
OUR AFGHANISTAN MISSION: CANADA CAN DO BETTER

A Brief to the Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan and to the Canadian Government

on behalf of:
World Federalist Movement – Canada

Prepared by:
Warren Allmand and John Trent

Warren Allmand, President of the World Federalist Movement - Canada, is a former federal Cabinet Minister and a past President of the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development, (“Rights and Democracy”).

John Trent, a member of the World Federalists Executive, is a Fellow of the Centre of Governance of the University of Ottawa and author of the recently released book, *Modernizing the United Nations System*.

WFM – Canada is the Canadian section of an international movement promoting global governance that is democratically accountable and based on the rule of law. WFM – Canada is also the host agency of an NGO network, the “Peace Operations Working Group.” One of the POWG projects entails publishing the “Peace Operations Monitor” (<http://pom.peacebuild.ca/>), a widely acclaimed online resource offering comprehensive and objective reporting on international operations in Afghanistan.

Introduction: Canada cannot wait until 2009 to change its policies on Afghanistan. Thus our brief is addressed to the Independent Panel, political parties and the Government. Our position concerning the Canadian mission in Afghanistan is informed by recent developments in the context of global governance. By global governance we mean the capacity to take decisions and appropriate actions on behalf of humanity in a world without a global government but with an array of world institutions. Understanding changes in global governance helps Canadians see the context in which we must conduct our foreign policy. In this brief we focus on foreign policy principles conforming to the global context as well as an analysis of the existing situation in Afghanistan. Together these have led to our policy proposals.

We recommend:

1. The UN and NATO, with Canadian participation, have a responsibility to help the people of Afghanistan with their protection and reconstruction.
2. A strict military solution is not possible in Afghanistan. A change of policy toward a comprehensive peace negotiation is the most viable solution.
3. We should continue to renegotiate our military role with our NATO allies and ensure the operation is part of a multilateral, UN endeavour in the framework of global governance.
4. The Independent Panel should state clearly that Canada should not intervene militarily in Pakistan.
5. Our aim must be long-term peace and reconstruction for Afghans. This complex goal needs a multi-departmental (“whole-of-government”) plan.
6. While decision-making may start with the Prime Minister and Cabinet, it is also essential they secure approval by Parliament.
7. Our political parties and leaders must develop comprehensive strategic policies on foreign affairs, including Afghanistan.
8. There is a desperate need for longer-term strategic and regional thinking in the Departments of Foreign Affairs and Defence and that they be listened to by the Prime Minister’s Office.
9. Parties have a responsibility to strive for non-partisan policies to support our men and women overseas when they are in a combat situation.
10. Canada must deploy all its diplomatic capacity behind demands for coherent strategies from the UN and NATO. The Afghanistan mission must be overseen by a NATO strategy and not just American tactics.
11. There is an urgent need for a UN-led, broadly-based political dialogue in Afghanistan, inclusive of all parties that want peace including adequate Pashtun representation, the less strident elements of the Taliban, regional neighbours and the various components of the Afghan society.
12. Canada should influence the UN Secretary General to name a new High-Level Representative to organize a peace dialogue.
13. Sustainable peace includes disarmament, demobilization, reconciliation and re-integration, strengthening of the rule of law and human rights (police, judges, courts etc) and technical assistance for institution building, democratic development and economic infrastructure. Canada has contributions to make toward all these goals
14. It is urgent to balance the two “Ds”, defence and development.
15. Over the next years we should multiply substantially our aid to Afghanistan. Canada should also be reminding its partners in the Afghanistan Compact of 2004 of their financial obligations.
16. The government should mobilize and directly support Canadian, Afghan and international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to aid in Afghan development.
17. Our aid should not simply be concentrated in Kandahar and Kabul. The rest of the country needs our help too.

18. Canada should give serious analysis to the proposal of using the Afghan cash crop of poppies for the legitimate world market for medical narcotics
19. The Canadian Government and media ought to be informing the Canadian people that Afghanistan is part of a broader Canadian responsibility to help with failed states and people in distress and that it does so as part of the process of global governance.
20. We live in the context of an emerging global community in which national boundaries can no longer limit responsibility and compassion.

1. Policy Proposals: Elaboration

Unlike media snapshots of the Canadian Mission, the situation in Afghanistan is neither black nor white. We believe there is a rational and moral case to be made that Canada has an international responsibility to support peacebuilding in Afghanistan and has indeed made significant contributions. There has been some progress in reconstruction and Canada's role is appreciated. However, there are grave problems with the Canadian Mission. Our political parties and leaders have never developed a comprehensive strategic policy toward Afghanistan. Canada's reconstruction and diplomatic efforts are falling far behind our aggressive military stance. We show little diplomatic leadership with our allies in NATO. As Senator Romeo Dallaire recently told the CBC program, The House, despite its considerable force in the world, Canada still thinks it is a 90-pound weakling. Hence the conclusion that Canada must do better.

