

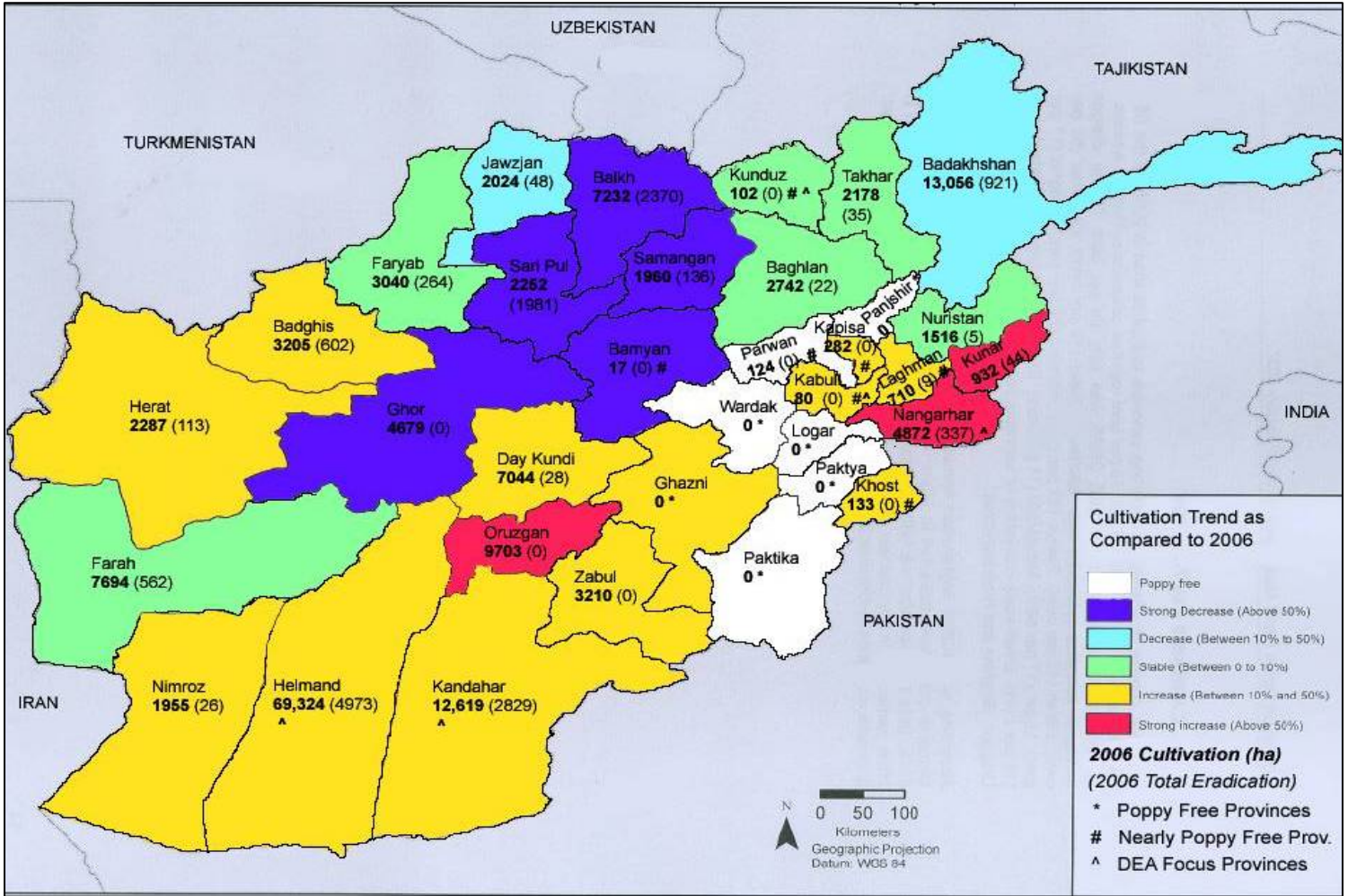
A vast field of pink and red poppies stretches across the horizon under a clear blue sky. The flowers are in various stages of bloom, with some fully open and others as buds. The field is densely packed, creating a sea of color.

U.S. COUNTERNARCOTICS STRATEGY FOR AFGHANISTAN

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2007 UNODC Rapid Assessment Survey



CONTENTS

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
2. DEFINING THE PROBLEM.....	13
Security Issues	14
Economic Issues – Undermining Development	15
Political Issues – Corruption, Narcotics, and the Insurgency	15
Problems for Afghanistan’s Neighbors	16
3. CURRENT STRATEGY.....	17
U.S. Five Pillar Plan	17
Afghanistan’s Eight Pillar Plan	19
Counternarcotics Partners.....	20
Improving Implementation of the Five Pillar Plan	23
4. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS	24
Bifurcation	24
Challenges This Year	26
The Narcotics/Insurgency Relationship	30
Helmand	30
5. ELEMENTS OF THE STRATEGY	32
A. Public Information.....	32
B. Alternative Development.....	39
C. Poppy Elimination/Eradication.....	48
D. Interdiction/Law Enforcement Operations.....	53
E. Justice Reform/Prosecution	61
F. Political Will	68
G. Unity of International Effort.....	68
H. Integrating Counternarcotics (Particularly Interdiction) Into The Comprehensive Security Approach.....	70
I. Countering “Silver Bullet” Approaches.....	73
6. GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS	77

U.S. COUNTERNARCOTICS STRATEGY FOR AFGHANISTAN

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper evaluates the current counternarcotics strategy for Afghanistan, examines issues, obstacles, and lessons learned, and presents a way forward on key elements of the strategy, including public information, alternative development, poppy elimination/eradication, interdiction, and justice reform.

The drug trade has undermined virtually every aspect of the Government of Afghanistan's (GOA) drive to build political stability, economic growth, and rule of law and its capacity to address internal security problems. While the last two years have seen only localized progress in the struggle to contain the drug trade, the consensus among U.S. policymakers is that the current "Five Pillar" plan (Public Information, Alternative Development, Eradication, Interdiction, Justice Reform) provides the appropriate balance of incentives and disincentives. However, changing trends in poppy cultivation and trafficking, the security situation, the political climate, and economic development require significant and, in some cases, dramatic changes in the way Afghanistan and the international community implement the counternarcotics strategy.

For example, while there appears to be a trend of reduced poppy cultivation in the northern half of Afghanistan that could make it close to poppy-free by 2009, poppy cultivation in Helmand and the rest of southern Afghanistan is increasing at a rate that more than offsets the successes in the north. Although Governor Led Eradication (GLE) figures are greater this year than they were last year, political obstacles have closed the door on opportunities for much greater success in eradication.

The north-south security dynamic greatly impacts the efficacy and reach of the Five Pillar strategy. While the permissive security environment in the north permitted a robust person-to-person community outreach campaign, instability in the south hindered a parallel public information effort in the areas of greatest poppy cultivation that need it the most. While USAID support for farmers has secured long-term contracts for Afghan fruit and vegetable exports in poppy cultivation areas and developed a wide ranging

rural credit system, the Taliban has improved its own system of lending money to poppy farmers and taxing their crops.

With respect to law enforcement, Operation Containment has seized more than 26 metric tons of Afghan heroin in the last two years – compared to only 407 kilograms in years prior—and resulted in the arrest of heads of major Afghan drug trafficking organizations. At the same time, vast networks of traffickers operate virtually untouched in Afghanistan’s rugged terrain, capacity to build evidence against major traffickers remains limited, and the nexus between drug traffickers and insurgents continues to increase.

While justice sector reforms to date have been noteworthy, including the passage of a Counternarcotics Law, construction of over 40 courthouses and justice facilities, and the training of professionals from throughout the justice sector, the continued absence of rule of law in Afghanistan, particularly in the provinces, has had a crippling effect on security, governance, and economic development. Finally, although over 71,000 Afghan police officers have been provided basic training, the police force still lacks a sufficient presence in rural districts and is often perceived by the Afghan public as corrupt and lacking discipline.

This paper improves implementation of the counternarcotics effort in Afghanistan. Strategy elements are based on input from an interagency group of experts representing the Department of State, Department of Defense, Department of Justice, Department of Agriculture, Department of the Treasury, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Office of National Drug Control Policy, and the U.S. Agency for International Development.

The basic strategy shift outlined below involves three main elements: 1: dramatically increasing development assistance to incentivize licit development while simultaneously amplifying the scope and intensity of both interdiction and eradication operations; 2: coordinating counternarcotics (CN) and counterinsurgency (COIN) planning and operations in a manner not previously accomplished, with a particular emphasis on integrating drug interdiction into the counterinsurgency mission; and 3: encouraging consistent, sustained political will for the counternarcotics effort among the Afghan government, our allies, and international civilian and military organizations.

A.

Public Information

1. **Improve Counternarcotics (CN) and Counterinsurgency (COIN) Public Information Coordination:** *Given the increasing ties between drug trafficking and the insurgency, it is essential that the CN and COIN public information campaigns be consistent and well-coordinated. Those who grow poppy or traffic in drugs in the south of the country need to know that they will be defeated just as the insurgents will be, and that contributing to the Taliban financially, with people, or with weapons is equivalent to insurgent activity. Public information campaigns should highlight the joint successes of counterterrorism, narcotics interdiction, and poppy elimination/eradication campaigns to undermine insurgent claims of victory and to enforce the message that narcotics-related activity is as non-negotiable as insurgent activity is. Organizations involved in counternarcotics should work closely with Afghan and allied military forces to coordinate this campaign through weekly meetings of a standing counternarcotics public information working group.*
2. **Enhance Focus on Grassroots and Word of Mouth Initiatives:** *This year, for the first time, public information campaigns attempted to engage local leaders on a more systematic basis. There was some success in these efforts in Balkh and a few other northern provinces. This program should be dramatically expanded by enlisting the assistance of Poppy Elimination Program (PEP) teams, military organizations, and PRTs. Public information campaigns need to bring the Poppy Elimination Program to local tribal leaders and shura members through word of mouth and a grassroots empowerment campaign. Each PEP team, PRT, and military command should have a written plan for local outreach and should keep track of contacts and both successes and failures. Pre-planting campaigns should include community outreach. PEP operations should be strengthened and regionalized.*

B. Alternative Development

1. **Strengthen the Good Performers Initiative (GPI):** *The objective of the Good Performers Initiative is to provide high-impact development assistance to encourage the Government of Afghanistan, provincial administrators, and local actors to take decisive action to halt the*

cultivation of opium poppy. The GPI will be significantly expanded and improved, providing significant financial and political incentives (\$25 to \$50 million) to provinces for reductions in net cultivation, as reported in the annual UNODC cultivation survey. An information campaign could publicize the Good Performers Initiative widely. In addition, efforts could be made to accelerate the expenditure rate of the UN-administered Counternarcotics Trust Fund (CNTF). So far only 2.5% of the CNTF's \$70M has been distributed. Funding should be more rapidly distributed to provincial governors in order to maximize their political capital during periods of poppy planting and eradication.

2. Develop Refined Plan for Crops and Livestock: *USAID has continuously refined its crop and seed programs by promoting higher value crops and farming methods that result in higher profits for traditional crops and livestock. USAID should focus on the development of marketable high-value crops and livestock that can give rural households increased income in the short-run (e.g. vegetables) as well as the long-term (e.g. fruits and nuts).*
3. Increase Private Sector Involvement: *Farming households must be provided with viable, lasting economic alternatives to opium poppy cultivation. The private sector must be the driver of this change. Alternative development programs could begin establishing businesses that issue contracts that give farmers guaranteed sales and favorable prices for their crops, thereby lowering the risk of switching to new crops. Short-term crops that yield immediate income, such as animal fodder grains and high-value vegetables, could be produced, processed, packaged, and sold throughout Afghanistan and the region, thereby generating job opportunities on and off the farm for rural households. Contract farming, alongside grant assistance to farmers for farm equipment, infrastructure, and other inputs is preferable to direct crop subsidies, which might undermine competitive markets, distort economic activity, and be prohibitively difficult to administer.*
4. Provide Additional Support for National Solidarity Program Targeted at Rural Areas Critical to the CN Effort: *The NSP program operates in 34 provinces and has been responsible for nearly 4,000 irrigation sub-projects and hundreds of other village-level projects. The*

program could benefit from a timely infusion of funds and also serve as an Afghan-led complement to the counternarcotics strategy.

5. **Engage Land Grant Universities:** *USAID and USDA could expand their programs for U.S. land grant universities. USDA could support this role for the agricultural sector through development of technical capacity-building activities with appropriate GOA officials and Afghan universities.*

C. Poppy Elimination/Eradication

1. **Governor Accountability:** *The GOA could announce a national net poppy reduction target before the fall 2007 planting season to create an atmosphere of accountability.*
2. **Governor Rewards:** *A comprehensive pre-planting strategy could include public recognition and rewards for governors who have excelled in suppressing poppy planting and carrying out Governor-Led Eradication (GLE), along with the announcement of future incentives.*
3. **Improve Mechanized Eradication and Targeting:** *The Afghanistan Eradication Force (AEF) could focus on using more mechanized eradication, supported by manual eradication. This would primarily mean using tractors and ATVs in terrain suitable for mechanized operations. In conjunction with the enhanced Good Performers Initiative, this approach could raise eradication figures to match—and even exceed—the national growth rate of opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan. Eradication verification capability could also be improved by having the USG deploy more observers to verify AEF eradication on the ground, or by employing technology that provides detailed imagery as well as the coordinates of eradicated fields.*
4. **Improve Quality and Quantity of Eradication:** *No herbicidal spray program would be implemented without the consent of the GOA. This being said, in order to ensure that eradication is equitable, efficient, and capable of eradicating poppy on a sufficient scale, the USG advocates a policy of GOA-led non-negotiated forced eradication. One method of implementing forced eradication would entail the deployment of force-protected ground-based spray (GBS) teams.*

There are many misconceptions about the safety, health, and environmental impact of glyphosate, the active ingredient in ground-based spray. A public education campaign should be initiated to address the health concerns associated with spray, broadcast the benefits of farm herbicides via public information targeting, and dispel misconceptions about GBS. Another way to accomplish the objective of non-negotiated forced eradication would be to employ aerial spray.

D. Interdiction/Law Enforcement Operations

1. Provide the Counternarcotics Police of Afghanistan (CNPA) with the Capacity to Protect All Elements of the Five Pillar Strategy: *Develop an implementation plan for building a security capacity within the CNPA for CN enforcement operations in non-permissive environments. The CNPA security capacity will not assume the role of a maneuver force; rather, it will focus on enforcing Afghan civil law and supporting all the activities included in the Five Pillar CN strategy when confronted by determined opposition. This capability will be entirely resident within the MOI and will not increase ANP manning above the 82,000 currently authorized.*
2. Increase the Number of DEA Agents or Other Law Enforcement Advisors for CNPA: *In order to provide comprehensive mentor support and training of a large CNPA special protection police force, the USG should significantly increase the number of DEA agents or other law enforcement mentors/trainers assigned to Kabul.*
3. Expand DEA Investigative and Operational Capacity: *DEA believes its Afghan counterparts could more effectively employ their strategy of attacking the command and control structure of Afghanistan drug High Value Targets (HVTs) with greater investigative capacity and improved operational capacity, including increased airlift capability. Establishment of the Vetted Unit Program and continued support for drug HVT extraditions are also crucial elements.*
4. ASNF & NIU: *More cooperation between the Afghan Special Narcotics Force (ASNF) and the National Interdiction Unit (NIU) could maximize resources, improve intelligence gathering*

capabilities, and increase the ability to successfully prosecute High Value Targets.

5. Publicize Successful Interdiction Operations and Prosecutions: *An aggressive public information campaign down to the village level could publicize the success of interdiction operations to the local population and traffickers. These successes should also be publicized to the international community.*
6. Improve Interdiction and Prosecution of High Value Targets (HVTs): *In FY2007, the USG will contribute \$343 million towards interdiction efforts. The USG must continue to improve the interdiction capabilities of the Counternarcotics Police of Afghanistan (CNPA) by building up specialized units, continuing support for the Foreign-deployed Advisory Support Teams (FAST), assigning additional DEA agents to Kabul, expanding the core of the CNPA with a five-year plan, and more aggressively implementing the northern, eastern, and southern Enforcement Strategies.*

E. Justice Reform/Prosecution

1. Expand Central and Provincial Counternarcotics Justice Capacity: *The Criminal Justice Task Force (CJTF) in Kabul investigates and prosecutes mid- and high-level narcotics and narcotics-related cases before the Central Narcotics Tribunal (CNT), which has exclusive nationwide jurisdiction for such cases. Counternarcotics justice reform should include expansion of the CJTF and CNT in Kabul. Other support to the Afghan criminal justice system, such as that provided by the nine already-deployed provincial justice advisors, will assist these counternarcotics efforts by directing appropriate cases arising in the provinces to the CJTF in Kabul.*
2. Improve Anti-Corruption Initiative: *The USG should improve assistance to the Afghan Attorney General's anti-corruption campaign by providing security, secure facilities, equipment, and technical assistance. The Department of Justice, with assistance from the State Department, should expand its anticorruption programs in Afghanistan along the lines recommended by a recent DOJ assessment team. The Ministry of Interior should make whatever*

organizational changes are necessary to bring itself into compliance with this initiative.

