

# Afghanistan Review

Week 14

03 April 2012

Comprehensive Information on Complex Crises



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Economic Development

Governance &amp; Rule of Law

Security &amp; Force Protection

Social &amp; Strategic Infrastructure

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## CONTACT THE CFC

For further information, contact:

Afghanistan Team Leader  
[steve.zyck@cmicweb.org](mailto:steve.zyck@cmicweb.org)

The Afghanistan Team  
[afghanistan@cmicweb.org](mailto:afghanistan@cmicweb.org)

This document provides a weekly overview of developments in Afghanistan from 27 March – 02 April 2012, with hyper-links to source material highlighted in blue and underlined in the text. For more information on the topics below or other issues pertaining to events in Afghanistan, contact the members of the Afghanistan Team, or visit our website at [www.cmicweb.org](http://www.cmicweb.org).

## Economic Development

Steven A. Zyck ► [steve.zyck@cmicweb.org](mailto:steve.zyck@cmicweb.org)

Concerned about future security in Afghanistan, investment into the country is drying up, and some existing [businesses are planning to withdraw](#), says *The New York Times*. The businesses involved range from large multinational companies to mid-sized local firms. On 28 March, Standard Chartered, the only major international bank in Afghanistan, announced that it would be handing over its operations to a local bank and would withdraw from the country. Likewise, one of the country's four mobile phone companies, which is based outside of Afghanistan, announced that it would not be investing further in Afghanistan. Speaking on the departure of businesses and businesspeople from the country, President Hamid Karzai had the following to say: "Sometimes I hear that some businessmen are fleeing and moving their businesses to outside Afghanistan. Curses be upon such businessmen that made tons of money here and now that the Americans are leaving they flee. They can leave right now. We don't need them." However, some investment continues to trickle into the country, including the building of a Pepsi bottling plant, plans for which were announced a year ago.

US *National Public Radio (NPR)* [chronicles the delays](#) which have prevented large-scale mining from beginning in Afghanistan over the course of the past four decades. A Chinese state-owned firm won the rights to the Aynak copper mine in [Logar](#) province four years ago but has yet to move forward either with mining or with the construction of a railway which is needed to export the copper ore. While officials from Afghanistan's Ministry of Mines (MoM) indicate that China is contractually obligated to build the railway by 2014, work has not started on the massive construction project. In addition, experts indicate that the Chinese view parts of its agreement with the Afghan government as being "flexible" and may not ultimately meet its past commitments. Haseeb Humayoon, an Afghan mining sector specialist, tells *NPR* that it will likely be at least 10 to 15 years until the Aynak copper mine and other large-scale mining ventures in the country begin yielding significant financial benefits for Afghans and the Afghan government. Confirming the delays, Jiangxi Copper Co Ltd, a Chinese company with a minority stake in Afghanistan's Aynak copper mine, tells *Reuters* that its [operations in Afghanistan will be delayed](#) until at least 2014 or 2016. Jiangxi cites the discovery of an ancient Buddhist monastery at the site of the mine as the primary cause of the delay.

In regional economic news, *The Christian Science Monitor* reports that India is attempting to [bolster its relations with Iran](#), despite international sanctions against Tehran, in order to enable it to export goods to Central Asia and Europe without passing through Pakistan. Experts note that Iran could be important in benefiting not only the Indian economy but also in fostering sustainable growth in Afghanistan. Afghan products and, especially, its mineral resources could potentially be exported more easily via Iran than via other neighbouring countries. However, international sanctions against Iran could reportedly result in complications. While noting that a wide range of factors undermine economic

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growth in Afghanistan, Ellen Laipson of The Stimson Center in Washington, DC notes that “[t]he sanctions towards Iran are a complicating factor in the economic strategy towards Afghanistan.”