But, there is an even deeper problem. A strict military solution is not possible in Afghanistan. A change of policy toward a comprehensive peace negotiation is the most viable solution. However, none of the elements of such a peace process are currently in existence. There are no peace negotiations (despite Karzai's efforts) or dialogue with neighbours; there are no coordinated peace or development plans between a plethora of independent actors, each taking a lead role on specific issues such as the police, drugs, the judiciary, the military and humanitarian relief etc. What, then, should be Canada's priorities? Our recommendations on improvements to Canada's mission in Afghanistan follow below.

However, it should first be noted, in the context of growing turmoil in neighbouring Pakistan, there is no sound basis in policy or in international law, for Canada intervening militarily in Pakistan. While some of Canada's allies may have plans to increase their military presence in Pakistan, we believe that this Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan should state clearly that Canada should not intervene militarily in Pakistan.

Doing Better: Stay Involved but Change the Course

In the light of current issues of global governance, we believe that the UN and NATO with Canadian participation have a continuing responsibility to help the people of Afghanistan with their protection and reconstruction. The world wars that almost destroyed the Western world only lasted half a dozen years. After three decades of war, we cannot expect Afghanistan to be rebuilt in a day. The international community should not cut and run when the going gets tough. We should continue to renegotiate our military role with our NATO allies and ensure the operation is part of a multilateral, UN endeavour in the framework of global governance. While their role may change, Canada should not withdraw its troops until the UN's goals have been attained. But, doing the best we can to help Afghanistan requires much better policies and a clearer strategy.

Doing Better: Developing Foreign Policy Strategy

We would achieve only half our purpose if we were to concentrate on fixing the Afghanistan mission without trying to understand and remedy the incompetent decision-making which got us into our current problems in the first place. It is not sufficient for politicians to make last minute, ill-prepared, un-debated decisions on issues as fundamental as our Afghanistan Mission. It is not sufficient to continue the inherited U.S. policy of a war on terrorism in Afghanistan, quarter-backed by part-time decision-making in the Prime Minister's Office (Liberal or Conservative). Nor can there be a quick fix to our policy deficits. The weaknesses are much more fundamental. Our aim must be long-term peace and reconstruction for Afghans. Security operations must serve that aim. Because this is a more complex goal it requires a comprehensive, multi-departmental ("whole of government") approach, preferably backed by all parties. Our political parties must, themselves, make a practice of developing integrated foreign policies and debating them in public. Canadians have a right to know how their leaders intend to deal with issues of global governance – which was not the case with our Afghanistan Mission.

While decision-making may start with the Prime Minister and Cabinet, it is also essential they secure approval by Parliament. They are also responsible for making sure that mechanisms are in place to ensure they receive the best possible advice. This requires longer-term strategic and regional thinking in the Departments of Foreign Affairs and Defence. It also necessitates a means of communications and coordination between them and other departments participating in our foreign activities. All this is lamentably lacking. In particular, the Department of Foreign Affairs has been left to languish. Coordination is weak to non-existent. While Afghanistan is a current priority, our planners must balance it with forward thinking about our other present or potential commitments. Our democracy requires that foreign policy be given adequate (not just a day or two) debate in Parliament. Parties have an additional responsibility to strive for all-party, non-partisan policies to support our soldiers overseas when they are in combat.

Doing Better: A Multilateral Leader

Canada has long been an important member of the United Nations. Our increased military budget and contributions to NATO mean that we cannot be ignored. Canada must deploy all its diplomatic capacity behind demands for coherent strategies from the UN and NATO in Afghanistan aimed toward peace negotiations and not just punitive actions or piecemeal relief. Canada should be demanding more adequate, full-time strategic policy-making in NATO for both now and in the future. We cannot leave the impression that it is only the United States that makes decisions in NATO. In the field, there must be a separation of operational humanitarian and military missions, because one de-legitimizes the other in the minds of Afghans and puts relief workers in danger. Wherever security exists, the Provincial Reconstruction Teams must be dismantled and the work left to NGOs. Canada must work to change what has become known as American "over-kill" tactics. The Afghanistan mission must be overseen by a NATO strategy and not just American tactics. For instance, heavy air-strikes must be minimized and more money and effort must continue to be put into training and equipping the Afghan army and police. We must also influence the United States to return to its place at the table of democracies and to accept a collegial approach to global governance.

