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PICSim | 2006

The Middle East '06

خوش آمدید

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Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

Dear Delegates,

Five years ago the Taliban regime in Afghanistan was toppled by the unmatched American military seeking to rid the country of a leadership harboring terrorists. Today this committee can meet because a government and Parliament have been elected by the Afghan people through elections supported by the international community. However, this leadership has been unable to govern the countryside, which is still largely ruled by warlords. Moreover, rebuilding this nation— torn apart by warfare for the greater part of the last quarter century – has proven to be an alarmingly slow effort, especially when the international community’s investment in this country is not as high as it needs to be. This problem is only aggravated by the fact that Afghanistan continues to be the world’s largest exporter of opium.

At the special extended session of the Cabinet of our Republic from March 2 to 5 in Kabul you will have an unparalleled opportunity to roll up your sleeves and put your heads together to tackle some of Afghanistan’s toughest problems. You will answer the question: what can you as ministers do to help this country overcome its problems and continue down this positive path? In addition to tackling long term problems, you will also be confronted with the daily crises both domestic and international that need to be resolved quickly, lest they evolve into even larger headaches.

My name is Jeanne-Paloma Zelmati, and as chair of this committee, I will represent the President of the Republic of Afghanistan. My director, Veneka Chagwedera will represent the First Vice President. I am currently a junior in the Woodrow Wilson School, focusing on Europe. My director is a freshman and we have both done a good amount of work on the Middle East. We are both happy to welcome you to PICSIM 2006, and to a committee that is sure to be a true challenge. We hope we can make this an exciting weekend! Should you have any questions or thoughts until then, please do not hesitate to e-mail either Veneka or myself.

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Chair, Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

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Director, Islamic Republic of Afghanistan



Princeton Interactive Crisis Simulation 2006



CABINET POSITIONS

President ~ Hamid Karzai (CHAIR)

First Vice President ~ Ahmad Zia Masood (DIRECTOR)

Following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, he traveled with his brother, Ahmad Shah Masood, to the Panjsher Valley with the first group of Mujahideen. For the next three years, he fought alongside his brother in the Panjsher against the Soviet forces and became a distinguished figure in the Afghan resistance to the Soviet Occupation and the Taliban rule of the country. For the next 12 years, he represented the Panjsher front and served as the Special Representative of Ahmad Shah Masood in Pakistan.

In the late 1990s, he continued his political and diplomatic activities, working to raise the profile of Afghanistan on the international stage, and to call attention to the horrors of the Taliban. In December, 2002, he was appointed Ambassador of Afghanistan to the Russian Federation, a post he maintained until July 2004, when he returned to Afghanistan at the request of President Karzai.

Second Vice President ~ Abdul Karim Khalili

He completed his secondary studies at a religious school. After the Communist Coup in 1978, he decided his place was with those who were resisting the changes the Communists were trying to impose on Afghanistan's culture, religion and people. He left Kabul, and became active with a resistance group called Nasr, which aimed to free people from Communist, and later Soviet, rule. Six years later, he became a member of the Islamic Coalition Council of Afghanistan, and later its Speaker.

He worked hard to foster unity among the various Mujahideen groups. He continued to rally his people against the Taliban, and when the opportunity for peace arose with the Bonn Conference, he embraced the process enthusiastically. With the beginning of the Interim Administration, Mr. Khalili halted the activities of the National Unity Party and dissolved its military branch in the interests of national unity and peace. He served as Vice-President of the country under the Transitional Government.

Along with **Amin Naziryar** (minister of religious affairs), leader of Hizb-e-Wahdat, the largest Shiah group comprising the main part of the current government - i.e. they have government of the Central Government in North and Central area of Afghanistan.

Minister of Foreign Affairs ~ Dr. Abdullah Abdullah

He studied ophthalmology at Kabul University's Department of Medicine and worked as an Ophthalmologist in Kabul, until he began working with Afghan refugees in Pakistan, where he came into contact with the anti-Soviet resistance. He spent several years in Pakistan and traveled to Europe often on behalf of the mujahidin. He then joined the Panjshir Resistance Front, and became an advisor to General Ahmad Shah Massoud.

