Afghanistan
- Proposals from the Human Security Perspective -

July 2004
Preface

After the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States, a military offensive was launched against Afghanistan as part of the “war against terrorism.” This has brought the issues of state rebuilding, reconstruction and development in Afghanistan to the forefront of the issues facing the international community. Following the conclusion of the Bonn Agreement in December 2001, an Interim Authority was established, the Loya Jirga (Grand Assembly) approved the formation of a Transitional Administration led by Hamid Karzai in an emergency session, and the administration was mandated to hold another Loya Jirga to adopt a constitution in December 2003. With these developments, the process of state rebuilding, reconstruction and development seemed to be moving forward.

However, with the ongoing military operations aimed at eliminating the Taliban, the influence of warlords, especially those associated with the Northern Alliance, is increasing both in the Transitional Administration and in the outlying regions. The resulting backlash is hindering progress toward reconstruction and development and creating fertile ground for the revitalization of Taliban activities. Since the start of the Iraq War, attacks on US military personnel, members of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), and the staff of international organizations and international NGOs have grown more frequent. In addition, conflicts have begun to develop between various factions, and disputes have evolved within the transitional government and between central and outlying regions.

In light of these difficulties, NIRA has been conducting research on the “State Rebuilding Process and Development Assistance in Afghanistan” since 2002. Recognizing the problem as a subtle mismatch between the support efforts being conducted by the international community and the conditions that the people of Afghanistan are actually facing, this research emphasizes the human security perspective in attempting to identify problems from the viewpoint of Afghan citizens themselves. This research demonstrated that the war against terrorism being conducted in the country by the United States with the cooperation of Afghan warlords is creating divisions in Afghanistan and hindering the process of reconstruction and development; NIRA has suggested that state rebuilding must be predicated on the participation of the entire Afghan people, and proposed a transition from the war against terrorism to a longer-term “anti-terrorism strategy” that emphasizes reconstruction and development.

The following paper contains detailed proposals concerning state rebuilding, reconstruction and development in Afghanistan, formulated from the human security perspective. The paper is based on the discussions of the NIRA Study Group on Afghanistan and its research report Afghanistan: Challenge for State Rebuilding and Reconstruction, published by Nihon Keizai Hyoronsha in March 2004. An outline of the proposals was also submitted by Kinhide Mushakoji, Chairman of the NIRA Study Group on Afghanistan, in December 2003, prior to the convening of the Constitutional Loya Jirga in the same month. Professor Mushakoji’s outline of the proposals will be published on the NIRA website (http://www.nira.go.jp/newse/index.html) together with this paper.
Abstract

- **Ensuring Public Safety**
  The guarantee of public safety and the active participation of the entire Afghan people are essential to the state rebuilding process and the achievement of reconstruction and development. Due to the ongoing war against terrorism, which focuses on eliminating remnants of Al Qaeda and the Taliban, weapons and financial support have continued to be provided to warlords, especially those with links to the Northern Alliance. To ensure public safety, it is essential that the United States and the nations surrounding Afghanistan stop supporting warlords, that the opium trade and the collection of informal transit taxes, which the warlords use to finance their activities, are restricted, and that an international cooperative structure is put in place to disarm these warlords. However, because hasty disarmament could also cause public safety to deteriorate, it will be important to ensure that all aspects of such efforts, including the reintegration of disarmed fighters into society, are closely coordinated with the process of reconstruction and development.

  In the Pashtun regions in the east and south where the relentless search for remnants of the Taliban continues, there is a strong sense of alienation vis-à-vis state rebuilding, reconstruction, and development efforts. In fact, movements calling for the restoration of the Taliban, which are believed to be receiving support from Pakistan, have been emerging. For this reason, it is essential that new Taliban arrivals are cut off at the border, and that the war against terrorism is firmly restricted to targeting hardline Al Qaeda and Taliban supporters. In addition, it will be necessary to advance the political negotiations being conducted by the US State Department and the Karzai administration and to incorporate moderate factions of the Taliban into the political process.

- **State Rebuilding Based on Ethnic Coexistence**
  There are now concerns that the exercise of direct or indirect power by warlords or Islamic groups to influence the political process may distort discussions, making it difficult for an administration that all Afghan people regard as legitimate to emerge. In the spirit of the Bonn Agreement, it is important that the power structures of the Transitional Administration be reformed, beginning with changes to the Defense Ministry, which is dominated by Tajiks from the Panjshir Valley. It will also be important to meet the preconditions necessary to enable all people to participate in the state rebuilding process. In addition, the disarmament of the warlords must be performed in a fair and neutral manner, and urgent efforts must be directed toward rebuilding an Afghan army and police force with a diverse ethnic, regional and religious factional composition.

  To establish an administration that is regarded as legitimate by all Afghans, it will be important that the people reach a consensus on a new constitution and new institutions. Such a consensus should be reached on the basis of a multi-layered and mutually complementary employment of traditional Afghan decision-making mechanisms (such as jirga), which are firmly rooted in Afghan society and recognized as legitimate by the people. It is also important that the international community support Afghanistan by playing the role of a fair and neutral monitor during the transition period, during which the process of state rebuilding will be rendered unstable.

- **Reconstruction and Development Assistance Conducted to Promote Empowerment of the Afghan People**
  Thus far, priority has been placed on humanitarian support to deal with the
mass return of refugees and a three-year drought, but it is time to shift to an approach to reconstruction and development that promotes the empowerment of the people. Selective and strategic assistance must be provided to create employment and guarantee income by rehabilitating agriculture, in which approximately 90% of the population is involved, and constructing infrastructure such as irrigation facilities, bridges, and ring roads. This is also likely to have a positive effect on the voluntary disarmament of local militias and on the return of refugees from the cities to the countryside. NIRA proposes that support be provided for research on the promotion of agriculture and livestock farming and on surveys of livelihood in each region, particularly through the existing national agricultural experimental stations and the relevant departments at Kabul University.

To advance regional reconstruction and development while the authority of the Transitional Administration is limited to the capital, Kabul, it is essential that all support be implemented on the basis of consensus reached through the use of traditional consultative frameworks (jirga and shura) with the cooperation of trustworthy local NGOs. It will also be important in the medium- to long-term to increase direct support for reliable NGOs that serve not as low-cost subcontractors, but as important partners in supporting the self-help efforts of the people, and to offer support to the Transitional Administration by means of the Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF).

The conditions faced by Afghan women are complex and varied, and international assistance must therefore be implemented carefully and with respect for Afghan women's own awareness of their situation. If activities aimed at increasing the status of women are undertaken without regard for the rules of Islam, local customs, or the nature of social relationships, those efforts may harm rather than help the women they are attempting to assist. International assistance should be provided with a sufficient degree of attention given to preventing this from occurring.

Japan's Role Based on the Principle of Human Security

Japan enjoys a good reputation in Afghanistan mainly because of its lack of involvement in power politics. This is a “hidden asset” of Japanese diplomacy. Given this, Japan should formulate its own policies for the provision of support to Afghanistan based on the principle of human security, with an emphasis on the perspectives of Afghan people. This will in turn prevent Japan from being perceived as merely compliant with the will of the United States. Specific proposals include the establishment of a center that facilitates dialogue and collaboration among Afghans from different ethnic and religious factional groups and social classes, one that can help to build a “common security” for all. Other proposals for Japanese activities include the promotion of field research on Afghanistan's social structure and cultures in order to support the long-term process of state rebuilding, reconstruction and development.

The Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) program, which is advancing under the leadership of Japan and the United Nations, should be promoted under a comprehensive strategy integrated with other forms of development assistance, such as the rehabilitation of agriculture and the construction of roads. It is important that such a strategy be pursued on the basis of international cooperation. For example, regular international conferences among countries concerned with stopping the financial support to warlords and putting an end to their intervention in the political situation should be held by the United States and the nations surrounding Afghanistan, and efforts should be made to bring an end to the opium trade.
Afghanistan
--Proposals From the Human Security Perspective--

Terumi Hirai*
Secretariat
NIRA Study Group on Afghanistan

1. The Situation in Afghanistan

(1) Reconstruction and Development – Current Status and Problems

Following the September 11 terrorist attacks, the U.S. launched military operations against Afghanistan as part of its “war on terror.” The reconstruction and development of Afghanistan subsequently emerged as an important issue for the international community, resulting in the conclusion of the Bonn Agreement in December 2001. The Agreement specified that the Afghan people themselves should play the major role in the rebuilding of the nation, and laid out guidelines for the political process stretching from the establishment of the Afghan Interim Authority (under the leadership of Hamid Karzai) to the holding of a general election in 2004. A Transitional Administration, again led by Karzai, was approved by an Emergency Loya Jirga (Grand Council) held after the establishment of the Interim Authority. The political process was mapped out to continue with the holding of a Constitutional Loya Jirga and the general election. However, the complexity of the problems facing the nation and the difficulty of the process of reconstruction were highlighted by the extension of conflicts among warlords into the administration, resulting in an assassination attempt on Karzai in September 2002.

In the background of the conflicts among warlords is the fact that the U.S. continues to provide them with weapons and financial assistance as

* Terumi Hirai is a senior researcher in the International Cooperation Department of the National Institute for Research Advancement (NIRA), Japan. This paper compiles proposals based on the discussions of the NIRA Study Group on Afghanistan and its report entitled Afuganisutan: Saiken to Fukko heno Chosen (Afghanistan: Challenge for State Rebuilding and Reconstruction) (co-edited by NIRA, Kinhide Mushakoji and Yoshio Endo, Nihon Keizai Hyoronsha), March 2004, Tokyo. The Japanese text of this paper, entitled “Teigen: Ningen no Anzen Hosho no Shiten kara” is also included in the same book. Ms. Hirai would like to express particular thanks to Professor Yoshio Endo of Takushoku University for his valuable advice during the process of editing this paper.
part of its military operations aimed at wiping out Al-Qaeda and the Taliban. As a result, local governments have come under the control of warlords and armed conflicts between them have led to the deterioration of public safety in a variety of regions. The Northern Alliance, which cooperated in the “war on terror” with U.S. forces, has been able to increase its influence within the Transitional Administration. In addition, the strong sense of alienation from the reconstruction and development process prevalent in the Pashtun regions, where operations to eliminate the Taliban are continuing, has enabled the latter to regroup, now receiving support from Pakistan. These factors have stalled reconstruction and development in many regions.

As the political process advances from the holding of the Constitutional Loya Jirga towards the general election, the voice of warlords and Islamists has increased in strength. This has distorted political discussion in a variety of forums, making it doubtful that a constitution and a government considered legitimate by the majority of Afghan citizens will be established [Tanaka]. In addition, progress towards fair disarmament and the establishment of a neutral national army has been hindered by the fact that the Defense Ministry is controlled by the Northern Alliance. Unless these circumstances are taken into consideration, the international community’s support for reconstruction and development in which the Afghan people play the major role may exacerbate the distortions which have been introduced into the process to the present.

(2) Where do These Problems Originate?

The purpose of the ongoing military operations in Afghanistan is to capture members of Al-Qaeda and the Taliban who remain active in the nation. It is essential in this to obtain cooperation from local warlords and residents, and U.S. forces have therefore provided weapons, funds and training to warlords while continuing their own campaign. This has increased the power and influence of the warlords.

Both the Interim Authority established after the conclusion of the Bonn Agreement and the Transitional Administration established after the Emergency Loya Jirga have been influenced by Tajik warlords, especially Defense Minister Fahim, and warlord influence is actually increasing in both the central and local governments. Under these circumstances, the advancement of the political process – the holding of the Constitutional Loya Jirga in December 2003, the general election in June 2004 (the presidential election and parliamentary election have been postponed until October 2004 and April 2005 respectively) – based on the Bonn Agreement will perpetuate the current unequal distribution of power and increase the difficulty of establishing a legitimate government.
The minimal intervention strategy adopted by the international community to support Afghanistan, which stresses UN support for initiatives originating among Afghan citizens and the indirect election of representatives for the Loya Jirga on the basis of a two-stage selection method, has enabled warlords to increase their control even within the Transitional Administration. To advance the political process in future, it will be essential to disarm warlords. We should be alert to the fact that the ethnic diversity in the structures of power premised by the international community has not eventuated and that ethnic Tajiks from the Panjshir Valley wield tremendous influence, with Defense Minister Fahim of the Northern Alliance a prominent example.

With the commencement of the U.S. war on Iraq and the participation of NATO in the UN-sanctioned International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), attacks against U.S. and ISAF personnel and members of international organizations and international NGOs have increased in intensity. A number of personnel of the International Red Cross, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other organizations have recently been murdered in protest against the Karzai administration and its support by the U.S., and this has impeded the provision of reconstruction and development support. The strong feeling in Pashtun regions in particular that they have been left behind by the rebuilding and development process has enabled a resurgence in Taliban activities. Moreover, there have been terrorist attacks targeting the Afghan national army, police, NGO staff and ordinary citizens.

To overcome this situation, it is essential for surrounding nations to cooperate in a unified manner. However, the nomination of Iran, which holds the key to the situation, as part of an “axis of evil” created a new source of instability, and the war against Iraq launched by the United States has caused an escalation in anti-American sentiment in surrounding nations. The increased support offered by Islamists in Pakistan to the Taliban is just one aspect of this trend [Endo]. The provision of support to warlords and intervention in Afghanistan by surrounding nations, arising from a variety of motivations, has further complicated the domestic situation in Afghanistan.

2. Defining Issues on the Basis of the Current Status of Afghanistan

The current status of Afghanistan demonstrates that the original problems of the nation have not been solved and have become more complex and increased in scope with the new problems generated by military action. The approach adopted by the international community is itself problematic in a variety of ways, suggesting that a new approach is required.
First, there are the problems specific to the war on terror. The air strikes against Afghanistan may have represented an allowable level of destruction according to the logic of international security, but this does not consider the perspective of Afghan people who have been exposed to them. It is not acceptable to engage in destruction in the name of human security and to use human security as a tool for after-the-fact justifications [Mushanokoji]. The current situation of the Afghan people is rarely given attention in the international political arena. Raising questions anew from this specific perspective may enable new directions to be discerned for the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan, which presently appear to be deadlocked.

Second, there is the issue of the gap between the current status of Afghanistan and the perception of the nation on which the international community has based its approach. There is no accurate shared recognition of the actual status of Afghanistan, but the provision of support without sufficient understanding of the actual conditions generates confusion. Attaining a grasp of the actual conditions necessitates understanding the historical background behind the current situation and the characteristics of the Afghan social structure [Matsubara]. In considering specific policies, attention must be focused on policies that local people will perceive as legitimate and that are suited to the local situation. It is necessary to consider the types of support genuinely required by the Afghan people, based on mechanisms that are functioning in the field and local perspectives, rather than the unilateral imposition of policies based on the fixed concepts of the intervening side.

Given this, the following points concerning the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan should be emphasized.

The first point is the importance of Afghanistan to the international community. Afghanistan is located in one of the new post-Cold War centers of geopolitical competition, including competition for oil, and, depending on the way in which it progresses, there is a possibility that the U.S. war on terror will open a new strategic conflict between great powers [Naya]. In addition, if Afghanistan remains unstable, the surrounding area as a whole will be destabilized, and transnational networks, including dealers in drugs and weapons, guerillas, terrorists and human traffickers, will expand and threaten global security [Naya]. Afghanistan will be a litmus test for the international community in correcting the response to troubled nations it adopted in the 1990s and preventing such nations from influencing their regions [Naya].

The second point is that the military action taken against Afghanistan in the name of the “war on terror” or “humanitarianism” has not
necessarily been accepted as a legitimate intervention by surrounding nations and the Islamic world [Katsumata]. The repressive aspect of the Taliban has been emphasized, but this ignores the historical possibility that the Taliban regime might in the future have integrated the society on the basis of a system of religious authority. As has been indicated, the collapse of the Taliban government has eliminated this possibility [Matsubara]. What was the situation of the Afghan people under the Taliban government? It is necessary to reconsider this question from specific perspectives, including that of Afghan women.