Doing Better: A Comprehensive Peace Strategy

Canada must now bend its efforts, with its Afghan, UN and NATO partners, toward comprehensive peace negotiations. It must be inclusive of all parties that want peace

including adequate Pashtun representation, the less strident elements of the Taliban, regional neighbours and the various components of the Afghan government and society. Conflict resolution specialists tell us that peace treaties often reflect a convergence of preferences among factions. The government and the Taliban may be arriving at a “mutually hurting stalemate” where they recognize a simple military victory is not possible. However, there are three key elements here: the consent of the parties, a comprehensive framework and coherent international assistance. All this indicates there is an urgent need for a UN-led, broadly-based political dialogue in Afghanistan. Canada has a key role to play in securing support from its UN and NATO partners for this new, overarching strategy. As a start, Canada should influence the UN Secretary General to name a new High-Level Representative to take responsibility for organizing a peace dialogue and international aid as head of the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan.

Sustainable peace includes disarmament, demobilization, reconciliation and re-integration, strengthening of the rule of law and human rights (police, judges, courts etc) and technical assistance for institution building, democratic development and economic infrastructure. Canada has contributions to make toward all these goals. It should be a leading player without pretending to do everything. Structures for collaboration among allies and their agencies must also be in place to provide an agreed multilateral framework. Eventually, peace must be implemented. This will require time, political skills, policing structures, and impartial third-party expertise. This is another reason for insisting Canada must mobilize pertinent departments (a whole-of-government approach) behind the Afghanistan Mission. The government should also be tapping the important capacities of the country’s non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Doing Better: Rebalancing Development and Defence

We have said little about Canada’s troops in Afghanistan. This is because we think they are doing all that is requested of them – and more. Canadian soldiers in Kandahar do their country honour. We also perceive the elements of an on-going, bi-partisan policy to re-equip and finance our forces. However, more effort should go into police training immediately. What is required now is balancing of the two “Ds” defence and development. It starts with money. Although Canada is one of the most generous donors to Afghanistan, we must do much more. Our few hundred million of aid pales in comparison to the \$7 billion in military expenditures. Over the next years we should multiply substantially our aid to Afghanistan. Canada should also be reminding its partners in the Afghanistan Compact of 2004 of their financial obligations. More money will necessitate a more coordinated development strategy from the Afghan government, foreign interveners and the United Nations, because it is a UN not a Western initiative.

This, in turn, will require more Canadian expertise on the ground. The government should mobilize and directly support Canadian, Afghan and international NGOs. It is all well and wise for us to contribute to multilateral aid which is often the best coordinated and targeted. But, this should not be to the exclusion of Canadian aid projects so that Afghans see we have more to offer than tanks. Nor should it be to the exclusion of us continually analyzing where else in the world Canadian resources might make a difference. People are worried about the safety of our aid workers but most of the country is relatively safe. And as a former Minister of Foreign Affairs (and Past-President of WFM – Canada), Flora MacDonald, has been stating after each of her trips to Afghanistan, our aid should not simply be concentrated in Kandahar and Kabul. Our aim should be to create “law and justice” areas outside Kabul that will have a multiplier effect. The rest of the country needs our help too. Canada also needs to use its

numerous agencies – such as our International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development – and individual experts – to increase our aid for institution building and democratic development. Canadian scholars should be encouraged to take a long term interest in Afghan culture and society. Exchanges of Afghans and Canadians should become a regular practice. Corporate and agricultural mentoring and micro-finance aid should be fostered. Among contributions to economic growth, Canada should seriously analyze the use of the Afghan cash crop of poppies for the legitimate world market for medical narcotics.

Doing Better: Afghanistan as Part of a Bigger Picture

Some people suggest Canadian troops should be in Darfur or elsewhere. Nothing stops us from lending logistical and possibly other support to the UN mission in Darfur. But, the point is that we are already in Afghanistan and we better see if we can make a success there – and learn from it. Besides, we live in the context of an emerging global community in which national boundaries can no longer limit responsibility and compassion. If a foreign policy is not embedded in its international context, it is likely to fail. Today that context is the steady movement toward improved global governance. The Canadian Government and media ought to be informing the Canadian people that Afghanistan is part of a broader Canadian responsibility to help with failed states and people in distress and that it does so as part of the process of global governance.

But if this is not to be an endless process, Canada must also show some leadership in reforming the United Nations. For instance, if a UN standing military force for emergency peace services had been available, it is much more likely that the Rwanda, Afghanistan and Darfur depredations could possibly have been contained. Ottawa has a duty to explain to our citizens that globalization has meant that global security for the planet and human security for the protection of peoples have come to join traditional concepts of national security. All three are responsibilities of advanced governments.