He was the foreign minister of the Afghan Northern Alliance's government from 1998 onwards and in 2001 was selected as Foreign Minister for the Interim Administration of Afghanistan. Generally considered to be leader of the Tajik faction. Not very willing to



compromise with some of the other tribal groups, wanted to maintain the Alliance's grip on power. He played a pivotal role in many of the diplomatic talks on Afghanistan's future circa 2001 and has a penchant for Western-style dress.

He has made many visits to Western governments and Washington, and regularly has the opportunity to visit prominent institutions in those countries to express the view of his government. He has repeatedly asserted that Osama bin Laden is not Afghanistan, and has hinted he may be on the Pakistani side of the mountains that separate these two countries.

He also serves as Ambassador to the UN for Afghanistan.

Minister of Defense ~ General Abdul Raheem Wardak

He served in the Ground Forces, U.S. Army, and received some military training in the U.S. He completed his advanced studies in the United States and in Cairo, Egypt. After the fall of communist regime, he was a member of the Security Committee of Kabul City, Chief of the Army Staff, Director of the Military Officers Society, Deputy Defense Minister, and Director of Reform of the National Army.

He is tasked to defend a country slightly smaller than size of Texas. He must oversee Afghan National Army, strive to make it more representative of the ethnic make-up of the country. His primary functions are disarming militias and warlords who do not respect the authority of the central government. A member of the majority Pashtun ethnic group, he fought the Soviet Union as a mujahidin.

He also serves as a liaison to NATO.

National Security Advisor ~ Dr. Zalmai Rasool

He earned a Doctorate in Medicine from Paris, France. His significant contributions are serving in the Research Institute of Cardiac Diseases in Paris, in charge of a publication in Paris which focused on the Jihad in Afghanistan, as a doctor in the Military Hospital of Saudi Arabia, and as Chief of Staff of the former Afghan King His Majesty Zaher Shah.

He served as a Minister of Civil Aviation and Tourism during the Interim Government and as a National Security Advisor during the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan.

Minister of Interior and Counter Narcotics ~ Ali Ahmad Jalali

He obtained his Bachelors degree in Political Science from the Afghan Military University. He later obtained a Diploma from the US Army Infantry Advance Course, in Georgia. He received his Masters in Military Science from the Staff College in Kabul, and his PSC from the British Staff College. He served as a Professor at many Afghan universities, and as a Top Advisor at the Afghan Resistance Headquarters in Peshawar during the Soviet invasion.

In January, 2003, he returned to Afghanistan, but his family remains in suburban Maryland where he was formerly employed by the U.S. government. He has written extensively about the Afghan military for scholarly journals and the mass media, in



addition to reporting on Afghanistan and Central Asia for Voice of America for almost two decades. Also served in the Afghan army.

He wrote an influential critique in 2002 of the U.S. military role in Afghanistan, arguing that the way the United States used local chieftains in the war on terrorism "enhanced the power of the warlords and encouraged them to defy the central authorities." He later softened his criticism but pointed out that local militias still play a significant role in working with the U.S. military.

Minister of Finance and Commerce ~ Dr. Anwar Ahady

He received a Dr. in Economics from Providence University. He received a Master's degree in Fiscal Affairs and Management and a PhD in Political Science from Northwestern University. He has served as an Assistant Professor of Political Sciences in the U.S. and as the Banking Director of Continental Elona of Chicago. From 2002 to 2004, he served as the Director of the Da Afghanistan Bank (Central Bank of Afghanistan).

Also serving as a Afghan liaison to the International Monetary Fund and the International Development Bank.

Minister of Women's Affairs ~ Ms. Habiba Sarabi

She spent her youth traveling around the country with her father. She later moved to Kabul to attend high school and study medicine at the university. After graduating, she was awarded a fellowship by the World Health Organization and moved to India to complete her studies in hematology.

During the Taliban rule in the country, she and her children fled to Peshawar, Pakistan. She also worked underground as a teacher for girls, both secretly in Afghanistan and in refugee camps in Pakistan.