[Trade relations with Pakistan](#) are facing challenges, according to an article published on 30 March by *The Express Tribune*. Afghan vegetable importers reportedly owe up to PKR 2 billion (USD 22.1 million) to Pakistani agents at markets in Peshawar. The agents, who arrange the sale of Pakistani produce to Afghan businesses, reportedly provide the vegetables to Afghan importers on credit and accept relatively lenient payment terms. Afghans most commonly pay for the vegetables in instalments. However, Afghan vegetable importers have been increasingly defaulting on their payments. Pakistani traders are now attempting to work together to resolve the issue, which they had previously raised with the Afghan ambassador to Pakistan.

Regional trade complications and opportunities were the focus of last week’s Fifth Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan (RECCA V). President Hamid Karzai called for the establishment of a “[visa-free regime](#)” to foster economic integration at the event, according to *Pakistan Observer*. Such a regime would allow traders to move within the Central and South Asian regions without necessarily requiring them to re-apply for visas for every country along their route. Iran used the RECCA V conference to emphasise its [record of economic cooperation](#) with Afghanistan. Azerbaijani news agency *Trend* cites Iranian officials as stating that 27.6% of Afghan imports come from Iran.

In agricultural news, Afghanistan’s Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock will distribute [65,000 kg of saffron plants](#) to Afghan farmers in order to increase the popularity of the crop, according to *Tolo News*. Each farmer benefiting from the saffron distribution programme will receive 400 kg of saffron plants in addition to tools to cultivate saffron, fertiliser, insecticides and fungicides. In addition, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) reports on the results of a [five-month irrigation programme](#) which ended in late 2011. The programme, in the Mehterlam district of [Laghman](#) province, improved the productivity of 21,000 acres of land. Farmers in affected areas are now reportedly able to earn greater sums of money from small plots of land, and property values in the area have risen significantly.

USAID was the subject of another article this past week. *Pajhwok Afghan News* reports [that a USAID-funded “pack house”](#) in [Nangarhar](#) province is being transferred to Tak Dana, a private Afghan company, in order to ensure its sustainability. The pack house is used for grading, sorting and packing agricultural produce from Nangarhar, Laghman, [Kunar](#) and [Nuristan](#) provinces. The facility also provides cold storage to ensure that Afghan produce does not spoil while waiting to be exported to Pakistan or beyond. Experts have been calling for such facilities

Lastly, *Pajhwok* reports that the rising [availability of gas](#) via the Hairatan port in northern Afghanistan has led the price of liquefied petrol gas (LPG) to drop sharply over the course of this past week. LPG dropped from AFN 70 per kg to AFN 60 per kg, though the price of diesel remained unchanged at AFN 64 per litre. Food prices also remained stable.

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## Governance & Rule of Law

Stefanie Nijssen ► [stefanie.nijssen@cimicweb.org](mailto:stefanie.nijssen@cimicweb.org)

Officials tell *Reuters*, that the US government will consider [accepting less-stringent controls](#) on former Taliban leaders if they are transferred to Qatar as a result of on-going peace talks with the Taliban. The US government has indicated that it would be willing to agree to the transfer of five Taliban detainees to Qatar as long as authorities there could provide assurances that the men would not be allowed to leave the country. Tighter restrictions such as imprisonment, house arrest or continuous monitoring by security forces had previously been proposed by US officials but were reportedly rejected by the Qatari government. While discussions regarding the detainee transfer have moved forward, it is not clear when or whether the detainees will be moved to Qatar. Under US law, the American government must provide US legislators a formal notification 30 days in advance of any detainee transfers. Thus far, no such notification has been given.

According to *Tolo News*, Afghan Foreign Minister Zalmay Rassoul met with the Qatari authorities on 02 April [to discuss reconciliation](#) with the Taliban. This marks the first time that a senior Afghan government official is paying a visit to Qatar since the Taliban agreed to open an office there. In related news, the insurgent group Hezb-e Islami has moved to [suspend talks](#) with the US and Afghan governments, *The Washington Post* reports. Hezb-e Islami’s European representative, Qaribur Rahman Saeed, said the group was abandoning talks because they had produced nothing “practical”. Meanwhile, former Senate chairman Sibghatullah Mujaddedi [resigned all his government positions](#) after President Hamid Karzai’s refused to appoint him as High Peace Council head, *Pajhwok Afghan News* reports.

