharif, and the west, centered on Herat, have access to international markets (Central Asia and Iran respectively) that has made them somewhat more dynamic and less aid-dependent than other regions. Combined with a better security environment in those regions, these regional economies will likely outperform the other regional centers (Kabul, Kandahar and Jalalabad) after 2014.

Unfortunately, the one area of Afghanistan's economy that seems to be doing well is opium production.[60] According to some reports, 2014 is set to be a record-breaking year.[61] Although close observers note that there is variation in the expansion of opium and therefore some cause for hope after 2014, at present the trend is negative.[62]

Aerial view of poppy fields in Nangarhar province (photo by Alcis Ltd.).

Future Scenarios for Afghanistan

A stable stalemate is defined as one in which neither the government nor the Taliban has a prospect of achieving a rapid and/or decisive victory but both sides are suffering some level of attrition.

Drawing on both the Soviet experience and the foregoing discussion of the current baseline, it is possible to identify four major possible scenarios for post-2014 Afghanistan. The key variables are the internal political cohesion of the country (high or low) and the level of external support (moderate or low).

In this context, political cohesion means principally that at the national level, the accord reached between the Ghani and Abdullah camps (or some equivalent) holds together. Realistically, this does not mean the two camps embrace one another with great warmth but rather that they can agree to a distribution of political and economic resources that both can live with. At the same time, cohesion means intra-ethnic divisions do not become unmanageable. In contrast, low cohesion presumes that the national accord does not endure for long after end of 2014 and/or that intra-ethnic divides become more severe.

External support in this context means continued support from the international community for the Afghan government. Moderate support presumes that the international community continues to provide significant financial support to ANSF and Afghan economic development, along with a continued but much smaller presence of international troops to provide training, advice and assistance to ANSF. Low (or no) support presumes that the international community after 2014 provides significantly fewer resources and little or no international troop presence.

The interaction of these two variables thus yields four theoretically possible scenarios as described in the table on the right (see Figure 1).

Each of these scenarios is briefly discussed in the remainder of this section. The focus is less on detailed description of the many possible variations within each scenario and more on the likely implications for policymakers, with an emphasis on counternarcotics, for each scenario. The intent is to provide policymakers with a structured mechanism to evaluate possible futures and to determine where Russia-U.S. cooperation is most likely to be effective in reducing the shared threat of narcotics.