She carries the trust of the local people, and a reputation for standing up to other male politicians and for the rights of women.

She was recently appointed to governor of the Bamiyan province by President Karzai, but is maintaining her post as Minister until her replacement is appointed.

Minister of Education and Public Health ~ Dr Amin Fatemi

He has participated in advanced academic programs in Bonn, Germany and the High Institute of Public Management in Karachi. He has a certificate in health care and earned a Health Policy in Developing Countries certificate from Boston University. He has served as a doctor in Badakhshan, as a teacher in the Kabul Public Health Institute. He was in charge of the education program of the International Red Cross, founder and Director of Mujahedin's Unity Programs, member of the advisory board of the Health Ministry in the interim government in the early 1990s, and Deputy Minister and First Deputy of the Public Health Minister. He was the Public Health Minister from 1993 to 1995.



He has served as a advisor to the World Health Organization in Geneva, Switzerland for Mediterranean countries, as permanent advisor of the WHO for the Eastern Mediterranean countries, and as a member of the Executive Board of WHO.

Also serving as Afghan liaison to UNICEF and the World Health Organization.

Minister for Refugees and Social Affairs ~ Sediqa Balkhi

She was born into a religious and educated family. She earned a bachelors degree in Islamic Studies. She also followed religious studies in Iran. Besides teaching and working as a manager, she was involved in the anti-Soviet invasion movement through publishing articles and holding several seminars. She has made endeavors for providing the young generation of Afghan refugees with education and providing the vulnerable women and girls with business skills.

She must handle one of the world's largest refugee populations. She is also serving as Afghan liaison to the Office of the UN High Commisioner for Refugees.

Also recently appointed governor of the Jowzjan province on the border with Iran, but serving out her term as minister until her replacement is appointed.

Minister of Haj and Religious Affairs ~ M. Amin Naziryar

Along with **Abdul Karim Khalili** (second vice president), leader of Hizb-e-Wahdat, the largest Shiah group comprising the main part of the current government - i.e. they have government of the Central Government in North and Central area of Afghanistan.

Also a former warlord who has allegedly put down his arms and disbanded his armed gangs when he afforded himself to be selected as minister. However, he is currently involved in human rights violations: confiscating land and property, arresting, kidnapping, killing and raping of people all over the country through government infrastructure.

Ambassador to the United States ~ Said Tayib Jawad

He was educated at the School of Law and Political Sciences at Kabul University. Shortly after the Soviet invasion in 1980, he left Afghanistan and went into exile in Germany. In 1986 he migrated to U.S., where he received his MBA.

He served as the President Karzai's Press Secretary, Chief of Staff as well as the Director of the Office of International Relations at the Presidential Palace. He has worked closely with President Karzai in formulating strategies, implementing policies, building national institutions and prioritizing reforms in Afghanistan. He also worked with the U.S. and Afghan military experts to help reform the Ministry of Defense and rebuild the Afghan National Army. Among his many accomplishments, he was instrumental in drafting Afghanistan's foreign investment laws and also served as President Karzai's principal liaison with the constitutional commission during the process of the drafting of Afghanistan's new constitution.

**Ambassador to Pakistan ~ Mr. Nangyalai Tarzi**

He was educated at Kabul University and in Paris. He lectured in Law and International Relations at Kabul University. He served as Political Adviser for the Islamic Conference Organization to the UN, as Ambassador and Permanent Observer to the UN, and served as Ambassador to Pakistan in 2002.

He will have to handle one of the most complex relationships in the region.

Speaker of the Meshrano Jirga (House of the People) ~ Mr. Yunus Qanuni

An ethnic Tajik from the Panjshir Valley in Afghanistan, he is a moderate figure trying to unite Afghanistan's ethnic groups. He is also the leader of Afghanistan e Naween (New Afghanistan) political party. As a member of the Afghan Northern Alliance, he strongly supported the United States invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, but opposed Pakistani involvement, as Pakistan favored a reformed Taliban government rather than a new government based upon the Afghan Northern Alliance. He is closely associated with the political faction of the late Ahmad Shah Masood, assassinated in 2001. In 2001, he served as chief negotiator for the Afghan Northern Alliance delegation to the Bonn conference on Afghanistan in Bonn, Germany.

