

After 2014: The U.S./NATO Missions in Afghanistan

Written by J Vowell

This PDF is auto-generated for reference only. As such, it may contain some conversion errors and/or missing information. For all formal use please refer to the official version on the website, as linked below.

After 2014: The U.S./NATO Missions in Afghanistan

<https://www.e-ir.info/2012/12/17/after-2014-the-u-s-nato-missions-in-afghanistan/>

J VOWELL, DEC 17 2012

As a result of the NATO conference in Chicago in May of this year, the Obama Administration formally announced the end of combat operations by the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) at the end of 2014 and a focus of operations until that time upon Security Force Assistance (SFA) to the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). Dr.

Joseph Collins at the National Defense University terms this “Afghanization”, implying ownership of security by Afghans.[i] This focus on SFA is now the withdrawal strategy. Said another way, as they stand up, we will stand down. The underlying assumption here is that ANSF will be good enough by 2014 to provide for their own security and prevent the overthrow of the elected government in Kabul and a return to a Taliban state. But the outcome of any coalition effort, now or in the previous 11 years in Afghanistan, has been anything but certain. In this paper, we will analyze reasonable military options for the U.S. and NATO for the transition period after 2014 that will achieve vital U.S. national security interests in Afghanistan. To reinforce success after the security transition, it is recommended that the U.S. and NATO adopt a balanced approach that includes counterterrorism (CT), security force assistance (SFA), and the provision of coalition enablers and other combat power to support ANSF, the cumulative effect of which has the greatest probability for Afghanistan to succeed and our vital national security interests to be achieved.

To begin, our stated goals for Afghanistan include enabling a stable and secure Afghanistan from ever becoming a safe haven for terrorists that threaten Afghanistan, the region, and the world.[ii] In addition, the National Security Strategy for the United States describes the specific vital national interest to disrupt, dismantle and defeat al-Qaeda (AQ) and its violent affiliates in Afghanistan, Pakistan and around the world.[iii] Any discussion of what is to happen now and beyond 2014 should always be balanced against these strategic aims. To determine what course of action to adopt for the U.S. and NATO after ISAF’s mission comes to a close, we must have relative certainty that not only are AQ and other associated movements unable to conduct operations, but that they cannot find purchase in Afghanistan and that the security environment prohibits their reemergence. This means the Afghan state must have sufficient forces to secure themselves and that the state itself is capable of providing for overall stability. The development of competent ANSF is seen as one essential element to this end. The continued CT effort against transnational terrorist groups and leadership is another key facet. The current mission and focus with ISAF is to this aim by the end of 2014, where ongoing CT operations continue to target the highest level transnational terrorists while simultaneously focusing the broad military effort in training, advising, and assisting the ANSF to become operational and self-sustaining.[iv]

With this in mind, we now turn our attention to realistic military options for missions after the 2014 transition is complete. One possible option for NATO and the U.S. is an almost complete withdrawal of all forces after 2014 (similar to Iraq). For this to be feasible, ANSF must be minimally capable of providing for their security. However, it is unclear at this time if this will be the case. As of November, 2012, only one ANA Brigade of the 23 is able to handle security without air or other military support from the coalition.[v] Although ANSF have shown their abilities to plan, prepare and execute military operations at the tactical level, they have yet to show operational achievements without coalition support. This means a certain level of troops dedicated to training, advising and assisting ANSF even after the transition is complete. Planning figures place this number somewhere between 6,000 and 30,000 troops, depending upon which level of ANSF still has operational issues needing advisors.[vi] But we will stay focused on the missions needed to support the achievement of vital national security interests. Given the probability that ANSF will still need advisors beyond 2014 at a certain level in the hierarchy, a precipitous withdrawal of U.S. forces has a high probability of precipitous failure. Failure defined as Taliban resurgence or a protracted civil war

After 2014: The U.S./NATO Missions in Afghanistan

Written by J Vowell

that would lead to conditions favorable to a reemergence of AQ in the country. Essentially, any sudden withdrawal at the end of 2014 has great potential to make Afghanistan 2015 look exactly like Afghanistan 1992.