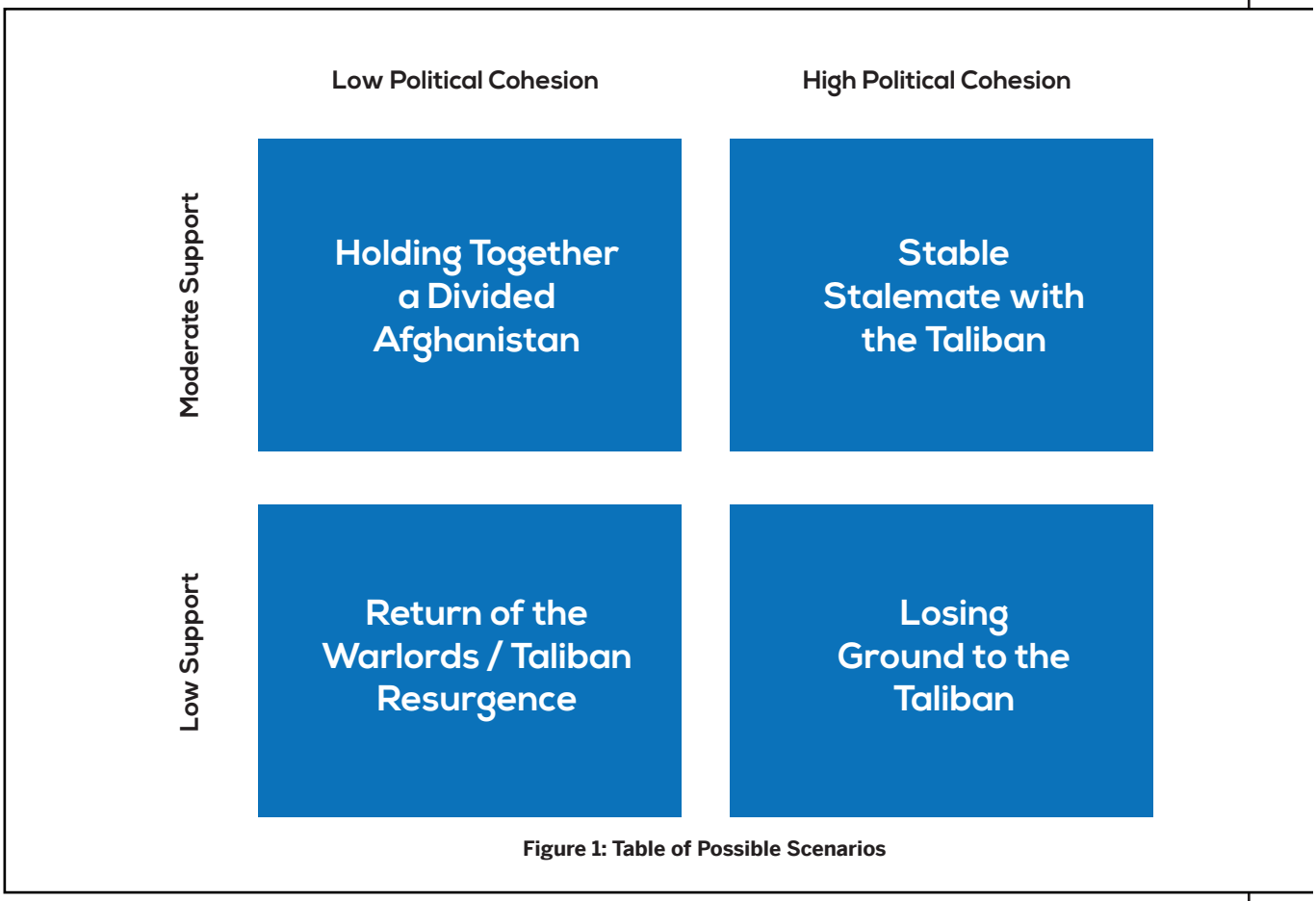

Figure 1: Table of Possible Scenarios

Stable Stalemate

The best possible outcome for a post-2014 Afghanistan is a stable stalemate between the government and the Taliban. Although an outright government victory would be better, it seems unlikely given the current environment and future trends. However, with continued political cohesion and external support, government forces could at least achieve a stalemate.

A stable stalemate is defined as one in which neither the government nor the Taliban has a prospect of achieving a rapid and/or decisive victory but both sides are suffering some level of attrition. Stalemate could potentially allow a successful negotiated settlement, as both sides conclude that outright victory is impossible. Some hypothesize that a "mutually hurting stalemate" is one of the conditions necessary for such a resolution.[63]

Stable stalemate is the post-2014 scenario that most resembles the current environment. The political compromise between the interests represented by President Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah would endure, though its details may vary (e.g. Abdullah might step down from his current position but remain within the current political framework). Both sides would be able to ensure some level of discipline within their networks to limit intra-government clashes (e.g. the fighting between factions in Jowzjan province in June 2013).[64]

Significant but nonetheless limited external support would also continue. This would allow the government to maintain the ANSF as a significant force, stabilizing the security environment (current ANSF costs are roughly $6 billion annually). At the same time, the "aid bubble" in the economy would deflate more slowly, reducing the immediate economic impact.

Despite the similarity to the current environment, this scenario would still have some key differences. The contours of control of territory would likely be different than the current distribution, though much would depend on the continued level of external support. If the government maintains sufficient external support to support the ANSF at the present size, it would likely be able to hold a significant

Yet, even in this relatively promising scenario, interdictions and eradication are likely to decrease even from current levels. Policymakers should emphasize other tools to mitigate these shortfalls.

portion of the country against the Taliban. Areas that are lost to the Taliban would likely be those that are remote or peripheral (though these may also be important areas for opium production). However, the ANSF would likely be able to control key lines of communication between all major cities and many provincial capitals.