Immediately after the fall of the Taliban government, Qanuni was interior minister in an interim administration. He was eventually made the education minister in the Afghan Transitional Administration (established in June 2002), and served as a security advisor to interim President Hamid Karzai. However, in the presidential election of 2004, he placed second to Karzai, who announced his administration, and Qanuni was dropped from his post. In the parliamentary elections this December, he was chosen to lead the 249-seat lower house of parliament with 122 votes against 117 for his closest challenger, Rasool Sayyaf a notorious warlord responsible for bloody civil war atrocities.

Governor of Kunar province ~ Asadollah Wafa

He is the governor of the Kunar Province which lies on the turbulent border with Pakistan. He is best known for his time as governor of the Paktia province when he led a group of tribal elders to work with the U.S. to establish an amnesty program for Taliban fighters in an attempt to bring an end to the fighting by separating the rank-and-file troops from their leadership. It is unclear whether this specific program ever went ahead, but he was subsequently transferred to Kunar to continue his work by negotiating with the local Hezb-I-Islami group.

He was also governor of Kunar during the June 29, 2005 shooting down of a Chinook helicopter in the Kunar province, the largest to date single day death-toll (16) by American troops in the region. He subsequently reported that the United States launch a retaliation strike against a Taliban base in the area, killing 18 women and children.



IN THE WORDS OF AN AFGHAN...

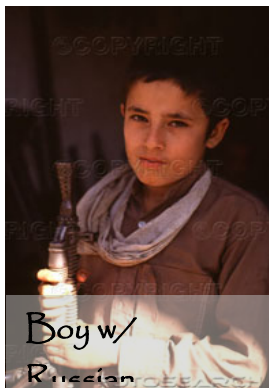
“Recent reports indicate that senior government officials are heavily involved in drug trafficking. The traffickers are supported not only by officials, but also by some of the peacekeeping forces based in the country. This is not acceptable either for the Afghan people or for the international community. It must be stopped. One Kabul newspaper quoted former Afghan interior minister Ali Ahmad Jalali as saying that four cabinet ministers and 13 provincial governors are involved in the narcotics business. Meanwhile, the president's former spokesman and current chief of staff Jawed Ludin said the Afghan government is unable to catch these smugglers because they are being supported by peacekeeping forces stationed in the country.”

Thus reads a translated January 18th editorial in the independent daily newspaper *Arman-e-Milli*, run by a group of journalists. Overlooking its accuracy or bias, this editorial speaks volumes to the remaining lacunas in the Afghan system, and the deep level of distrust that is still seeped in Afghan minds after decades of rule by the extremist Taliban government.

But it would be unfair to let this characterization of the political situation overshadow the tremendous efforts and marked successes that the international community and the Afghan people have had in rebuilding a working government that today numbers among the few relative democracies in the region. The editorial above ends, “Afghans no longer want their name and reputation to be associated with drugs, and do not want be labeled the ‘main producer of narcotics’ forever. We hope our president will be able to rid himself of these people. He must purge his cabinet and the entire government.” This portrays well the hope that Afghans preserve that change for the better is possible, and that President Karzai is the man to drive that change.

A LITTLE HISTORY...

Often called the crossroads of Central Asia, Afghanistan suffered almost a decade of Soviet rule under Babrak Karmal, fiercely challenged by Afghan freedom fighters (mujahidin) which made it almost impossible for the regime to govern in rural areas. In 1986, several guerrilla organizations, supported by popular displeasure with the regime,



forced its replacement by Muhammad Najibullah, former chief of the Afghan secret police (KHAD). Now at the high point of the Cold War, the tenacious resistance movement – supported by the U.S., Saudi Arabia and Pakistan within others – continued to exact a high toll on the Soviet Union. This latter signed the Geneva Accords in 1988, pledging its full withdrawal the next year. However, the mujahidin, not a party to the accords, refused their terms, and a civil war ensued between these fighters and the standing Najibullah government, and eventually among the various mujahidin militias. An interim Islamic Jihad Council was established in Kabul, ruled intermittently by different fractions, but continued infighting devolved into anarchy, with warlords

controlling much of the countryside.