A second option acknowledges the more important mission that directly addresses the vital national security interest of the defeat of AQ and associated movements—counterterrorism(CT). Secretary Panetta has acknowledged this will be the primary mission of U.S. presence in Afghanistan and a force structure will be built around this.[vii] But as we have already stated, ANSF will still most likely need to have some NATO advisors and trainers beyond 2014 to continue their development. Counterterrorism efforts, however, go directly to the heart of a declared U.S. vital national security interest, namely to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al-Qaeda and associated movements.[viii] The U.S. and NATO went to war in 2001 in Afghanistan as al-Qaeda effectively used a compliant host nation state (Taliban Afghanistan), ungoverned space, and vast, rugged terrain from which to plan, train, prepare and launch transnational terrorism and attacks against the west. While it is argued that the focus of our strategic aim against al-Qaeda in the region has been emphasized in the past 11 years to varying degrees, it remains in our vital national interest to continue their defeat as an organization.[ix] This capability that remains, mostly special operations forces and their enabling combat power, would be nearly 1,000 troops and service personnel.[x] In addition, no protracted effort at CT in the region can be conducted without associated bases from which to project selected and targeted raids with or without host nation forces. Therefore, anything less than a CT footprint inside the borders of Afghanistan precludes any serious efforts towards CT operations against AQ and associated movements simply due to forward presence. The only other option, over the shore and outside the region, involves huge distances for ISR to traverse, altitudes and weather to overcome for aircraft, and lack of basing close enough to target areas from which to conduct raids or focused intelligence operations.[xi] Operations originating outside of the country will be severely impacted by the limiting factors of operational reach and logistics. It gets difficult to prosecute the National Security Strategy against AQ when you aren't physically there to do something about the problem.

A third option after the security transition in 2014 speaks to the truth that ANSF has inherent weaknesses as an organization today that will simply not be overcome in only two more years of development. Since their inception, we have been with ANSF at each step ensuring their success with our forces and capabilities where theirs did not exist. Beyond needing the advice, mentorship and training assistance from NATO, ANSF are absolutely concerned with their lack of artillery, attack and lift aviation support, MEDEVAC, and obvious intelligence domination capabilities we provide for them and currently bring to the battlefield.[xii] Understandably so, as they have seen their western partners with them now having been ingrained to employ synchronized combined arms in an overwhelming manner during any battle from which the enemy cannot recover. The battlefield becomes more leveled when it is an Afghan Soldier-on-insurgent fight. Without critical enabling combat power and logistics, ANSF won't operationalize and actually be on a more even keel than they are now in future engagements and battles with insurgent groups. So, in addition to trainers and CT forces, we are describing a third mission set of providing enabling capabilities that enhance ANSF operations or completely fill an unresourced requirement. These are the formations and force structures of aviation, logistics, fires, intelligence, and trauma-capable medical capabilities that add to western commitment. Adding enabling combat power to the range of military options certainly hedges our bets that success will tilt towards Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) and NATO.

Regardless of any timeline, there are several key factors and enabling conditions for success, or obstacles causing failure, to discuss. Foremost are the Presidential elections currently slated for April, 2014. President Karzai's term is up and Afghans want change. Karzai is on record saying that these elections must happen and he will step aside and let the process happen as he is constitutionally prevented from a third term.[xiii] This is good, as the Presidential election is important to the success of the NATO withdrawal in 2014 for several reasons. First, it provides for the much-needed legitimacy of the Afghan government to continue efforts to represent the people. Conducting an on-time national election in fulfillment of the Afghan Constitution projects power, legitimacy and transparency and is a strong case against insurgent propaganda that targets the illegitimate GIROA. Any emergency powers enacted or delays to the election, say into 2015, will cause significant anxiety with not only the international community but directly with the Afghan people.