Third, the military operations have critically distorted the reconstruction and development process. Ethnic Tajiks from the Panjshir Valley, including Defense Minister Fahim who fought with U.S. forces, have achieved dominant influence in the Transitional Administration, which is therefore unable to function as a legitimate government. The provision of aid without a sufficient grasp of this unequal distribution of power has made the majority Pashtun people hostile to the Karzai administration [Tanaka & Endo]. The Bonn Agreement presupposed a fair and well-balanced process of reconstruction and development in which all citizens would participate, but this has not been realized in practice. A shared recognition of this fact is necessary in order to advance the provision of aid in the future.

Fourth, the provision of aid without recognition of the complexity of the situation in Afghanistan could worsen the situation, irrespective of the good will with which the aid is provided. The political systems functioning in European nations are not only diverse, but are the result of long histories and numerous vicissitudes. The unthinking imposition of a unified system of human rights and democracy on a troubled nation might therefore compound the problems [Naya]. The efficacy of research is necessarily limited, but attention should be directed towards establishing policies based on actual local conditions and rooted in local communities.

Fifth, it is not only the United States that provides support to warlords. Afghanistan has a long history as a site for the playing out of strategic schemes, and the United States, the U.K., Russia, and surrounding nations continue to provide support to Afghan warlords. In addition, battles over oil pipelines and hegemony in Central Asia are also developing [Endo]. Unless such power politics are considered, any aid provided will fail to produce benefits. Japan has kept a distance from power politics, and expectations are therefore high for the nation to play an effective role. Together with the recognition of Japan as a nation that achieved early success in modernization and economic growth, this represents a “hidden asset” of Japanese diplomacy. Japan should be aware of this [Naghizade].

The research project which will be discussed in outline in the next
section was instituted to clarify problems from the diverse perspectives of Afghan citizens and to offer policy proposals to Japan and the international community based on an understanding of the current situation, the historical background and the social structure of the country.

3. Reconstruction and Development – Current Status and Problems

(1) Proposals Concerning Support for the Reconstruction of Troubled Nations – From Humanitarian Assistance to Support for State Rebuilding

Since the end of the Cold War, economic globalization and the ease with which the US is able to use force in its position as the single global superpower have caused the number of troubled nations to increase. Such nations are unable to rebuild a functioning system, and the weakening of domestic governance prevents them from effectively administering their territories. It has become clear that it is extremely difficult to restore sound governance and rebuild states and mechanisms of public safety by either upholding the principle of noninterference in another country's internal affairs, or employing non-compulsive preventive diplomacy, post-war aid for reconstruction centering on humanitarian aid, or armed intervention by multinational forces. Change is therefore required in the approach adopted by the international community [Naya].

The provision of humanitarian aid cannot be expected to improve the situation. The traditional approach of the international community has been the provision of humanitarian aid based on the principle of noninterference in internal affairs. The current priorities are activities whose primary purpose is state rebuilding, that is, the rebuilding of mechanisms of public safety (national army, police) and the government system. This necessitates long-term involvement in internal affairs, including the restoration of governance and the restructuring of authority. This will prompt drastic changes in the approach which the international community has adopted towards troubled nations since the 1990s [Naya].

Afghanistan is a multiethnic nation located at a crucial transport juncture. The nation was drawn into conflict due to intervention by surrounding nations, and repeated civil wars have made rebuilding extremely difficult. Reconstruction and development must take into account a tripartite structure: 1) the local situation; 2) relations with surrounding nations in the region; and 3) international politics, including armed interventions against international terrorist organizations [Katsumata].

Pakistan’s reported involvement in the current resurgence of Taliban activities follows a traditional pattern in which Afghanistan's domestic situation has been rendered more complex by the interventions of other
nations. This makes it necessary to stabilize the surrounding nations to prevent them from interfering in Afghanistan, including their provision of support to warlords, and to promote consensus-building on a transnational crackdown on crime networks (agreement on border inspections and the establishment of procedures and a monitoring system) [Endo]. In December 2002, the Kabul Declaration on Good Neighborly Relations was signed. It will be necessary to hold conferences among neighboring nations on a regular basis [Katsumata, Naya, and Tanaka].

It will also be necessary to establish a fair and comprehensive international framework for the reconstruction of troubled nations in the future. For example, it is high time to set up a “Nation-Building Council” at the United Nations to establish principles for the nation-building process and to consider a system in which subcommittees which include representatives of surrounding nations are entrusted to implement reconstruction under the control of a special administrative official [Naya].

(2) The War on Terror and Afghan Citizens

Afghanistan has fallen into chaos because of the ease with which the United States is able to use military force. What situation have the Afghan people been placed in by military operations? Unless this question is asked, we cannot discuss Afghanistan after the September 11 terrorist attacks.

Air strikes on Afghanistan seemed to break Taliban control at one blow and to solve the associated problems [Tanaka]. However, neither leading members of Al-Qaeda, including Osama bin Laden, nor Taliban officials, including Mullah Omar, have been captured. Today’s reconstruction of Afghanistan is a task arising from the fact that the Taliban regime was ousted by external military intervention in a sovereign nation; the challenge is how to overcome this “original sin” [Katsumata].

The United States claims that its military operation against Afghanistan was launched to protect itself by preventing further acts of terrorism after the September 11 terrorist attacks. A “strong America” that independently identifies and attacks invisible enemies (terrorists) has instantaneously broken the multiple restraints on the use of force established by the international community. Grasping the situation in Afghanistan as precisely as possible and sharing information may be a means of bringing the U.S. back to the control of international law and preventing preemptive strikes and a series of preventive wars.

1 The United Nation Charter prohibits the use of military force, including preemptive strikes and preventive war. The only exception is the right of self defense stipulated by Article 51 of the UN Charter if “an armed attack occurs” and “until the Security Council has taken measures necessary to maintain international peace and security.” See
Another logic that was employed to legitimize the attack on Afghanistan was that it was impossible to neglect Taliban human rights abuses. By this logic, air strikes and other operations were launched on the basis of humanitarianism; however, they caused an outflow of refugees from mountainous areas and a large number of fatalities and injuries. It has been reported that by the eighth week after the commencement of air strikes 3,712 people had been killed, exceeding the number of deaths in the World Trade Center on September 11, and air strikes are continuing. Clearly, the violation of human rights by the Taliban administration was impermissible. However, the fact that the operations mounted to eliminate these abuses have further victimized the Afghan people demonstrates that there is no logical coexistence between air strikes and humanitarianism.

Such victims of air strikes are dismissed as “incidental victims” of smart bombs that should accurately pinpoint targets. However, it has been indicated that in the case of high-altitude air strikes used to ensure that aircraft are beyond the range of antiaircraft batteries, not even the most precise instruments can ensure that targeting is correct. Contrary to the image conjured up by the terms “smart bombs” and “precision strike,” mistakes are unavoidable and the rate of correct hits is not high. Cases of warlords cooperating with the U.S. providing false information or manipulating information to lead U.S. forces to bomb their enemies are increasing, and the number of victims among Afghan citizens is therefore also increasing.

Carpet-bombing was conducted over a large part of Afghanistan, and the cluster bombs used have also increased the number of casualties. A CBU87 cluster bomb releases 202 bomblets which cover an area two or three times the size of a soccer field. 5% of these are designed not to explode immediately, and represent a continuing threat. In addition, there is a strong probability that a large amount of depleted uranium shells were used in Afghanistan; remarkably high levels of radiation, 100-400 times as...
high as those recorded during the Gulf War, were recorded in a study conducted in the suburbs of Jelalabad [Nakamura]. A depleted uranium shell explodes into particles of less than 1.5 micron in diameter, and these can be inhaled into the lungs. There are therefore concerns that the use of these shells will cause long-term damage to health and the environment.\(^6\) 

(3) Proposals for State Rebuilding – Two Contradictory Approaches

The contradiction between the security strategies put into effect by U.S. forces and the international community’s reconstruction and development strategies has become apparent. U.S. forces have provided support to warlords in return for their assistance in military operations; however, the disarmament of warlords is the greatest challenge for the reconstruction and development process. In addition, U.S. strategy has ensured that the Northern Alliance is the major player in the state rebuilding process, and the majority Pashtun people have been further alienated by the clean-up operations being conducted against the Taliban. The Afghan people are caught between these contradictory approaches.