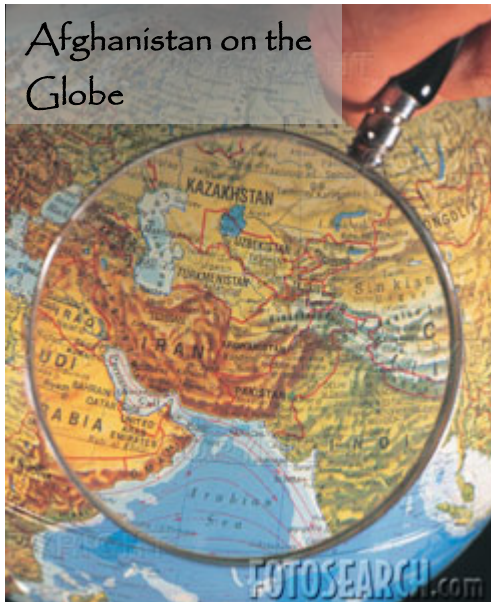
The Taliban rose to power in this period of the mid-90s as a reaction to this anarchy and warlordism. Mainly educated in Pakistani madrassas and of rural Pashtun ethnicities, the Taliban first took control of the city of Kandahar, then of Kabul in 1996, and finally to 90% of the country by 1988. Preaching an extreme interpretation of Islam and committed massive human rights violations against women (imposing Sharia law), the Taliban gave refuge to a Saudi national who had fought with the mujahidin, by the name of Osama bin Laden, and his Al-Qaida terrorist organization and training camps.

After bin Laden took responsibility for the September 11, 2001 attacks against the World Trade Center, the U.S. asked the Taliban to expel his organization. When the latter refused to renege its support for terrorists, the U.S. led a coalition of Western countries in a targeted military campaign against terrorist installations in Afghanistan. It was supported by the United Islamic Front for the Salvation of Afghanistan, an assemblment of warring parties that did not recognize the Taliban regime, mostly former mujahidin. The group became known to its enemies and the Western media alike as the Northern Alliance. Kabul fell in a matter of weeks in November, 2001.

Afghanistan's first democratic national elections in October 2004 brought out 8 million Afghans to vote, almost half of them women. They elected Hamid Karzai as president, who appointed three women as ministers. The election for the lower house of Afghanistan's bicameral legislature and 34 provincial councils (who appoint the upper house) this last September had a 53% voter turnout.

Source: U.S. State Department's Bureau of South Asian Affairs, "Background Note: Afghanistan", December 2005, available at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5380.htm>.

CURRENT SITUATION: THE WAY FORWARD



they will make once in office. There

Afghanistan's history has been marked for most of the last twenty-five years by war and upheaval that have taken a heavy toll on its population and the nation's resources. However, international efforts and the September parliamentary elections have allowed it to make slow but steady progress towards reconstructing a viable state. As one editorial puts it, President Karzai is "justifiably proud in saying that Afghanistan 'now has a constitution, a president, a Parliament, and a nation fully participating in its destiny.'" However elections are not enough to build a democracy or a viable state for that matter. There were 600 candidates for the presidential elections, still no political parties – the voters thus had scarce knowledge of the people they elected, and will have limited influence over the decisions



Attempts to rebuild this country depleted of so much of its resources have been somewhat successful. The international community has already committed large amounts of resources, financial, military and otherwise to rebuilding the country and establishing its security.