3. Develop an Extradition Policy: *The USG should develop guidelines with the GOA and the international community defining the circumstances under which extradition is appropriate. Given that full Afghan capacity to prosecute kingpins is still a few years away, a more clearly defined extradition policy is imperative for successful prosecution of selected High Value Targets (HVTs).*
4. Increase Justice Sector Salaries: *Increasing justice personnel salaries is critical to building the rule of law and should be supported by the U.S. The European Union is considering augmenting justice salaries through a trust fund. The U.S. could offer a substantial financial contribution to this effort over the coming two years.*
5. Expand Counternarcotics Justice Infrastructure: *Over the coming year, a number of U.S. and international initiatives will substantially accelerate CN law enforcement efforts. Most importantly, the Counternarcotics Justice Center will be completed in 2007, providing a secure facility for investigation, detention, trial, and conviction of major narcotics offenders.*

F. Political Will

1. Central, Provincial, and District Leaders: *One of the principal obstacles to greater success in interdiction and eradication is the intervention of corrupt officials. The USG and international community should assist wherever possible to ensure that central, provincial, and local government officials are strong and uncorrupt, and will not succumb to pressure to limit or stop interdiction and eradication operations.*

G. Unity of International Effort

1. Develop a Plan to Ensure Allied Unity in Messaging: *The USG and partners should work to improve the delivery of a clear and consistent counternarcotics message. This plan would need to be executed concurrently by civilian and military authorities from all allied nations and the GOA.*

2. Regional Cooperation and Border Security: *Coordination among countries bordering Afghanistan needs to improve. The U.S. should strive to foster improved regional cooperation on Afghan drug transit and enhanced Allied-Afghan border security efforts. The U.S. should identify useful ways to engage resources, expertise, and assistance to counter the drug-related transit in and out of Afghanistan without undermining our larger goals in Afghanistan.*
3. Increased Coordination on Interdiction Strategies and Justice Sector Development: *Coordination is needed to avoid conflicting initiatives and improve disbursement of funds.*

H. Integrating Counternarcotics (Particularly Interdiction) Into The Comprehensive Security Approach

1. Work with Afghan and Allied Military Forces to Integrate Counternarcotics Into Our Broader Security Strategy: *There is a clear and direct link between the illicit opium trade and insurgent groups in Afghanistan. The Taliban and other anti-government elements exploit the opium trade to facilitate their financial, logistical, and political objectives, jeopardizing the prospect of long-term security and stability, reconstruction, and effective governance. Successful counternarcotics operations, particularly interdiction operations, dismantle criminal enterprises, capture narco-terrorists, and weaken the insurgents' areas of strength. Therefore, progress in the CN mission, and drug interdiction in particular, is essential to achieving our security objectives in Afghanistan. Combating the insurgency requires an integrated strategy that incorporates CN target sets, operations, and resource priorities as components of the overall security effort. DOD will work with DEA and other stakeholders to develop options for a coordinated strategy that integrates and synchronizes counternarcotics operations, particularly interdiction, into the comprehensive security strategy.*
2. Establish a Command and Control Cell: *In addition to building a CNPA protection force, an Afghan Command and Control (C2) cell could be established to provide command and control for all government CN forces operating in a specific region. This C2 cell will ensure that there is a single command structure for all*

government CN efforts in the region, and will coordinate with the respective local governments, NGOs, PRTs, military headquarters, etc.

3. Develop Coordinated Plans for Afghan and Allied Military Support for Counternarcotics Operations, Particularly Interdiction Operations: *Establishing liaison relationships with Afghan and allied planning cells, drug interdiction mission planners, eradication specialists, and public information specialists would help develop more integrated plans, policies, and procedures.*
4. Support Afghan and Allied Partners' Public Information Efforts: *The Afghan and allied militaries could support the GOA and international community's counternarcotics public information campaign.*

I. Countering "Silver Bullet" Approaches

1. Provide Information to Expose the Flaws of an Imbalanced Interdiction-Only Approach: *Various actors have expressed support for an interdiction-only approach to combating narcotics in Afghanistan. While interdiction is a critical piece of the U.S. government's counternarcotics strategy, it will not solve the problems absent the other pillars. Interdiction at the expense of the other pillars would have a negative impact on the entire CN effort.*
2. Impossibility of Legalizing and Buying Out the Opium Crop: *The USG has considered the arguments for legalizing and/or buying out the opium crop. The biggest problems with this idea are that it would encourage the 87% of Afghans who do not grow opium poppy to begin cultivation, there exists no infrastructure to manufacture and distribute legal opium, there is already an oversupply of legal opium, and a licit opium program would require multi-billion dollar annual subsidies. The international community needs a consolidated response to get out the message that "legalizing the crop" is not a viable option.*
3. No Miracle Crop: *Many outside observers continue to assume that there is one single miracle crop that can replace poppy. This simply is not true. There is no legal crop that can match the value of the opium poppy. Instead, a balanced approach combining several crops,*

in conjunction with agricultural market and business development, can provide farmers with a reasonable livelihood.

Short-Term Action Items for Helmand and Other High-Concern Provinces

In the section below, specific strategic elements are discussed for especially problematic provinces, notably Helmand. Counternarcotics success hinges on GOA and international support for a robust counternarcotics effort in Helmand, Afghanistan's most active opium-growing province, and secondarily in other regions.

Although many of these options will take time, now that the U.S. is more than two years into the implementation of the Five Pillar strategy it is crucial that the USG demonstrates concrete progress in assisting the GOA with counternarcotics. For 2008, one of our main objectives should be to achieve a net reduction in total opium poppy cultivation in Helmand. To achieve this, we must make immediate progress in the following five areas:

- 1. Make Eradication a Counternarcotics Priority**
- 2. Encourage the GOA to Set Eradication Goals for 2008**
- 3. Encourage the GOA to Employ Non-Negotiated Methods of Forced Eradication**

--Encourage the GOA to consider the use of force-protected GBS eradication in 2008, particularly in insecure areas.

--Make available to the GOA the tremendous amount of research done on health, safety, and environmental concerns about glyphosate.

- 4. Improve the Good Performers Initiative (GPI)**

--To date, rewards under the Good Performers Initiative have only been disbursed to poppy-free provinces, which have each received \$500,000 for achieving poppy-free status as defined by a confirmed crop of less than 100 vestigial hectares. To

incentivize poppy reduction in high-concern provinces such as Helmand, the USG and GOA will announce an expanded Good Performers Initiative before the 2007 planting season that will reward poppy reduction in all provinces, and offer special performance incentives for high-concern provinces that stabilize or reverse cultivation trends through aggressive governor-led action.

5. Improve CN-COIN Public Information

--The USG will develop and implement an action plan to improve coordination of message delivery on the CN-COIN nexus in Afghanistan.

2. DEFINING THE PROBLEM

The drug problem in Afghanistan is a serious health and social problem, a serious obstacle to the international community's efforts to defeat global terrorism, and a serious impediment to achieving regional stability. Resolving this problem is a priority of the USG. Afghanistan provides 93% of the world's opium, almost solely supplying the world's heroin demand. While the U.S. is one of the few countries that does not receive significant amounts of Afghan heroin, that trend could change with the development of increasingly sophisticated drug transit networks.

UNODC figures estimated last year's Afghan opium crop as the largest in recorded history, rising 59% over the previous year's crop to 165,000 hectares (Ha). According to UN estimates, 2007 may see another record year of opium poppy cultivation and resulting heroin overproduction. This crop could translate into more than 650 tons of heroin, supplying the entire world's demand for over a year. By comparison, U.S. users consume 15 tons of heroin a year.

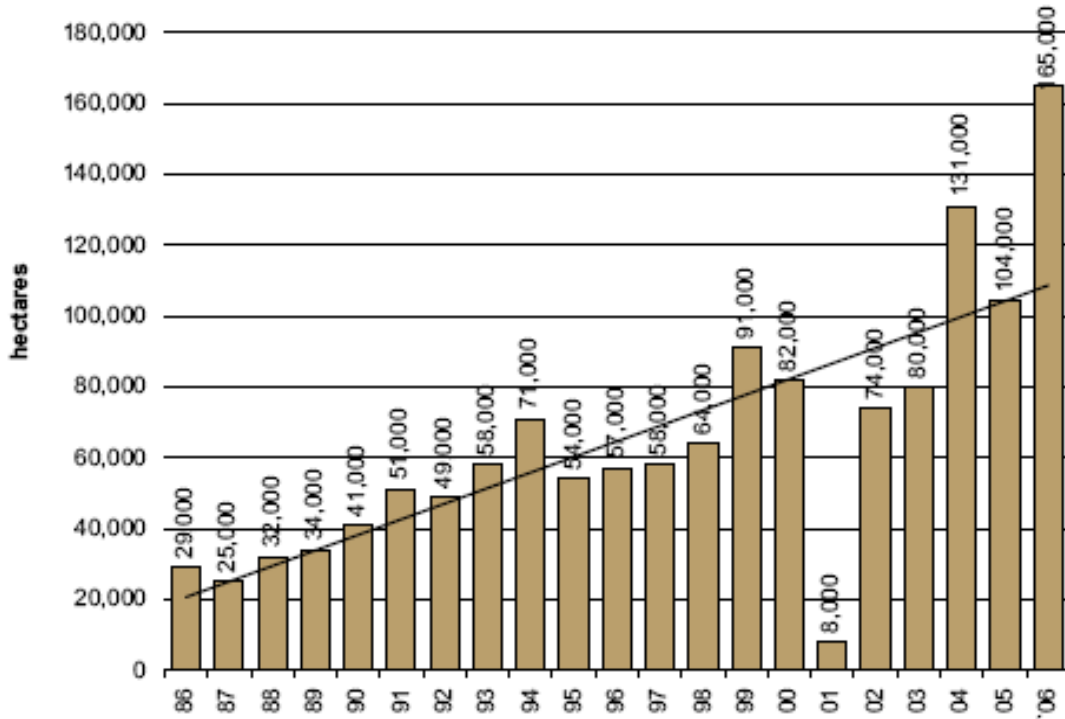
Increased cultivation means lower prices, increasing purity, increasing numbers of users, and more drug-related deaths. The number of new addicts will also increase because heroin of higher purity can be consumed not only through needles, but also by smoking, snorting, and ingesting.

But the Afghan opium trade is much more than a drug problem. In 2006, the total export value of Afghanistan's opium was \$3.1 billion, representing approximately 32% of the country's total (licit and illicit) GDP. This represents an improvement over the 2005 percentage (34%), but still requires significant action in order to reach controllable levels. When refined into heroin, the London street value of Afghan opium rises to \$38 billion.

Afghanistan's drug money weakens key institutions and strengthens the Taliban. In many regions, the economy operates by and for drug traffickers. Since Afghanistan's financial institutions are still developing, money primarily goes through the informal *hawala* system, making it difficult to track and therefore cutting out the nascent banking system. Further, the illicit drug trade's corrupting influence and provenance of funding for insurgents threatens the efforts of the United States and its allies to help the

Afghan people bring stability to their country. Some studies indicate that the Taliban receives between 10% and 50% of its funding from trade in illegal narcotics. In sum, Afghanistan’s drug money corrupts the government, weakens institutions, and strengthens the Taliban.

Figure 1 Opium poppy cultivation from 1986 to 2006 (hectares)



Security Issues

Security problems greatly impede counternarcotics efforts. With improved security, the USG could better deliver CN assistance in all areas. Eradication efforts in 2007 met with more resistance and violence from Taliban and local elements than in prior years, with 16 reported deaths during eradication operations. The hectares eradicated in Afghanistan in 2007 were hard won, and in the future eradication could become increasingly difficult to carry out if the security situation continues to deteriorate. Non-permissive environments such as Helmand limit eradication efforts. Lacking force protection, eradicators are forced to negotiate how and where eradication takes place with farmers and local officials, slowing down operations and lessening the deterrent effect of the threat of eradication.

Economic Issues – Undermining Development

While the UNODC estimates that approximately 46% of Afghan licit GDP derives from opium exports, only 12.6% of Afghans are involved in drug cultivation. The largest opium poppy cultivation areas are also distinct from Afghanistan's more populated areas, which minimizes the political constituency in support of poppy.

In Helmand and Konduz, traffickers and poppy farmers use roads and irrigation canals developed for licit farming for drug transit and improved poppy yields. Under pressure from insurgents or local warlords, some farmers take out loans to cultivate large amounts of opium poppy, creating a vicious cycle of debt that cannot be broken by shifting back to licit crops. In other cases, farmers turn down alternative crops to grow poppy simply because it is more lucrative.

Although the narco-economy has been reduced as a percentage of licit and illicit GDP in recent years, this is due to the proportionate growth of the licit Afghan economy. The drug economy remains entrenched, and continues to present a serious impediment to national sustainable development.

Political Issues – Corruption, Narcotics, and the Insurgency

Corruption

Narco-corruption is present at all levels of the Afghan government. Executive branch officials, legislators, police chiefs, and governors have been implicated in trafficking, enabling, bribery schemes, and related narco-corruption. Decades of war and economic dislocation have eroded institutions, so that an informal system of favors and payoffs has become the normal process for resolving issues. In this environment, narcotics corruption thrives. For example, the judicial system has difficulty prosecuting corrupt officials, due to low salaries, limited infrastructure and the lack of a professionalized bureaucratic infrastructure.

Integrating CN Into The Comprehensive Security Approach

Increasingly, indicators show a growing relationship between narco-traffickers and Taliban-related insurgent groups, prompting the need to

integrate drug enforcement into the comprehensive security strategy and operational planning. While the Taliban eliminated poppy production for one year during their rule (largely to gain favor with the West and keep opium prices high), some reports indicate that the Taliban has now formed direct alliances with narco-traffickers to raise money for a national counter-offensive against Afghan and ISAF forces, especially in southern Afghanistan. Unless the Afghan government and the international community can disrupt the narcotics trade, insurgent groups will use drug funding to consolidate territorial gains in the south, build a force capable of going toe-to-toe against ISAF and Afghan forces, and threaten Afghan unity and regional stability.

The insurgents profit from every aspect of Afghanistan's opium trade. They tax farmers and traffickers, offer protection for travel on drug transit routes, and develop high-level contacts for joining the Jihad with narco-trafficking. Currently the insurgents are moving from opportunistic profiteering—e.g., taxing farmers—to more organized profiteering, whereby they develop regional strategies to maximize narco-trafficking profits at all levels of the production ladder. Although Afghanistan's insurgents are not yet totally integrated into the drug trade, they are moving in that direction, as the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) have done in Colombia.

Problems for Afghanistan's Neighbors

The transit of Afghan heroin has become a national security issue for its neighbors. Afghan heroin transits through Iran, Pakistan, and the Central Asian states. This transit flow has a similarly corrosive effect on the economic and social stability of these countries and provides a ready source of income for internal criminal and insurgent elements. Russia, for example, has expressed considerable concern over the flow of Afghan heroin through the Central Asian States and possible ties between drug traffickers and insurgent elements. Pakistan is also attempting to address the effects of narcotics funding on tribal stability in the Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA).

3. CURRENT STRATEGY

The Afghan Government's own Afghan National Drug Control Strategy lays out the basic framework for counternarcotics success in Afghanistan. While the USG and its coalition partners can provide funding and training assistance, Afghanistan as a sovereign nation must develop its own methods of implementation to defeat the drug problem over the long term.

U.S. Five Pillar Plan

The USG strategy focuses on helping the GOA disrupt Afghanistan's opium-based economy and strengthen the central government's control over the country. To address these objectives comprehensively, the USG has focused on helping the GOA implement the first five parts of the Afghan National Drug Control Strategy:

1. Public Information (PI) - (State/INL and DOD): Designed as a year-round, nationwide program focused on helping the GOA achieve sustainable reductions in poppy cultivation and production through public information, engagement, and education. In 2006, the campaign increased its emphasis on person to person community outreach initiatives that engage trusted local opinion leaders. UNODC reporting indicates a significant reduction in poppy cultivation in the northern provinces, attributed in part to improved PI efforts.
2. Alternative Development (AD) - (USAID): Designed to help the GOA establish economic alternatives to the cultivation of poppy for Afghan people. The AD campaign, with annual expenditures of \$120 million to \$150 million, includes short-term cash-for-work projects, comprehensive agricultural and business development projects, and high-visibility programs. Over the past few years, agricultural production has nearly doubled, increasing farmers' incomes. The USG has paid \$32 million in cash-for-work salaries for infrastructure rehabilitation resulting in the construction of 1,000 km of rural roads and improved irrigation for 3% of Afghanistan's arable land. \$3.1 million in credit has been disbursed, and over 100,000 farmers have been trained in improved agricultural practices.

3. Elimination/Eradication - (State/INL): Designed to help the GOA deter and reduce the cultivation of opium poppy by launching a major program of prevention incentives while also building a credible forced eradication capability. It includes support for Governor-Led Eradication (GLE) and the 600-man Afghan Eradication Force (AEF). Political will and security problems have impeded eradication efforts since the AEF program began in 2004. While AEF made some notable progress during the first eight weeks of the 2007 eradication season, armed attacks and deficient political will on all levels obstructed eradication efforts later in the season. Despite setbacks, combined AEF and GLE efforts succeeded in eradicating more than 19,000 Ha in the 2007 eradication season, outpacing last year's total eradication of 15,300 Ha by nearly a third.

4. Interdiction - (DEA, DOD, and State/INL): Focuses on decreasing narcotics trafficking and processing in Afghanistan by helping the GOA build its capacity to disrupt and dismantle the most significant drug trafficking organizations. Groups such as the DEA-trained Counternarcotics Police of Afghanistan (CNPA), the Afghanistan Special Narcotics Force (ASNF), and the National Interdiction Unit (NIU) of the CNPA are being equipped to arrest and prosecute the command and control elements of narcotics trafficking organizations. Over the past two years, interdiction initiatives have resulted in the seizure of more than 26 metric tons of heroin, the initiation of hundreds of investigations, and the arrest of more than 1,000 individuals.

5. Law Enforcement/Justice Reform - (DOJ and State/INL): Encompasses both police and justice sector efforts to help the GOA increase overall rule of law, specifically in the area of narcotics-related law enforcement. Programs are closely tied to police-sector and justice-sector efforts at large. USG advisors mentor the Afghan Criminal Justice Task Force's (CJTF) pursuit of narcotics and public corruption cases through the Central Narcotics Tribunal (CNT) in Kabul. All narcotics cases involving over 2 kilograms are handled by the CNT. Concurrently, the USG is helping the GOA implement its Justice Sector Strategy, which to date has built or renovated 40 judicial facilities, distributed more than 11,000 copies of the Afghan Constitution, built the central justice system, and trained more than 1,250 Afghan judges, lawyers, prosecutors, and corrections personnel. The GOA's CN law has been the foundation for these programs. Building the overall justice system has a direct impact on expanding the rule of law and thus on counternarcotics law enforcement efforts.