Second, a new Afghan government will be a symbol of the change that is to happen: true Afghan sovereignty and ownership. Karzai is still seen as tied to the U.S. and recent surveys from the Afghan population show the majority

After 2014: The U.S./NATO Missions in Afghanistan

Written by J Vowell

think we've worn out our welcome.[xiv] We helped install him early on. A new president, one elected with great leadership potential for the country, will be seen to be mostly separate from this western "baggage".

Last, the security transition in Afghanistan cannot happen unless there is stable government. Security in Afghanistan won't come at the end of 2014 just because the ANSF are trained and equipped. It will happen because there is political will for the armed forces and police to protect the people and the Afghan state. Staying on track with regards to the presidential election of an effective leader for the country in April 2014 is therefore a key enabler to this future success.

A second important component in the security transition is the commitment of the international community to Afghanistan beyond 2014. NATO has already acknowledged this, declaring that it is committed to providing security forces as trainers and advisers in the years following, terming it the "Transition Decade".[xv] But commitment to Afghanistan must be much more than just to the military. The international community can and must continue to dedicate economic aid and support packages to the government of Afghanistan for the foreseeable future. Simply put, Afghanistan does not have the GDP to support the current level of ANSF at 182,000 troops and approximately 150,000 police or anything close to these levels.[xvi] If there is no security, there is no governance. If there is no governance, the Taliban and al-Qaeda will have the ability to reestablish primacy in the country, or at least claim great swaths of it. In 2012, NATO and the U.S. spent \$110 billion on efforts in Afghanistan for a broad counterinsurgency mission.[xvii] While these numbers are neither politically nor economically sustainable by donor nations at these levels, Afghanistan will still require significant economic support for its security forces and its government to function in power until they are stable enough to support themselves. Many planners believe the realistic number that support ANSF and governance is around \$10-15 billion/year; \$20-25 billion when adding total costs for potential footprints of NATO forces that may remain after 2014.[xviii] Although there is an estimated \$3 trillion in precious metals and gems under the Afghan earth yet to be exploited, it will take years for industries and infrastructure to reach them and make them marketable for the coffers of the Afghan government.[xix] Same with natural gas and oil deposits, revenues produced either in Afghanistan or tariffs to be charged on pipelines that would potentially carry gas across the country. All of these potential growth commodities will take time to develop to provide a basis of economic support to the country. Therefore, the international community must continue to invest economic support packages until Afghanistan further develops its GDP.

It is important to note the cost of not supporting Afghanistan economically versus the cost required of continued support to a stable country. As a lesson for this, we need look no further back than the lesson drawn from President Mohammed Najibullah's government after the Soviet withdrawal in 1989. After the last elements of the 40th Soviet Army crossed over the Amu Darya River back into the USSR from Afghanistan in February 1989, Najibullah's regime was thought to be on the verge of collapse.[xx] Najibullah lasted for almost another three years. It lasted primarily because the Soviet Union continued to give aid to Najibullah for his security forces to defeat the mujahedeen groups to the tune of over \$3 billion a year.[xxi] With backing, the security forces were successful. When the Soviet Union collapsed in December 1992, the money stopped immediately. Three months later, Najibullah and the Afghan government was overthrown by various mujahedeen groups working together. This was enabled by the U.S. and Saudi matching aid packages to mujahedeen and Afghan refugee operations and programs now reduced to a mere \$400-500 million each year from 1990-1992, which was enough to keep the mujahedeen pressure on the Najibullah-led Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (DRA).[xxii] We are left to ponder the staying power of the Najibullah regime if his security forces continued to be paid, armed, equipped and trained to defeat the mujahedeen groups all violently competing for power in Kabul. With further extrapolation, it may even be surmised that the Afghan Taliban would never have come to power in 1994-1996, their success being due primarily to the deep security vacuum that reverted Afghanistan to ungoverned chaos and fiefdoms of warlord states once Najibullah was overthrown. One only has to look at this relatively recent historical narrative to draw relevant parallels to our situation in Afghanistan after 2014. Clearly, the international community must remain committed to the GIRoA and a political solution unlike our goals in the 1980s that were solely focused on defeat of a Soviet military organization.