However, the international community has fallen short in actually disbursing much of the funds they have pledged to the country's reconstruction, and is still a long ways from ridding the country of violence and extremism. In London at the beginning of February 60 countries will gather to establish a post-Bonn framework for cooperation with Afghanistan, hoping to draft the Afghanistan Compact that will set out benchmarks and timetable to achieve specific goals in various aspects of the country's reconstruction, the success of which will be closely linked to pledges that are made by the international community in those areas. The web-site for the conference can be accessed at:

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1133773247211>. Watch closely what pledges and frameworks emerge from the conference. You can also read a very relevant editorial in the International Herald Tribune on the assistance of the international community at <http://www.ihf.com/articles/2006/01/22/opinion/edinder.php>. This latter maintains that "Afghanistan is still at risk. The insurgency led by elements of the Taliban and Al Qaeda is not going away. Afghanistan remains the world's leading drug supplier of opium. Corruption is on the rise. And many Afghans are beginning to ask, four years after the international community arrived, where are the promised roads, the schools, the health clinics, the electricity, the water?"

NATO's International Security Assistance Force exists in Afghanistan in accordance with the Bonn Agreement of December 2001. Under its UN mandate, its role is to assist in the maintenance of security to help Afghanistan and the UN in Kabul and its environs and to assist the Afghan government in creating a secure and stable environment there. 11,000 NATO troops currently provide security for Kabul and the Western and Northeastern regions of the country, including the border with Iran. 17,200 U.S. troops are responsible for the Southern and Southwestern regions, some of the most dangerous since they include the mountainous region on the Pakistani border. Finally, the growing Afghan army which now numbers at 26,500 and the Afghan national police now at 53,400 assist in patrolling Kabul and have responsibility for the center and generally calm region of the country.

The international community *has* made a major commitment to provide security through the expansion of NATO's Provincial Reconstruction Teams. However, the central government remains weak in the face of corrupt warlords that maintain their powerful clench on certain regions (some of whom have even been elected to parliament). President Karzai has become a popular figured recognized by most Afghans as the face of renewed hope. However many continue to maintain that he has not done enough to root out corruption. Certainly the government has not been able to give powerful enough momentum to the shift of Afghanistan's economy away from drugs and power.



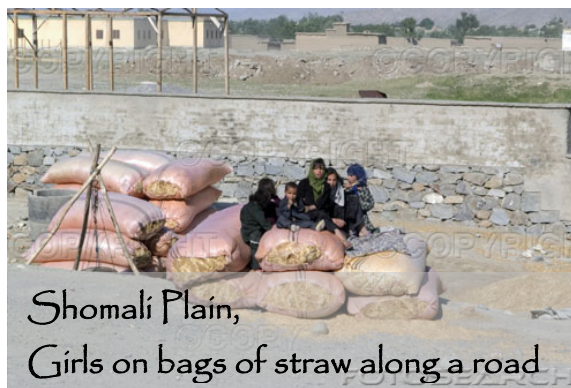
Alishang Valley,
Farmers tend opium poppy plants

Indeed, the problems of drug trafficking and money laundering are still very real ones in this country. Afghanistan remains the world's largest exporter of opium and a large source of hashish. It could produce up to 582 metric tons of heroin if all this opium was processed. The number of Afghan farmers growing poppy-seeds in their fields is on the rise. Moreover, 80-90% of heroin consumed in Europe comes from Afghan opium!

Aggravating the corruption, drug and public security situation, Osama bin Laden remains at large and suspected by many to still reside in the North East of the country. Indeed the Taliban continues to find strength in the Pashtun population in the mountains and along with border with Pakistan, a heavily treed and mountainous area full of caves and tunnels. Most recently, it was reported that a CIA strike in the area may have killed the head of Al-Qaeda for Afghanistan, and closely missed Al Zawahari, bin Laden's second in command. This continues to cause stress on the NATO forces, as well as the Afghan national army, who attempt to establish public security in the country while dissembling terrorist networks.

Finally, the ethnic makeup of the country remains a threatening boiling cauldron. The main ethnic groups are Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara, Uzbek, and Turkmen. A vast majority (80%) of Afghans are Sunni Muslims, while 19% are Shi'a Muslims, with only 1% not belonging to either of these. Vast portions of the population are nomadic. Literacy remains at 36% (male 51%, female 21%) and Dari serves as a lingua franca for most Afghans, though Pashto is spoken throughout the Pashtun areas of eastern and southern Afghanistan.