If the level of external support shrinks modestly and the ANSF are forced to contract more quickly (e.g. from the current level of 352,000 to something closer to the 2012 NATO Chicago Summit level of 228,000), more significant losses of territory are likely.[65] This might include remote provincial capitals such as Parun in Nuristan or Tarin Kot in Uruzgan. Although these losses would probably not prevent the establishment of a stable stalemate, it would be on terms less favorable to the ANSF, which would reduce the Afghan government's leverage in any negotiations. Under these conditions, the Taliban might also be slower to conclude that a stalemate was actually stable and thus that negotiations were necessary.

From a policy perspective, achieving stable stalemate will require two types of effort. The first is to ensure that the preconditions in terms of external support and political cohesion are met. This will be challenging, given donor fatigue in terms of external support and unresolved tension in the new Afghan government.

The second effort is more operational and focuses on reducing or ameliorating some of the key weaknesses in the ANSF. Most notably, these include the limitations in intelligence and logistics as well as politicization and corruption in the ANSF. The recent collapse of Iraqi forces around Mosul demonstrates that even forces that have external support can be vulnerable to rapid and unexpected collapse when they lack logistics and intelligence and suffer from politicization and corruption.[66] While Iraq may not be perfectly analogous, the South Vietnamese military suffered from similar weaknesses in 1975 and also experienced an unexpected collapse.[67] The possibility that the ANSF could suffer similar collapses even when receiving external support cannot be discounted. However, if external support is structured to ameliorate these weaknesses (e.g. by retaining foreign troops that can provide some level of logistics and intelligence support), then the likelihood is much lower.

Even as the ANSF contract, the Afghan economy would also shrink in this scenario. Although continued aid would allow the "aid bubble" to deflate relatively slowly, the economy would still feel the impact as well as some continued uncertainty. This decline, combined with ANSF loss of some key opium-producing areas (e.g. parts of Helmand), would likely drive some short-term expansion of the opium economy.

Despite these challenges, this stalemate offers some hope for counternarcotics. Although this stalemate promises little to no short-term progress, it does raise the possibility of significant progress in the medium-to-long-term through a negotiated settlement. A successful negotiated end to the conflict in Afghanistan would not in and of itself solve the opium problem, but it offers the possibility of refocusing resources from counterinsurgency to counternarcotics as well as a general expansion of the government's reach into key opium-producing areas.

Yet, even in this relatively promising scenario, interdictions and eradication are likely to decrease even from current levels. Policymakers should emphasize other tools to mitigate these shortfalls. Some examples of these tools will be provided in the forthcoming report by the Joint U.S.-Russia Working Group on Afghan Narcotrafficking on border security around Afghanistan, the second in the series of follow-up reports focusing on specific issues related to Afghan narcotrafficking.

Losing Ground

A less promising scenario for post-2014 Afghanistan is one in which the new Afghan government maintains political cohesion but begins to lose external support. In this scenario, the government would not collapse overnight but would be forced to prioritize very limited resources and would lose significant portions of the country to the Taliban. Ultimately, the government would at best hold onto key parts of the west and north of the country as the Taliban take the south and east. At worst, the ANSF would collapse due to lack of funding.

This scenario assumes, like the previous one, that the current political coalition between the Ghani and Abdullah camps will hold, but unlike the previous scenario, it presumes that external support drops significantly after 2014 in terms of both foreign troops and resources. Even with a Bilateral Security Agreement, the United States and other international partners are weary after more than a decade of war. Moreover, fiscal austerity has tightened Western defense budgets. This combination makes it entirely possible that even though support will likely continue into 2015, it may begin to wane rapidly thereafter.

Perception of the Afghan government will likely play a significant role in maintaining external support. If donors view the government as unworthy, then support would likely decline rapidly. For example, a perception among donors that Afghanistan is not supporting rule of law and human rights could lead to significant decline in international aid. The same is true if donors perceive that corruption in Afghanistan is getting worse rather than better.