Afghanistan's Eight Pillar Plan

The Afghan National Drug Control Strategy establishes eight priorities for eliminating the drug trade: public information, alternative development, eradication, interdiction/law enforcement, prosecution/criminal justice reform, demand reduction, institution building, and international and regional cooperation.

USG and international efforts support the GOA's eight pillar counternarcotics strategy. Although the USG spent over \$600 million last year supporting all eight pillars, the primary focus is on the first five, as described above. While this paper details the USG commitment to the first five pillars throughout, USG support for the remaining three pillars is briefly outlined below.

Demand Reduction

The USG contributes several million dollars annually to help the GOA prevent and reduce Afghanistan's domestic drug abuse problem. By providing technical and training assistance, the USG supports the GOA's creation of a national drug abuse prevention, intervention, and treatment program.

USG demand reduction efforts in Afghanistan have resulted in leading Muslim clerics and organizations issuing *fatwas* and resolutions that strongly support U.S. policies and programs designed to reduce drug production, trafficking, and abuse. Additionally, USG collaboration with the Afghan Religious Affairs Ministry (3,000 mullahs) has provided rare access to mosques for establishing prevention and outreach centers.

Institution Building

Continued USG and international efforts are needed to help the GOA build up the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Education, and other Afghan institutions involved in the fight against drugs. Justice sector capacity-building is also a high priority, and the U.S. and international community are increasing assistance to the justice system overall. The USG intends to double its justice sector support over the next several years, especially focusing on building prosecution capabilities. For the USG, this includes supporting over 70 justice and corrections advisors in Kabul and five

provinces in 2007 (including INL, DOJ, and USAID advisors) to implement the U.S. Justice Sector Strategy of (1) building the central justice system, (2) expanding to the provinces, and (3) increasing coordinated international justice assistance.

International and Regional Cooperation

The USG contributes to a variety of international efforts to support regional cooperation. Pakistan, Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan all now have major drug problems as a result of large influxes of Afghan heroin, taxing their law enforcement capabilities. Further, the Afghan drug trade corrupts bordering countries' political systems with large amounts of narco-money. To combat this problem, the USG has programs in all neighboring countries (except Iran) that help to interdict narcotics and improve law enforcement and prosecution capabilities in those countries. The newly-formed Central Asian Regional Information Coordination Center (CARICC) will also help combat trafficking throughout Central Asia by acting as an information sharing venue for all intelligence and law enforcement agencies operating in the area.

Counternarcotics Partners

International

As part of the 2002 Bonn Agreement, the United Kingdom initially assumed the role of "lead nation" for counternarcotics support. Germany led on police reform, Italy on justice reform, and the United States on the military. Lead nations, however, soon realized that Afghanistan's needs were more extensive and expensive than they had originally expected.

In January 2006, a new agreement, the Afghanistan Compact ("the Compact"), came into force. The Compact states that Afghanistan is the lead nation; the concept of other lead nations consequently no longer exists. Mindful that Afghanistan's reconstruction and stabilization will require strong international engagement for the foreseeable future, the Compact establishes a Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board. The Afghan government and the United Nations co-chair this board, implementing the Compact's political commitments.

Multilateral cooperation is critical to making progress in drug control. The USG and UN continually work to ensure that their counternarcotics strategies are in lockstep.

USG Interagency

The USG plays a critical role in all areas related to the GOA's counternarcotics efforts, contributing – through an interagency effort – hundreds of personnel and over \$600 million in counternarcotics support last year alone. Since 2001, the total USG counternarcotics contribution to Afghanistan has totaled around \$1.6 billion.

Within the U.S. interagency process, ONDCP sets overall counternarcotics policy, and the National Security Council (NSC) has the coordinating role on Afghanistan issues, including counternarcotics. The State Department's Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) serves as the lead implementing agency on narcotics issues in Afghanistan. To disseminate messages on all counternarcotics programs and increase confidence in the Government of Afghanistan, the State Department works to improve public information engagement and education.

The State Department also works to improve Afghan elimination and eradication capacity by supporting provincial governors (through Governor-Led Eradication, or GLE) and improving the capacity of the Counternarcotics Ministry's centrally led eradication force (the Afghan Eradication Force, or AEF). The State Department is also responsible for funding the programs associated with the eradication pillar, including the provision of aerial protection for ground-based eradication forces through INL's air wing.

DEA and DOJ, DOD, and State Department programs are building the capacity of the counternarcotics police, border management forces, and the Afghan court system. With regard to justice reform, the State Department funds a program implemented by the Department of Justice (DOJ) to train, mentor, and build the capacity of the Criminal Justice Task Force, which is based in Kabul. DOJ has also provided assistance to the Central Narcotics Tribunal.

On police training and assistance programs, DOD provides equipment, airlift, heavy arms support, salary support for most Afghan law enforcement

personnel and other operational assistance, while State Department support includes operations and maintenance support for facilities, provision of training advisors and curricula for police training programs, nearly 500 advisors for field based and Ministry of Interior mentoring programs, and related program administrative assistance.

DEA's mission in Afghanistan is to help the government target the command and control structures of the largest drug organizations in the country. DEA does this by building Afghan law enforcement institutions and by directly combating Afghan narcotics trafficking networks. DEA's contributions extend beyond the borders of Afghanistan with *Operation Containment*, an international effort involving 19 countries that work to stop the flow of drugs and precursor chemicals into and out of Afghanistan.

USAID coordinates and funds efforts to establish legitimate economic alternatives to poppy cultivation. The alternative development program, operating in nine provinces, has realized significant accomplishments in supporting the overall counternarcotics effort and in promoting new infrastructure and economic activities that provide rural jobs and increase farmers' income from legal crops. USAID is improving the infrastructure, business capacity, and agricultural productivity needed to create jobs and increase Afghanistan's revenues from licit sales in domestic, regional, and international markets.

Government of Afghanistan (GOA)

In December 2004, the Counter Narcotics Directorate (CND) became the Ministry of Counternarcotics (MCN). It was upgraded to the ministerial level in order to tackle the scale and intensity of the problem of illegal drugs in Afghanistan. On behalf of the Government of Afghanistan, the Ministry of Counternarcotics leads the coordination, policy making, monitoring and evaluation of all counternarcotics activities and efforts. The Ministry of the Interior (MOI) supports the MCN, with particular emphasis on law enforcement and eradication. All counternarcotics activities are carried out in accordance with the Afghan Constitution, Afghan Drug Law and Afghanistan's National Drug Control Strategy (NDCS).

Responsibilities for administering justice are divided between the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Justice, the Supreme Court, and the Attorney General. The Ministry of Interior is responsible for police forces and the first

stages of criminal investigations; the Attorney General's Office (AGO) initiates prosecutions and manages the prosecution service; the Supreme Court, the highest judicial authority, manages the nationwide judicial system; and the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) is responsible for the corrections system, legislative drafting, civil law matters, legal aid (pending Parliamentary approval), oversight over implementation of laws throughout the government, and coordination of the justice sector. USG experts are working with both the Ministry of Justice and the Attorney General's Office to deconflict perceived overlaps in legal authority, which has led to interagency rivalry.

Improving Implementation of the Five Pillar Plan

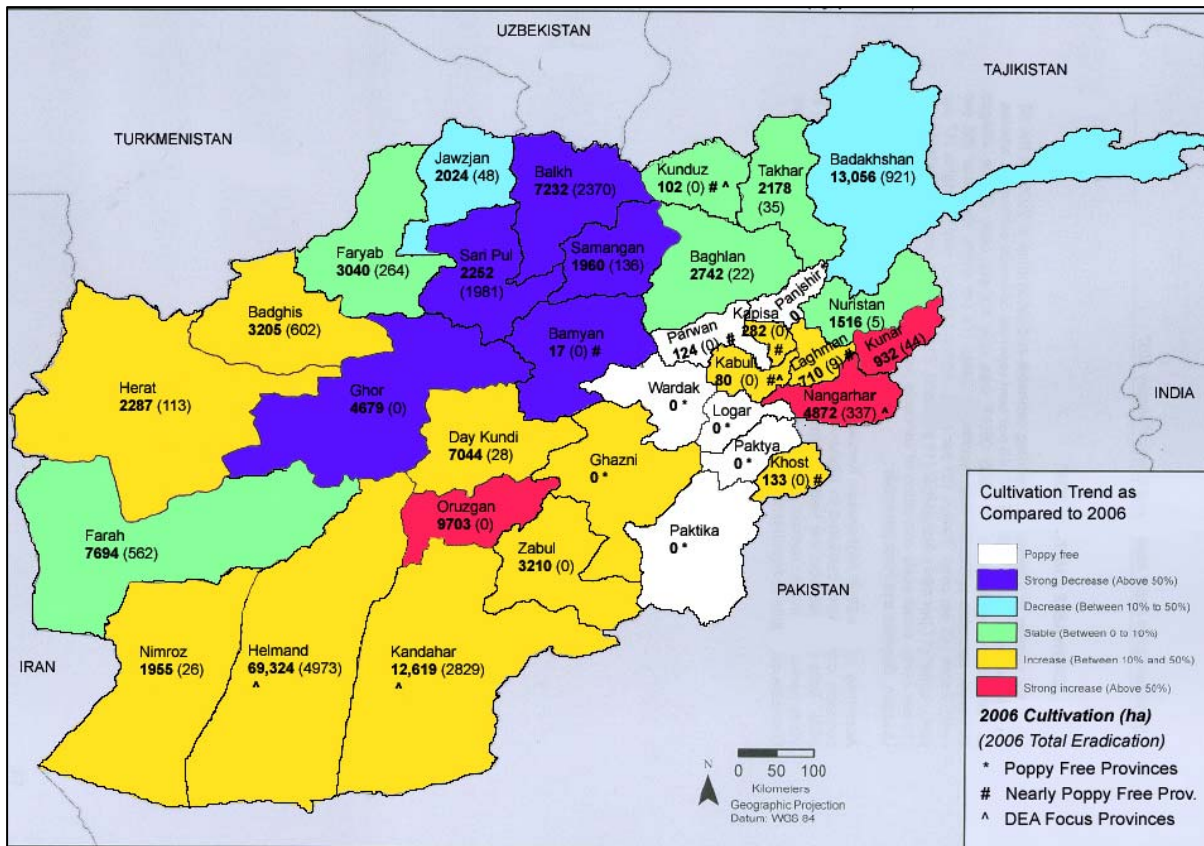
The U.S. has on multiple occasions evaluated the soundness of the basic five part strategy described above. While the USG has concluded that it is the right general strategy, the U.S., the GOA, and the international community need to deliver the strategy more effectively. We now have additional data, summarized below, on how the counternarcotics problem is developing across the country.

4. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Bifurcation

According to UNODC's 2007 Rapid Assessment Survey, this year may be another record-setting year for Afghanistan's opium crop. Recent trends in opium cultivation, however, fall along a clear north-south divide in the amount of poppy cultivation among provinces. Due to increasing ties between narcotics traffickers and elements of the insurgency in southern Afghanistan, poppy cultivation in the south has increased. In contrast, northern provinces contributed to a decline in opium cultivation due to a combination of political will and incentives and disincentives, such as effective public information, alternative development, and eradication.

The U.S. and UN have jointly agreed on a strategy to help the GOA sustain reductions and maintain poppy-free provinces in the north while integrating a security component into the counternarcotics plan for the south.



Northern Progress

Several northern provinces with very low amounts of poppy—two to three hundred hectares—are well on their way to becoming poppy free. Due to strong political will and a successful Governor-Led Eradication campaign, Balkh, which cultivated 7,232 Ha in 2006, will likely be certified poppy-free in 2007.

Likewise, in Bamyan the central government delivered an effective public information campaign through the Poppy Elimination Program's teams and advisors which contributed to a strong decrease in hectareage. This part of Afghanistan will either be poppy free or on its way to becoming poppy free within the next two years if our strategy continues to be aggressive.

Nangarhar is the one exception to this generally positive trend in Afghanistan's north. While cultivation in Nangarhar is still well below historic highs of 30,000 Ha, the 2007 growing season witnessed a resurgence of cultivation in Nangarhar which needs to be addressed.

Southern Challenges

The generally positive outlook in the north contrasts dramatically with the situation in the south, which has seen poppy cultivation increases in virtually every province. In 2007, the USG is supporting a GOA-led eradication campaign in central Helmand which focuses eradication in areas with available agricultural alternatives. As the Afghan Eradication Force works to increase its daily rate of eradication, there has been a corresponding increase in local resistance, partly encouraged by local officials.

Until May, Oruzgan had almost no counternarcotics activities this season, with provincial authorities failing to launch a credible GLE campaign. Farmers currently have a free hand to grow poppy. The eradication campaign lost credibility because the AEF was unable to follow through on forced eradication. A strong increase in poppy cultivation in Oruzgan could bring negative, contagious effects on neighboring provinces.

Challenges This Year

Political Will and Security

Strong political will enables effective eradication and interdiction programs and judicial system development. In Kandahar, despite unfavorable security conditions, the governor managed to suppress the acceleration of poppy cultivation to keep 2007 cultivation estimates nearly level with last year's. While most of the southern provinces posted increased cultivation numbers, Kandahar's governor successfully suppressed cultivation through commitment to the poppy elimination mission. Yet corruption in Afghanistan too often impedes progress and erodes political will.

In areas where more security exists, as in the north, political will can eliminate the drug problem. In Balkh, for example, the governor decided to show authority over his area and proved to be a key player in making dramatic reductions in poppy cultivation. Where insecurity exists, it is harder to deliver services and maintain a central government presence. For example, USAID had twelve contractors killed from 2005-06 trying to deliver alternative development programs.

Interdiction/Prosecution

The GOA needs help in improving its interdiction and prosecution capacity. Last year, less than two percent of the total opium crop of Afghanistan was interdicted inside Afghanistan. Porous borders and mountain terrain continue to impede interdiction efforts. The USG is working closely with the international community to improve border control and to take some of the lessons learned from countries with successful interdiction activities, such as Colombia, and apply those lessons in Afghanistan.

The interdiction strategy also needs to better address stockpiled narcotics. Since Afghanistan produces more opium than global demand can absorb, traffickers can store opium for up to three years and use it for currency. Even when the Taliban outlawed opium production in 2000 they continued to profit from huge stockpiles.

DEA is working with the Departments of State and Defense to help the GOA build its investigative and interdiction capabilities through the funding and

training of the Counternarcotics Police of Afghanistan (CNPA). Without a dedicated narcotics police investigative agency like the CNPA, interdiction efforts will be left to roadside checkpoint discoveries. A dedicated investigative agency will utilize contemporary investigative techniques to infiltrate drug trafficking organizations (DTOs), interdict shipments of drugs, and gather evidence against the heads of the DTOs needed for prosecution. Efforts for the creation and training of these specialized units are underway.

Afghanistan's ability to prosecute high-level cases also remains a challenge. In December 2005, the GOA passed a comprehensive CN Law and is currently revising criminal justice procedures and laws. Further, the central tribunal for narcotics is still in its infancy. To date, the Central Narcotics Tribunal (CNT) has received over 320 cases that meet the minimum threshold for heroin and opium, involving over 520 defendants and resulting in approximately 225 defendants being found in guilty. In addition to the CNT, the Department of Justice trains and mentors the Afghan CN Criminal Justice Task Force (CJTF) of 30 prosecutors and 35 investigators to prepare for higher level cases over the coming year, including cases involving narcotics-related corruption.

Information Campaign

The insurgents exploit information to meet their ends. They claim counternarcotics efforts hurt poor farmers and will lead to a collapse of the GOA. Cultivation, however, has significantly decreased in the northern part of Afghanistan and the GOA remains stable. Early shortcomings in the public information effort involved a reliance on radios, television, posters, billboards and stickers, rather than effectively using local leaders, particularly religious leaders, to deliver counternarcotics messages. The public information campaign has shifted this past year to focus more on word of mouth and working with Muslim leaders than in the past. In close coordination with the Poppy Elimination Program (PEP), the campaign has worked to engage trusted local opinion leaders, including tribal leaders, religious leaders (mullahs, *ulama*, and *imams*), elders, police chiefs, district leaders, and teachers. While this strategy has worked successfully in the north, campaigns have not been able to get the message out as well in the south because of the security situation. If campaigns can eventually persuade the religious leaders in the south to give the same message, it will help curb the cultivation of poppy and drug trafficking there as well.

Alternative Development/Eradication Balance

In FY2006, \$120 million of alternative development projects accompanied eradication in major poppy growing provinces. FY2007 funds include \$20 million for an enhanced Good Performers Initiative to reward provinces that have sustained poppy reductions. The USG has also had some success in ensuring that the GOA's poppy eradication campaigns and alternative development programs are co-located in the same geographic areas in order to reinforce the "carrot and stick" aspects of the program.

Critics of the USG-supported eradication effort say the government should stop eradicating and provide drug-cultivating farmers with economic assistance without strings attached. However, there is no successful precedent anywhere in the world where drug cultivation was abandoned purely through economic rewards. Successful USG drug cultivation reduction programs, specifically in the Andes with coca cultivation, and in Pakistan and Thailand, have succeeded by presenting a forced/voluntary eradication component with the offering or withholding of economic benefits.

USG supported counternarcotics efforts must encourage alternative development programs that combine both short and longer-term incentives for individual rural households – where it is important to instill a sense of confidence that our assistance is a sustainable alternative to opium poppy cultivation. Surveys suggest that once farmers are provided with a viable alternative subsistence crop – not necessarily comparable to poppy— they will grow legal crops for quality of life reasons, including consistency with religious beliefs.