Afghan General Ghulam Farooq Barekzai, who was formerly in charge of policy at the Afghan Ministry of Defence, has been tasked with taking [over the Bagram detention centre](#) from international forces, according to *Reuters*. This is the first step in handing over control of the prison to Afghan authorities, a process which has been contentious and subject to negotiations between the US and Afghan governments. The US government is concerned that prisoners at Bagram, most of whom it says are mid-to-high-level members of the Taliban, might return to the battlefield if released. President Hamid Karzai’s chief spokesman, Aimal Faizi, said the United States “can have a consultative role, but not a veto”. This statement [contradicts a compromise](#)

reported by *Reuters* and other media outlets three weeks ago. Under the previously-reported compromise, the US government would have the ability to veto the release of prisoners from Bagram.

*The Wall Street Journal* is reporting that offering former fighters positions with the government as part of the reintegration process is [breeding distrust](#) of the Afghan government and instilling a sense of injustice among many Afghans. Hajji Ibrahim Adel, an elder from Pashtun Zarghunn district in [Herat](#) province asks: “What lesson is this teaching to our young people? That if you go kill and rob, you’ll be rewarded with a good job and drive around in a police Ford Ranger?” The reintegration programme led by the Afghan High Peace Council reportedly provides sought-after positions to insurgent commanders in hopes that they will cease fighting and transition to civilian life. This practice, according to *The Wall Street Journal*, angers some of the Afghan security personnel who fought those former fighters. For instance, the provincial police commander in Herat, Brigadier General Sayed Agha Saqeb, recalled how he had lost several of his men in pursuit of a Taliban commander who is now working for the Afghan Border Police. “The government may forgive his crimes, but the people will never accept him,” he stated.

## Humanitarian Update

According to *Pajhwok*, the Afghan government and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) signed a [memorandum of understanding](#) (MoU) to facilitate the capacity development of the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation. The MoU is aimed at promoting migrants’ rights and at providing assistance to returnees, internally-displaced persons and vulnerable groups. Minister of Refugees Jamaher Anwari said Afghanistan was working very closely with IOM to come up with systems to better manage legal migration, particularly those related to passports and visas.

According to *The Times of India*, US Marine Corps Lieutenant General Frank Panter, the Deputy Commandant for Installations and Logistics, told a US Congressional subcommittee that international forces may have to [further rely on](#) India and the Northern Distribution Network, which passes through Central Asia, if Pakistan does not re-open the routes that previously supplied foreign forces in Afghanistan. Islamabad closed these supply routes after the cross-border fire incident that killed 24 Pakistani soldiers on 26 November 2011.

The Head of Russia’s Federal Narcotics Control Service, Viktor Ivanov, visited Pakistan on 27 March to discuss how best to counter [illegal drug trafficking](#) with his Pakistani counterpart, Syed Shakeel Hussain, according to *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*. Hussain remarked that cultivation of opium poppies in north-eastern Afghanistan has risen by 50% and that the number of laboratories capable of processing opium into heroin in that area has also doubled. Hussain also expressed concern that Afghan narcotics traffickers were selling their products throughout Russia and the Central Asian republics.

*Khaama Press* reports that an Afghan woman was [sentenced to death and killed](#) for having a relationship with a man in [Paktiya](#) province. The sentence was handed down by a group of tribal elders. Provincial Police Chief Zalmai Oryakhel said two of the woman’s brothers had been arrested by Afghan security forces for being involved in the woman’s killing. Human rights advocates condemned the woman’s killing and urged the judicial institutions to investigate the incident. In related news, the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) recently told *Pajhwok* that human rights [violations increased considerably](#) in eastern Afghanistan in 2011. As many as 583 cases of violence against women were registered last year in [Nangarhar](#), [Nuristan](#), [Laghman](#) and [Kunar](#), compared to 400 in 2010. Rafiullah Baidar, the AIHRC regional head, said that 200 of the 583 complaints of violence against women were yet to be addressed.