It is necessary to terminate military operations in Afghanistan immediately, and to transform the U.S. forces into a fair and neutral peacekeeping presence. The U.S. Department of Defense is responsible for the military operations in Afghanistan while the Department of State is supporting the state rebuilding, reconstruction and development process taking place under the Karzai administration. While the Defense Department continues clean-up operations against the Taliban, the State Department has conducted political negotiations aimed at bringing Taliban moderates into the Transitional Administration.\(^7\) In the United States, opinion is divided over this situation within the government and among the public. Given these circumstances, questions have been asked as to whether and by what means Japan can influence the U.S. government and how NGOs around the world might influence public opinion.

In today’s Afghanistan, both the central and local governments are strongly influenced by warlords. As long as this situation continues, it will be difficult to ensure the necessary freedom of debate and activity to provide a basis for state rebuilding. It will be necessary to pressure the United States and the surrounding nations to stop providing support to warlords and to create a situation in which all Afghan citizens are able to participate in the state rebuilding process. At the same time, it will be essential to

---


\(^7\) Sakai Tanaka, “Taliban no Fukkatsu (Revival of the Taliban),” 1 October 2003, [http://tanakanews.com/d1001afghanistan.html].
promote the restructuring of the Transitional Administration, including the Defense Ministry, in order to promote fair and neutral disarmament and rebuilding.

What should be prioritized at present is the provision of support directly linked to the rebuilding of the nation, such as ensuring public safety and restructuring the administration. It is desirable that the nation be rebuilt on the basis of systems and processes that are best suited to the local situation. In the current situation, in which the authority of the central government does not extend across the entire country, it is necessary to repeatedly hold discussions through traditional (Jirga and Shura) and new dialogue mechanisms until consensus has been reached among all participants, in order to build a national consensus and to establish a legitimate system of government. It will therefore be important to take into account the laws, rules, and systems that are actually functioning, including both formal and informal systems.

Regional deployment of international security forces and regional reconstruction teams has been discussed and partially implemented to ensure public safety in regional areas. An international presence is important, but given the history of conflict between Afghans and invading forces such as the British and the Soviets, what the people want most is the rebuilding of a national Afghan army which is not divided along ethnic or religious lines. Providing support for the rebuilding of a diverse, fair and neutral national army is the most important task in improving public safety in Afghanistan.

The establishment of a constitution, a political system, and an electoral system is more significant than the holding of an election for the future stability of Afghanistan. It is important to understand the impact of the current debates about a constitution on the future political process and to minimize any negative consequences which might ensue from the promulgation of the constitution. Moreover, if democracy based on majority rule is immediately introduced in a situation in which party politics remains immature, ethnic, religious and regional antagonisms are likely to be politicized, which will generate conflicts [Katsumata]. It is necessary to consider systems and processes from the perspectives of confidence building and conflict prevention.

(4) The Constitutional Loya Jirga and Islam

A Constitutional Loya Jirga has been held and presidential and parliamentary elections are scheduled to be held in October 2004 and April 2005 respectively under the authority of the Transitional Administration. Bargaining is continuing over the final form of the constitution and the
procedure for conducting the elections. In addition to warlords, fundamentalist Islamists have gained a stronger voice, which has limited the freedom of discussions. This has made it increasingly difficult to determine how Islam should be positioned in the constitution.

99% of Afghan people are Muslim. In such a situation, Islam is not only a belief, but also the norm and tradition that forms the foundation for political reconstruction. However, the people of Afghanistan have separated and established a balance between “everyday Islam” and “Islam as a source of law” [Tanaka]. Islamists have repeatedly stated their wish to make Afghanistan an Islamic state and base the constitution on Shariah law. On the other hand, many are concerned that the power of the Islamists will increase if Islam is written into the constitution. It is necessary to support a nation building process in which freedom of belief prevails and a moderate way of thinking based on everyday Islam is encouraged [Endo]. On the other hand, it is also necessary to correct the negative stereotyping and the easy application of the label of “fundamentalism” to Islam which has been observed in recent discussions in the U.S. and Europe [Iizasa].

Traditional social systems have survived in Afghanistan, predominantly in farming villages, but the nation also has a history of modernization efforts under the monarchy and the communist regime. As a result, Afghanistan is said to have three norms: the secular constitution established in 1964; Islamic law (Shariah); and common law (for example, Pashtunwali) [Endo]. The formulation of a constitution at this time will also represent a process of coordination of these traditional norms with current international law, including international human rights law. It is necessary that old and new laws and norms function in a multilayered and complementary manner.

Conflict also exists over judicial reform between the Justice Minister, who aspires to the establishment of secular law, and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, who wants to apply Shariah law to improve the legal system. Islamists and warlords have dominance over regional judicial mechanisms, which has impeded freedom of speech [Tanaka]. It is necessary to pay attention not only to the situation of the urban elite, but also to that of people in regional areas.

The Constitutional Loya Jirga and the election are the last chance to correct the inequities which have been introduced into the state rebuilding process to date. Lessons from the Emergency Loya Jirga must be employed.

---

to make the Constitutional Loya Jirga a forum for free discussion: the entry of warlords must be prohibited, weapons must be prohibited, intimidation and corruption must be eliminated, and entry must be denied to representatives of the Ministry for the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice (religious police) and parties concerned with the maintenance of public order and the gathering of intelligence [Tanaka]. In addition, to ensure the transparency of the constitution, it will be important to utilize the traditional authority of the Loya Jirga and to make a final decision by consensus. The international community should further enhance its role as a fair and neutral watchdog to ensure that freedom of speech prevails at the Constitutional Loya Jirga and that the constitution decided on is put into effect in a way that is regarded as legitimate by the majority of the Afghan people.

It is likely that the United States and the international community will use the election as a “ritual” marking their withdrawal from Afghanistan. However, the process leading from the Constitutional Loya Jirga to the election requires various preparations, and if a hasty election is held to enable withdrawal before sufficient preparations are made, conflicts are likely to ensue. It will be necessary to examine the option of postponing the election to enable it to fulfill its true function, the legitimation of a new administration by Afghan citizens themselves [Katsumata, etc.]. If the election is postponed, the reform of the Transitional Administration, including the Defense Ministry, should be carried out before it is held.

(5) Support for Women – Divergence between the International Community and the Local Community

Humanitarian intervention bases itself on a logic of assisting the weak, but is always out of touch with the “lived reality” of those who are actually suffering in the country or region in question. Such a divergence cannot be eliminated unless we consider the problem from the perspective of the type of relationships which exist in the country in question on the basis of the specific “lived reality” of local citizens9. In the case of Afghanistan, the Taliban chose women as the targets of oppression, and the cause of liberating women became one aspect of the logic of intervention [Nakamura]. However, what was the “lived reality” of Afghan women under the Taliban? It will be necessary to adopt policies that are based on the actual status of women in different classes by taking into consideration the historical background and social structure of Afghanistan, the difference between

female members of the elite who live in Kabul and women from ordinary families, and the reality that about 90% of Afghan women live in conservative farming villages.

It might be said that in the history of Afghanistan, a variety of policies concerning women have been adopted as political tools, as the most natural and cost-free methods of ensuring collective order and stability [Ito]. The situation has not changed today. Support for women could become a political tool to demonstrate internationally the change which has been effected in Afghanistan and the results of aid activities in the cheapest and most effective manner. We must therefore pay attention to ensure that Afghan women's voluntary activities will not be disrupted from the outside and will not be used politically.