Thus, it is critical to focus resources on programs that persuade farmers to switch crops while ensuring that the switch is a sustainable livelihood choice. Indeed, such sustainability requires integration with the private sector. In the current environment, however, the private sector will only develop over the medium-term. The most effective programs will therefore link immediate needs with the hoped for medium-term integration and be balanced with eradication programs in the same region.

Eradication/Elimination

The number of hectares eradicated thus far in 2007 has increased over previous years' totals. The Afghan Eradication Force (AEF) and Governor-Led Eradication (GLE) teams collectively eradicated more than 19,000 Ha in the 2007 eradication season.

Kandahar's governor eradicated 8,157 Ha in 2007 simply by making it his personal initiative. His province currently cultivates about half the hectareage it did ten years ago. This sort of effort demonstrates to his people that he has control over his province, not the Taliban.

The governor of Badakhshan greatly reduced cultivation through personally and actively engaging in PEP's pre-planting campaign. In addition to calling for strict enforcement of the CN law by all provincial authorities and declaring that "no excuses" for cultivation would be accepted, he visited and spoke with those residents who initially demonstrated resistance to eradication. His hands-on approach was instrumental in demonstrating the importance of political will to back eradication.

Balkh also achieved positive results in the 2006/2007 season because of the governor's political will. According to UNODC estimates, in 2006 the province cultivated over 7,000 hectares of poppy. In 2007, the province will likely achieve poppy-free status. Balkh's governor enabled this achievement by strictly enforcing the counternarcotics law with help from PEP and others. He prevented planting through a strong public information campaign, involvement of community leaders and students, and effective follow-through on development options in the province. His continued ability to attract development projects and build the province's licit economy will be essential to keeping the province poppy-free.

Despite large gains in governor-led and central-led eradication, success will take time and renewed efforts. Lack of security in some areas forces eradication teams to negotiate the terms of eradication with local elders. The resulting loss of effectiveness necessitates a more aggressive non-negotiated forced eradication strategy. The GOA should also consider a plan for a stronger set of incentives and disincentives for farmers.

The Narcotics/Insurgency Relationship

More and more information indicates that local Taliban commanders receive funding from the drug trade. These activities include taxation of opium poppy farmers, laboratories, and narcotics transporters passing through Taliban checkpoints. Taliban commanders are also providing security/safe passage for drug shipment and are collecting “donations,” both money and supplies, such as vehicles from wealthy traffickers, to support the Taliban cause. The increasing linkage between the region’s major drug trafficking organizations and insurgencies prompts the need to elevate the drug enforcement mission and integrate it appropriately into the comprehensive security strategy.

Evidence suggests that eradication and other strong counternarcotics measures need not alienate the rural population and drive them to the Taliban insurgency. According to Australian counterterrorism expert David Kilcullen:

“The facts do not support this view [that eradication alienates farmers]. According to UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) figures [from 2005], less than 10% of the Afghan population is engaged in poppy cultivation. Thus even the harshest efforts to eradicate poppy would not alienate the majority of the population. Similarly, by far the largest areas of cultivation are Helmand and Badakshan provinces. Together, these provinces account for 49.9% of poppy cultivation...but only 5.6% of the Afghan population. The largest pockets of cultivation—in rural northern Helmand province—are in the least populated areas of Afghanistan. The insurgency is where the people are, but the poppy is not.”

Helmand

This year, eradication in Helmand depended heavily on the GOA’s continued support of the central government-led Afghan Eradication Force (AEF). The AEF worked in Helmand, despite increased security problems.

However, the AEF continues to face significant management challenges. Local shura representatives—embedded with the AEF—have provided misleading targeting advice, preventing the AEF from maximizing

eradication efforts on many days. Shura members have allegedly taken bribes from local villages, farmers, and traffickers to direct the AEF away from certain areas.

An increase in the number of protests against the AEF and the potential for violence forced the GOA to request that the AEF depart Helmand this year. The AEF eradicated 3,000 Ha, well short of its eradication goal.

This year's experience in Helmand is instructive for its insights into the need for better coordination. Provincial officials initially helped the AEF establish local connections, appointing an eradication commission and local jirga to assist the AEF in obtaining community consent to operate. Allegations of corruption, however, plagued these ad hoc bodies. When the AEF ignored the jirga's guidance, it encountered security threats, civil disobedience, and political opposition that shut down its operations. Furthermore, some officials were uncooperative with the Poppy Elimination Program's (PEP) mandate to engage in province-wide public information and alternative development outreach with farmers and local leaders.

Helmand's Governor-Led Eradication (GLE) efforts have also fallen short of expectations. Despite having more resources than any other province, Helmand's GLE teams eradicated only 2,037 Ha in the heartland of Afghanistan's poppy-belt. By comparison, neighboring Kandahar has eradicated 8,157 Ha this year and Helmand's previous governor led a GLE effort that eradicated 3,166 Ha of poppy in 2006.

5. ELEMENTS OF THE STRATEGY

A. Public Information

To counter insurgents' claims about the risks and rewards of poppy cultivation and narcotics trafficking, the USG-supported public information campaign informs the Afghan public about success in eradication, law enforcement, justice reform, and alternative development programs; thereby increasing confidence in the GOA. Public information campaigns could also more effectively use PEP to work with local opinion leaders, *shuras*, and other grassroots and person-to-person initiatives to spread messages by word of mouth.

The pre-planting component of the public information pillar aims to reduce national planting levels by at least 15%, increase the number of poppy free provinces, and sustain poppy reductions in provinces that experienced decreases during the 2006-2007 planting season. As part of the public information pillar, pre-planting campaigns aim to promote lasting behavioral change among poppy farmers by transforming their perceptions of the risks and rewards of poppy cultivation. Any strategy must target all levels of players involved with the problem. A successful strategy requires that the GOA furnish political will and create accountability; that provincial level government officials prevent poppy planting in their provinces; that farmers be dissuaded from planting; and that there be provision of ample alternatives to opium poppy farming. At all levels, the USG strategy supports the application of benefits and deterrents, such as those listed below.

1. **Improve Counternarcotics (CN) and Counterinsurgency (COIN) Public Information Coordination:** *Given the increasing ties between drug trafficking and the insurgency, it is essential that CN and COIN public information campaigns be consistent and well-coordinated. Those who grow poppy or traffic in drugs in the south of the country need to know that they will be defeated just as the insurgents will be, and that contributing to the Taliban financially or with people or weapons is equivalent to insurgent activity. Public information campaigns should highlight joint successes of counterterrorism, narcotics interdiction, and poppy elimination/eradication campaigns to enforce the message that narcotics-related activity is as non-negotiable as insurgent activity is. Organizations involved in*

counternarcotics should work closely with Afghan and allied military forces to coordinate this campaign through a weekly standing counternarcotics public information working group.

At the most basic level, communicating concrete success stories serves to demonstrate tangible improvements in the Government of Afghanistan's capacity and reach of its authority, thereby enhancing public confidence in the central government. Increased emphasis on interdiction and eradication success stories also serves to interject a heightened degree of risk into the decision to plant poppy or engage in the drug trade. Publicizing any advances in central government and governor-led provincial eradication demonstrates to poppy farmers that the threat of eradication is real and imminent. To the extent possible, messages on tangible successes should be communicated at the village, district, and provincial levels to imprint the risks of poppy growing into local collective memory – as well as the idea that supporting the drug trade equates with supporting terrorism, particularly in the south. During the fall pre-planting season, public information efforts should remind farmers of both the effectiveness of eradication campaigns and the guaranteed markets for licit crops.

Throughout the year, interdiction successes and the arrests of high value targets should be widely publicized throughout the Afghan media. Public information emphasis on interdiction serves to dispel misinformation that counternarcotics programs only target poppy farmers and to demonstrate that no one group is being unfairly targeted. Rather, all groups of people – from poppy farmers to international narco-traffickers – must adhere to the rule of law. Similarly, the GOA should highlight the Taliban's links to poppy cultivation as part of a targeted information campaign to discredit them in the eyes of the Afghan population, international donors, and local leaders. This activity should include publicizing the detention of high-profile corruption figures associated with poppy cultivation.

Coordination of key messages and public information programs is essential to promoting cohesion among allied partners and delivering coherent and unified messages on these themes to the Afghan people. For example, the Government of Afghanistan's Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Counternarcotics determine the message themes for INL-led counternarcotics public information programs, in coordination with the U.S. and UK embassies in Kabul. There is a critical need for a unified, security sector-oriented communications working group that engages all stakeholders

equally and that works to devise a Strategic Communications Plan for Afghanistan that specifies short term and long term information objectives, specific programs to achieve these objectives, programmatic responsibilities of USG and coalition partners, plans for engaging with and building capacity within the GOA's communications sector, and standardized protocols and processes for disseminating information.

An effort is currently underway to coordinate messages among and build capacity in relevant GOA Ministries through the National Communications Coordination Center (NC3), which was established in December 2006. As it matures, the NC3 will serve as the primary GOA tool for disseminating information to the Afghan and international public. These operational efforts are vital and receive INL support and input, but must be integrated into a coordinated strategic framework in order to be effective.

2. Enhance Focus on Grassroots and Word of Mouth Initiatives:

This year, for the first time, the public information campaign engaged local tribal and religious leaders at the grassroots level. Success in these efforts was achieved in Balkh and several other northern provinces. This initiative should be dramatically expanded through the Poppy Elimination Program Teams, "Message Multipliers" program, military organizations, and PRTs. Each province should have a written plan for local outreach that engages the PEP team, PRT, and military command, and should keep track of contacts, successes and failures. Pre-planting campaigns should include community outreach. PEP operations should be strengthened and regionalized.

Face-to-face engagement of prominent members of the community is critical because these actors are often capable of changing farmers' risk-reward calculus. For example, there were reports from eastern Nangarhar, which experienced a sharp decrease in poppy cultivation in 2005 due to the efforts of the former governor, that community elders encouraged farmers to plant poppy during the pre-planting season. In turn, Nangarhar experienced a strong increase in poppy cultivation for the 2006/2007 growing season.

In 2006, the security situation had a great impact on the efficacy of community outreach programs. A permissive security environment allowed robust community outreach campaigns to be carried out during the pre-planting season in the northern provinces of Ghor, Sari Pul, Samangan, and Badakhshan, where UNODC reported there was a significant reduction in

cultivation. The fragile security situation in Helmand and Uruzgan, however, prevented the pre-planting public information campaign from gaining traction, according to reporting from the U.S. Embassy in Kabul.

The local leaders and the general public can be engaged in any number of ways. In Balkh, for example, PEP achieved success in engaging farmers and entire families in the CN message by distributing candies to children while they spoke about the need to eradicate poppy. This simple approach has proven effective in boosting the receptivity to PEP officers who travel from village to village explaining Afghan law and consequences for planting poppy. In Nangarhar, the PEP team has actively engaged local entrepreneurs by hosting small business seminars, with particular focus on capacity-building for women. In Kandahar, PEP multiplied its CN outreach by educating teachers from multiple districts on the CN law, as well as the legal, social, economic and political consequences of poppy cultivation. The teachers then disseminate the same information to students and their parents throughout each district. PRT and military commands could begin to adopt these tactics to further the CN message.

The “Message Multipliers” program supplemented PEP activities by allowing the GOA to identify key communicators to encourage non-cultivation in 10 different provinces, including five non-PEP provinces. Implemented in October/November 2006, message multipliers reached 363,804 people in 1,941 villages by working with the provincial governors to convene *shuras* that were attended by district governors, chiefs of police, *ulama*, and members of provincial councils.

Moving forward, these community outreach activities should be expanded significantly and implemented in an increasingly strategic manner to target districts with the highest levels of cultivation. The PEP teams and Message Multipliers must continue to devise creative projects that spread the CN message in a grassroots fashion. PRT and military commands should begin to adopt these types of tactics to further the CN message. In the future, the PEP teams will create a project approval and funding mechanism to identify and fund priority outreach activities. In addition, given the success of the Message Multiplier program in several northern provinces, the GOA should complement these gains by engaging with mullahs and tribal leaders.

- a. Strengthen Pre-Planting Activities:** *Innovations to the 2006/2007 public information pre-planting campaign – namely in the arena of*

community outreach – proved successful in lowering poppy cultivation levels in certain areas. These activities should remain a component of future pre-planting campaigns, but should be intensified and begin earlier in the pre-planting season.

Poppy planting begins as early as September in the south of the country and continues throughout the fall with a smaller secondary planting in upland areas in February and March. Because farmers must make their planting decisions prior to this time, the window of opportunity to influence and impact these planting decisions occurs from the time of harvest (generally, April-July, but primarily in May) until planting season ends in November/December.

Those who facilitate and profit from the drug trade in Afghanistan work during the pre-planting season to provide loans to and obtain poppy growing commitments from farmers. While warnings about possible eradication remain an important deterrent that provides teeth to pre-planting season activities, increased emphasis and resources must be dedicated to the provision of incentives, public outreach efforts, and rural development programs during the pre-planting season to proactively prevent poppy planting before it occurs.

The pre-planting public information campaign for the 2006/2007 growing season began in September 2006 and included community outreach activities as well as traditional radio and television messaging. In future years, a comprehensive pre-planting strategy must be finalized much sooner than this, since planting begins as early as September in some locations.

During the 2006/2007 growing season, each of the seven PEP teams developed a set of pre-planting activities designed to influence farmers and other decision makers, such as tribal elders and district officials, not to plant poppy. Examples of these activities included educating farmers about the risk of eradication, establishment of a farmers' cooperative to discuss development needs and garner local support for non-cultivation initiatives, conducting CN seminars for teachers, meeting with local elders, head men, and mullahs to win support for CN efforts, and holding farmers *shuras* at the district level. PEP's active outreach in each of its provinces has made it an indispensable "coordinator" of multiple efforts at the provincial level and has served as the link between functional actors in each PEP province throughout the growing cycle. Continued development of this role and

adding PRT and military support will facilitate greater coordination, cooperation, and focus of the range of CN efforts in each PEP province.

In addition to continuing these traditional pre-planting activities, certain PEP teams could be tasked with conducting written analyses of the factors that have motivated notable good performers in preventing planting and eradication in the past to determine whether this “model” can be replicated elsewhere. This assessment could begin as soon as possible so its findings can be applied to the upcoming pre-planting season and next year’s eradication season.

The public information campaign could also highlight enhanced rural development (alternative development) programs during the pre-planting season to make the pursuit of licit livelihoods a more attractive and available option to farmers. Alternatives to poppy must be presented to farmers prior to the time when they make their planting decisions.

b. Regionalize the Poppy Elimination Program (PEP): *The USG could strengthen existing PEP operations in its seven operating provinces. The PEP concept also could be regionalized through the incorporation of surrounding provinces and by delegating financial authority to the provincial teams. Regionalizing PEP would maximize central government presence in opium poppy areas with minimal addition of resources.*

Supported by the USG, PEP began in 2005 under the Ministry of Counter Narcotics (MCN) as a fledgling outreach program based in what were then seven of the highest poppy-producing provinces (Badakhshan, Balkh, Nangarhar, Kandahar, Oruzgan, Helmand, and Farah). By mid-2006 the program had overcome initial logistical and staffing hurdles and has since become a key resource at the provincial level. The GOA and international community regard PEP as the primary “bridge” for the counternarcotics pillars in each of its seven provinces. Under the supervision of International Advisors (IAs), the Afghan-staffed PEP teams provide a range of functions, including monitoring and verification of poppy planting, growth, and eradication; monitoring of – and a repository for information about – provincially-based alternative development programs; public information outreach; and guidance and recommendations for provincial governors on eradication planning and factors necessary to build an environment conducive to eradication and alternatives to poppy cultivation.

Strengthening and regionalizing PEP's outreach to local populations in host provinces as well as provinces surrounding the original seven will provide further insight into and feedback on local attitudes toward poppy cultivation and the elements needed to prevent future planting and cultivation of poppy. Furthermore, its capacity to coordinate provincial, national, and international actors and to serve as a "sounding board" for provincial governors will ensure continued focus and cooperation on the CN campaign. To effectively regionalize PEP in the short-term, additional personnel would be required to allow PEP team members to serve a wider geographic area. In the medium and long term, new teams could be established in provinces without PEP presence.

As employees of an MCN program, Afghan nationals employed in PEP may soon face an approximately 80% reduction in salary under the Priority Reform and Restructuring (PRR) of the Civil Service salary scale. Many of the current staff have developed considerable expertise in their subject area, and their departure from the MCN would represent a considerable knowledge deficit for the Ministry. The GOA could establish a program budget for PEP and budgetary flexibility for teams to prioritize funding. This includes agreement by MCN and international donors on how to retain Afghan PEP members under the PRR process, including through the possible appointment of PEP staff as "advisors" to the MCN.

Public Information in Helmand

Recognizing the unique counternarcotics, communications, and security challenges present in Helmand, there is a need to supplement traditional community outreach activities and radio, television, and print media messaging with specialized information initiatives.

CN Programming to VOA's *Deewa* Pashto station: In spring 2007, INL initiated an agreement with the Voice of America's (VOA) recently-created Pashto language radio station *Deewa*, which broadcasts in the Pashto areas along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, including Helmand. Under the terms of the agreement, *Deewa* will provide dedicated coverage of counternarcotics, law enforcement, and related news and successes. *Deewa* joins *Radio Television Afghanistan-Helmand* and *Radio Sabawoon* in carrying CN and related broadcasting in Helmand. Given the tenuous security situation in Helmand, radio becomes a very important conduit

through which to relay critical counternarcotics news and information to the local population.

B. Alternative Development

Afghanistan is one of the poorest countries in the world; two-thirds of the country's population subsists on less than two dollars per day. Extreme economic deprivation, low life expectancy, endemic illiteracy, and widespread unemployment are among the fundamental drivers that have led rural households to cultivate opium poppy, despite moral and religious strictures against intoxicants.