The appellate court in [Baghlan](#) province sentenced a man to [16 years in prison](#) for taking part in the gang-rape of a female teacher. The appellate court judge, Mohammad Rahim Karimi, told *Khaama Press* that measures have been put in place by Afghan security forces to detain the other rapists. Also in Baghlan, a man from Dahan-e Ghor was sentenced to death for murdering his wife.

Seventy Afghan security officials have been [fired on charges of corruption](#) and mis-using their authority in [Farah](#), [Ghor](#), [Badghis](#) and [Herat](#) provinces, Interior Minister Bismillah Mohammadi told *Pajhwok*. Mohammadi said an additional 50 police officials will be replaced. Whilst on his trip to the area, Mohammadi also noted citizens’ concerns regarding the presence of illegal weapons, unregistered cars with tinted glass, traffic hazards and the issuance of passports. In Ghor province, the minister attributed these problems to a lack of coordination between government departments. Conditions in prisons in Ghor and Badghis provinces were also unsatisfactory, he acknowledged.

A judge has been arrested by intelligence operatives on [bribery charges](#) in [Faryab](#) province, according to a separate article by *Pajhwok*. Habibullah Wasiq, an appellate court judge, was detained by National Directorate of Security (NDS) officials. Wasiq was allegedly arrested while accepting a bribe from a resident of Ghormach district. Another court official said Wasiq had been offered AFN 45,000 (USD 933) in bribes. Hafizullah Hafiz, the anti-corruption chief at the Attorney General’s Office (AGO) in Kabul, confirmed Wasiq’s arrest and said an AGO representative had been sent to the province to investigate the allegation.

The UN Secretary-General’s Special Representative for Afghanistan, Jan Kubis, says the United Nations will work with the Afghan government to ensure a transparent [2014 presidential election](#), *Pajhwok* reports. The UN will provide technical support for the poll, monitor the electoral process and help build the capacities of Independent Election Commission (IEC) staff. Ac-

ording to Kubis, UNAMA's new mandate, which was approved two weeks ago, emphasises working more closely with the Afghan government and civil society.

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## Security & Force Protection

Mark Checchia ► [mark.checchia@cimicweb.org](mailto:mark.checchia@cimicweb.org)

Admiral James Stavridis, NATO's Supreme Allied Commander Europe, has said that [Afghan forces will soon take the lead](#) in providing security for three-quarters of Afghanistan's population, the *Associated Press* reports. Admiral Stavridis also said that the training of the Afghan National Security Force (ANSF) was proceeding very well in spite of attacks in which ANSF members have fired on members of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF).

In a combined operation, Afghan and NATO forces [killed a senior commander](#) of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) in [Far-yab](#) province on 26 March, *Reuters* reports. An ISAF spokesman said Makhdum Nusrat, the "highest-ranking IMU insurgent operating in the country", was killed along with several other fighters. ISAF said Makhdum was wanted for attacks against foreign forces and for plotting to kill a member of the Afghan parliament. The IMU has been linked to al Qaeda and the Taliban. The IMU's stronghold has been the Ferghana Valley, a region shared by Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

A [terrorist plot](#) was uncovered on 26 March, according to *CBS News*. An official at the Afghan Ministry of Defence (MOD) said that 11 suicide vests were discovered in rooms near a parking lot at the MOD headquarters in Kabul. Eleven nearby buses were scheduled to leave the parking lot carrying Afghan National Army (ANA) personnel to their duty stations. Officials believe that bombers planned to board each of those buses and to detonate a suicide vest on each bus simultaneously. Six Afghan soldiers allegedly connected with the plot were arrested at the scene. Another 12 people were arrested on 27 March, and [more arrests could follow](#), intelligence and security officials tell the *BBC*.

An Afghan soldier, five private security guards and as many as 20 insurgents were killed after an ISAF supply [convoy was ambushed](#) in [Farah](#) province in western Afghanistan on 28 March, says the *Deccan Herald*. A three-hour fire fight ensued. *The New York Times* reported that the [ANA responded](#) and that two NATO air strikes were called in to support them. Raouf Ahmadi, an Afghan police spokesperson, noted the fatalities and said five other guards were wounded. Sayed Abdul Wahid, an official of the Arya security company, said militants burned three convoy vehicles.