Some of these concerns have already been publicly reported in 2013 during the Karzai administration.[68] Although there is hope that Ghani and Abdullah will make fighting corruption a priority, both men have extensive networks that will be seeking patronage after supporting them in the elections.[69] It is thus possible that despite their intentions, corruption, human rights and the like will worsen to the point of significant donor reduction after 2014. Indeed, the price of maintaining political cohesion could be increased patronage.

This scenario is perilous for the government in two ways. First, a rapid and significant decrease in international troops below the current post-2014 plan of roughly 10,000 U.S. troops with additional NATO forces would hamper the continued development of the ANSF. This is particularly important as a decline in funding for the ANSF could jeopardize the security of even key regions of Afghanistan (particularly Kandahar city and Lashkar Gah in Helmand). Based on estimates from an independent assessment of the ANSF, protecting the five largest cities in Afghanistan alone would require maintaining an army at least 20 percent the size of the current one. If one assumes a roughly comparable fraction of the current police force, then that mission requires roughly 70,000 ANSF personnel.[70]

Given that attempting to hold just these cities without holding any lines of communication would be pointless, it is clear that the minimum number of ANSF to have any prospect of holding even the most vital terrain would be significantly larger. If one assumes that it would take roughly double the personnel (approximately 140,000 ANSF) to secure lines of communication and there are no changes in how the ANSF pays and equips its forces, then paying for this force will require roughly $2.4 billion annually (40 percent of the current cost of $6 billion), of which Afghanistan can pay, as noted earlier, at most $500 million in the near term. Thus, if donor funding for the ANSF falls below roughly $2 billion annually in the medium term, it is highly unlikely that the current government can survive.

Support that is above this rough threshold but below the Chicago Summit funding level of the ANSF ($4.1 billion annually) might be able to hold some other key cities, but its ability to conduct counternarcotics operations of any significance would be virtually nil. Many of the key opium-producing regions, especially in the south, would likely be outside government control.

At the same time, the "aid bubble" would likely burst rapidly and painfully in this scenario. If aid dropped by half in one year, this would lead to a decline in Afghan GDP of at least 10 percent.[71] When compounded with a rapidly worsening security situation, the fall would likely be greater as investment dried up and currency flight to safer havens like Dubai increased.

This combination of declining government control and economic contraction would likely result in significant expansion of the opium economy with little to no successful interdiction inside Afghanistan. However, continued political cohesion at least offers the possibility for continued cooperation by the Federal Drug Control Service of the Russian Federation (FSKN) and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) with Afghan counternarcotics units. This at least offers some possible avenues for intelligence-sharing that could allow interdiction outside Afghanistan.

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Holding Together

This scenario presumes the opposite of the previous scenario, with political cohesion failing but external support continuing. It is distinct from a scenario in which Abdullah vacates the position of chief executive but continues to participate in the political process and is able to maintain discipline among his supporters. It is also significantly worse for Afghanistan generally and counternarcotics specifically than the preceding two scenarios. In the absence of political cohesion, external support is likely to be less effective and harder to maintain.

A joint Russia-U.S. position on the need for unity would be very useful to reinforce the conditions for aid.

In this scenario, the current coalition between the Ghani and Abdullah camps fails relatively quickly after 2014. Some observers believe that the two camps could collapse in six months.[72] Although this may be pessimistic, it is very plausible that competition for resources and/or another bloody fighting season in 2015 could drive the two camps apart early in the post-2014 period. This problem would be compounded by potential difficulty in maintaining discipline in both camps, with powerful figures like Dostum and Atta potentially acting according to their own agendas in ways that further undermine political cohesion.

The result of this loss of political cohesion is difficult to predict, but at best, it would lead to suboptimal resource allocation. Many in the Abdullah camp and their extended networks inside the government and ANSF would likely overemphasize defending territory in the north (e.g. Balkh and Badakhshan) rather than in the south (e.g. Kandahar and Helmand). This would leave even very important regions vulnerable to the Taliban in the south and east.

