

# Afghanistan Review

Week 15

10 April 2012

Comprehensive Information on Complex Crises



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*This document provides a weekly overview of developments in Afghanistan from 03 – 09 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

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A number of articles this past week highlighted the potential for an economic slowdown in Afghanistan as international actors reduce their footprint as part of the on-going transition process. *Voice of American (VoA) News* notes that [Afghanistan's economy](#) is currently losing momentum. Businesses are starting to withdraw, property values are declining and wealthy individuals are moving their money outside of the country. Truck drivers are seeing their cargos decline sharply as demand for imported materials drops. The article notes that concerns about future stability and security in Afghanistan have, along with corruption, led many in the private sector to limit their involvement there. Afghan businessman Zahir Hakimzada raised concerns that Afghan businesses would no longer be able to rely on international supply chains to import materials. He also told *VoA News* that, despite recognition that Afghanistan could face new economic challenges in the coming years, the "Afghan government doesn't have a plan" for the economic side of the transition process.

Touching upon a similar theme, *Reuters* reports that Afghan farmers and narcotics traders are [beginning to hoard opium poppies](#) and other illicit substances so that they will have access to ready cash in case of economic hard times and increasing insecurity during the coming years. Afghanistan's experience with conflict has led Afghans to prepare for unpredictable and often insecure conditions, including periods of displacement and economic decline. Jean-Luc Lema-hieu, head of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, described the hoarding of opium poppies and other drug crops as an "economic reflex" and indicted that poppies are the "gold standard" in Afghanistan given their value and consistent market demand. Such hoarding and concern about Afghanistan's future has added an instability premium to the price of poppies. These inflated prices may, according to experts, lead a rising number of Afghan farmers to plant opium poppies rather than licit crops such as wheat, fruits and vegetables this year and in the coming years.

Kabul Bank returned to the media spotlight this past week due to the [formation of a Special Tribunal](#) to investigate the fraud which led to a crisis at Afghanistan's largest private financial institution in 2010, according to *Khaama Press*. The tribunal emerged from a meeting of the Economic Assembly of the Afghan cabinet this past week. President Hamid Karzai, who participated in the meeting, subsequently appointed a Special Prosecutor and a Special Tribunal to investigate the Kabul Bank crisis. According to *Pajhwok Afghan News*, the crisis emerged in the autumn of 2010 after the media reported that executives and shareholders at the bank had withdrawn [hundreds of millions of US dollars](#) of depositors' money to make risky investments and provide unorthodox "loans". The majority of these loans were neither properly recorded nor repaid. To prevent the bank from collapsing and taking depositors' money with it, the Afghan government bailed it out with an infusion of nearly USD 1 billion. *Khaama Press* says the Special Tribunal's investigation will reportedly

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focus not only on the bank's executives and shareholders but also on those individuals who illegally took loans from the bank. The international community has previously asked the Afghan government to prosecute individuals found to be complicit in malfeasance at Kabul Bank and to re-capitalise the Afghan Central Bank following the Kabul Bank bailout. On this second point, Noorrullah Delawari, the country's Central Bank governor, says that the government has been able to trace 80% of Kabul Bank's assets and is in the process of attempting to re-claim them. As part of this process, *Pajhwok* reports that the Afghan government has told all Kabul Bank borrowers that they must repay their loans within the coming two months or face legal action. For more information on Kabul Bank, see the August 2011 CFC report on "[The Evolution and Implications of the Kabul Bank Crisis](#)".

In mining news, *The Australian* says that the Afghan government is increasingly drawing upon Australian firms and expertise as it seeks to develop its [extractive industries](#). Afghanistan's Ministry of Mines (MoM) will be sending a delegation to Australia in the coming weeks to promote investment in Afghan mineral resources, and Australia is also expected to support the MoM in establishing an Afghan school of mines. The Afghan government requires such expertise, given that it is increasingly auctioning off mining rights. Gold and copper deposits are currently being tendered, and a bidding process for Afghanistan's sought-after lithium deposits will begin later in April. Next year, further deposits of oil, natural gas and copper will also be opened for tender. By 2016, Afghan Mines Minister Wahidullah Shahrani expects the government to be receiving USD 1.5 billion per year from its mining. However, foreign investors have reportedly been wary about starting mining operations in Afghanistan while the security situation in the country remains unsettled. In response, the Afghan government has established a Mines Protection Unit to secure mineral deposits, and Shahrani is offering suggestions for how foreign companies can work with local community to ensure that they help facilitate mining projects.