First we must recognize that the present situation of Afghan women and the rules and order in which they are implicated vary widely depending on region and ethnicity, and whether the women live in a city or an agricultural village. The activities of Afghan women who are working towards autonomy are also highly diverse10. Support must be offered on the basis of a full recognition of such diversity, with no attempt to force values on Afghan women.

It is the outside, intervening parties that specify the problems of the local community, decides on the groups to receive aid and evaluates the results of aid. Therefore, because aid varies according to the logic employed by the agents of intervention, the support provided is inconsistent. There is a latent danger that support will be provided on the basis of political motivations [Nakamura]. Like other kinds of support, support for women should be provided jointly by local governments, international organizations, and NGOs. It is also necessary to provide support based on consensus after a sufficient amount of consultation with Afghan women. In part for that purpose, it will be important to establish a venue for dialogue between Afghan women and to help women from cities and farming villages to discuss the problems they face and find solutions.

Unless the providers of support understand the complexity and diversity of Afghan society there is a possibility that even women will become involved in conflicts between communities competing for aid from Europe and the United States [Nakamura]. To avoid this, the following points are

10 According to Yui Nakamura, activities are being conducted by groups influenced by Western feminists, including Afghans living abroad, groups espousing socialist or Maoist ideas (from a Western point of view, these three may be regarded as representing secular civil society), Islamic moderate women (who are attempting to interpret Islam from new perspectives) and the women's committees organized by warlords and religious fundamentalists.
important in every kind of support: (1) to take into account various factors, including region, ethnicity, social stratum, and age; (2) to understand women's issues in terms of the social relationship between men and women and to bring the situation of men and boys into focus; and (3) to establish conditions in which individuals are able to exercise their abilities irrespective of gender and both men and women are recipients of benefits [Ito]. Some adaptation is required when implementing projects. It is, for example, necessary to reconsider how to conduct projects when women, in accordance with the traditions of Islamic society, are obliged to be accompanied by close male relatives when they go out and to separate working spaces between men and women [Ito & Endo]. Above all, during the long-standing conflict the number of widows and households headed by women increased and these households became poorer [Ito]. This is a major issue, and must be urgently dealt with.

Approximately 90% of the Afghan population lives in agricultural villages, and many of the policies adopted by the Taliban are said to have been related to codes of conduct for women's daily lives in the agricultural community. For example, the burqa, which has been treated by the international community as a symbol of discrimination against women, is a traditional outdoor garment worn by Afghan women, and a symbol of Afghan culture [Endo]. The problem is that the Taliban administration forced all women to wear the burqa and that religious police imposed severe penalties on those who did not wear it as a warning to others. The religious police have made a comeback under the current Transitional Administration and are engaging in similar activities. However, the international community does not treat such abuses of human rights as a problem, but criticizes the traditional culture of Afghanistan as represented by the burqa. This is only one example of the gap in awareness between the international community and local women, and it is essential to give attention to this fact [Nakamura].

(6) Issues Related to Reconstruction and Development Aid: Towards Efficient Channels for Aid

More than 2 million refugees have returned to Afghanistan from Pakistan and Iran within a short period. In response, emergency aid is presently being provided to the nation. However, aid to Afghanistan must be provided on the basis of a long-term perspective to advance reconstruction and development in the future. A large proportion of the funds provided to Afghanistan over the past two years were emergency humanitarian aid [Tanaka]. Consequently, reconstruction and development has not progressed and the rebuilding of the nation has stagnated.

The delay in reconstruction has resulted in a decline in public safety and order. A number of international aid workers working for the
International Red Cross and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees have been killed by the Taliban. This has in turn caused further delays in the reconstruction and development process. In addition, newly recruited Taliban members are being sent from madrassa in Pakistan to promote jihad in Afghanistan. They have killed local government officials and policemen, disturbed the construction of roads, and have set fire to schools. Public safety and order is crucial to reconstruction and development. However, there will be a further decline in public safety and order if reconstruction and development efforts do not prove effective. Special emphasis must therefore be placed on promoting reconstruction and development in order to facilitate the rebuilding of the Afghan nation.

Afghan society is founded upon a complex network of kinship and community relationships, and funds sent as reconstruction and development aid tend to flow in accordance with patron-client relationships. Many Afghan citizens are unable to feel that they are actually benefiting from aid and are therefore irritated by and disappointed with the slow progress of reconstruction and development. Citizens who feel that they are not benefiting from aid often believe that their community or ethnic group is being discriminated against for political reasons. These suspicions are exacerbating distrust and confrontation between communities and ethnic groups. Under these circumstances, it is important to establish restraints on patron-client relationships and narrow the disparity between regions.

The actual status of aid in the post-9.11 international community is difficult to analyze, and this section relies on the previously-cited report written by Professor Barnet Rubin, et al. This report indicates, on the basis of statistics presented in the CARE Report (published in October 2002), among others, that the greater percentage of funds provided by the international community to Afghanistan has been spent in confronting Al-Qaeda and the Taliban, namely for the “war on terror.” Among the funds used for other purposes, 9% was used for humanitarian assistance, 4% for the International Security Assistance Force and only 3% for reconstruction and development. In addition, although the International Conference on Reconstruction Assistance to Afghanistan held on January 2002 in Tokyo declared that 5.2 billion dollars would be spent for reconstruction and development, the actual amount donated to Afghanistan was 2.1 billion dollars (as of May 15, 2003). Furthermore, these funds were contributed in the main through international organizations and international NGOs and

---

spent for purposes such as needs assessments before the commencement of new projects, and for office management (personnel expenses, etc.) and the purchase of expensive vehicles. Afghan citizens are presently asking how international organizations and NGOs might best provide aid [Tanaka].

The amount of aid provided to Afghanistan is extremely limited in comparison to that provided to Kosovo and East Timor. According to materials provided by the Afghan Assistance Coordination Authority (AACA), the funds received by the Afghan government as aid constituted a mere 11% of the total amount of funds coordinated by the United Nations as humanitarian and reconstruction aid [Tanaka]. The establishment of a monitoring system which will contribute to improving transparency is essential to enhancing the administrative capacity of the Afghan government. However, increasing the amount of aid sent through the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) is equally important. In addition, it is also necessary to give consideration to increasing the influence of the Afghan government by increasing the amount of aid provided [Endo].

The process of rebuilding the nation represents a process of political reform; if drastic economic reforms are set in place during this process, it is likely to aggravate confrontations. In particular, a drastic reduction in the number of government officials and military and police personnel would cause conflict over employment and might lead to a decline in public safety and order. If it is absolutely necessary to reduce the number of personnel, these reductions must be postponed until political reforms are settled or be compensated by the provision of a retirement allowance. Measures must be taken in order to prevent confrontations from becoming serious.

The financial situation of the central government limits its effective authority to Kabul; local governments are under the control of warlords. This situation makes it difficult for the central and local governments to adopt consistent policies for reconstruction and development. In a number of regions, local government is under the joint control of a governor appointed by the central government and local warlords. The improvement of the system of administration is therefore essential to the progress of reconstruction and development. This is another reason that warlords must be removed from their position of dominance [Endo].

(7) Issues Related to Reconstruction and Development: Agricultural Support as a Policy for Ensuring Stable Employment

Humanitarian aid, including the provision of food, education, health

---

13 See Ibid., p.12, etc.
14 Although the statistical data may differ slightly depending on the source, month and year; the proportion is only 16% even in the material provided by Rubin.
and sanitation, is a priority issue for Afghanistan, given the nation's large refugee population. Some of these are returning from neighboring nations and others have become refugees due to a three-year drought. Although humanitarian aid remains essential, Afghanistan must endeavor to become independent on the basis of the rehabilitation of its agriculture and the development of interdependent relationships between its regional communities. At the same time, the emphasis of aid efforts must be shifted to reconstruction and development to ensure steady progress towards the rebuilding of the nation. What is now required is the “seamless transition from humanitarian aid to reconstruction and development,” advocated by Ms. Sadako Ogata, the former UN High Commissioner for Refugees and President of JICA. The rehabilitation of agriculture, in which 90% of Afghan citizens are involved, and the establishment of infrastructure will contribute to ensuring increased employment opportunities. It is hoped that this will in turn indirectly influence warlords, leading them towards disarmament [Naghizadeh, Endo].