At least nine [Afghan Local Police \(ALP\) personnel were killed](#) in the eastern [Paktika](#) province on 30 March, according to *Tolo News*. A senior police official said the incident happened in Yayakhil district of Paktika province, near the border with Pakistan. The ALP members in the guard post reportedly were drugged and then shot by a member of their team, says General Ali Shah Ahmadzai, the head of the ALP at the Afghan Interior Ministry. A Taliban spokesman said the killer took the weapons from the post and fled in a police truck to join the insurgency.

Three [de-miners working for HALO Trust were abducted](#) in [Herat](#) province on 01 April, *Bakhtar News Agency* reports. Security officials in Herat said the de-miners, who were travelling without a security escort, were abducted by unknown men from the Chama Dam area in the western part of the district.

A foreign [private security company \(PSC\) was dissolved](#) in compliance with Presidential Decree (PD) 62, which was issued by President Hamid Karzai more than two years ago, according to *Pajhwok Afghan News*. The PSC, Ranko, surrendered 43 weapons and thousands of rounds of ammunition to Afghan officials, reports the chief of the Afghan Public Protection Force (APPF), Brigadier General Sardar Mohammad Sultani. Thus far, 70 registered and unregistered PSCs have been dissolved across the country. Sultani says all private companies will be dissolved by the 09 June deadline, when the APPF is intended to take over many functions currently filled by PSCs. For further information on PD 62, the dissolution of PSCs and the APPF, please see CFC publication "[Private Security Companies Give Way to the Afghan Public Protection Force](#)."

Interior Minister Bismillah Mohammadi promised a crackdown on [illegal armed groups](#) in [Ghor](#) province within two months, according to *Pajhwok*.<sup>1</sup> Local officials say up to 6,000 armed men operate in about 100 groups in the province. Mohammadi was in Chaghcharan, the capital of Ghor, to meet with provincial council members, lawmakers and police officials. Mohammadi promised to soon launch a campaign to disarm illegal armed groups. He said an ANA battalion would be deployed to the province after their headquarters building was completed.

A [suicide bomb attack](#) in [Uruzgan](#) province injured three ISAF soldiers, an Australian aid worker and an ANA soldier on 26 March, the *Sydney Morning Herald* reports. A man with explosives strapped to his body walked up to soldiers and staff outside a bazaar in the Chora Valley in Uruzgan and detonated his vest. The security chief of the province, General Gulab Khan, noted the injuries in the blast and confirmed that no one other than the bomber was killed. The Taliban has said the attack was in retribution for the murder of 17 unarmed Afghan civilians by a US soldier on 11 March.

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<sup>1</sup> This article was produced by *Pajhwok Afghan News* and re-printed in *Outlook Afghanistan*.

A photojournalist writing in *Daily News and Analysis* describes British forces' [encounter with an IED](#) in [Helmand](#) province. The unit was clearing a series of compounds in the area to disrupt insurgent activity. The unit's mine detector swept a doorway and revealed nothing; several men from the unit and an embedded photojournalist entered the compound. When another soldier stepped into the compound, the IED detonated, blowing off both his legs and severely injuring him. The article deals with the squad's response and the results of the explosion, and the quick action that saved his life.

US Army Specialist Dennis Weichel [died saving the life](#) of a little Afghan girl, *CNN* recounts. As his convoy moved down a road in [Laghman](#) province last week, Weichel and other soldiers left their vehicles to clear children out of the way. One little girl ran back into the road to recover some spent brass shell casings. Weichel saw she was in danger of being struck by a 16-tonne Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicle. He pushed her out of the way but was struck by the vehicle himself and later died of his injuries. The governor of the US state of Rhode Island, from which Weichel hails, ordered that flags in the state be flown at half-staff until Weichel was laid to rest.