The Ghani camp could attempt to prevent this reallocation by changing some of the leaders in the ANSF, shifting leadership towards their supporters. However, as the Najibullah case underscores, this could further alienate the Abdullah camp and begin the unraveling of the ANSF. The worst case in this scenario is the breakdown of the ANSF along ethnic and political lines, with the Taliban then well positioned to exploit this breakdown and significantly increase its territory.

From a counternarcotics perspective, this scenario is potentially worse than the previous scenario. It is at least as bad in terms of interdiction, as the political will to interdict and the security environment to enable interdiction would both decline from the present level. The opium economy would be roughly as bad, as the overall economy would suffer from political division and eroding security even though continued international aid would prevent or at least ameliorate rapid decline.

However, the loss of political cohesion could make cooperation with the ANSF, including military advising and intelligence-sharing, more complicated. Intra-ANSF sharing and cooperation, including on counternarcotics, would be limited. Military advisers, along with FSKN and DEA personnel, would have to deal with counterparts that were, at best, not cooperating, and at worst, hostile to one another.

The policy emphasis in this scenario would be using conditionality of external support to force the government to hold together despite political differences. Yet, there are real limits to the impact of conditionality. Convincing actors in these environments that conditionality is serious can be challenging. Even if that is successful, some Afghan actors may believe that they could benefit more from defecting from the government even if that meant losing some aid. They may also believe that suspended Western aid could be replaced by others, including regional actors.

A joint Russia-U.S. position on the need for unity would be very useful to reinforce the conditions for aid. It would help dispel any ideas that the two could be played against one another. In this scenario, it may be insufficient to maintain full political cohesion, but it could be sufficient to prevent the ANSF from breaking apart.

Yet, convincing weary donors to continue supporting Afghanistan, even conditionally, would be challenging. This is especially true if, as seems likely, current fiscal constraints for many donors continue for the medium term. The result could be a downward spiral, where donors begin to withdraw aid as political cohesion declines, which in turn reduces incentives for the coalition to hold together, and so aid is further reduced.

Return of the Warlords

The end result of either of the two preceding scenarios (holding together and losing ground) could ultimately be the final scenario. In this scenario, both external support and political cohesion are low or even nil. This scenario would very likely resemble the post-1992 period in Afghanistan, though with two key differences.

As with the post-Najibullah-regime environment, various strongmen would likely vie for control of regions in a shifting pattern of alliances.[73] The result would be an increase in violence as the ANSF broke apart along ethnic and political lines. Some of these defectors would likely side with insurgent factions, including Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's Islamic Party.

At best, each of the main regional strongmen might eventually control his area without seeking to expand (e.g. Dostum would control the Uzbek region around Jowzjan province). This might achieve a fractured but nonetheless stable and relatively peaceful balance between competing warlords. Yet the incentives, both economic and in terms of eliminating potential enemies, may push the various alliances towards continued and even expanded conflict.

One of the main differences between this post-2014 scenario and the 1990s in Afghanistan is the preexistence of a national shadow government in the form of the Taliban. It is possible that many of those defecting from the ANSF in the south and east could choose to align with the Taliban, as the alternative might be to fight a two-front war against the Taliban and the former ANSF in the north and west. The Taliban would have the ability to focus resources, province by province, to deal with those unwilling to align with the Taliban, potentially defeating warlords, one by one. It is thus very likely in this scenario that the Taliban would dominate much of the south and east relatively quickly.

Yet, the other main difference between the post-2014 period and the early 1990s is the continued interest of both regional and international actors in counterterrorism in Afghanistan. This may cause some actors to remain involved in Afghanistan in the post-2014 period (at least covertly) to a much greater extent than in the 1990s. This could prevent the Taliban from duplicating its advance across almost the entire country, as it did in the late 1990s.