Lastly, Afghanistan's Commerce Minister, Anwar-Ul-Haq Ahady, expressed hope that his country would be [exempted from international sanctions](#) being imposed against Iran, according to *Bloomberg*. Afghanistan imports half of its fuel from or through Iran, and the Afghan government is arguing that Afghanistan faces special circumstances that should allow it to side-step the sanctions. US government sanctions target countries and institutions doing business with Iran's Central Bank and which do not significantly reduce their imports of Iranian fuel. Countries found to violate the sanctions will be barred from doing business via the American banking system, which handles a large proportion of international transactions. At the time of writing, it was not clear whether the Afghan government would be awarded such an exemption.

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## Governance & Rule of Law

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Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Jawed Ludin tells *Tolo News* that the Afghan government would come to an [agreement with Qatar](#) soon to allow for the establishment of Taliban office in the Gulf state. Ludin said that the subject of the Taliban office in Qatar will be taken up at a meeting between Afghan and Qatari officials in Kabul. That meeting is expected to yield a memorandum of understanding concerning the Taliban office. Meanwhile, Qatari Minister of State for International Cooperation, Khalid Mohamed al-Attiyah, says that Qatar will [talk to all](#) Afghan parties in an effort to reinvigorate the peace process, according to *Reuters*. Such talks include negotiations between the US and Qatari governments concerning the potential transfer of Taliban detainees from Guantanamo Bay to Qatar.

The head of Hezb-e-Islami's political committee, Ghairat Baheer, says that the group will send a peace delegation to meet US and Afghan government officials in Kabul soon to [discuss a road map](#) for peace, according to *The Express Tribune*. Baheer, who is the son-in-law of Hezb-e-Islami leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, said that two rounds of talks have already been held in the past but noted that negotiations are in their early stages. "We want a meaningful dialogue in a transparent manner in order to chalk out a peaceful solution of the Afghan problem and do not believe in secret dealings," he said. Baheer added that Hezb-e-Islami and the Taliban were coordinating their strategies.

Salahuddin Rabbani, the son of slain Afghan peace envoy and former president Burhanuddin Rabbani, is being appointed as the new [Afghan peace envoy](#), an Afghan diplomat told *The Express Tribune*. President Hamid Karzai has been weighing the appointment of the new chief of the High Peace Council since Burhanuddin Rabbani's assassination in September 2011. "President Karzai had made up his mind to appoint Burhanuddin's son as the new chief but several senior former jihadi leaders had opposed his appointment," the diplomat said. An Afghan presidential spokesperson confirmed that President Karzai had finalised his selection for chief of the High Peace Council but would not confirm whether it was Salahuddin.

Opposition leader Abdullah Abdullah tells *Pajhwok Afghan News* that the election commission and the judiciary should be [independent and monitored by international observers](#) during the upcoming 2014 presidential election. Abdullah said: "There is need for reforms in the electoral process to assure the people that the election will be transparent". A day earlier, President Karzai met with members of the Independent Election Commission (IEC) where they discussed preparations for the presidential ballot and exchanged views on the irregularities, mistakes and the role of external actors in the 2009 election. On 28 March, the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Representative for Afghanistan pledged active UN support for the 2014 election.

Meanwhile, the Asia Foundation found that a vast majority of Afghan voters want better security arrangements to be put in place during elections, according to its "[Voter Behaviour Survey](#)" concerning Afghanistan's 2010 parliamentary election. That survey, which reflects the responses of 2,397 Afghans from all 34 provinces, finds that Afghans believe steps should be taken to ensure that future

elections are free from fraud and bribery. A third (38%) of those polled believe the 2010 parliamentary vote was transparent; 26% indicated they were not transparent, and 33% of respondents declined to answer.