Najibullah's political capital likewise didn't collapse immediately after the withdrawal of the Soviets. His efforts to bring mujahedeen groups into the political process, including significant amendments to the Afghan constitution, were the beginnings of what might have been a reconciliation process. But once the Afghan security forces

After 2014: The U.S./NATO Missions in Afghanistan

Written by J Vowell

collapsed from lack of support and payment, the mujahedeen saw the opening and took advantage of the vacuum being created.[xxiii] With no threat of capable Afghan security forces in their way, the mujahedeen groups had no incentive to resolve disputes through diplomacy or political dialogue. Najibullah's lesson in political capital by involving everyone under the tent is the third important enabling condition for Afghanistan beyond 2014: a dedicated and coherent effort towards the reconciliation process involving the Afghan Taliban and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

The third critical enabling condition for success in Afghanistan involves reconciliation between GIRoA and the Taliban. Reconciliation is the political process by which nations end their civil wars as well as a component to how most insurgencies end as the fighters and guerillas are brought into the national political process with the government. As such it is the reestablishment of normal relations between former belligerents. Many efforts have been made towards reconciliation in Afghanistan. While there are many potential inroads to a serious level of talks, most agree that GIRoA, the Afghan Taliban, and Pakistan emissaries must be involved at a minimum. A future of reconciliation is all but impossible without Pakistan's compliance in the outcome to assuage any concerns of their potential loss of strategic depth from a pro-Pakistan government in Kabul.[xxiv] But it is imperative that must be worked alongside our concerted efforts at improving the security forces and their capabilities. As we saw with the Afghan collapse in 1992, only this credible deterring force in Afghanistan will drive home the point to Taliban entities of two possible outcomes: continue to fight to exhaustion or get involved as citizens using ballots and not bullets.

Another important requirement for successful transition is a bilateral security agreement (BSA) between the U.S. and GIRoA. This is the key enabling event for any military option after 2014 when ANSF achieve full control of security responsibility throughout the country. A solid BSA between the host nation and international forces would spell out the specific roles, missions, and responsibilities of all parties. Having a sound legal framework for international forces on the ground inside the host country protects the integrity of the soldiers conducting the essential missions as guests of the state. It will be a challenging prospect to conduct any military mission in the country without agreements regarding potential prosecution of coalition military members.

There is an associated level of risk given all the factors and the environment in Afghanistan that can be mitigated by focusing on the key conditions that must be prioritized in order to enable the successful security transition at the end of 2014. By focusing on the planning, preparations, voter registration, and support to presidential elections of competent leadership in 2014, the best possible political conditions of legitimacy and transparency will be established by Afghans as the end of 2014 approaches and the security transition is complete. Second, by ensuring an enduring and focused commitment of economic support packages (primarily for ANSF development and security) from the international community, we will preclude any mistakes as we saw during the Soviet withdrawal period in the early 1990s. Last, without serious support to political reconciliation efforts, no enduring political solution will be possible. Reconciliation does not have to be complete by the end of 2014: it is highly unlikely that some catastrophic success will be achieved here in the next two years. But it is important that the process remains a top diplomatic priority and efforts continue to develop this political solution.