US Ambassador to Afghanistan Ryan C. Crocker warned that [al Qaeda would be back in Afghanistan](#) if international forces depart too soon, according to *The Telegraph*. Crocker reportedly stated that “[i]f we decide we’re tired, they’ll be back”. He said al Qaeda remains a threat despite recent setbacks. “We have killed all the slow and stupid ones. But that means the ones that are left are totally dedicated,” he said. Further noting that al Qaeda “is still present in Afghanistan”, Crocker stated that the terrorist group could once again use the country to attack a “big Western city” if the international community pulls out of Afghanistan too soon. Crocker said that, while progress had been made, Afghanistan would need international support for years to come. NATO figures cited by *The Telegraph* suggest that as many as 100 al Qaeda fighters have returned to Afghanistan and that hundreds more could move into Afghanistan from Pakistan in the future.

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## Social & Strategic Infrastructure

Rainer Gonzalez ► [rainer.gonzalez@cimicweb.org](mailto:rainer.gonzalez@cimicweb.org)

Afghanistan has [decided not to take a share of the gas](#) from the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) natural gas pipeline, reports *The News International*.<sup>2</sup> The Afghan government argues that Afghanistan currently does not have a network in place to absorb and distribute the gas. The plan had previously been for Pakistan and India to each receive 1.365 billion cubic feet (bcf) of gas per day and for Afghanistan to take 0.5 bcf per day. Without a share of the gas, Afghanistan may request to be compensated in other ways, potentially through higher “transit fees”, which are currently being negotiated between Afghanistan, Pakistan and India. India, which has to pay such fees to both Afghanistan and Pakistan, has the greatest stakes in the on-going negotiations. The transit fees and the new distribution of intake shares will be finalised in the forthcoming round of talks in Kabul on 19 April.

The *BBC* describes the long-standing [Afghan tradition of Bacha Posh](#) in which girls are disguised as boys. This practice is reportedly rooted in economic and social dynamics. Families dress girls as boys so that they can easily work on the streets and markets to provide an extra source of income for their families. In addition, Bacha Posh helps to maintain the social standing and acceptance of couples which have not born any sons. That is the case of Azita Raffhat, a former member of Afghanistan's parliament who had four daughters and decided to disguise one of them as a boy. His fourth girl was given a boy's name and haircut and dressed in a suit and a tie rather than the garments and headscarf worn by baby girls. Raffhat says he disguised this daughter because having a son is a symbol of prestige and honour in Afghanistan. Once girls disguised as boys turn 17 or 18 they may live as a girl once again, though the *BBC* notes that the transition is often complex. Fariba Majid, the head of the Women's Right Department in [Balkh](#) province, who was disguised as a boy for many years, said that going through the experience of the Bacha Posh allowed her to enjoy the freedom she could not have had as a girl and enabled her to gain confidence to pursue a career. However, Daud Rawish, an Afghan sociologist, argues that this tradition can cause identity problems for girls who are subjected to it.

An article published by the *Common Ground News Services* questions how the [withdrawal of international troops will affect women's rights](#). The article is based on a series of interviews with female parliamentarians, activists, health workers and non-governmental organisation (NGO) leaders. The general perception is that women want war to end given that conflict puts them and their rights in danger. According to the study, many Afghan women interviewed said that they support peace negotiations as long as the talks do not result in the revocation of key laws such as those outlawing violence against women. The women interviewed also expressed a desire for continued investment in social and economic development activities for women.

Human Rights Watch published a report entitled “[I Had to Run Away: The Imprisonment of Women and Girls for ‘Moral Crimes’ in Afghanistan](#)”. The study comprehensively reviews the situation of approximately 400 women and girls who have been imprisoned for “moral crimes” such as running away from home and having sex outside of the marriage. According to one of the researchers involved in the study, “Afghanistan is the only Islamic government in the world that specifically criminalized running away”. Many of the imprisonments are “solely on the basis of ‘confessions’ given in the absence of lawyers and ‘signed’ without having been read to women who cannot read or write”.