According to the *Associated Press (AP)*, Pakistani lawmakers are [increasingly unwilling](#) to re-open NATO supply routes to Afghanistan unless the US government end its drone strikes against militants in Pakistan. Pakistan's border has been closed to NATO shipments since a US airstrike inadvertently killed 24 Pakistani troops in Pakistan near the Afghan border. Islamist and militant groups have staged large rallies to oppose re-opening of the border to NATO. One of the leaders of the campaign to keep the borders closed has been Hafiz Mohammad Saeed, the founder of Lashkar-e-Taiba, the group blamed for the 2008 attacks in the Indian city of Mumbai that killed 166 people. On 02 April, the United States announced a USD 10 million reward for information leading to the arrest of Saeed, who lives openly in Pakistan. According to many analysts referenced by the *AP*, Saeed has the sympathy of many in Pakistan's military establishment.

According to *Outlook Afghanistan*, members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) have suggested that NATO troops should [destroy poppy fields](#) in Afghanistan. The head of the Russian federal drug control service, Viktor Ivanov, told reporters that SCO member-states will fight drug traffickers in their territories.

Based on recommendations of the Independent Directorate of Local Governance, President Karzai approved the appointments of [four new governors](#) for [Uruzgan](#), [Farah](#), [Sar-e Pul](#) and [Logar](#) provinces, according to *Pajhwok*. Mohammad Akram Khpalwak was appointed as governor of Farah province and Abdul Jabbar Haqbin as governor of Sar-e-Pul. Previously, Rohull-Amin served as Farah governor and Syed Anwar Rahmati was the governor of Sar-i-Pul province. Amir Mohammad Akhundzada has been appointed in Uruzgan, replacing Mohammad Omar Sherzad. Mohammad Tahir Sabri was named as central Logar governor, succeeding Ateequallah Lodin. It is not yet clear when they will take up their posts.

Afghanistan's lower house of parliament, the *Wolesi Jirga*, has for a [second time voted to reject](#) the proposed budget for the current fiscal year, *Pajhwok* reports. On 18 March, the *Wolesi Jirga* refused to approve the budget because there were concerns over unequal allocation of funds to the different provinces. The second vote on the budget also reportedly failed because these inequalities in provincial allocations had not yet been addressed and because of disagreements regarding an USD 80 million allocation related to Kabul Bank, a private financial institution which has been the subject of embezzlement and corruption allegations.<sup>1</sup> Kamal Nasir Asuli, a lawmaker from [Paktiya](#) province, argued that "[t]he budget should have been approved to prevent a delay in development projects."

The lower house of Parliament, *Wolesi Jirga*, has announced a list of 43 [lawmakers who remained absent](#) from the legislature last month without informing the assembly secretariat, says *Pajhwok*. Under Article 132 of the *Wolesi Jirga* procedures, if a lawmaker is absent for five consecutive days without providing any reason, his or her salary is deducted and his or her name released to the media during the weekend. According to the article, despite the procedures, punishments for absentee lawmakers had not been enforced.

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## Security & Force Protection

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Afghan and US negotiators signed a [breakthrough deal](#) giving the Afghan government greater oversight of controversial night raids, setting the stage for the establishment of a long-term partnership agreement before the NATO Chicago Summit in May, *The Wall Street Journal* reports. On 08 April, after months of talks, the two nations agreed to give Afghan judges more power to regulate the raids, to curtail US military searches of Afghan homes and to restrict the ability of American forces to directly interrogate detainees. According to senior Afghan officials, this deal represents a significant step in making Afghans responsible for critical military operations. Afghan Defence Minister Abdul Rahim Wardak signed the night raid agreement with General John Allen, the Commander of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and US forces in Afghanistan. Wardak is quoted as saying "[t]his is another important step in strengthening the national sovereignty of Afghanistan". He also called it a "very important step in strengthening relations between Afghanistan and the United States".