Regarding our proposed solution for presence after 2014, there are several counterfactuals that should be addressed. One concern raised is the prospect that too many western troops can exacerbate the security environment in Afghanistan, giving the Taliban and other belligerents more reasons to keep fighting the occupation by western armies. This is a valid point however context to this argument is needed. Mullah Omar, the leader of the Afghan Taliban, has said on numerous occasions that his prime goal is to fight the occupiers (western armed forces) in Afghanistan until they are defeated like the Soviets.[xxv] However, the additional U.S. and NATO forces after 2014 have neither a combat mission, nor would conduct combined or partnered operations, and their numbers will be significantly reduced compared to present troop levels. The mission of training ANSF largely confines western forces to training bases and ANSF headquarters areas. Those that do go forward, the SFA advisor teams, would be few in number. The overall appearance and signature in any of our options above is so reduced as to negate any potential reason for the Taliban and other groups to keep fighting western forces based upon any perceived an occupation.

A second potential argument is the political concern of continuing to have U.S. and coalition support do so much for GIRoA after 2014, continuing a dependency paradox at all levels when we should be fostering independence.[xxvi]

After 2014: The U.S./NATO Missions in Afghanistan

Written by J Vowell

Another valid point but this assumes that we won't be developing ANSF to create, train, and employ capabilities of their own. It also assumes the west will continue to support the large development and infrastructure projects of nation-building, which should not be the case. As mentioned, our coverage of enabling combat power bridges this capabilities gap after transition. ANSF will continue to own their Battlespace and the security mission. Western security elements won't be doing it for them as they won't be deployed in traditional formations of organic and complete combined arms organizations. It is difficult to reason that an ANSF kandak (battalion) would look to its 11 advisors to do the necessary work for them. In the past, when there were over 100,000 NATO soldiers accomplishing a counterinsurgency mission by partnering with ANSF, this might have been the case. Scoping the mission and tailoring the western forces to accomplish them inherently prevents ANSF from even being able to look to NATO to do the work of security for them.

A third argument that has been raised before goes directly to our military options and which would best meet our strategic goals with the least cost. From the outside, this would appear to be the CT option only, where our sole effort is towards AQ and transnational terrorism in the area.[xxvii] A mission of conducting only counterterrorism operations, with perhaps the essential force protection and enablers, would be the least costly in terms of resourcing and whole troop numbers on the ground. But choosing this COA alone does not address the overall condition of ANSF and stability inside Afghanistan. CT, while focusing upon the direct threat AQ and transnational terrorism presents to the U.S., does not address the enduring goal of keeping them and Taliban from coming back to Afghanistan. A CT-only approach, while seemingly attractive given low cost and very low signature troop deployment numbers, is only one part of a solution that requires a balanced approach.

Given our discussion of several military operations in context with three key conditions for success in Afghanistan after 2014, it is recommended that this balanced approach for Afghanistan is the best option. A balanced approach has the greatest probability for success through continued ANSF development until they can become independent and operational. For example, ANSF will need close air support from the coalition as Afghanistan's nascent air force isn't expected to be operational until 2017.[xxviii] Insurgent groups are more confident fighting ANSF and western forces in Afghanistan whenever fires and aviation capabilities are not present. As the security transition period approaches the end of 2014, NATO and the U.S. can ill afford any sink-or-swim strategy for the ANSF. The end of 2014 will be the best period, in 13 years of conflict, for Afghan Taliban and other groups to push hard against ANSF and GIRoA if overwhelming combat power is not available to push back. Likewise, the continued prosecution of CT operations will continue to directly target AQ and transnational terrorist groups and actors aimed at securing our vital national security interest and strategic aim in Afghanistan. Last, this balanced approach allows for the best flexibility and opportunities for GIRoA to pursue the needed political solutions for the country to never again return to state-sponsored terrorism or even a place where AQ can effectively return. Keeping insurgent groups under pressure and at bay after transition through reinforced ANSF military strength as well as from the backing and support for GIRoA from the international community greatly increases the chances of Taliban exhaustion and eventual acceleration of reconciliation, a political solution for Afghanistan that will be decisive for Afghanistan's future. Through this approach and the resources required for the missions, the U.S. will be able to achieve our stated vital national security interests for Afghanistan.