Additionally, many rural households are mired in debt.¹ Estimates as to the total debt of poppy growers in Afghanistan are in the hundreds of millions of dollars. Many of the indebted have little choice but to grow a crop which yields the necessary income to meet obligations, as the repercussions of default in Afghanistan are severe. Moreover, eighty percent of Afghanistan's population depends directly or indirectly on agriculture for subsistence, yet only an estimated twelve percent are engaged in illicit crop cultivation. Providing rural households with viable economic alternatives does not entail that the sales of legal crops will replace household income derived from opium poppy sales. Unfortunately, no licit crop has yet come close to equaling the revenue that opium poppy generates because of the elasticity of the farm gate price of poppy, which is manipulated by a cartel of large brokers, traders, and narco-criminal networks.

Therefore, coercive measures, such as eradication, must be combined with both short and long-term economic incentives in order to alter the risk/reward calculus of rural households to be in favor of licit crop cultivation. Only a vibrant, dynamic and strong private sector can provide the jobs and drive the economic growth required to provide these incentives. Economic growth must be widespread, however, and provide employment opportunities both on and off the farm, in rural areas as well as cities, in order to counter the rapid mobility and elasticity of opium poppy cultivation. Increasing employment opportunities is also important in order to reduce the amount of surplus labor available during the poppy harvest season.

¹ Field work in Nangarhar (2004), for example, has indicated that around 57% of households obtain seasonal loans. More recent work in Herat, Kapisa, and Ghor indicates respective percentages of indebted households as 41%, 67%, and 89%.

Economic growth and job creation must be sustained over time given that Afghanistan's workforce is expanding rapidly, since 70% of the country's population is under the age of thirty.

In recent years, economic growth has lessened the Afghan economy's dependence upon opium poppy cultivation. Significantly, while the total export value of Afghanistan's opium rose from \$2.7 billion in 2005 to \$3.1 billion in 2006, the value of opium exports as a percentage of licit GDP fell from 52% to 46% during the same period thanks to the even faster growth of Afghanistan's licit economic sectors. Afghanistan's licit GDP grew by 29% between 2005 and 2006, from \$5.2 billion to \$6.7 billion. If robust economic growth continues, increased opportunities in the licit economic sector will lead to an increasing number of alternatives to opium poppy cultivation for rural households.

The Alternative Development program (AD) targets the principal poppy producing provinces of Afghanistan to establish economic alternatives to the cultivation of the opium poppy for rural households. The Alternative Development program provides both short and long-term economic incentives for rural households, as well as political support to proactive provincial leaders through the Good Performers Initiative.

Short-term incentives to rural households include improvements to livestock health, cash-for-work opportunities to rehabilitate rural infrastructure, and the provision of seed, fertilizer, and other inputs to spur the production of high-value vegetables, animal fodder, and other crops that have short cultivation cycles. While these short-term incentive programs occur throughout the year, particular emphasis is placed during the poppy planting and harvest season, in order to maximize impact on household decision-making during those critical periods.

Short-term assistance is complemented by long-term programs that establish the foundation for sustained job creation and economic growth. These projects improve the entire agricultural value chain, from seed to end consumer. Long-term comprehensive development programs include pre-planting assistance (such as credit, agricultural input delivery, and training) as well as post-production assistance with harvesting, sorting, grading, packaging and marketing. Targeted products include high-value nut and fruit crops, such as pomegranates, as well as vegetables, oilseed, and animal feed. Farmer associations, such as the Dried Fruit and Nut Exporters

Association of Kandahar, are strengthened through training, financing, equipment leasing, and other assistance. Farmer associations and cooperatives, as well as successful individual farmers, provide the quantity and quality of crops required by private agribusiness firms.

Agribusinesses and agro-industries are being supported with marketing, planning, credit, and other business development assistance that will add value to farm products and enable Afghan producers to compete in local and external markets. The long-term goal is to create competitive, sustainable businesses that provide jobs, expand markets, and spur economic growth in order to remove the economic incentives that drive poppy cultivation.

The Alternative Development program also provides financial incentives to proactive provincial leaders that eliminate or prevent poppy cultivation through the Good Performers Initiative. The initiative may target provinces that are not covered by alternative development programs. These initiatives demonstrate the GOA's concern for such provinces and rewards local initiatives to reduce poppy cultivation.

The challenges of implementing the alternative development program are daunting. Economic growth in Afghanistan is hampered by massive infrastructure deficits (especially lack of electric power), a shortage of skilled human capital, insecurity, corruption, weak legal and regulatory regimes, and poor access to seaports, among other factors. The USG and other donors are addressing these structural problems, and much progress has been made, but given Afghanistan's incredibly low starting point, years of work remain in order to build a modern and regionally competitive Afghan economy.

Lack of security also makes program implementation, particularly in the south, difficult, slow, and expensive. Twelve persons associated with the alternative development program were killed during the program's implementation from 2005-6.

1. Strengthen the Good Performers Initiative (GPI): *In 2006, the Government of Afghanistan launched a Good Performers Initiative to reward provinces that had achieved poppy-free status. Prior to the start of the 2007 planting season, the GPI will be significantly expanded and improved. The objective of the Good Performers Initiative is to provide high-impact development assistance to encourage the Government of*

Afghanistan, provincial administrators, and local actors to take decisive action to halt the cultivation of opium poppy. The GPI will provide significant financial and political incentives (\$25 to \$50 million) to provinces for reductions in net cultivation as reported in the annual UNODC cultivation survey. In addition to the GPI, the UN-administered Counternarcotics Trust Fund (CNTF) must disburse funds sooner to enable delivery on approved CN-related development projects. So far only 2.5% of the CNTF's \$70 million has been distributed.

In 2006 President Karzai announced the launch of a Good Performers Initiative to reward poppy-free provinces for aggressive counternarcotics performance. Provinces were promised an additional \$500,000 worth of quick-impact, high-priority development projects, with the prospect of another \$500,000 if they maintained their poppy-free status in 2007. Under the expanded GPI, to be released before the fall 2007 planting season, rewards for poppy-free provinces will be continued. Disbursement under this category will probably expand significantly this year, as the number of poppy-free provinces is likely to climb from six in 2006 to at least eleven in 2007.

Under the terms of the expanded Good Performers Initiative, which will be announced in Kabul in the near future, provinces can also qualify for rewards for significantly reducing net cultivation and for other meritorious counternarcotics performance.

The proposed expansion of the GPI will be easy to understand, administer, and verify. It will also reduce opportunities for corruption and cause no perverse incentives. It will provide substantial material and political incentives to provincial administrations to drive down opium poppy cultivation. It will also provide villages, neighborhoods, and rural communities with the opportunity to directly improve their lives in ways that matter to them.

- a. Accelerate Counternarcotics Trust Funds (CNTF) Payouts:** *The UN-administered CNTF must disburse funds sooner to enable delivery on approved CN-related development projects. So far only 2.5% of CNTF funds (now totaling approximately \$70M) have been disbursed*

The Counter Narcotics Trust Fund (CNTF) was established in October 2005 by the Government of Afghanistan, the United Nations Development

Programme (UNDP) and donor nations to confront illicit drug cultivation, production, and trafficking in Afghanistan. The broad objectives of the CNTF are to provide greater resources for the Government of Afghanistan's counternarcotics efforts, ensure transparency and accountability in the allocation and use of those resources, enable increased government ownership over counternarcotics implementation, and promote greater coherence in the funding of counternarcotics related activities.

As of July 2006, the CNTF had received contribution pledges totaling approximately \$70 million. The USG and other contributing donors should work with the GOA to streamline the process of receiving and reviewing project proposals, providing approval and funding, and enhancing oversight to ensure delivery.

2. Develop Refined Plan for Crops and Livestock: *USAID has continuously refined its crop and seed programs by promoting higher value crops and farming methods that result in higher profits for traditional crops and livestock. More attention could be focused on the development of marketable high value crops and livestock that can give rural households increased income in the short-run (e.g. vegetables) as well as the long-term (e.g. fruits and nuts).*

The development of crops to provide rural households with alternatives to poppy cultivation must be driven by market demand. Once market demand is established, the entire value chain of a product—from the provision of seed to the final sale to the consumer—must be developed to maximize market value. Alternative development programs could continue to facilitate linkages between input suppliers, farmers, and traders, and ensure that rural households cultivate products that meet the market variety, price, volume, quality, packaging, and timing requirements.

USDA could increase assistance to the GOA to enable Afghan products to meet international sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) standards.

There is no single licit crop that can replace poppy, however. Instead, a mix of marketable high-value licit crops must be promoted, alongside the implementation of coercive measures such as eradication.

3. Increase Private Sector Involvement: *Farming households must be provided with viable, lasting economic alternatives to opium poppy*

cultivation. The private sector must be the driver of this change. Alternative development programs could begin establishing businesses that issue contracts that give farmers guaranteed sales and favorable prices for their crops, thereby lowering the risk of adopting new crops. Short-term crops that yield immediate income, such as animal fodder grains and high-value vegetables, could be produced, processed, packaged, and sold throughout Afghanistan and the region, thereby generating on and off the farm job opportunities for rural households. Contract farming, alongside grant and micro-finance assistance to farmers for farm equipment, infrastructure, and other inputs is preferable to direct crop subsidies, which would undermine competitive markets, distort economic activity, and be prohibitively difficult to administer.

Afghanistan's private sector must be the driver of the economic growth and job creation that provide rural households with the incentives needed to move away from poppy and towards the cultivation of licit crops. USAID could begin focusing on developing large-scale agribusinesses, based in provincial capitals such as Lashkar Gah, Kandahar, Jalalabad, Mazar-e-Sharif, and Herat, that would refine, process, add value to, and distribute licit agricultural products bought from farmers in poppy-growing regions.

Agribusinesses will enter into contracts with farmers, farmer associations, and cooperatives in order to guarantee a favorable purchase price for certain products. A guaranteed market would greatly reduce the risk farmers face in moving from poppy to licit crops. USAID could also provide complementary agricultural inputs, such as seed, fertilizer, credit, machinery, and irrigation, as well as farm-to-market roads and other infrastructure. This assistance would target specific poppy-producing provinces, and will stimulate the private-sector development of particular product lines.

At the same time, USAID will encourage a mix of long and short-term crops, so that farmers are given both immediate and long-term economic incentives. Short-term crops such as animal feed crops (e.g. alfalfa, sorghum) and high-value vegetables (e.g. lettuce, carrots, tomatoes) will give farmers immediate sources of income, while longer-term horticultural crops (e.g. pomegranates, almonds, grapes) mature.

The agro-industrial facilities that will process and distribute these agricultural goods will generate off-farm employment in transport,

manufacturing, and services, thereby creating additional job opportunities for rural households. Current plans include the creation of a nationwide animal feed industry centered in Helmand, pomegranate concentrate and other horticultural product manufacturing in Kandahar, vegetable and horticultural production in Jalalabad, and canned vegetables and fruits in Mazar-e-Sharif. Since off-farm employment opportunities are of critical importance to the creation of licit economic alternatives to poppy, other industries such as marble and carpets may be concurrently developed.

The development of major infrastructure, particularly transport and energy, is vital to ensuring the success of this endeavor. Timely completion of the southern and northern electrical power systems are key examples. Because of the importance of air transport and reliable cold chain storage for perishable high value products such as flowers, fruits and vegetables, opening Kandahar Airport - the largest in the country - to commercial air freight and passenger traffic could have a transformational impact on southern Afghanistan's economy.

Crop subsidies have been duly considered, but the option is not viable because subsidies would undermine competitive markets, distort economic activity, and be prohibitively difficult to administer. Countries where subsidies are currently practiced require enormous bureaucracies to distribute the payments. Afghanistan's administrative capacity is too weak to execute a subsidy program; further, such a program could lead to significant corruption. It would also be costly and cumbersome for donor agencies, such as USAID or the UN, to administer a subsidy program. Moreover, the program would require a prohibitively expensive yearly appropriation. The private sector program proposed in this section already provides a type of subsidy by grant-financing the development of alternative crops that yield income in the short and long-term, as well as financing rural infrastructure and markets for the crops. Unlike crop subsidies, which do not spur long-term, sustainable growth, the development of a viable private sector will provide lasting economic alternatives to opium poppy cultivation, both on and off the farm.

The Afghan private sector is currently underdeveloped, however, and will not be able to provide the necessary income for quite some time. Therefore, in the interim it will be critical to provide additional resources for the previously mentioned grant programs, as well as new micro-finance facilities that help rural Afghans meet their obligations while improving

their productive capacities. Such facilities would be conditioned upon alternative crop growth, and could be unfolded in a number of pilot programs to rapidly perfect oversight practices.

4. Provide Additional Support for National Solidarity Program (NSP) Targeted at Rural Areas Critical to the CN Effort: *The NSP program operates in 34 provinces and has been responsible for nearly 4,000 irrigation sub-projects and hundreds of other village-level projects. The program could benefit from a timely infusion of funds and also serve as an Afghan-led complement to the counternarcotics strategy.*

The NSP program, funded through the donor-supported Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF), is operating in 34 provinces and has been responsible for nearly 4,000 irrigation sub-projects and several hundred rural development efforts at the village level. The program could benefit from a timely infusion of funds and also serve as an Afghan-led complement to the counternarcotics strategy. NSP has a good track record of engendering local level support for the Afghan government and, if focused in poppy production areas, could have similarly productive results. While the World Bank, as manager of the ARTF and large contributor to NSP, would likely balk at targeting the program explicitly for CN purposes, the USG could work with Afghan authorities to target NSP projects on areas critical to the CN effort.

5. Engage Land Grant Universities: *USAID and USDA could expand their programs for U.S. Land Grant Universities. USDA could support this role for the agricultural sector through development of technical capacity building activities with appropriate GOA officials and Afghan universities.*

Since 2004, USAID and USDA have been working with U.S. land grant universities (LGUs) in Afghanistan on agricultural extension, natural resources management, biodiversity conservation, animal health services, and trade. To date, thirteen LGUs have worked with USAID in Afghanistan. Examples of ongoing LGU programs include specialized training programs for Afghan agricultural experts and policy makers; the establishment of a national livestock disease surveillance system; and applied in-country training to improve Afghan agricultural research and extension. Future plans anticipate spending up to an additional \$20 million to fund LGUs through a competitive award process.

Alternative Development Investment in Helmand

USG investment in Helmand's development currently totals more than \$270 million and includes infrastructure, health, education, democracy and governance, agriculture, and alternative development programs. Helmand is one of the highest recipients of USAID assistance in Afghanistan. Indeed, if Helmand were a country, it would be the fifth largest recipient of FY2007 USAID funding in the world.

This year, the Alternative Development Program will intensify efforts in Helmand. The centerpiece of this activity is the renewed rehabilitation of the Kajaki hydroelectric dam, which was delayed in 2006 due to security problems. Alternative development programs will support the Kajaki project by providing cash for work and other programs along the Sangin Valley, where the Kajaki access road is scheduled to be built.

Construction of an industrial park in Lashkar Gah, like those already built in Kabul, Kandahar, and Mazar-e-Sharif, will be the locus of agro-industrial production in Helmand. For example, USAID will develop an animal feed industry centered in Lashkar Gah, which will be supplied by farms surrounding the provincial capital. USAID plans to establish a privately owned and operated animal feed mill that will enter into contracts with farmers in the Helmand river valley to provide them with a guaranteed market, favorable prices, and the inputs required to produce crops such as alfalfa and sorghum, which can be harvested up to five times per year, thereby providing an immediate source of income for Helmand's farmers. These crops, once transported to Lashkar Gah, will be milled and packaged and shipped through a nationwide network of agricultural stores and veterinarians present in every district of Afghanistan, feeding demand for meat and dairy products and creating a nationwide industry based in Helmand. The feed industry will also create off-farm employment opportunities in transport, manufacturing, and services.

Other short-term crops, including peppers and other high-value vegetables, will also be developed as long-term fruit and nut crops mature. Concurrently, ADP will continue to improve Helmand's infrastructure, including farm to market roads and major irrigation works such as the Darweshan Irrigation Canal. USAID will also upgrade the Lashkar Gah Electrical Sub-Station and Distribution System to prepare it for an increased electricity load once the Kajaki project is completed.

C. Poppy Elimination/Eradication

A successful counternarcotics strategy requires both strong incentives and strong disincentives. The current use of tractors and ATVs to eradicate large poppy fields has been helpful in the 2007 season and could be continued and improved. Additionally, the GOA could reconsider Ground Based Spray (GBS) after the USDA and State/INL conduct an education program on the safety and effectiveness of herbicides for Afghanistan's government officials. The AEF appears to need significant management improvements regarding the quality of eradication and verification. Additionally, more aggressive GLE is needed in order to supplement the shortcomings associated with the AEF when operating in volatile areas.

The most critical improvement to current eradication methodology, however, would be the wide-spread implementation of GOA-led non-negotiated forced eradication. Negotiated eradication greatly limits the capabilities of the AEF not only by slowing down operations, but also by weakening eradication's deterrent effect on farmers' planting decisions. A stronger force protection component for the AEF (discussed more fully under Interdiction/Law Enforcement operations) would allow the AEF to operate more effectively in hostile environments such as Helmand, where eradication currently often occurs after an inequitable negotiation process with local authorities. Aerial eradication should also be considered as a potential method for implementing non-negotiated forced eradication. No aerial spray program would be implemented without the consent of the GOA.

Although controversial and difficult, eradication is essential to controlling the narcotics industry in Afghanistan. USG-funded eradication efforts date back to late 2003, when USG and UNODC surveys began to show a very large increase in poppy cultivation was underway in Afghanistan. Under the five-pillar plan, the USG focuses on providing support to Afghanistan's central and provincial governments in their elimination and eradication efforts.