In a related story, the special forces chief of the Afghan National Army (ANA), General Sayed Abdul Karim, asserts that ANA commandos are [ready to conduct night raids](#) independent of ISAF, reports *Tolo News*. At a ceremony marking the graduation of 144 ANA commandos, Karim stated that the commandos were fit to launch operations against insurgents in Afghanistan, including the night raids discussed above.

The head of the ANA, General Sher Mohammad Karimi, was appointed by President Hamid Karzai to investigate the murder of 17 civilians in [Kandahar](#) last month. According to *Tolo News*, he now says there is strong evidence that [only one soldier carried out the massacre](#). Karimi told the *McClatchy* group of newspapers that, based on interviews and research, he now believes one person could have acted alone. Karimi said that two survivors he interviewed offered credible accounts that the killings were the act of a single individual. US officials have maintained that, following a review of evidence that includes video surveillance footage, US Army Staff Sergeant Robert Bales is the only suspect. Nevertheless, the belief that more than one soldier was involved is widespread in Afghanistan.

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<sup>1</sup> Kabul Bank is further addressed in the 'Economic Development' section of this newsletter.



*Der Spiegel* notes that the majority of ISAF forces are departing Afghanistan by the end of 2014 and that withdrawal poses a [huge logistical challenge](#). Dynamic US relations with Pakistan have made the coalition dependent on air hubs in Russia and the Central Asian republics to transport its troops and equipment home. The Russian city of Ulyanovsk has been identified as a major hub for ISAF troops preparing the way for withdrawal. Many ISAF troops and a large volume of equipment will pass through the Ulyanovsk airport. Some 130,000 troops, 70,000 vehicles and 120,000 containers need to be withdrawn, and Ulyanovsk city officials are hoping to see an increase in local jobs. However, the plan to use Ulyanovsk is not without its opponents. According to *Tolo News*, 2,000 Russian communists held a [rally in Moscow](#) on 07 April to protest the proposed base. Once the withdrawal is underway, a local official tells *Der Spiegel* that “several dozen planes” will land in Ulyanovsk each day, and 60 trains a month will leave the city en route to Baltic Sea ports like Klaipeda in Lithuania. From there, the freight will be shipped to Western Europe.

Rogue Afghan security forces who commit attacks on their international colleagues are more often [driven by personal grievances](#), battle stress and domestic problems than by affiliation with or support for the Taliban, *Reuters* reports. After the killing of 17 foreign soldiers by Afghan security personnel since the beginning of this year, ISAF has stepped up security to prevent more such “green on blue” attacks. “One of the things that we are finding is that in many cases there were signs and symptoms that could have been seen, and leadership has to be improved to make sure that those signs are seen in the future, in time before an incident happens,” NATO spokesman Brigadier General Carsten Jacobson stated.

Afghan and ISAF forces [captured a member of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan](#) (IMU) during a gun battle on 06 April in [Faryab](#) province, *The Washington Post* reports. The IMU is an al Qaeda-linked group which supports attacks against Afghan and foreign targets. The individual captured on 06 April is the third member of the group detained or killed in the past two weeks. Faryab has a considerable IMU presence, but the province is otherwise relatively calm. The IMU was formed in 1991 with the goal of setting up an Islamic state in Uzbekistan. It has since expanded its aims, seeking to establish an Islamic state across Central Asia. On 26 March, a combined operation by Afghan forces and ISAF in Faryab killed the group’s leader in Afghanistan, Makhdom Nusrat.<sup>2</sup> Another IMU operative was captured on 06 April in [Badakhshan](#) province. ISAF said the operative was a facilitator of suicide attacks against Afghan officials and security forces in [Kunduz](#), Badakhshan and [Takhar](#) provinces.