This January, the International Crisis Group reported that Afghanistan was one of only a few countries in "crisis situations" whose conditions have improved. However, it is the ICG's first such report about the nation in over a year. It has reported the situation there as steadily deteriorating since last January.



Shomali Plain,
Girls on bags of straw along a road

GEOPOLITICS IN THE REGION: WHO ARE OUR NEIGHBORS?

UNITED STATES

The U.S. has a tense relationship with those Afghans who believe that Pakistan still covertly supports the Taliban and Osama bin Laden. They argue the U.S. should not have



as a close ally a country that is playing a double game. Most Afghans though would like to see better services provided to them and to see reconstruction in their country occur at a faster pace. They are looking mostly to the U.S. to fulfill those hopes.

PAKISTAN

Pakistan took the lead diplomatically in the United Nations in opposing the Soviet occupation. During the war against the Soviet Union, Pakistan served as the primary logistical conduit for the Afghan resistance. Pakistan initially developed close ties to the Taliban regime, and extended recognition in 1997. However it dramatically altered its



policy after September 11, 2001 by closing its border and downgrading its ties.

However, still today the Pakistan military do not see a stable government in Afghanistan. It is widely accepted that Afghanistan can't rely on the Pakistani military to be an honest broker or partner on the war on terror. There is a significant gap between the words of President Pervez Musharaf and the actions of some of his military in supporting

Al-Qaeda networks.

IRAN

Though Afghanistan's relationship with Iran has fluctuated over the years, the main issue of dispute has been the rights over the Helmand River. Iran opposed strongly the Soviet invasion and closed its consulate in Afghanistan. Iran later supported the Afghanistan resistance and even later the Northern Alliance. Most importantly, it provided refuge to over 2 million Afghans.

Other countries to consider are RUSSIA, TAJIKISTAN, INDIA, GERMANY.

WHAT TO EXPECT

This Cabinet will be confronted with real long-problems and more immediate crises faced today by Afghanistan. You must be ready to deal with anything that comes at you.

Each of you is expected to provide input pulling from your knowledge managing the ministry to which you were appointed and to put forth the best solutions available with the limited resources that our country has. We as a Cabinet have tough decisions to make, but every action that we make must ultimately be with the best interest of our country in mind.

The Afghan people are a hard-working people in a country with vast unused resources. Though you are all adept ministers, this session is your chance to demonstrate that you are willing to work hard for their benefit. I have every confidence that we will make



significant progress this weekend, and help Afghanistan advance at the fullest of its capacities.

No matter what some of these situations entail though, you *will* be expected to remain in character, reacting as the persona that you have been assigned. Thus it is crucial that everyone come in prepared – that is knowledgeable about the history, culture, politics and current state of Afghanistan, as well as the position that you have been assigned.

Many challenges lie ahead, none of which can be resolved using the same methods that are currently utilized. I trust you will all come with creative well-researched ideas that will prove to be the new thrust needed for this country. I look forward to seeing you all for an intense weekend in Kabul!

SOME TOPICS WE WILL ADDRESS...

Resolving the drug problem

Eradicating fields that grow poppy seeds will never be enough to eradicate Afghanistan's drug problem. The crucial question faced by this Cabinet will have to be how it can best provide options to farmers who are compelled to grow poppy seeds in their fields because it is the only profitable crop that they can grow to sustain their families. This Cabinet will have to provide these farmers with the necessary incentives to choose to the alternatives to poppy seed growing.

Dealing with warlords

Very linked to the previous point is that this Cabinet will have to tackle the stronghold that warlords have over portions of the country, in particular where poppy seeds are grown. One of the goals of our committee is to advance a solution on the question of either establishing a working relationship between our government and them, or eradicating their power to the highest degree possible.