As discussed earlier, the USG is collaborating with the GOA to launch a Good Performers Initiative (GPI) as a means of encouraging governors and local leaders to pro-actively reduce net poppy cultivation in the 2007/8

poppy season. The GPI will serve as the "carrot" to accompany the "sticks" of suppressing poppy planting and forced eradication.

Concerning eradication in Afghanistan, the USG currently supports two forms of eradication—mechanized and manual – in two eradication efforts. One effort, centrally-led by the GOA, is called the Afghan Eradication Force (AEF) and consists of a group of 600 Afghan police trained in eradication and security. The AEF operates in self-contained units and eradicates with tractors and high-tech equipment. The GOA sends the AEF where either a governor requests aid because of insecurity, or where the provincial government is underperforming. Some governors want to prevent central GOA eradication in their province, and the threat of AEF intervention encourages them to eradicate on their own. The second effort, Governor-Led Eradication (GLE), accounts for the bulk of Afghanistan's eradication, but is subject to corrupt practices and perverse incentives. Some provincial authorities solicit bribes to bypass fields while eradicating the fields of farmers who don't pay bribes. Verifiers are vulnerable to pressure to inflate the amount of verified eradication. Some areas treat GLE as a "tax," wherein each farmer agrees to have a small portion of his crop eradicated to satisfy GLE goals. The enhanced GPI would eliminate many of these faults and would replace USG reimbursements for GLE.

In 2006, the AEF began using tow bar drags, made of iron bars and chains, behind tractors and ATVs to accelerate poppy eradication beyond what is possible using stick labor. This method reduces the amount of time that AEF needs to spend per field and also reduces its personnel commitment and security risks. With mechanized eradication, it is estimated that the AEF can destroy 300-1,000 hectares per day. Theoretically, in an entire season the AEF could potentially cut up to 30,000 hectares, given sufficient political will and proper security precautions and conditions.

Obstacles to eradication in general, and specifically to increased mechanized eradication, include lacking political will on the local, district, provincial, and central levels; bribery, corruption, protests, and demonstrations; attacks on the AEF; and growing instability in the south, where mechanized eradication could perform the best.

1. Governor Accountability: *The GOA could announce a national net poppy reduction target before the fall 2007 planting season to create an atmosphere of accountability.*

The GOA could announce 2007/2008 net poppy reduction targets for each province that will be assigned to each governor in September. The GOA's announcement could include listing corresponding rewards (see section below) for those meeting/exceeding their assigned poppy reduction targets via a combination of proactively discouraging planting and eradication and a gradation of specified sanctions for governors who fall short. Governors could face explicit outcomes for success or failure for which they have been publicly forewarned. Widespread media coverage of the GOA's announcement could also occur.

2. Governor Rewards: *A comprehensive pre-planting strategy includes public recognition and reward for governors who have excelled in suppressing poppy planting and encouraging GLE, along with the announcement of future incentives.*

Possible rewards recognizing positive performance include USG financial support for targeted expansion of the governor's budget; special grants for projects important to the governor; international recognition and rewards, such as international trips; promotions to career-enhancing or otherwise prestigious positions; invitations to an official GOA awards reception; and naming successful governors "leaders of excellence." Recognition and rewards must be meaningful enough to influence other governors to follow suit and could commence as soon as possible to serve as an incentive for governors during the coming pre-planting season.

3. Improve Mechanized Eradication and Targeting: *The AEF could focus on using more mechanized eradication, supported by manual eradication. This would mean primarily using tractors and ATVs in terrain suitable for mechanized operations. In conjunction with the enhanced Good Performers Initiative, this approach could match - and even exceed - the national growth/expansion rate of opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan. Eradication verification capability could also be improved by having the USG deploy more observers to verify AEF eradication on the ground or employ technology that provides detailed imagery as well as coordinates of eradicated fields.*

In order to maximize mechanized eradication, security could be removed as a criterion for targeting an area as it has only an indirect impact on the availability of licit livelihoods. The AEF must also know how to properly

operate and maintain vehicles through taking part in comprehensive training program prior to the start of the season. Finally, it will be particularly important to support the UK target-mapping initiative in Helmand. This initiative focuses eradication efforts on the “greedy” over the “needy” and areas where farmers have viable alternatives with better irrigation and access to markets.

4. Improve Quality and Quantity of Eradication: *No herbicidal spray program would be implemented without the consent of the GOA. This being said, in order to ensure that eradication is equitable, efficient, and capable of eradicating poppy on a sufficient scale, the USG advocates a policy of GOA-led non-negotiated forced eradication. One method of implementing forced eradication would entail the deployment of force-protected ground-based spray (GBS) teams. There are many misconceptions about the safety, health, and environmental impact of glyphosate, the active ingredient in ground-based spray. A public education campaign should be initiated to address the health concerns associated with spray, broadcast the benefits of farm herbicides via public information targeting, and dispel misconceptions about GBS. Another way to accomplish the objective of non-negotiated forced eradication would be to employ aerial spray.*

The USG could encourage the future use of GBS eradication, particularly in high-concern provinces, and lay the groundwork for GOA acceptance of GBS by educating senior officials throughout the GOA regarding the health concerns associated with spray; broadcasting benefits of farm herbicides via public information targeting; and dispelling misconceptions about GBS. The USG could send GBS education and implementation teams to Afghanistan to address health and safety concerns. These teams, comprised of USDA and DOS representatives, could meet with GOA senior officials and scientists to provide information on the commonplace use of spray worldwide since 1974, both in commercial and government-sponsored programs. Along with public information campaigns, the implementation teams could clarify glyphosate's extensive worldwide use on food crops, non-food crops, and on general vegetation control.

In addition to implementation teams, the USG could facilitate an exchange between Afghan and Colombian agricultural and policy-making experts to share experiences on crop control and glyphosate use. The Organization of American States Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission

(OAS/CICAD) could serve as an educational link by providing Latin American experts on spray eradication. For example, CICAD has undertaken a test field project with glyphosate in Colombia over the last few years. If glyphosate test sites were established in Afghanistan, they would likely mirror the OAS/CICAD study experience and could serve to enhance familiarity with spray on the part of key stakeholders.

Radio messages and community outreach activities are a critical component of increasing awareness of the safety of GBS. PEP teams could work with provincial governors to disseminate information on the safety of glyphosate in each of the seven PEP provinces. Additionally, PEP could coordinate community outreach efforts that include organizing district and village *shuras* and community events as well as engaging local leaders on CN efforts and glyphosate education activities.

While herbicidal spray eradication is a more efficient and effective option than mechanized or manual eradication, it is also more politically volatile. Although differences of opinion on herbicidal eradication exist, the USG ultimately defers to the GOA's decision with respect to its use. If and when the GOA decides to use herbicidal spray, the USG would be ready to assist.

UNODC calculates that eradicating about 25% of the opium crop will introduce sufficient fear of future eradication into farmers' minds to prevent planting next year. The Afghan government wants to try to reach the 25% eradication threshold. This may prove impossible, however, without the use of herbicides. Regarding the various concerns about glyphosate, numerous studies show that glyphosate is safe, efficacious, and cost-effective; it has been used globally for over 30 years. Glyphosate has a low toxicity, is not carcinogenic, and presents little other toxicological concerns to animals or humans. Additionally, the patent on glyphosate has expired, and supplies are plentiful. Further, spraying glyphosate will improve the yield of eradication, as seen in other USG-supported eradication programs. For example, last year the Colombians sprayed more illegal crops than Afghanistan's entire opium poppy harvest.

Additionally, in order to accomplish the objective of non-negotiated forced eradication, the GOA could study aerial eradication as a potential policy option.

Eradication in Helmand

This season, the governor of Helmand asked the AEF to eradicate in Helmand. Despite making progress due to the AEF's heavy use of mechanized eradication, insecurity and waning political will hindered the AEF's efforts. Helmand will likely continue to be Afghanistan's largest opium cultivating province. Any future eradication strategy for Helmand needs to first account for security and political will.

It should be noted that 75% of the opium poppy cultivation in Helmand is new cultivation that did not exist two years ago. By definition, then, at least 75% of the poppy in Helmand is not being grown by poor farmers who lack licit economic alternatives—two years ago these farmers were doing something else.

In other words, the vast majority of the poppy in Helmand is not being grown by poor farmers who have been growing poppy for generations and lack economic alternatives. The reality is that cultivation has expanded rapidly in the past two years as opportunists have scrambled to exploit Helmand's lawlessness for profit. Many of Helmand's poppy growers are wealthy land-owners, corrupt officials, and other opportunists. Helmand's land is fertile; infrastructure and access to markets is good, and alternatives to poppy are available. Moreover, if Helmand were a country, it would be the fifth largest recipient of U.S. development aid in the world, having received over \$270 million in USAID funds in recent years. Opium poppy grown by wealthy land-owners and corrupt officials funds the insurgency. There is no reason to avoid eradicating their poppy fields aggressively.

D. Interdiction/Law Enforcement Operations

DEA will continue to identify, target, and dismantle drug high-value targets (HVTs) operating throughout Nangarhar province. In December 2006, DEA agents deployed to the Konduz area in furtherance of the northern Border Strategy. This strategy was created to target large-scale traffickers moving drug and money shipments over the northern border of Afghanistan and into Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Additional HVTs are being targeted that are directly associated with Taliban terrorist activity and are being supported by the illicit narcotics trade. These drug HVTs are mostly operating in southern Afghanistan and are located predominately in the Kandahar, Nimruz, and Helmand provinces.

DEA believes its Afghan counterparts could more effectively execute their strategy of attacking the command and control structure of Afghanistan drug High Value Targets (HVTs) with greater investigative capacity and improved operational capacity, including increased airlift capability. Establishment of the Vetted Unit Program and continued support for drug HVT extraditions are also crucial elements.

1. Provide the Counternarcotics Police of Afghanistan (CNPA) with the Capacity to Protect All Elements of the Five Pillar Strategy:

Develop an implementation plan for a security capacity within the CNPA for CN enforcement operations including, but not limited to, eradication and interdiction in non-permissive environments. The CNPA security capacity will not assume the role of a maneuver force; rather training and equipping will focus on enforcing Afghan civil law and supporting all the activities included in the Five Pillar CN strategy when confronted by determined opposition. This capability will be entirely resident within the MOI and will not increase ANP manning above the 82,000 currently authorized. Other segments of the criminal justice system will also need to be increased accordingly.

Force protection capacity for eradication, interdiction, and aid delivery operations is lacking. DOD intends to work on an implementation plan that defines the scope, roles/responsibilities, desired effects, timelines, and priorities for establishing such a force protection capacity within the CNPA. Moreover, DOD will examine potential interim options to fulfill this role by leveraging existing or already planned capabilities. DOD will then report the findings of this assessment to the interagency and begin refining the details of a way forward with this matter. Because of the difficulty of working in an environment like Helmand, this initiative is especially critical to the success of AEF and interdiction operations.

Building this CNPA force would require training, equipment, and maintenance. The force could be modeled on the successful U.S.-trained Colombian Army Counterdrug Brigade, the new ANA Commando Battalion structure, the Colombian police “*Mobile Carabiniro Squadrons*” and/or the Colombian Police “*Junglas*.” The USG could provide training, equipment, and mentors for the force until they are capable of conducting operations on their own. The Colombians have offered to assist with the training. Special

Protection Force operations would initially focus on the southern provinces of Helmand, Kandahar, and Nimruz.

In Helmand, a percentage of the local population supports the Taliban and insurgents both willingly and through coercion. Only very limited interdiction activity is occurring at present due to the hostility of the local populace to the operations. If a force protection unit could ensure the security of operations, the interdiction arms of the CNPA would be able to conduct more operations and exhibit central government authority. In addition, the volatility and insecurity of Helmand hinder not only interdiction efforts but also eradication efforts by the AEF. Force protection is critical for the success of AEF operations in Helmand and throughout the south.

The need for force protection for interdiction operations is underscored by the numerous examples of attacks on interdiction and eradication missions where a dedicated protection force would have reduced reliance on local forces whose allegiance was uncertain or questionable.

2. Increase the Number of DEA Agents or Other Law Enforcement Advisors for CNPA: *In order to provide comprehensive mentoring support and training of a large CNPA special protection police force, as well as to support widespread interdiction operations, the USG should significantly increase the number of DEA agents or other law enforcement mentors/trainers assigned to Kabul.*

Although the DEA 90-day Foreign-Deployed Advisory Support Teams (FAST) have proven very effective, successful training of a large self-sustaining CNPA investigative and special protection force will require a substantial increase in the number of DEA agents and law enforcement mentors and trainers assigned to Kabul. DEA could take the lead role in identifying the most effective mix of DEA agents, other USG law enforcement agents and/or law enforcement contractors required to support the enhanced CNPA protection force to be developed by DOD for interagency community review.

3. Expand DEA & CNPA Investigative and Operational Capacity:

a. Increase Airlift Support for Drug Interdiction Operations: *DOD will continue to develop an Afghan CN aviation capacity for the*

Ministry of Interior as planned. While this capacity is being built, mechanisms are in place in Afghanistan for DEA to request DOD, State Department, and ISAF airlift support. Supporting elements will weigh the requirements against available resources and competing priorities as appropriate and provide airlift if available.

A lack of sufficient airlift support has severely hampered DEA and Afghan counterparts' ability to operate throughout Afghanistan. Interdiction operations will increase in 2007 if DEA and its counterparts have airlift capacity, a Quick Reaction Force (QRF), in extremis support, and close air support. Airlift and air coverage are the vital components for effectively targeting the drug trafficking networks that are operating with impunity throughout the country. When these requirements are met, the USG-supported program will be able to improve interdiction efforts at a greater pace and dramatically impact the drug trafficking organizations operating in and around Afghanistan.

Assets have been – and for the foreseeable future will continue to be – limited to both primary (military) and supporting tasks.

b. Enhance Technical Investigative Capacity: *The USG should support expansion of CNPA technical investigative capacity.*

Afghan drug trafficking organizations are extremely difficult to penetrate. Technical and investigative capacities are a vital and necessary tool to gather evidence against these traffickers for use in criminal prosecutions.

c. Reliable Partner/Vetted Units: *DEA's ultimate goal is to create a DEA Afghanistan with the ability to develop into a self-sustaining counternarcotics police force.*

The Afghanistan vetted units will be DEA's primary counterparts and will be tasked with the investigation of High Value Targets. Training for the SIU began in May 2007 at the DEA Academy at Quantico. Personnel from the TIU are slated for training to begin July 2007. It must be understood that as the Afghan Counternarcotics police force is created and expanded, so too must the Afghan prosecutor and judicial numbers and capacity be expanded.

4. ASNF and NIU: *A coordinated ASNF and NIU interdiction strategy could maximize resources, improve intelligence gathering capabilities, and increase the ability to successfully prosecute High Value Targets.*

The Afghan Special Narcotics Force (ASNF) operates as a narcotics enforcement element of the Afghan MOI. The Counternarcotics Police of Afghanistan (CNPA) Narcotics Investigation Unit (NIU) is a narcotics investigation element of the Afghan MOI. ASNF is tasked with conducting tactical raids directed at opium conversion laboratories. ASNF historically has not focused on the apprehension and prosecution of HVTs or even laboratory operators. In contrast, the NIU, trained by DEA, focuses on targeting HVTs, collecting evidence, and apprehending and prosecuting HVTs.

DEA agents and NIU officers are now embedded with ASNF. While conducting laboratory raids, DEA/NIU secure evidence and apprehend the operators for prosecution in Afghan courts. ASNF has its own consolidated air assets. DEA/NIU has utilized these assets, along with ASNF officers, to assist in the execution of Afghan search and arrest warrants. Additionally, all enforcement operations, either ASNF or NIU, are coordinated through the Interagency Operations and Coordination Center (IOCC).

Drug enforcement activities in Afghanistan have demonstrated the need for the CNPA to establish a specialized Afghan Vetted Unit Program (AVP) to support ongoing investigations against priority organizations and high value targets. DEA views the vetted unit program AVP as a force multiplier. This program will increase the number of drug investigators significantly.

5. Publicize Successful Interdiction Operations and Prosecutions: *An aggressive public information campaign down to the village level could publicize the success of interdiction operations to the local population and traffickers. These successes should also be publicized to the international community.*

This campaign could inform the public of successes, including the destruction of labs, the seizure of drugs, precursor chemicals, and weapons, and successful arrests, trials, incarcerations, and extraditions. This campaign could also correct misperceptions and rumors, and reinforce the GOA's public commitment to combating drugs. Public information campaigns could also publicize activities of all U.S.-led and UK-led interdiction forces.

6. Improve Interdiction and Prosecution of High Value Targets (HVTs): *In FY2007, the USG will contribute \$343 million towards interdiction efforts. The USG must continue to improve the interdiction capabilities of the Counternarcotics Police of Afghanistan (CNPA) by building up specialized units, continuing support for the Foreign-deployed Advisory Support Teams (FAST), assigning additional DEA agents to Kabul, expanding the core of the CNPA with a five-year plan, and more aggressively implementing the northern, eastern, and southern Enforcement Strategies.*

a. CNPA Special Units: *In FY2007, the USG will contribute \$343 million to help the GOA build drug interdiction capacity, up from \$118 million in FY2006. The USG must continue to improve the interdiction capabilities of the Counter-Narcotics Police of Afghanistan (CNPA), to take down labs, to stop shipments when they go across the borders, and to improve its interdiction capability. Continued efforts could improve interdiction and prosecution of High Value Targets (HVTs) by building up the CNPA's specialized units, and by developing a CNPA presence in the major population centers of Afghanistan.*

All USG interdiction efforts in Afghanistan form a single, unified effort under the umbrella of Operation Containment. In response to September 11, 2001, the USG began working with 18 countries from Central Asia, the Caucasus, Europe, and Russia through Operation Containment to reduce the flow of Afghan heroin into world markets; to prevent Afghanistan from becoming a major heroin supplier to the United States; and to disrupt drug-related insurgent activities. Through the USG-led Operation Containment, nineteen countries are working with the USG to disrupt the flow of drugs and precursor chemicals into and out of Afghanistan before they spread to broader markets. It brings together nations that historically have had little or no interaction from a law enforcement perspective and it facilitates the sharing of intelligence and exchange of operational initiatives.