2. Perspectives and Principles: Among the most striking developments in the recent era is the interdependence of countries resulting from economic globalization (environmental disasters, health epidemics, proliferation of weapons, and global crime and terrorism) and the replacement of international wars by civil conflict. Mutual responsibility is a response to global interdependence. The United Nations has recently recognized the responsibility of the international community to protect citizens at risk in their own country and has created a new Peacebuilding Commission.

Former Secretary-General Kofi Annan challenged UN members to resolve the conflict between non-interference in state sovereignty and the responsibility of the international community to respond to massive human rights violations. The government of Canada responded by creating the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty. Its report, *The Responsibility to Protect*, balanced the rights of individuals against state sovereignty. The world leaders' summit at the UN in 2005 adopted the principle of international responsibility to protect local populations when states cannot or will not do so. The original intervention in Afghanistan was based on the war against terrorism and the self-defence principles of international law, not the more recent emerging norm of the Responsibility to Protect. But, it is the latter which will tend to direct intervention and underlie principles of global governance. Afghanistan's descent into chaos is in part due to the lack of progress in building global governance institutions.

Comparative studies of peacebuilding following civil wars (129 of them between 1945 and 1999) show that effective *peacekeeping* provides security that allows *peacebuilding* operations to create reconstructed institutions and generate the consent and legitimacy that allows *peacekeeping* to work. Further, these studies demonstrate that impartial, multilateral, UN endorsed operations are necessary to provide the discrete force, economic development and sustained monitoring that makes peacemaking successful. Finally, peacebuilding is a long-term investment in which the international community can only assist countries to get to the point of inclusive, negotiated, power-sharing peace settlements which allow for lasting arrangements. Negotiated settlements are, in themselves, a democratic learning process for establishing acceptable limits to politics, addressing grievances, establishing viable institutions, and testing sincerity.

Recognizing these realities, the United Nations' new Peacebuilding Commission has been created with the intention of extending the period when world leaders and media focus on regional crises and to advise on cooperative strategies, mobilizing resources and catalyzing broader efforts. This is in response to what is perceived to be an on-going global challenge requiring world cooperation and leadership from countries like Canada.

Indeed, these new challenges dovetail with Canada's traditional foreign policy. Since 1945 multilateralism and internationalism have been the pillars of our foreign policy. Cooperation with other countries and international organizations allows us to maximize our national capacities to achieve the goals of world peace with justice. A fair and stable international environment is most favourable to a continent-sized middle power with exposure on three of the world's oceans, living next to the world's super power.

These perspectives, we think, indicate the principles that should direct the future of multilateral interventions and the present Canadian Mission in Afghanistan. Peacebuilding is the modern face of peacekeeping. It is intended to marry robust military capacity to the practices of nation building. For both humanitarian reasons and self interest, Canada has an internationally endorsed responsibility to cooperate with other countries to help stabilize Afghanistan. Successful peacebuilding must arise from the UN, and focus equally on security and development leading to comprehensive peace negotiations. Participation from Canada will require not only money and troops but also wise leadership and a competent foreign policy to contribute to global governance and overcome human rights abuses and civil conflict. Our goals are developmental, aiming to improve democratic capacities and human rights.

3. Analysis of the Situation in Afghanistan

At this point we should note that the preceding section is based not just on the beliefs and sentiments of the World Federalists but on rigorous international studies. The same is true of this next section examining the current situation in Afghanistan, resulting from on-the-ground reports of soldiers, diplomats and NGOs.

But, first, it is worth recalling that the Afghans have suffered nearly thirty years of the devastation of wars which were not of their making. Their reasonably stable and forward looking government in the context of the 1960s was upset by international communist maneuverings in the 1970s and the Soviet invasion and occupation in the 1980s. This was followed by the war of liberation by the Mujahidin with its U.S and other foreign support. The international community then forgot about Afghanistan, leaving it to its civil war among the warlords and then the takeover by the fundamentalist Taliban. Later, UK

Prime Minister Tony Blair was to say that the world would never again turn its back on Afghanistan – something that could well be remembered today. Enter the Saudi and Egyptian based Al-Qaeda, which took advantage of Afghan bases and hospitality to hatch international terrorist plots including the 9-11 attack on America. This, in turn, prompted the U.S. led overthrow of the Taliban government. In due course, it was endorsed by NATO and bolstered by UN resolutions.