Given that the guarantee of employment opportunities is the priority issue for Afghan citizens, the main focus of support efforts should be promptly shifted from humanitarian projects to reconstruction and development. The construction of infrastructure such as roads, bridges and irrigation systems is essential to ensuring employment opportunities. The rehabilitation of agriculture is also important in terms of ensuring employment opportunities and income. In particular, increased food self-sufficiency is one of the most urgent problems. At the same time, increasing farm output should be emphasized. The construction of roads will not only facilitate the transportation of surplus farm products and cash crops, such as grapes and melons, but will contribute to narrowing the disparity between urban and rural areas and between regions [Endo].

The rehabilitation of agriculture must be advanced in accordance with the characteristic patterns of production of each region. However, Afghanistan does not possess accurate statistics concerning its regions, and basic surveys must therefore be conducted immediately. In addition to agriculture and stock-raising, detailed surveys must be conducted on small-scale industries, such as carpet weaving and folk handicrafts [Katsumata].

Research essential to the rehabilitation of agriculture and stock-raising, such as research on breed enhancement and fertilizers, must be conducted under the initiative of the national agricultural research stations and the relevant departments of Kabul University.

With the return of refugees, the ownership of land has become a source of disputes nationwide. The issue is complicated because of the
existence of a variety of criteria, including common law, religious law (Shariah) and civil law. The newly established Special Court is as yet unable to function effectively. A land ownership law capable of application nationwide must be established in the future. It is important, however, that traditional consultative frameworks for the resolution of disputes, such as jirga and shura at the village level, in addition to common law, be fully reflected in the new legal framework [Naghizadeh].

Food self-sufficiency and stable employment opportunities in rural areas will contribute to peace and order in the villages and will make communities more stable. The traditional self-supporting efforts of the Afghan people that have ensured self-sufficiency - for example, the management of irrigation facilities and water ways by "water managers" - should be made use of in achieving these goals. Aid should be provided to supplement the funds necessary for restarting businesses. In order to revive rural villages, it will be essential to rebuild the communities in which returned refugees are residing. This will be facilitated by giving impetus to activities being conducted by organizations established by the communities themselves. Possibilities for establishing new agricultural cooperative associations based on traditional consensus-building systems such as jirga and shura [Matsubara, Ito and Naghizadeh] and community centers in which citizens participate [Kuwana and Tanaka] should be explored.

Aid in the form of job training and support for small-scale industries (poultry farming and folk handicrafts, etc.) based on micro-credit will prove effective in improving the situation of returning refugees and farmers who do not own land. Afghan citizens in their 30s and below, both male and female, have lived with war throughout their lives. Given this, it will be important to provide young people with opportunities for education and training to ensure their ability to secure employment. At the same time, educational programs that can help young citizens achieve a transition from values applicable in war to those on which peace can be founded must be provided.

Afghanistan must not tolerate illegal economic activities such as the cultivation of poppies for the production of drugs. These aspects of the informal war economy have supported the warlords, and the nation must put an end to these activities immediately [Katsumata]. Afghanistan has become the major producer of drugs in the world, said to have supplied 76% of world’s heroin demand in 200215. Although part of this profit flows to the warlords, a large proportion is said to flow into the hands of American and European brokers functioning in international drug cartels and networks.

15 Peshawar-kai Jimukyoku, etc., “Genchi no Hodo kara (From the Local News), 31 August 2003 (1),” [http://www1m.mesh.ne.jp/~peshawar/gh.html#un03].
However, drugs are not merely a problem for the nations in which they are produced, but for the nations in which they are consumed. Efforts to rehabilitate agriculture will not only contribute to rescuing industries, but will also contribute to breaking Afghanistan’s dependence on the cultivation of poppies for the production of drugs.

(8) From Emergency and Humanitarian Aid to Reconstruction and Development Aid: The Perspective of the NGOs

One-third of Afghanistan’s population is said to have become refugees and one-tenth to have been killed as a result of two decades of war. The fact that NGOs have often overlooked the seriousness of this situation raises a number of questions: Did NGOs respond in situations in which their involvement was absolutely necessary? Were they really free from political influences, during the Cold War for example? [Ohashi] This section will discuss the involvement of NGOs in the provision of aid on the basis of an analysis of the negative effects of long-term emergency aid.

A huge number of refugees have returned to Afghanistan within a short period, requiring the rapid provision of large-scale emergency humanitarian aid. Without the support of NGOs, international organizations would have been unable to conduct their aid activities effectively. This situation has seen international organizations contracting international NGOs and international NGOs subcontracting local NGOs. While an increase in the amount of aid provided directly to local NGOs is desirable, the organizations need to be carefully examined from the standpoint of neutrality. Some NGOs are playing the role of agents representing specific ethnic groups, warlords or political groups [Ohashi]. The first step in confirming the neutrality of local NGOs will be to take part in small projects. Efforts must be made through these projects to find local partners who are trustworthy and to enhance relationships. It is also important for Japan to clearly recognize the basic difference of principle between ODA and NGOs, or NGOs will remain low-cost subcontractors [Ohashi].

Competition between aid organizations is preventing aid activities from progressing as slowly as they need to in order to appropriately respond to the actual circumstances facing Afghan citizens while enabling citizens to gain a deeper understanding of the nature of reconstruction and development efforts and progress with their own efforts to achieve self-sufficiency. NGOs are presently facing difficulties in obtaining the funds necessary for their activities because of “aid fatigue.” It is time for Japan to establish a social environment in which NGOs will be provided with a sufficient supply of funds and their uniqueness will be recognized [Ohashi].
When a large amount of international aid funds flow into a nation, the domestic economy often becomes disordered because of the resulting “aid prosperity.” The cost of renting accommodation, of hiring English-speaking personnel and of other factors necessary to the provision of aid are likely to soar. Consequently, the disparity between the rich and poor will widen and funds sent as aid will be used ineffectively. It is necessary to reduce the inflow of funds as much as possible in order to protect the local community and prevent the economy from falling into chaos [Ohashi].

If food donation continues for an extended period, local citizens will grow dependent on aid. The community’s mutual support systems are prevented from operating effectively. If the provision of a large amount of aid results in a surplus, the price of crops will drop in the country. This will only hinder the progress of the rehabilitation of agriculture. In many of Afghanistan’s regions, it is time to shift from humanitarian aid to reconstruction and development aid. In these areas, it will be necessary to slow down ongoing aid activities and make the transition to reconstruction and development with the participation of local residents [Ohashi].

A large amount of international aid means that a large amount of funds and goods flow into a nation through a route which is independent of the market mechanism or government system. This increases the possibility of corruption. There may even be cases in which the traditional systems of the community become corrupt and lose the trust of citizens, leading the nation towards instability. A reliable system of management must be established.

NGOs which conduct their activities under the protection of foreign military forces and local armed forces can be misunderstood as being involved in the activities of the armed forces, and therefore may become the target of attacks. In order to prevent this, NGOs must demonstrate the clear distinction between themselves and the military forces. In Afghanistan, teams made up of both military personnel and civilians from the U.S., U.K and other nations are providing humanitarian aid in regional cities. The military and aid groups should be divided as a matter of principle to prevent any possible misunderstandings concerning the activities in which they are involved. The military should not be involved in any activities that may be understood as aid activities [Ohashi].

The Japanese government has provided emergency aid in accordance with the Japan Platform. However, Japanese NGOs did not have extensive experience in emergency aid and were not familiar with Afghanistan’s society or culture. It is time for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Japanese NGOs to make joint efforts in order to increase their level of experience in the provision of aid [Ohashi].
4. What Japan is Able to Do Immediately and What the Nation Should not Do

(1) Can Japan Become Afghanistan’s “Guest”?