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<sup>2</sup> For further information on the TAPI project, see the CFC report entitled “[TAPI Natural Gas Pipeline: Status & Source of Potential Delays](#)”.

Lastly, according to *Pajhwok Afghan News*, the *Wolesi Jirga* (lower house of parliament) [refused to allow deputy ministers](#) to brief lawmakers on the outcome of a recent university entrance test. *Wolesi Jirga* members insisted that the ministers of education and higher education themselves deliver the briefing in person. As many as 40,000 of 147,000 candidates were declared successful in the test, with the education ministry promising that another 70,000 students would be enrolled in semi-higher education institutes. Previously, Afghan legislators alleged the university entrance test lacked transparency.

## Recent Readings & Resources

- [“Canada’s Engagement in Afghanistan: Fourteenth and Final Report to Parliament”](#), Government of Canada, 29 March 2012.
- [“Clear and Present Danger: Planning and New Venture Survival Amid Political and Civil Violence”](#), Harvard Business School, 27 March 2012, by Shon Hiatt and Wesley Sine.
- [“Barriers to Repatriation of Afghan Refugees: A Case Study of Afghan Community at Shah and Khusar Colony Board Area Peshawar”](#), *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, March 2010, by Anwar Alam.
- [“Funding the Enemy: How U.S. Taxpayers Bankroll the Taliban”](#), Prometheus, March 2012, by Douglas A. Wissing.
- [“Gender and Economic Choice: What’s Old and What’s New for Women in Afghanistan”](#), Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit, March 2012, by Chona R. Echavez.

*The readings and resources above were brought to the attention of the CFC’s Afghanistan Team during the course of the past several weeks. The CFC does not endorse any of these documents or their content. If you would like to recommend a report or website for this section of the “Afghanistan Review”, please send the file or reference to [Afghanistan@cimicweb.org](mailto:Afghanistan@cimicweb.org). The CFC welcomes all recommendations but is not obliged to print them.*

## Afghanistan Events Calendar

- **Prospects for Peace in Afghanistan.** This event is organised by the United States Institute for Peace (USIP) in Washington, DC and will include speakers such as Ambassador Marc Grossman, the US Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, and Minister Mohammed Masoom Stanekzai, an adviser to President Hamid Karzai and the Head of the Secretariat of the High Peace Council. It takes place on 10 April from 10:30 to 12:00 (local time). For more information, [visit the event website](#).
- **Global Security Forum 2012.** This event is hosted by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington, DC. One session during the event will focus on “Towards 2014: Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the U.S. Role in the Region” and will include speakers such as Anthony Cordesman of CSIS and former US Ambassador to Afghanistan Ronald E. Neumann. The event takes place on 11 April from 08:00 to 13:45 (local time). For further information, [visit the event website](#).
- **Agricultural Development for Afghanistan Pre-Deployment Training.** The United States Department of Agriculture ([www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov)) and a consortium of American universities deliver this training. The curriculum will meet the needs of all deploying United States Government personnel in support of the USG Agriculture Strategy in Afghanistan. The training is for United States Government personnel and will take place in Fresno, California on the following dates: 02-07 April and 18-23 June. Participants will be enrolled on a first come first serve basis. Contact Ryan Brewster, US Department of Agriculture, at [ryan.brewster@fas.usda.gov](mailto:ryan.brewster@fas.usda.gov) for further information.
- **Pakistan, Afghanistan and the US withdrawal.** This event is hosted by Chatham House in London on 20 April 2012 from 13:00 until 14:00 (local time). Ahmed Rashid, author of *Pakistan on the Brink*, will provide a guide to the key stakeholders in the region and offer his thoughts on the future of international terrorism. Forth further information [visit the event website](#).
- **Field Security Management Course.** The Centre for Safety and Development (CSD) will be holding its “Field Security Management” course in Afghanistan from 13-15 May 2012. The course reportedly addresses topics such as the following: security management, context analysis, risk assessment, security strategies and procedures, contingency planning, incident reporting and the development of action plans. Further information is [available here](#).

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