—

COL J.B. Vowell is a career infantry officer and commanded Task Force No Slack (2-327Infantry Regiment) in the 101st Airborne Division in Kunar Province, Afghanistan in 2010-2011. He has served in a variety of assignments worldwide and is currently a U.S. Army War College Fellow at Stanford University's Center for International Security and Cooperation (CISAC).

[i] Joseph J. Collins. On the Eve of Afghanization. Armed Forces Journal, July/August 2011, p. 14. Available at www.armedforcesjournal.com Dr. Joe Collins article describing Afghanization as a comparative term to the Vietnamization process where both the Johnson and Nixon administration efforts were for the South Vietnamese to take on more of the security requirements

After 2014: The U.S./NATO Missions in Afghanistan

Written by J Vowell

against the VC and NVA.

[ii] North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Chicago Summit Declaration on Afghanistan: Issued by the Heads of State and Government of Afghanistan and Nations contributing to the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). Chicago, IL, May 21, 2012. Available at: http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_87595.htm

[iii] Barack Obama. The United States National Security Strategy. The White House, May, 2010. P. 4. Available at: http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/national_security_strategy.pdf

[iv] International Security Assistance Force. ISAF Mission Statement. Available at: <http://www.isaf.nato.int/mission.html>

[v] Department of Defense. Department of Defense Bi-Annual Report to Congress on Progress Towards Security and Stability in Afghanistan. Washington, DC. December, 2012. P. 99. Available at: http://www.defense.gov/news/1230_Report_final.pdf. Among many metrics, this report shows the 6-month progress of Afghan National Security Forces. Only 1 ANA brigade is assessed as ready for independent operations with advisors as we head into 2013. No brigade is ready to conduct independent operations as headquarters echelons above them all have operational and logistics support issues that directly affect every brigade's progress.

[vi] David S. Cloud. "U.S. force in Afghanistan may be smaller than expected after 2014". The Los Angeles Times. December 11, 2012. Available at: <http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-us-afghan-20121212,0,6043156.story>

[vii] No author. "Panetta: Troops to Remain in Afghanistan after 2014". Upi.com, November 30, 2012. Available at: http://www.upi.com/Top_News/US/2012/11/30/Troops-to-remain-in-Afghanistan-after-2014/UPI-76671354312656/

[viii] Barack Obama. The United States National Security Strategy. The White House, May, 2010. P. 4. Available at: http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/national_security_strategy.pdf Also stated in President Obama's address to cadets at the United States Military Academy, West Point, NY, December 1st, 2009. Available at: <http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/full-transcript-president-obamas-speech-afghanistan-delivered-west/story?id=9220661> as one of the justifications for supporting the Afghanistan surge strategy.

[ix] Ibid, pp. 19-22.

[x] Michael R. Gordon. "Time Slipping, U.S. Ponders Afghan Role After 2014". The New York Times. November 25, 2012.

[xi] Dr. Fred Kagan and Dr. Kim Kagan. "Why U.S. Troops Must Stay in Afghanistan". The

After 2014: The U.S./NATO Missions in Afghanistan

Written by J Vowell

Washington Post. November 23, 2012. Available at: <http://www.aei.org/article/foreign-and-defense-policy/regional/india-pakistan-afghanistan/why-us-troops-must-stay-in-afghanistan/>

[xii] Deb Reichmann. "U.S. Withdrawal from Afghanistan Raises Deep Concerns". Associated Press. August 2, 2012. Available at: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/08/02/us-withdrawal-afghanistan_n_1734990.html I personally have numerous vignettes from experience in country with ANSF in 2010-2011 where my Afghan counterparts in the Army and Police forces did not express confidence to do independent operations without the type of combat power the U.S. partners provides.