Four major drug trafficking heads targeted by Operation Containment have been arrested, including Haji Bashir Noorzai and Haji Baz Mohammed. The operation has also led to significant seizures of narcotics and precursor chemicals and the dismantlement and disruption of organizations involved in the southwest Asian drug trade. Prior to the initiation of Operation

Containment, only 407 kilograms of heroin had been seized. In the past two years, Operation Containment initiatives have resulted in the seizure of more than 26 metric tons of heroin, the initiation of 267 investigations, and the arrest of more than 1,000 individuals.

- b. FAST Teams and DEA Agents:** *Continue support for the USG-formed Foreign-deployed Advisory Support Team (FAST), and increase the number of DEA agents assigned to Kabul in order to augment Afghanistan's interdiction and training operations in support of Operation Containment.*

In April 2005, the first two FAST teams arrived in Afghanistan. The FAST teams are deployed on cycled rotations and work directly with elements of the newly USG trained National Interdiction Unit of the CNPA. There are five NIU teams. These law enforcement activities, despite difficult conditions, are succeeding in identifying, targeting, and disrupting the highest level traffickers and their organizations. Operations have led to record-breaking seizures, arrests of kingpins, dissolution of major trafficking organizations, and the first-ever extradition between Afghanistan and the United States.

Despite resource limitations, DEA has had good operational results, and should therefore consider increasing the number of agents assigned to Kabul. Increasing the number of permanently assigned agents would allow DEA to pursue multiple, long term, and complex cases simultaneously, greatly expanding the number of potential prosecutions of HVTs.

- c. Five Year CNPA Plan:** *Expand the core CNPA to create an Afghan Vetted Unit Program, expand CNPA facilities, place CNPA officers in Regional Law Enforcement Centers outside Kabul and establish a plan for staffing the various ranks of CNPA with narcotics trained police officers.*

The USG has begun to provide training and equipment for an Afghan Vetted Unit Program. The Sensitive Investigation Unit (SIU) will identify, target and dismantle those DTOs that are having the greatest impact on Afghanistan's sovereignty, to include those with a nexus to Taliban and Anti-Coalition elements

Working with the CNPA, the USG will utilize all intelligence and evidence gathered by each component of the CNPA for furtherance of drug prosecutions of HVTs in either Afghanistan or the United States. In order to capitalize on intelligence gathered by the CNPA, agents and officers must be able to move enforcement personnel and have the ability to travel from Kabul to the locations where the drug traffickers are operating.

d. Northern, Eastern, and Southern Enforcement Strategies: *These strategies will initiate operations in three areas of Afghanistan to attack major drug trafficking organizations. Initial efforts have started in Kabul and have been followed by the Eastern Strategy in the Province of Nangarhar.*

The Northern Strategy comprises interdiction efforts in the provinces of Kunduz, Takhar and Badakshan. This region is less troubled by insurgent activity and the reduced security concerns allow for freer access to sources of information and local counterparts.

The Eastern Strategy is the CNPA's organizational attack of several major drug trafficking organizations termed the Nangarhar Consortium. Studies indicate that a significant amount of Afghanistan's heroin conversion occurs in Nangarhar. Opium and heroin exit Nangarhar through a variety of means including convoys, single load truck and couriers.

The Nangarhar drug trafficking organizations control a network of labs in Nangarhar, and often own storefronts in the bazaars which provide laboratory equipment or chemicals for the conversion labs. Many Nangarhar drug trafficking organizations run their drug operations in Afghanistan from outside the country, typically from Dubai or Pakistan, with little interference from local law enforcement authorities. Ongoing Nangarhar investigations show a clear link between the drug traffickers and anti-coalition activities.

The Southern Strategy focuses on the drug trafficking organizations operating from the critical provinces of Kandahar and Helmand. This turbulent area is the home region of the Taliban and is the focus of a large degree of the coalition's anti-insurgency efforts. It is also the region that produces most of Afghanistan's opium and its most notorious drug lords. Interdiction efforts target traffickers who comprise the most significant lab operators, brokers and traffickers in Afghanistan and the region. Effective CN operations in the South will significantly enhance stability efforts there.

In this troubled region, however, better cooperation between the GOA and allies will be necessary for success.

Interdiction in Helmand

The situation in Helmand is especially difficult due to the concentration of Taliban and insurgents and additional cross-border insurgent activity from Pakistan. The local population supports the Taliban and insurgents both willingly and through coercion. Presently, only very limited interdiction activity is occurring. This is an area where a force protection capability within the CNPA would enable more effective interdiction.

The USG could press for increased security to garner support from the local populace, and coalition forces must provide reliable and available airlift and security support to interdiction forces. The USG could also improve CNPA capacity to establish forward operating bases, and secure and properly equip CNPA office facilities in Helmand. The CNPA must train and equip officers supported by Helmand's provincial government and must develop strong links to a central/national office. Helmand also should be the first to receive support from the proposed CNPA Special Protection Force for CN operations.

Intelligence collection capacity in Helmand could also be improved for more effective border control and regional monitoring of the borders with Pakistan and Kandahar. USG-supported efforts could increase coordination with border forces for integrated cross-border interdiction operations. Further efforts could develop provincial investigation capacity to target HVT's, MVT's, and major DTO's and forward an increasing number of case packages for trial to the Central Narcotics Tribunal, until provincial justice reform takes place.

E. Justice Reform/Prosecution

As part of a comprehensive counternarcotics strategy, high level traffickers and corrupt officials involved in the narcotics trade must be prosecuted and incarcerated. As related to the other pillars, effective prosecution shows the Afghan public that poppy farmers, drug traffickers, and corrupt officials are all vulnerable to punishment. Moreover, the Afghan government could go a long way toward increasing its legitimacy in the eyes of the populace by

reforming the Ministry of the Interior. MOI reforms could include ridding the Ministry of corrupt officials and developing a new strategy to properly staff and rotate provincial police leadership.

Justice sector capacity-building is a high priority, and the U.S. and international community are increasing assistance to the overall justice system. The USG intends to double its justice sector support over the next several years, especially focusing on building prosecution capabilities. For the USG, this includes supporting over 70 justice and corrections advisors in Kabul and five provinces in 2007 (including INL, DOJ, and USAID advisors) to implement the U.S. Justice Sector Strategy of (1) building the central justice system, (2) expanding to the provinces, and (3) increasing coordinated international justice assistance. The July 2007 Rome Conference on Afghanistan Rule of Law endorsed an overall justice assistance strategy and secured contributions including for a justice sector trust fund. This overall Afghan and international effort will significantly improve the justice sector over the coming years, which will have a positive effect on counternarcotics law enforcement efforts.

The Kabul-based Criminal Justice Task Force (CJTF) investigates drug cases involving two kilos or more, and the Counternarcotics Tribunal (CNT) tries these cases. There are approximately 80 pending cases in the CNT. Most of those are mid-level cases, but with the training and mentoring of DOJ and other international mentors, the CJTF and CNT are slowly gaining the capacity to successfully investigate and prosecute high-value traffickers.

1. Expand Central and Provincial Counternarcotics Justice

Capacity: *The Criminal Justice Task Force (CJTF) in Kabul prosecutes and investigates mid- and high-level narcotics and narcotics-related cases before the Central Narcotics Tribunal (CNT), which has exclusive nationwide jurisdiction for such cases. Counternarcotics justice reform should include expansion of the CJTF and CNT in Kabul. Other support to the Afghan criminal justice system, such as that provided by the nine already deployed provincial justice advisors, will assist these counternarcotics efforts by directing appropriate cases arising in the provinces to the CJTF in Kabul. To be more effective, counternarcotics justice reform should include expansion of the CJTF in Kabul and improvement of provincial capacities to direct cases to the CJTF.*

To be more effective, counternarcotics justice reform should include expansion of the Criminal Justice Task Force (CJTF) and the Central Narcotics Tribunal (CNT) in Kabul. DOJ, through its Senior Federal Prosecutors Program, has been working with the assistance of international advisors from the U.K. and Norway to train and mentor Afghan prosecutors and police investigators in the CJTF and judges in the CNT. While most of these convictions have been of low-level or mid-level traffickers, the Task Force is increasingly developing the capacity to pursue more high-level targets. To help build Afghan counternarcotics justice capacity, the USG should recruit, vet, train, and mentor additional Afghan prosecutors, police investigators, and judges; increase the number of DOJ and other international advisors working to guide and support the CJTF and CNT; establish, train, and mentor a specialized CJTF sub-unit dedicated to the investigation and prosecution of narcotics-related corruption cases; and develop an aggressive public information campaign to increase awareness of the provisions of the Afghan Counternarcotics Law, to explain the special nationwide jurisdiction of the CNT, and to describe the work and achievements of the CJTF.

In addition to the efforts in Kabul, the GOA needs to improve its capacity to investigate drug crimes at the provincial level, including in both poppy-producing and poppy-trafficking provinces. Developing the capacity of provincial Chief Prosecutor's offices to handle the initial stages of narcotics cases will improve the effective transfer of cases to the CJTF for trial before the Central Narcotics Tribunal in Kabul. Expanding counternarcotics justice in the provinces will require additional resources for provincial justice advisor teams. DOS and State/INL Justice Sector Support Program (JSSP) has 3-person teams based in Herat, Balkh, Nangarhar, and Konduz provinces which are providing an intensive training and mentoring program to 60 police investigators and 30 prosecutors focused on basic laws, criminal procedure, and police-prosecutor coordination in the investigative stage of criminal justice. These teams could also build capacity to investigate and prosecute narcotics cases locally, and assist in preparing mid-level and high-level narcotics cases for transfer to the CJTF in Kabul. This could be accomplished by adding an additional justice advisor focused on narcotics prosecutions, or by giving the current teams an additional responsibility. DOJ will augment the efforts of JSSP by providing in-depth training in the Counternarcotics Law and in narcotics prosecution to several of these provincial units.

Deploying justice advisors to all 355 districts of Afghanistan is not feasible at this time. Justice assistance must be closely paired with police assistance, as neither can be effective without the other. The police program is operational in most major provincial centers and key districts, but is not operating in many districts. Thus, State/INL is implementing a systematic expansion of JSSP advisors to the seven police Regional Training Centers. The preferred approach in the area of expanding and improving narcotics prosecutions is to use existing provincial JSSP advisors. JSSP teams are currently deployed in three provincial regional training centers, and will expand to seven by the end of 2009. This expansion was integrated into an overall donor plan for provincial justice which was endorsed at the Rome Conference.

Together with the Government of Afghanistan and international community, the USG is also developing a comprehensive plan to coordinate and reinvigorate provincial justice sector reform. This plan was also endorsed at the Rome Conference.

2. Improve Anti-Corruption Initiative: *The USG should improve assistance to the Afghan Attorney General in his anti-corruption campaign by providing security, secure facilities, equipment, and technical assistance. The DOJ, with assistance from the State Department, should expand its anticorruption programs in Afghanistan along the lines recommended by a recent DOJ assessment team. Additionally, a reform of the Ministry of Interior is essential to dismantling the narco-government nexus.*

The Afghan Attorney General's Office, consisting of thousands of prosecutors nationwide, is responsible for investigating and prosecuting crimes. Tackling corruption—much of which is narco-corruption—is one of the highest priorities of the Attorney General's Office. Since 2006, the Attorney General's Office has initiated over 150 corruption investigations in eight provinces, resulting in 138 arrests and a conviction rate of 71%. The current Afghan Attorney General has made anti-corruption his top priority.

To promote better institutional relations, the USG is establishing an assistance package for the Attorney General to assist in the development of solid investigations and prosecutions in accordance with Afghan laws and procedures. Additionally, the USG must continue to work with the international community to coordinate donor assistance for the justice sector including institutional and provincial justice plans.

USG and international assistance to the CN CJTF have plans to expand to include narcotics-related corruption. Development of narcotics-related corruption cases could be closely tied to assistance provided to the Afghan Attorney General's Anti-Corruption Unit to ensure uniformity of procedures and effective case transfers. The JSSP and DOJ programs each have advisors assigned on a full-time basis to the Attorney General's Office to provide advice and assistance in anti-corruption and other criminal law matters. While narcotics-related corruption cases can be heard before the CNT, non-narcotics related cases will need to be brought before normal Afghan courts. The U.S. and international community could work more extensively with the GOA to improve the effectiveness of those courts that will handle high-level corruption cases. The CJTF is already proceeding on a number of narcotics-related corruption cases.

The USG should look for ways to assist the MOI in ridding itself of corrupt officials, and in developing a new strategy to properly staff and rotate provincial police leadership.

3. Develop an Extradition Policy: *Extradition can be a controversial issue. Extradition needs to be understood as the international process to bring to justice those criminals who have caused harm to the people and/or interests of another nation. The USG should review a series of criteria with the GOA that would be considered on a case-by-case basis in determining whether extradition would be requested. Full Afghan capacity to investigate, prosecute, and incarcerate kingpins is still a few years away.*

The United States has been successful in disrupting and dismantling major drug trafficking organizations (DTOs) operating throughout the world by extraditing organization heads and members to the United States to face charges. The USG identifies, targets, and indicts drug traffickers operating at the highest levels of the drug trafficking industry. Subsequent to these investigations, the USG requests extradition of organization leaders and members to the United States. These various extraditions disrupt and dismantle DTOs and ultimately convict and incarcerate traffickers in the U.S. This is a process that DOJ is committed to not only in the short-term, but that DOJ will urge in the long term as well, as it does with many nations of the world. It is a process not just for drug traffickers but for all criminals who harm or threaten harm to U.S. persons or interests. These extradition efforts are consistent with USG practices around the globe.

When brought to justice in the U.S., extradited drug traffickers face a legal system prepared to adjudicate complex drug trafficking conspiracy cases and which typically imposes appropriately severe prison sentences following convictions. Extraditing drug traffickers to the U.S. can aid in breaking the narcotics-insurgent links of financial and other support. As President Karzai commented in his remarks to the United National General Assembly on September 20, 2006, “The menace of narcotics feeds terrorism and threatens the foundation of legitimate economic development of Afghanistan.”

The priority and long-term goal of the USG is to help strengthen the Afghan criminal justice system and promote public confidence in its justice institutions. At the same time, and on a case-by-case basis, the U.S. should consider requesting extradition of any high-value target who has caused or threatened harm to U.S. persons or interests. The USG should encourage European countries to do the same. To date, the USG has extradited only one individual from Afghanistan, and European countries have extradited none. DOJ, in consultation with Afghan justice officials, has drafted a proposed extradition law that will authorize extradition from Afghanistan for any offense covered in a United Nations Convention or other multi-lateral treaty to another signatory country.

4. Increase Justice Sector Salaries: *Increasing justice personnel salaries is critical to building the rule of law, and should be supported by the U.S. The European Union is considering increasing justice salaries through a trust fund. The U.S. could offer a substantial financial contribution to this effort over the coming two years.*

The U.S. justice strategy provides for a robust and expanded U.S. role in building Afghanistan’s justice sector over the coming years, together with broader international and Afghan justice sector plans. In addition, it is vital that the U.S. and international community augment capacity-building and training with an increase in justice personnel salaries. Currently, prosecutors and judges earn less than army and police recruits, but are charged with enforcing and adjudicating serious crimes in accordance with the Afghan Constitution and Afghan law. The lack of basic living wages has led to bribery and high-level corruption by justice officials, which has a direct negative impact on the legitimacy and effectiveness of the courts, derails convictions of narcotics-related and other serious crimes, and undermines Afghan efforts to build public confidence in the central government’s

authority. Consequently, lack of competitive wages limits the enforcement of the rule of law, which undermines counternarcotics law enforcement.

5. Expand Counternarcotics Justice Infrastructure: *Over the coming year, a number of USG and international initiatives will materialize to substantially accelerate CN law enforcement efforts. Most importantly, the Counternarcotics Justice Center will be completed in 2007 to serve as a secure facility for investigation, detention, trial, and conviction of major narcotics offenders.*

The CNJC will house the CN Criminal Justice Task Force (CJTF), the Central Narcotics Tribunal (CNT), and a detention center for pre-trial and trial. Upon completion, this facility will provide a secure platform for major narcotics prosecutions by the Afghan Government. The U.S. Marshals Service, as an adjunct project to the Department of Justice Senior Federal Prosecutors Program, has provided on-site security consultation and advice on the proposed design, construction, and operation of the CNJC. The UN also recently completed renovation of a cell block at Pol-e-Charkhi prison for convicted narcotics offenders (who will be transferred there from the CNJC once sentenced). The USG could focus resources on these ongoing efforts and ensure that the CJTF is effectively linked to the National Interdiction Unit and the Sensitive Investigations Unit over the coming year. Further, the USG could work to ensure that all justice sector efforts ensure that similar attention and growth are contemplated for the full spectrum of justice reforms needed so that one segment does not expand unless a complementary expansion is prepared for other segments as well.

Justice Reform in Helmand

The current security conditions in Helmand are not conducive to the deployment of justice advisors and mentors at this time. However, the Central Narcotics Tribunal (CNT) in Kabul has national jurisdiction over significant narcotics cases (those involving over two kilos of heroin), and the U.S. is establishing the above mentioned Counternarcotics Justice Center (CNJC), which will be completed in the fall or winter of 2007. Combined with efforts by the National Interdiction Unit, major drug offenders from Helmand must be transferred to the CNJC for prosecution and trial before the CNT. In addition, the UK has deployed several justice advisors to its Provincial Reconstruction Team in Helmand to begin working with the local judicial system.