Although the United States has dominated foreign action in Afghanistan since the attack on the Taliban and Al-Qaeda in 2001, and while we might not endorse these operations, Canada has been involved almost continuously. Commandos from Canada's JTF2 special-forces have been involved in the search for Al-Qaeda leaders. Regular Canadian forces were stationed in Kandahar in 2002. From 2003 to 2005 many Canadian soldiers participated in the UN-authorized, NATO-led "international security assistance force" (ISAF) located in and near Kabul. In late 2005 Canada took a more prominent role in "counter insurgency" work in the Kandahar region. It is this last operation that has been the most controversial and has led to almost all of the Canadian casualties. Intended to combine diplomacy, development and defence (the famous 3-Ds), it is clear the military operation has subverted the other two objectives. Although nominally a NATO operation, the US methodology and tactics have predominated to such a degree that the mission is perceived by many as an instrument of U.S. foreign policy and hegemony in the region.

Where do we stand today? Here is a summary of reports from 2007.

- This summer, the International Committee of the Red Cross (in Afghanistan since 1987) gave a press briefing entitled, "*Afghanistan: three decades of war and no end in sight*". It emphasized that the conflict has "significantly intensified" and was no longer confined to the south but is spreading throughout the country.
- The September 2007 report of the UN Secretary-General to the Security Council states 2007 has been the worst year for security since 2001. There were an average of 548 incidents a month – a 20 per cent increase over last year.
- According to respected analyst Paul Rogers of Bradford University, there is wide consensus among NATO commanders that no military solution is possible. A change of policy is necessary. Recently, NATO Secretary General, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer told the media, "It is my strong opinion that the final answer in Afghanistan will not be a military one and cannot be a military one. The final answer in Afghanistan is called reconstruction, development and nation-building."
- A book published in October, 2007, *The Unexpected War: Canada in Kandahar*, demonstrates that, "Canada slipped into war in Afghanistan step by step, incrementally, without fully understanding that it was going to war." There was never a medium- or long-term Afghanistan policy, the authors concluded. The study also shows that the Department of Foreign Affairs has been gutted since the 1990s and rarely coordinates with the Canadian International Development Agency. One of the book's authors, Janice Stein, professor of conflict studies at the University of Toronto, recently called for a negotiated settlement between the Karzai government and the Taliban.
- Despite all the confusion and difficulties with security, corruption and the drug trade, the World Bank director for Afghanistan reports dramatic improvements in economic and social conditions since the fall of the Taliban. He points to double-digit economic growth, an expanding road network, a surge in school attendance – particularly by girls – and a drop in infant mortality rates – although not necessarily in the war-torn south. The World Bank has committed \$1.5 billion of its own money to the Afghanistan Reconstruction Fund which has also gathered

\$2.4 billion in pledges from countries. Canada is the largest donor with \$211 million that, among other things goes to pay the salaries of health workers and teachers. The UN has also initiated a massive drive to immunize 1.1 million Afghan children against the ravages of polio.

- According to the claims of one Ottawa think-tank, despite Canadian military expenditures of \$7.2 billion on military missions in Afghanistan and many billions more by other countries, after five years the Afghan army is still in training and the police force is still under-paid, under-trained, under-equipped and corrupt.
- Also released in October, an in-depth study by the development assistance committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development says Canada's foreign aid policy, with two governments and five ministers in six years, is unfocused, weakly mandated and lacking stable, clear direction.
- Despite these setbacks, a broad public opinion survey for the CBC in the summer and autumn indicated that large majorities of Afghans support the Karzai government, appreciate the continuing need for NATO troops to maintain security, and believe the country is going in the right direction.
- A November meeting of the Atlantic Treaty Association in Ottawa heard from field commanders that NATO members in Afghanistan have competing goals. Also, there is little likelihood of lasting progress with only 5,000 of NATO's 41,000 troops dedicated to combat roles. And Canadian officials acknowledged there is an urgent need to rebalance military and nation-building objectives.
- At the same meeting, the Canadian Ambassador to Afghanistan said "there are more Afghans at work, more Afghans at school, more Afghan police forces on the streets, more Afghan army units working side by side with ours." But the biggest challenge is the lack of progress in building a functioning police force.
- On Nov. 20, an Oxfam report claimed the \$15 billion in aid pumped into Afghanistan since 2001 has been largely wasted – soaked up in contractors' profits, costly expatriate consultants, and uncoordinated, quick-fix projects. It called the development process top-heavy, insufficient and ineffective.

This analysis of the principles of governance and the present Afghan situation lead to our policy recommendations as stated above.

Nov. 27, 2007

WORLD FEDERALIST MOVEMENT – CANADA

207 – 145 Spruce St., Ottawa, ON K1R 6P1

• Tel: (613) 232-0647

• Email: wfcnat@web.ca

• Web: www.worldfederalistscanada.org