[Two suicide bombings](#) took place on 10 April, killing 16 people in [Helmand](#) and [Herat](#) provinces, reports the *Associated Press*. Four policemen were killed when suicide attackers attempted to breach the local police office in the Musa Qala district of Helmand. The three attackers, wearing suicide vests, approached the police station. The police recognised the threat and opened fire; one attacker was killed by the gunfire, and the other two managed to detonate their explosives inside the compound. Daud Ahmadi, a provincial spokesman, said that four policemen were killed and five, including the district commander, were wounded. In the other incident earlier in the day, suicide bombers in a truck detonated their bomb outside the Guzara district office in Herat province. Three Afghan policemen and eight civilians died in that blast. Raouf Ahmadi, a spokesman for the police commander of the western region of Afghanistan, said police in the area had received a tip that the black four-wheel-drive vehicle was loaded with explosives. Police were in pursuit when the truck exploded at the gate of the district building. The Taliban claimed responsibility for both attacks in telephone messages to the media.

[Three ISAF troops were killed](#) and at least three others wounded when a bomber exploded his suicide vest in a park in Maymaneh City, the capital of Faryab province on 04 April, *Pajhwok Afghan News* reports. Officials and witnesses say at least 18 people were wounded in the suicide attack,



*Air Hubs for Removing Supplies from Afghanistan* [Der Spiegel](#)

## Humanitarian Update

Indonesia says it has [rescued 120 Afghan refugees](#) from a leaking wooden ship apparently headed for Australia, the *Associated Press* reported on 09 April. An official from Indonesia’s National Search and Rescue Agency says they received a distress call on Sunday and went to the ship’s aid. The Afghans were taken by tanker to a port on Indonesia’s Java Island. Witnesses said the police were still negotiating with the migrants, who were refusing to leave the tanker on Monday. Migrants without legal documents are usually deported home, while others may apply for asylum. Migrants from conflict-ridden countries often use Indonesia’s many islands as a transit point on their way to Australia.

<sup>2</sup> See the [27 March 2012 edition](#) of the CFC “Afghanistan Review” for further information on the capture of Makhdom.

which occurred as foreign troops were about to enter a municipal park.

The [head of the Provincial Peace Council \(PPC\) in Kunar](#) and his son were killed by a suicide bomber while on their way home from a mosque after Friday prayers on 06 April, *Tolo News* says. Local officials said Maulawi Mohammad Hashem Munib, the PPC head, was killed instantly when the bomber detonated his suicide vest. His son died later in hospital, provincial governor Sayed Fazlullah Wahidi said.

A suicide bomber [detonated his explosives](#) in Badakhshan province on 05 April, killing himself and two civilians, *Pajhwok* highlights. Officials said at least two people were killed and 17 others wounded in the explosion, which occurred in the main bazaar of Kisham district. The target of the attack was not apparent, though provincial officials indicated that Afghan security personnel could be among the casualties.

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## Social & Strategic Infrastructure

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Ministers from the four countries involved in the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) pipeline project are scheduled to meet on May 24 in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan to further discuss [Afghanistan's participation](#), according to *Pakistan Observer*. There had recently been reports that Afghanistan was declining to take a share of gas from the pipeline. However, on 04 April, Afghan Minister for Mines Wahidullah Shahrani indicated that his country was ready to go ahead with the project and to receive a portion of the TAPI gas. The design phase of the TAPI pipeline project is expected to be completed soon.

During a ceremony marking International Water Day, Mohammad Ismail Khan, Afghan Minister of Water and Energy, discussed the [lack of water reservoirs](#) in Afghanistan, reports *Pajhwok Afghan News*. According to Khan, Afghanistan's lack of reservoirs and the transboundary nature of Afghanistan's water supplies have led to a critical situation. To ensure that Afghans have access to adequate supplies of water, the Ministry of Energy and Water is planning to construct 22 dams along rivers which are shared by Afghanistan and neighbouring countries such as Iran and Pakistan. Dams are particularly important for agriculture, which Afghanistan's Minister of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock, Asif Rahimi, recently highlighted. Rahimi noted that, in recent years, the amount of land under cultivation in Afghanistan had increased from 2.1 million to 8.1 million hectares and that wheat production had risen from 2.3 million tonnes to 5.1 million tonnes per year. The minister also noted a number of other improvements in agriculture which demand increasing volumes of water.