Afghanistan is an extremely pro-Japanese nation. However in response to the U.S. attack on Iraq and the nation’s declaration of support for the U.S., Afghan citizens have grown suspicious of Japan. There is fear that Al Qaeda or the Taliban may stage an attack in Japan. When the U.S. commenced bombing Iraq, Afghan protestors burned the Japanese flag. A foreign policy which is founded upon that of the U.S. will not prove effective in Afghanistan, nor will it advance Japan’s national interest.

Japanese diplomacy to date has been characterized by its deliberately ambiguous nature: while maintaining a friendly relationship with the U.S., Japan also displays understanding towards the positions of Asian and developing nations. This characteristic has often been criticized. However, if the perception that Japan is a follower of the U.S. becomes dominant in West Asia and the Middle East, it will hinder the nation from pursuing diplomacy in these areas. The military power of the U.S. is important as a deterrent against terrorist attacks. However, the war against terrorism is presently deadlocked. In this situation, it is important for Japan to make full use of its own diplomatic capacity by becoming a mediator contributing to shifting the emphasis to state reconstruction and development in Afghanistan.

There is growing concern among American citizens concerning U.S. foreign policy in West Asia, which is seen as having become bogged down. The role Japan should play as a true ally of the U.S. is to make it recognize even the smallest movement towards demand for a change in foreign policy in West Asia, and to pull the nation back to the arena of international cooperation.

Afghanistan’s history shows that it has fought firmly against any military intervention. At the same time, the nation has traditionally assured the safety of foreign visitors and welcomed their visits. Therefore, it is important for Japan to enter Afghan society as a guest who respects Afghan culture and customs rather than entering the nation as an intruder or enemy.

In order to achieve this, Japan’s activities must be approved not only by the central and local governments, but also by the communities in which the activities will actually be conducted. It is Afghan tradition that local
communities will ensure the safety of their guests once they have accepted them. If these procedures are observed, Japanese aid workers will be able to advance their reconstruction and development activities safely in Afghanistan’s communities. It will be essential to construct solid relationships with the central and local governments, local NGOs, local communities and leaders on the basis of a sufficient understanding of Afghan social frameworks.

(2) The “New Great Game” and Afghanistan – What Japan Must not Do

From the nineteenth century to the early twentieth century, the U.K. and Russia engaged in a competition for control over Afghanistan referred to as the “Great Game.” Since then and to date, other “great games” have been played in Afghanistan due to the intervention of major powers and neighboring nations. The Cold War is over, but a new great game is being played for control of Central Asia’s petroleum reserves [Endo]. The Afghan people resent foreign intervention and resist foreign military forces. Resistance was offered by guerrillas throughout the nation during the Soviet invasion. Similarly today the Taliban is attempting to oust the U.S. and its allies, and other groups are emerging to join the struggle. The fierce independence that characterizes the Afghan people makes military intervention the worst approach to take [Naghizadeh].

The International Security Assistance Force and the regional reconstruction teams have to date been deployed in only a limited number of areas to help to maintain peace and public safety. Although the presence of the international community will be important in the national elections scheduled for this October and next April, the greatest desire of Afghan citizens is for Afghans to maintain peace and public safety, and the Afghan national military forces are therefore being reformed. The former Afghan army was made up of soldiers from all ethnic groups and religions. One of the functions of the army was the inculcation during the education and training of the soldiers that they were a single people, despite ethnic differences16. However, the new national military is influenced by Defense Minister General Faheem, and is not recognized by Afghans as a neutral force. The prompt reform of the Defense Ministry and the disarmament of the warlords are crucial to the construction of a new military which is well-balanced in terms of ethnicity and religion. The establishment of a neutral military is important not only from the perspective of nation building, but also to the establishment of a foundation that will allow the nation to concentrate on reconstruction efforts without becoming involved in any new

---

“great games” [Endo].

(3) DDR (Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration of Ex-Combatants) and Political Negotiations

DDR (disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants) is the joint responsibility of the UN and Japan. The strongest demand of Afghan citizens at present is the elimination of warlords. This includes the termination of the support provided to warlords by the U.S. and neighboring nations. The implementation of this goal will require sophisticated political action. Negotiations must be conducted involving the U.S., the U.K. and Russia, Afghanistan’s neighboring nations, Minister of Defense General Faheem and warlords. Japan should play a central role in these negotiations [Endo].

When a large amount of funds moves, for example, when the cultivation of poppies is stopped and/or disarmament takes place, special caution is necessary to confirm whether warlords are not involved, maneuvering secretly to create new business opportunities. For example, the compensation funds paid to farmers who have burned their poppy fields can be utilized as funds to cultivate more poppies. Disarmament efforts are said to have provided an opportunity for selling old armaments and buying new ones. Special attention must be paid to the financial activities of warlords and appropriate action must be taken in order to prevent them getting around controls.

Warlords have independently disarmed rival warlords, and this has resulted in armed conflicts. It is important to carefully monitor warlords in order to prevent the inflow of external funds and equipment. At the same time, it is equally important to make voluntary, rather than compulsory, disarmament beneficial for the warlords. Given this, it is important for Japan to adopt an integrated strategy concerning all activities related to the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan [Rashid]. Voluntary disarmament should be the precondition for any citizen, including warlords, to stand for membership of cabinet or congress, or to become a staff member of an ODA project or an NGO. With this as the precondition, Japan should implement its aid policies on the basis of the “five ODA principles.” Job training must be provided on condition of disarmament, and programs must be conducted to rehabilitate rural areas (construction of irrigation facilities, provision of seeds and fertilizers, poultry farming projects, etc.). In addition, employment opportunities should be provided through the construction of roads and schools.

17 Peshawar-kai J imukyoku etc., “Genchi no Hodo kara (From the Local News), 31 August 2003 (1), /bid.
It is equally important to eliminate major sources of funding of warlords such as transit taxes and poppy cultivation. Aid must be provided to construct custom offices at the national borders and to train and support custom officers to prevent warlords from collecting illegal transit taxes [Endo]. It is important that these systems are introduced with consideration of existing Afghan systems rather than forcing Afghans to adapt themselves to international standards. Efforts to rehabilitate agriculture will be most effective in eliminating the cultivation of poppies. The responsibilities of the country cultivating the poppies as well as those in which the drugs are used and through which they are transported must be clarified. We propose that international conferences be held to examine comprehensive policies to respond to this issue.

It has long been argued that disarmament is crucial to establishing the requisite environment for an election. It does not require reiteration that the disarmament of warlords under the command of General Faheem is essential to the advancement of the disarmament process [Endo].

(4) Support for Reconstruction and Development in the Context of Power Politics

Japan and the U.S. are jointly undertaking the repair and reconstruction of the roads that connect Kandahar and Kabul. Although the roads were quickly asphalted in advance of the Constitutional Loya Jirga, the remaining work faces difficulties due to the decline of public order. House searches conducted by U.S. forces and allied warlords in Pashtun areas in an attempt to capture Taliban have exacerbated ill-feeling among the Pashtun, who are discontented with the U.S. and the Transitional Administration. This also gave an impetus to the revival and reorganization of the Taliban. Staff members of international organizations and NGO have been killed and projects for the reconstruction of roads and schools have been hindered. How should Japan proceed, given the severe conditions in which reconstruction and development activities must be conducted?

In addition to the Taliban, who are hindering the reconstruction of roads and schools in Pashtun areas, youths are continually being sent to Afghanistan from madrassas in Pakistan. Some of these young people are involved in activities under the banner of jihad, but others have been offered relatively small sums of money to take up weapons\textsuperscript{18}. The policies to be

\textsuperscript{18} See His Excellency Hamid Karzai, “Address to the Council of Ulema of Afghanistan,” 12 September 2003, in which President Karzai indicates that acts of destruction have been committed in the name of jihad, and that some insurgents have taken up arms for rewards of only 55 dollars.
adopted in response must be established based on the power politics functioning in Afghan society. It will be important to establish the necessary conditions to prevent the Pakistani groups supporting the Taliban and the young people sent in from other nations to Afghanistan as Taliban members from attacking workers involved in the construction of roads. For example, road construction could be contracted to Pakistani construction companies in the hope that young people sent from Pakistan would be employed by these companies. However, given the revival of the debate over the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, this may not be a practical proposal [Rashid]. The participation of Afghan companies in the reconstruction process will offer opportunities for training. This may contribute to promoting their growth into companies able to independently undertake future construction projects.