[xiii] Ben Farmer. "Hamid Karzai says he will not seek third term". The Telegraph 11 August 2011. Available at: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/afghanistan/8695924/Hamid-Karzai-says-he-will-not-seek-third-term.html>

[xiv] No author. Afghan Center for Socio-Economic Research. Survey, October 29, 2011 to November 13, 2011. Available at: <http://www.statista.com/statistics/168532/attitude-towards-the-u-in-afghanistan>

[xv] North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Chicago Summit Declaration on Afghanistan: Issued by the Heads of State and Government of Afghanistan and Nations contributing to the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). Chicago, IL, May 21, 2012. Available at: http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_87595.htm

[xvi] Central Intelligence Agency. "Afghanistan". CIA World Fact Book, 2011. Available at www.cia.gov.

[xvii] American Enterprise Institute. "Afghanistan War Cost". American Enterprise Institute, Washington D.C. October 18, 2012. Available at: <http://www.aei.org/article/foreign-and-defense-policy/regional/india-pakistan-afghanistan/afghanistan-war-cost/>

[xviii] Joseph J. Collins. "Stay the Course in Afghanistan: A Careful Transition—Not a Hasty Exit—Will Pay Long-Term Dividends". Armed Forces Journal. May, 2012. P. 25. This is the 15:20 proposal from Dr. Collins—15,000 troops and \$25 billion in aid support.

[xix] Hamed Shalizi. "China's CNPC Begins Oil Production in Afghanistan". Reuters. October 21, 2012. Available at: <http://uk.news.yahoo.com/chinas-cnpc-begins-oil-production-afghanistan-131607723-finance.html>

[xx] Steve Coll. Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan, and Bin Laden, from the Soviet Invasion to September 10, 2001. Penguin Press, New York, NY, 2004. P. 186.

[xxi] LTC David Fivecoat. "Leaving the Graveyard: The Soviet Union's Withdrawal from Afghanistan". Parameters. Summer, 2012. P. 47.

After 2014: The U.S./NATO Missions in Afghanistan

Written by J Vowell

[xxii] George Crile. *Charlie Wilson's War*. Grove Press, New York, NY, 2003. pp. 514-520.

[xxiii] Coll, pp. 262-263.

[xxiv] Ahmed Rashid. *Pakistan on the Brink: The Future of America, Pakistan, and Afghanistan*. Viking Press. New York, NY, 2012. P. 191-192. An excellent rundown of Pakistan's political challenges in accepting a reconciliation effort to which they are not represented and a future government in Kabul that is unfriendly to Pakistan.

[xxv] Bill Roggio. "Full Transcript of Mullah Omar's Message for Eid-al-Fatir". *The Long War Journal*. Posted 10 November, 2010. Available at: http://www.longwarjournal.org/threat-matrix/archives/2010/11/full_text_of_mullah_omars_stat.php

[xxvi] Malou Innocent. "Empowering Dependency 10 Years on in Afghanistan". CATO Institute. Washington, D.C. October 7, 2011. Available at: <http://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/empowering-dependency-10-years-afghanistan> There are numerous concern from the international community and the U.S. government that the institutions developed in Afghanistan, including its security apparatus, is inherently so large and costly as to be dependent upon significant foreign aid and investments for years to come.

[xxvii] Max Boot. "How We Can Win in Afghanistan". *Commentary*. November 2009. Available at: <http://www.commentarymagazine.com/article/how-we-can-win-in-afghanistan/> Vice President Joe Biden desired a CT-only option at the time President Obama decided for an additional 30,000 troops surge to Afghanistan to continue ANSF development and effect a focused counterinsurgency effort.

[xxviii] Department of Defense. "Department of Defense Bi-Annual Report to Congress on Progress Towards Security and Stability in Afghanistan". Washington, DC. December, 2012. P. 64. Available at: http://www.defense.gov/news/1230_Report_final.pdf.

About the author:

COL J.B. Vowell is a career infantry officer and commanded Task Force No Slack (2-327 Infantry Regiment) in the 101st Airborne Division in Kunar Province, Afghanistan in 2010-2011. He has served in a variety of assignments worldwide and is currently a U.S. Army War College Fellow at Stanford University's Center for International Security and Cooperation (CISAC).