Minister of Communications and Information Technology Amir Zai Sangin said that Afghanistan is seeking investors to launch its [first telecommunications satellite](#), reports *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*. Sangin estimated the cost of the new satellite at around USD 250 million and indicated the tender process should be complete within six months. Under international agreements, Afghanistan has an assigned space for a satellite in geosynchronous orbit, though the country currently has not yet taken advantage of this opportunity. According to the article, the winning firm, which will finance the satellite, will earn back its initial investment by selling the broadcasting rights to private television stations or telecommunications companies.

A leading drug addiction treatment centre says the growing numbers of [drug-addicted women](#) is related to the rising number of drug-addicted men, *Tolo News* says. Personnel from Nejat Center, which operates a number of drug treatment homes and programmes, said more than 700 women are currently being treated through Nejat and that the demand for treatment among female addicts has been increasing. The Nejat Center called for the government to pay serious attention to the ever-growing problem of female addiction. Nejat administrator Mohammed Amman Raoufi recounts that many women in treatment said they became addicts when their husbands returned from seasonal or temporary jobs in neighbouring countries, where they had begun using illegal drugs. Raoufi also suggested that many women in lower-income families use opium to "medicate" against the fatigue and pain.

When women are accused of crimes in Afghanistan's [Nangarhar](#) province, they [cannot get a female lawyer to represent them](#), according to the *Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR)*. The lack of female attorneys reportedly undermines women's access to justice. Most importantly, women are unlikely to tell male lawyers key facts related to their case – including facts which may indicate mitigating circumstances – because of shame or societal disapproval. All cases in Nangarhar are handled by male lawyers, prosecutors and judges. Abdul Qayum, the head of the prosecutor's office in Nangarhar, said female prosecutors would be beneficial. He stated: "It is true that many female suspects conceal the truth from male lawyers, particularly in 'moral' and family cases. The lawyer doesn't get told the whole story. That also has an impact on the punishment imposed on the defendant." There are female law graduates in the eastern province, but they are not choosing to enter the mainstream legal professions. Analysts cited by *IWPR* indicated that restrictions on women working outside the home and the low wages offered in the public sector could explain the lack of women in the judicial system.

In closely related news, a new [women's legal help centre](#) established by the Afghan government and supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has provided advice and counselling to vulnerable women, according to a UNDP statement. The majority of women assisted at the centre had been forced into marriage or face domestic violence. The centre is staffed with 25 volunteers who have received basic training on the law and counselling methods. The volunteers are taught to resolve conflict or refer disputes to relevant community groups or government departments.

Afghanistan will send its [first female boxer](#) to the 2012 Olympic Games in London this summer, *CNN* reports. Sadaf Rahimi will be only the third Afghan woman to compete at an Olympic Games. She is training in spite of limited facilities and a lack of sponsorship. Permitted to train only one hour per day, Rahimi exercises in a gym which the Taliban regime had used to execute women more than a decade earlier. Her coach, Mohammed Saber Sharifi, hopes the world will see Afghanistan differently when Rahimi steps into the boxing ring in London. Sharifi is a former male professional boxer and an advocate for women's rights.

## Recent Readings & Resources

- [“Food Security and Wheat Prices in Afghanistan: A Distribution-sensitive Analysis of Household-level Impacts”](#), World Bank, April 2012, by Anna D’Souza and Dean Jolliffe.
- [“Counter Terrorist Trends and Analysis”](#), International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR), Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, April 2012.
- [“Census in Afghanistan”](#), a presentation to be delivered at a Practical Advisory Workshop, Moscow, 16-19 April 2012, by the Central Statistics Organization, Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.
- [“Memorandum of Understanding](#) between the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the United States of America on Afghanistanization of Special Operations on Afghan Soil”, International Security Assistance Force, 08 April 2012.
- [“Myths and Misconceptions in the Afghan Transition”](#), United States Institute of Peace, PeaceBrief, 09 April 2012, by Noah Coburn and Shamahmood Miakhel.
- [“Voter Behavior Survey: Afghanistan’s 2010 Parliamentary Elections”](#), The Asia Foundation, 09 April 2012.

*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

- **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](#).
- **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. For 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](#).
- **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 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.

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