The counternarcotics implications of this scenario are likely to be catastrophic. Interdiction would essentially end along with all of the current Afghan counternarcotics apparatus. Without significant foreign aid and in the middle of renewed large-scale civil war, the opium economy would be one of the only reliable sources of revenue for many warlords. There is strong reason to believe that the Taliban would not act to curtail opium production, at least in the near term. Even at the height of their power before 2001, the Taliban was circumspect about how fast and hard to push limitations on opium production.

Apart from working to prevent this scenario from occurring, the policy emphasis must be two-fold. First, as with some of the other scenarios, Russia and the United States would both benefit from coordinating efforts to mitigate the expansion of opium. This includes most notably strengthening efforts to control regional borders, as will be discussed in the working group's forthcoming borders report. However, this is politically sensitive, particularly in Central Asia, and so the extent of cooperation may be limited.

Second, in considering support to anti-Taliban elements, Russia and the United States would benefit from some level of coordination. This is again politically very sensitive, but collaboration might allow Russia and the United States to influence how other regional and international states attempt to intervene in Afghanistan. Moreover, a coordinated position would give Russia and the United States some leverage to make any aid contingent on limiting growth of the opium economy in regions controlled by those seeking assistance.

Ultimately, the best policy for both Russia and the United States, particularly in terms of counternarcotics, is to avoid this scenario entirely. Although it is not likely in the immediate post-2014 period, the decline in external support and/or political cohesion over time could steadily push Afghanistan in this direction. The more that Russia and the United States can cooperate to prevent this drift from the beginning, the less likely this catastrophic scenario will ever be realized.

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Conclusion

The problem of Afghan narcotics will likewise continue to threaten Russia, the United States and the rest of the world. The Afghan state has too many weaknesses, the Taliban is too strong, and the incentives to expand the opium economy are too high for the environment to improve in the short term.

The working group's central conclusion is that the post-2014 security, political and economic environments will not be good under almost all conceivable circumstances. The problem of Afghan narcotics will likewise continue to threaten Russia, the United States and the rest of the world. The Afghan state has too many weaknesses, the Taliban is too strong, and the incentives to expand the opium economy are too high for the environment to improve in the short term. Policymakers must be prepared for this reality.

However, the possibility of a sustainable and stable stalemate should give policymakers hope. It offers a potential pathway to a negotiated settlement that could eventually begin to reduce the threat from Afghan narcotrafficking. At the same time, the possibility of a return to warlordism, though unlikely at present, should draw attention to the possible future perils.

Policymakers in Russia and the United States should therefore focus effort along two tracks. First, both countries should explore all possible joint efforts that increase the probability of a stalemate that leads to negotiations. One clear means is to work together to ensure continued political cohesion in Afghanistan. This will require diplomatic coordination so that all major political factions receive the same message to remain unified from both Russia and the United States.

Second, Russia and the United States must also coordinate efforts to mitigate the negative impacts if stable stalemate is unachievable. These efforts will also help limit the impact of the inevitable short-term challenges in any post-2014 scenario. The recommendations in the forthcoming EWI working group's borders report fall into this category of effort. In addition, future EWI working group reports will focus on possible joint efforts to attack the illicit mechanisms narcotraffickers use to launder and transfer money and strategies for alternative livelihoods. In the absence of security preconditions, however, it is likely that recommendations in this latter area would need to be left to future generations of leaders.

Harvested poppy crops near Kandahar.

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ACRONYMS & DEFINITIONS

ACCI	Afghan Chamber of Commerce and Industries
ANA	Afghan National Army
ANP	Afghan National Police
ANSF	Afghan National Security Forces
AWOL	Absent Without Leave
BSA	Bilateral Security Agreement
DEA	Drug Enforcement Administration, USA
DRA	Democratic Republic of Afghanistan
FSKN	Federal Service for Control on Narcotics Circulation, Russian Federation
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan
KhAD	Afghan Intelligence Service
mujahideen	Arabic term referring to those engaged in "jihad" (holy struggle or war). Most closely identified with guerilla groups fighting Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and Soviet forces during the Soviet war in Afghanistan from 1979 to 1989.
NDS	National Directorate of Security
PDPA	People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan

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