F. Political Will

Corruption in Afghanistan continues to impede progress in all areas of the counternarcotics effort. Strong political will enables effective eradication and interdiction programs and judicial system development. Despite vigorous eradication efforts, the UNODC estimates that this year's poppy crop will exceed that of 2006. Steps must be taken now to assist uncorrupt GOA officials in engendering political will for CN efforts next year.

1. Central, Provincial, and District Leaders: *One of the principal obstacles to greater success in interdiction and eradication is the intervention of corrupt officials. The USG and the international community should discuss ways to help the GOA foster political will, such as by:*

- a. Developing a working system of specific goals for each province, with rewards for reaching the goals, firing for incompetence, and prosecution for corruption.
- b. Highlighting successes at the provincial level, publicly praising and rewarding leaders who have demonstrated political will with effective poppy elimination/eradication programs, and denouncing and firing leaders with poor or no programs.

G. Unity of International Effort

The USG and its partners must deliver a clear and consistent counternarcotics message and must execute efforts cooperatively. While Afghanistan is the lead nation on counternarcotics issues, according to the Afghanistan Compact, strong international engagement could continue to be required in the foreseeable future.

1. Develop a Plan to Ensure Allied Unity in Messaging: *The narco-traffickers have attempted to undermine allied unity, particularly in the areas of eradication and interdiction. The USG and allies should work to improve the delivery of a clear and consistent counternarcotics message. This plan would need to be executed concurrently by civilian and military authorities from all allied nations and the GOA.*

An allied effort is currently underway to coordinate messages among, and build capacity in, relevant GOA ministries through the National Communications Coordination Center (NC3), which was established in December 2006. As the NC3 matures, it will serve as the primary GOA tool for disseminating information to the Afghan and international public.

2. Regional Cooperation and Allied Border Security: *Enhance regional cooperation on Afghan drug transit and enhance Allied-Afghan border security efforts.*

Drugs are trafficked through Pakistan, Iran and Central Asia. The USG should identify useful ways to engage resources, expertise, and assistance to counter the drug-related transit in and out of Afghanistan without undermining our larger goals in Afghanistan. The Central Asian Regional Information Coordination Center (CARICC) is a potential building block for enhancing law-enforcement cooperation beyond the sharing of information. The USG should urge all countries participating in CARICC to operationalize CARICC headquarters in Almaty without delay

3. Increased Coordination on Interdiction Strategies and Justice Sector Development:

a. Improve Coordination of CNTF Alternative Development

Programs: *The Counter Narcotics Trust Fund (CNTF) could benefit from greater allied unity in approving funding disbursements for counternarcotics projects.*

The CNTF Management Board is comprised of the following members: the Government of Afghanistan represented by the Ministries of Counternarcotics and Finance; the Asian Development Bank (ADB); the Government of the United Kingdom, as the former lead partner for counternarcotics; the United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA), which may exercise its membership role through the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC); and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The World Bank acts as an observer.

This CNTF Management Board is responsible for ensuring that projects received comply with sound project design principles, are consistent with the policies and aims of the National Drug Control Strategy (NDCS), and the

priorities approved by the Cabinet Sub-Committee for Counter Narcotics. USAID has initiated the process to request Board membership for the USG on the CNTF.

The GOA's Ministry of Counternarcotics (MCN) could greatly benefit from an improved allied effort to assist with coordinating, selecting, monitoring and evaluating counternarcotics projects. The allied effort could also assist with coordinating the development and implementation of the National Drug Control Strategy, work plans, policies and guidelines.

- b. Work to Improve Coordination of Interdiction Strategies:** *While the U.S. and UK enjoy an excellent counternarcotics working relationship, both countries could improve operational coordination, de-confliction, targeting, and in-country planning to respond to the fluid situation within Afghanistan. Improved coordination will maximize resources and improve cooperative intelligence gathering.*
- c. Improve Justice Sector Donor Country Coordination:** *Improve donor country coordination which has severely limited development of Afghanistan's justice sector.*

Some prosecutors and police investigators from the Criminal Justice Task Force, with training and mentoring from DOJ, UK, and Norwegian mentors, are beginning to employ the modern investigative techniques authorized by the Afghan Counternarcotics Law to develop broader and higher-level narcotics and narcotics-related cases. Considerably more could be done with better coordination among the donors.

H. Integrating Counternarcotics (Particularly Interdiction) Into The Comprehensive Security Approach

The increasing link between drug trafficking organizations and insurgents prompts the need to integrate the counternarcotics mission, particularly drug interdiction planning and operations, more closely into counterinsurgency strategy and operations. Recent UNODC survey data indicate a strong link between the dangerous security conditions and poppy cultivation. Security is good in the provinces where poppy cultivation is dropping, and government institutions are better able to assert their authority to influence farmers' planting decisions. The converse is true as well. The figures

demonstrate that 75 percent of surveyed villages subject to “poor” or “very poor” security conditions showed evidence of poppy cultivation compared to 22 percent in regions with “very good” security.

Moreover, reports clearly indicate increasing ties between narcotics and the insurgency. The narcotics trade in Afghanistan is a significant source of revenue to the insurgency, and insurgent forces exploit drug-related corruption and resulting lack of governance to weaken central government influence. The small Afghan drug interdiction forces are unable to achieve persistent effect against the burgeoning drug trade. The fledgling Narcotics Interdiction Unit of the Counternarcotics Police of Afghanistan and the equally small but capable Afghan Special Narcotics Force are not designed or resourced to forcefully dismantle the drug networks in Afghanistan, since they cannot remain in areas contested by drug traffickers and insurgents. Likewise, the State/INL-sponsored Afghan Eradication Force is not designed nor resourced to remain in these hostile areas over long periods of time.

1. Work with Afghan and Allied Military Forces to Integrate Counternarcotics Into Our Broader Security Strategy: *There is a clear and direct link between the illicit opium trade and insurgent groups in Afghanistan. The Taliban and other anti-government elements exploit the opium trade to facilitate their financial, logistical, and political objectives, jeopardizing the prospect of long-term security and stability, reconstruction, and effective governance. Successful counternarcotics operations, particularly interdiction operations, dismantle criminal enterprises, capture narco-terrorists, and weaken the insurgents’ areas of strength. Therefore, progress in the CN mission, and drug interdiction in particular, is essential to achieving our security objectives in Afghanistan. Combating the insurgency requires an integrated strategy that incorporates CN target sets, operations, and resource priorities as components of the overall security effort. DOD will work with DEA and other stakeholders to develop options for a coordinated strategy that integrates and synchronizes counternarcotics operations, particularly interdiction, into the comprehensive security strategy.*

Implementing the integrated CN/security strategy will require close coordination and synchronization of the CN operational entities with military operations. To this end, it is critical for all CN stakeholders to embed personnel in the military headquarters to advocate for and explain planned operations, participate in the targeting and resource allocation

processes, provide advice to the operational commander, and serve as a link to various CN organizations.

2. Establish a Command and Control Cell: *In addition to building a CNPA protection force, an Afghan Command and Control (C2) cell could be established to provide command and control for all government CN forces operating in a specific region. This C2 cell will ensure that there is a single command structure for all government CN efforts in the region, and will coordinate with the respective local governments, NGOs, PRTs, military headquarters, etc.*

3. Develop Coordinated Plans for Afghan and Allied Military Support for Counternarcotics Operations, Particularly Interdiction Operations: *Establishing liaison relationships with Afghan and allied planning cells, drug interdiction mission planners, eradication specialists, and public information specialists would help develop more integrated plans, policies, and procedures.*

Recent attacks upon the Afghan Eradication Force (AEF) highlight the need for coordinated measures to support Afghan CN operations. Routinely operating in non-permissive environments, CN forces require military support in the event of overwhelming hostilities, such as medical evacuation (MEDEVAC), indirect fire support, and Quick Reaction Force (QRF) support in the form of a CNPA special protection force.

The USG must liaise with Afghan and allied military commands to define – and implement – field plans, policies and procedures for support to CN and law enforcement elements. Combating the insurgency and its logistical, financial, and political areas of strength requires the synchronization of CN target sets, operations, and strategies with broader COIN objectives. Therefore, integration of the CN mission within the broader COIN effort could enhance opportunities for access to military support for CN operations.

4. Support Afghan and Allied Partners' Public Information Efforts: *The Afghan and allied militaries could support the GOA and international community's counternarcotics public information campaign.*

Allied military forces play a very active role in public information activities. Currently, allied forces are working to revise their overarching public affairs

strategy by increasing the effectiveness of their messaging, upgrading their information dissemination capabilities, and expanding their outreach to both the international and Afghan media. These efforts demonstrate allied forces' understanding of the value of public information, and this improved capacity, once operational, could improve allied forces' ability to play a larger role in the CN public information campaign.

I. Countering “Silver Bullet” Approaches

There is no simple solution, shortcut, or “silver bullet” which can address the drug trade in Afghanistan. Over the past year, some organizations and government officials in partner countries have suggested radical options, such as legalizing and buying out opium poppy produced in Afghanistan, or relying solely on interdiction to solve problems. The U.S. has carefully examined these ideas but rejects them. Based on the experiences of other nations in the fight against illicit drugs, the United States remains committed to supporting a mix of deterrence, prevention, and economic development assistance.

1. Provide Information to Expose the Flaws of an Imbalanced Interdiction-Only Approach: *Some people have expressed the need to focus attention on interdiction exclusively as a way to solve the counternarcotics problem. While interdiction is a critical piece of the U.S. government’s counternarcotics strategy in Afghanistan, it will not solve the problems without the other pillars.*

Currently, the international community, the Department of State, the Department of Justice, and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration are working to develop Afghan law enforcement and criminal justice institutions, but they are not yet sufficiently developed to prosecute complex narcotics cases on a scale that would deter poppy cultivation or drug production. The reality in Afghanistan is that a lack of infrastructure combined with wide stretches of barren desert and extensive mountain ranges make detecting hidden cargo and interdicting drugs extremely difficult. While the USG needs to do more in this regard, the simple fact is that interdiction alone will not in the foreseeable future eliminate a significant percentage of the opium trade.

2. Impossibility of Legalizing and Buying Out the Opium Crop: *The USG has considered the arguments for legalizing and buying out the opium crop. The biggest problems with these recommendations are that they encourage poppy cultivation and would make Afghanistan's economy dangerously reliant on one commodity.*

Reliance on one agricultural commodity, legal or otherwise, leaves a country extremely vulnerable to fluctuations in the price of that commodity. This has proven disastrous in Latin America, Africa, and other parts of the world. The long-term goal is to diversify Afghanistan's economy and make it less dependant on agriculture in general and poppy cultivation in particular. Additional reasons for rejecting the proposed legalization of poppy include the following:

First, the licit opium market is not lucrative enough to entice Afghan farmers. The price difference between licit and illicit opium is so substantial that Afghan farmers would continue to sell to the black market. To make up for the price difference, exorbitant subsidies would have to be offered, which would prove prohibitively expensive—billions of dollars per year. Moreover, the Government of Afghanistan would purchase all opium stocks at a high price, resulting in exponential expansion of poppy as more farmers would grow it to take advantage of a guaranteed source of income.

Second, there is no legitimate world demand for legally produced opium from Afghanistan. According to the United Nations International Narcotics Control Board, world demand for opium-based medicines is fully met. World stockpiles are also sufficient to meet any conceivable future or increased demand.

Third, it is not feasible. Countries which produce licit opium have strict controls, sophisticated law enforcement, and licensing systems – and still admit to significant illegal diversion. The lack of security in Afghanistan has led to the explosion of the current illicit poppy crop, so a licit industry which relies on legal controls could not work. Without safeguards, licit and illicit opium would be indistinguishable.

Fourth, historical experience argues against this approach. Lessons from India, Pakistan, Bolivia, and other countries show the often disastrous effects of legalizing drug production without the requisite market demand or law enforcement and control mechanisms. Each of these countries attempted to

regulate a legal trade in narcotics and, as a result, saw an increase in cultivation or significant diversion into the black market.

Finally, legalization is ultimately counterproductive and dangerous. Legalization would expand and entrench the drug trade, undermining ongoing efforts to bring security and sustainable economic development. This would benefit insurgent groups such as the Taliban who profit from the trade, as well as criminals and corrupt government officials. Afghanistan would suffer from more violence, lawlessness, and corruption as a result of legalization, not less. Expanding opium cultivation would also come at the expense of important efforts to diversify Afghanistan's economy, making the country's welfare dangerously reliant on one commodity.

A related idea is to use eradication funds to purchase poppy crops. While a recent report recommended spending up to \$375 million to do so, this recommendation would have very serious negative consequences. Schemes to purchase illicit crops have been tried in the past and have failed for one simple reason: if a government commits to purchasing an illicit crop, more farmers will grow it. This perverse incentive expands cultivation and makes farmers more reliant on poppy and future buy outs. This was the case in Bolivia during the mid-1990s when the Government of Bolivia attempted to purchase illicit coca from farmers. Cultivation expanded and moved from farmland into the national parks, where thousands of hectares of rainforest were destroyed. After the government changed its policy to forced eradication and interdiction operations, along with community-based alternative development projects, Bolivia's coca cultivation dropped from 45,800 hectares in 1997 to 19,600 hectares in 2000.

This strategy would also cost significantly more money than its proponents suggests. While the 2006 farm-gate value of Afghanistan's poppy was roughly \$560 million, the area under cultivation would expand exponentially in response to a preemptive buy, making this strategy prohibitively expensive. By way of comparison, commitments to the Afghan Counter Narcotics Trust Fund (CNTF) for development projects total approximately \$70 million after two years.

Both practical and economic, impediments not only argue against legalizing opium inventories and crops, but prove that it would be a dangerous course. Fringe ideas, while they may seem appealing at first glance, can seriously impede counternarcotics progress in Afghanistan.

3. No Miracle Crop: *Many outside observers continue to assume that there is one single miracle crop that can replace poppy. This simply is not true. There is no legal crop that can match the value of the opium poppy.*

There is no single crop that can replace the income farmers receive from opium poppy cultivation. USAID has reviewed several alternative crop suggestions including soy, cotton, sunflower, jathropa (for bio-diesel) and others. There are isolated cases where, under certain conditions, the price of licit crops can equal that of poppy. However, the farm gate price of opium poppy can be manipulated to regulate supply by the small cartel of brokers, traders and narco-criminal networks that control opium processing and trafficking in Afghanistan. Therefore, because of the high profit margins of the narco-criminal networks, the price of poppy can be adjusted upwards to surpass any licit crop in order to guarantee supply.

After careful review of each licit crop suggestion, the conclusion is the same: there is no miracle crop. Instead, a balanced approach combining several high-value crops, agricultural and business development, and comprehensive infrastructure-building is the key to a successful alternative livelihoods strategy.

6. GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

AD: Alternative Development
ADB: Asian Development Bank
ADP: Alternative Development Program
AEF: (GOA) Afghanistan Eradication Force
AGO: (GOA) Attorney General's Office
AIFWG: Afghan Illicit Finance Working Group
ANP: (GOA) Afghan National Police
ARTF: Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund
ASNF: (GOA) Afghan Special Narcotics Force
ATV: All Terrain Vehicles
AVP: Afghan Vetted Unit Program

CARICC: Central Asian Regional Information Coordination Center
CJTF: (GOA) Criminal Justice Task Force
CN: Counternarcotics
CND: (GOA) Counter Narcotics Directorate
CNJC: (GOA) Counter Narcotics Justice Center
CNPA: (GOA) Counternarcotics Police of Afghanistan
CNT: (GOA) Central Narcotics Tribunal
CNTF: (GOA) Counter Narcotics Trust Fund
COIN: Counterinsurgency

DEA: (U.S.) Drug Enforcement Administration
DOD: (U.S.) Department of Defense
DOJ: (U.S.) Department of Justice
DOS: (U.S.) Department of State
DTO: Drug Trafficking Organizations

FARC: Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia
FAST: (DEA) Foreign-deployed Advisory Support Teams
FATA: (GOP) Federally Administered Tribal Area

GBS: Ground Based Spray
GDP: Gross Domestic Product
GLE: Governor-Led Eradication
GOA: Government of Afghanistan

GOP: Government of Pakistan
GPI: Good Performers Initiative

Ha.: Hectares
HVT: High Value Targets

IA: (PEP) International Advisors
INCB: (UN) International Narcotics Control Board
INL: (DOS) Bureau for International Narcotics Control and Law
Enforcement Affairs
ISAF: International Security Assistance Force

JCMB: Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board
JSSP: (DOS) Justice Sector Support Program
JTF: Joint Task Force

LGU: (U.S.) Land Grant Universities

MCN: (GOA) Ministry of Counternarcotics
MEDEVAC: Medical Evacuation
MOI: (GOA) Ministry of Interior
MOJ: (GOA) Ministry of Justice (MOJ)
MVT: Medium Value Targets

NC3: National Communications Coordination Center
NDCS: (GOA) National Drug Control Strategy
NIU: (GOA) National Interdiction Unit
NIU: (GOA) Narcotics Investigation Unit
NSC: (U.S.) National Security Council
NSP: (GOA) National Solidarity Program

OAS/CICAD: The Organization of American States Inter-American Drug
Abuse Control Commission
OFAC: (U.S.) Office of Foreign Assets Control
ONDCP: (U.S.) Office of National Drug Control Policy

PEP: Poppy Elimination Program
PI: Public Information
PRR: Priority Reform and Restructuring
PRT: Provincial Reconstruction Team

QRF: Quick Reaction Force

RTC: Regional Training Center

SOCA: (UK) Serious Organized Crime Agency

SIU: (GOA) Sensitive Investigation Unit

“The Compact”: Afghanistan Compact

TIU: (GOA) Technical Intercept Unit

U.S.: United States

UK: United Kingdom

UN: United Nations

UNAMA: United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan

UNDP: United Nations Development Programme

UNODC: United Nations Office on Drug and Crime

USAID: U.S. Agency for International Development

USDA: U.S. Department of Agriculture

USG: United States Government

VOA: Voice of America