(5) Opportunities for Fostering Personnel and Enhancing Mutual Exchange

The main pillars of Japan’s proposals at the Tokyo Conference on Reconstruction Assistance to Afghanistan, held in January 2001, were the fostering of personnel and the provision of support for the peace building process and reconciliation among citizens. In this study group there was also a common understanding concerning the necessity of establishing forums for discussion. Forums in which Afghan citizens are able to express their ideas freely are crucial to fostering personnel who will play important roles in education and other fields in the future. Afghan citizens want long-term aid which will contribute to rehabilitating agriculture, creating employment opportunities and improving education rather than aid provided for short-term objectives. Japan can contribute through the creation of employment opportunities and technology transfers, which can be facilitated by ODA projects and NGO activities.

Aid for fostering personnel must be provided through various channels, because such personnel must be able to support the state reconstruction process from the foundation. Specifically, Afghan citizens should be provided with opportunities to study or be trained abroad. It will also be important to establish a system to support citizens who have studied or been trained abroad when they return to Afghanistan and begin work [Ito].

The Karzai Transitional Administration is said to be unrepresentative of Afghanistan’s ethnic diversity because its members are mainly Tajik. Criticisms have been made that the same lack of representativeness can be observed in the list of Afghans who have been invited to Japan. Exchanges should be conducted involving a broader range of Afghan citizens.
The study group proposes the establishment of a “personnel bank” which would register Afghan citizens who have studied or been trained abroad. It will be important to conduct follow-ups with respect to Afghan citizens who have received training in Japan, for example by sending e-mails or periodic publications, etc., and to enable them to build connections with Japanese aid workers and researchers.

The study group also proposes the establishment of a center in Kabul to serve as a forum for dialogue between Afghan citizens and to act as a base for Japan’s aid activities. A permanent forum for discussion of various issues related to the rebuilding of the nation would have the effect of revitalizing debate. The center would be open to a variety of people including Afghan citizens who have studied abroad, members of parliament, government officials, NGO members, researchers and ordinary citizens regardless of ethnicity, religion, political affiliation or occupation, with the aim of facilitating open discussions [Matsubara].

Furthermore, as a base for Japanese aid activities, specialists and other personnel from Japan should also be present in the center in relatively large numbers, enabling it to serve as a site for the fostering of personnel and the promotion of mutual understanding through the actual implementation of aid projects. Language lessons and training to help deepen understanding of Afghan society should be given in the center. The center should be capable of conducting surveys and evaluations, formulating proposals and implementing projects beyond the limitations of demand-driven assistance [Ohashi].

A center which fulfills a variety of objectives would enable exchange and cooperation between Afghan citizens who have studied in Japan and Japanese who have received training in Afghanistan. In order to effect dramatic changes in Afghanistan in the future, it will be important to establish similar programs in regional areas. A program to establish “Women’s Offices” in 19 of Afghanistan’s 29 provinces is underway under the initiative of the Ministry of Women’s Affairs. These offices will offer literacy education and provide vocational training to women in regional areas. The center would be able to perform an important function in providing support to such regional activities.

(6) Proposals concerning Japan’s Aid System

The revision of Japan’s aid system is a precondition for involvement in aid activities which promote exchange.

JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) has strict safety standards and therefore will not dispatch personnel to dangerous areas.
However, given the increasing number of troubled nations, it is difficult to avoid implementing programs in dangerous areas. It is therefore time to conduct broad-based discussions on JICA’s preconditions and to reach a new consensus. As pointed out by Sadako Ogata, the former UN High Commissioner for Refugees and President of JICA, it has become necessary to review existing safety standards. At the same time, legal regulations must be established concerning the system to support JICA employees who are involved in aid programs in dangerous areas, and issues such as government compensation for JICA employees must also be examined urgently [Katsumata].

NGOs are also operating in dangerous areas. Information on risk management, training for crisis response, and support for the funding of insurance plans are among the issues that need to be discussed.

Activities to improve the status of women in Afghan society are often accompanied by threats and other risks and may even be life-threatening. In the case that safety, the precondition of aid activities, cannot be guaranteed, the person or persons under threat must be promptly accepted as a refugee or refugees. Japan must make preparations to ensure its ability to respond to this requirement [Ito].

The detention of individuals seeking refugee status violates the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. After 9.11, the issue of detention was tabled in Japan, and, as a result, the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act was revised to enable detention of those applying for refugee status. There are cases in which refugees who have been officially approved by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees have not been approved by Japan [Iizasa]. While on the one hand Japan is a strong advocate of support for Afghanistan in the international community, the nation has not adopted an appropriate policy with respect to refugees. The international community is confused over this contradictory attitude. Japan must urgently review its official position and adopt improved measures for the approval and acceptance of refugees.

Afghanistan’s continuing state of war made it impossible for researchers to enter the nation. It is Afghans who know best about their nation. In order to provide aid based on Afghan perspectives, Japan should work in cooperation with Afghan citizens residing in Japan, while recognizing that diversity and differing standpoints must be taken into account. A forum must be established in which Afghan citizens residing in Japan, NGOs that have conducted aid activities in Afghanistan, representatives of government and researchers are able to exchange

Basic data concerning Afghanistan must be collected to support the rebuilding of the nation. In addition, on-site surveys and studies of the nation’s social structure and culture are also crucial. Continuous, long-term research on Afghan society conducted from a long-term perspective in cooperation with Afghan researchers and local NGOs will be of tremendous importance in increasing the effectiveness of rebuilding and development projects in the nation.

(7) From Aid to Partnership for Economic Development

Japan seeks a stable supply of oil from West Asia and the Middle East. However, citizens of these regions want Japan to conduct investment in addition to purchasing oil [Naghizadeh]. In a manner similar to Southeast Asia, where Japan has supported development, West Asia is seeking development through comprehensive economic exchange based on investment rather than aid. The good opinion and high expectations which Afghan citizens have of Japan is a “hidden asset” of which the Japanese are unaware [Naghizadeh and Koike].

Afghanistan’s history has seen repeated intervention and abandonment by major powers, followed by internal conflicts. This time, however, Afghanistan must not be abandoned. Given that it has supported Afghanistan without military intervention, Japan is able to play a role commensurate with its “hidden asset.” Japan must be aware of the asset it possesses, and should endeavor not to betray the expectations of the Afghan people.
**Postscript**

The Afghanistan Donor conference in Berlin concluded on April 1, 2004, reconfirming the commitment of the international community to continuing its support for Afghanistan's reconstruction with an aid package totaling US$8.2 billion over the next three years. With Afghanistan preparing to hold a presidential election this October and a parliamentary election next April, the country is entering a crucial stage. Instead of viewing the elections as a convenient excuse for withdrawal, this is the time for the international community to adopt a medium- to long-term strategy based on the reality that instability in the country will continue for some time after the election. The international community must not allow Afghanistan, which has been forsaken every time major powers have involved themselves in its affairs, to become mired in chaos yet again.
The National Institute for Research Advancement (NIRA) is an independent policy research body established on the initiative of leading figures from Japan's industrial, academic and labor communities. The Institute was founded in 1974 under the National Institute for Research Advancement Act and is funded through an endowment made up of capital contributions and donations from both the public and private sectors.

NIRA's primary objective is to conduct independent research of the highest excellence which will contribute to the resolution of various complex issues facing contemporary society. The Institute's research focuses on current and emerging issues in many areas, including politics, economics, international affairs, society, new technologies, and administration.

NIRA conducts research both independently and in association with other organizations and provides support for the research activities of other organizations where these complement its own research interests. Research exchanges and the broad dissemination of research findings are other key areas of NIRA's work.