

Afghanistan will need assistance for another 15 years

The first American ambassador in Afghanistan after the fall of the Taliban, Robert P. Finn, believes another 15 years of Western engagement will be necessary in order to rebuild the economic stability and public security of Afghanistan.

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BERLIN –According to the US Diplomat who spoke on Monday at the American Academy, the financial aid given by the West to date is far from sufficient. There is a need for the living standards of the population to increase dramatically, and the West needs to give more ‘visible development’, Finn argues. “Afghanistan is the Litmüstest not only for the US, but for the entire international community,” he says. If the operation in Afghanistan fails, then even the future of NATO will be at risk.

Finn described the Afghan central government under President Hamid Karzai as ‘very weak.’ He criticized the lacking qualifications of many government members, the inflated and inefficient administrative machinery as well as the involvement of the government in the drug trade. According to Finn’s estimate the drug trade meanwhile makes up more than 50 percent of the gross national product. Alone in the last year the drug production increased by 14 percent, thereby exceeding that of Columbia, Bolivia and Ecuador combined.