Women's role in society:

Women have earned the right to vote and attend school, but there are still strong restrictions in the Afghan society. President Karzai appointed three women to his original Cabinet, and recently appointed one as governor of the Bamiyan province, perhaps in an effort to demonstrate the country's commitment to women's rights. Traditionally women have played no role in politics, but today women in some villages such as in Bamiyan are allowed to vote. This will give them influence over the decisions that are taken.



New assembly and an emerging democracy

Afghanistan is after all an emerging democracy with a newly elected parliament.



Other issues we will deal with are refugees – Afghanistan has had the largest refugee repatriation in the world in the last 30 years – the building of a national army and police capabilities – how to recruit and maintain Afghans into these forces crucial to the establishment of security and the relief of international troops currently ensuring the stability of the country. We will also touch on the NATO mission **and whether it has** enough power to act, why it has been largely successful, and how it can be a model for other efforts.

We will certainly address **de-mining** since Afghanistan remains one of the most heavily mined countries in the world: mine-related injuries number up to 100 per month, and an estimated 200,000 Afghans have been disabled by landmine accidents. The UN has been heavily involved in efforts in this area. Finally we will of course deal with Afghanistan's relations with its neighbors and strategic allies, in particular Pakistan, Iran, U.S., Iraq etc.

BEFORE COMING TO PICSIM...

- Research Afghanistan and the region's dynamics from different vantage points (politics, security, regional balance of power, women's rights, narcotics etc.). Use the resources below to guide you in your research.
- Strive to familiarize yourself with the geography of the region, the name of the major provinces and towns, and where they lie strategically speaking. They will come into play a lot during crises! Also try to become familiar with some of the major players outside of the Cabinet such as the NATO Commander, Pakistani and Iranian leaders, the Chief Justice, etc.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- First of all, I highly recommend picking up a copy of the acclaimed *Ghost Wars* by Steve Coll, and Kathy Gannon's *I is for Infidel: from Holy War to Holy Terror*. Both will give you unparalleled insight into the rhythm of this country, on a entirely new level from what you see on CNN.
- Second, take a look at organizations such as the International Crisis Group that publish a wide variety of reports on Afghanistan that are updated every few weeks. They will give you a sense of what progress is being made on the ground. Some such relevant sites are:
 - International Crisis Group, <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=1266&l=1>.
 - Council on Foreign Relations, http://www.cfr.org/region/397/middle_east.html.
 - Brookings, Middle East Forum, http://www.brookings.edu/fp/saban/sabancenter_hp.htm.
 - Middle East Institute, <http://www.mideasti.org/countries/countries.php?name=afghanistan>.
 - Center for Strategic and International Studies, Post-Conflict Reconstruction Project, <http://www.csis.org/isp/pcr>.



- United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance, <http://www.unpan.org/middleeast.asp>.
- Congressional Research Service & [Library of Congress Selected Internet Resources on Afghanistan](#) provide links to various sites and documents, including a [country study of Afghanistan](#), which covers events up to 1995.
- Third, organizations like the Institute for War and Peace Reporting translate world-wide local newspapers that include some insightful editorials. You can access and sign up to receive their Afghanistan reports daily at http://www.iwpr.net/?p=arr&s=p&o=-&apc_state=henh. This is the closest you can get to the thinking of the Afghan people. Keep in mind that current news will be the inspiration for many of our committee crises.
- Finally, many other sites such as [Afghan Voice.com](#) and [Afghanistan News.net](#) claim to provide independent coverage of the progress going on in Afghanistan through chats and media tracking. They are worth a look.

LAST WORDS OF WISDOM...

Our government has already made great strides in affecting positive change in Afghanistan— it has gone from forbidding women to appear in public alone, to today electing them to the national parliament. The challenge for Afghanistan this weekend and in the years to come will be to continue to affect such change both internally and in relations with its neighbors.

Finally remember, the name of the game is preparation. When you make a decision in committee think of two things: the character you are representing, and all those who will be affected by your actions (the government, your allies, the welfare of Afghan people, etc.) Those overlooked repercussions have a nasty way of coming back to bite you during crises.

Good luck and we will see you all at PICSIM!