

INSURGENCY, TERRORISM, AND THE DRUG TRADE

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ABSTRACT: This report analyzes the threat of narco-terrorism in Afghanistan and Pakistan. It explains the extent to which insurgent groups are involved in, or profit from, the drug trade, as well as describes relationships between insurgent groups and individual traffickers, criminal organizations, and state governments. Insurgent groups discussed include the Afghan Quetta Shura Taliban (QST), the Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP), the Haqqani Network, and foreign groups including the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and the Kurdistan Workers' Party. The report also assesses claims that Al Qaeda is supported by Afghanistan's drug trade.

The report outlines counternarcotics and counterterrorism policies of Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the United States and its Coalition partners, assesses their effectiveness and shortcomings, and suggests priorities for future strategies. This assessment addresses the effects of continued corruption on Afghan counternarcotics efforts and discusses Pakistan's inconsistent actions toward insurgent groups.

* The views expressed in this publication are solely those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the International Institute for Counter-Terrorism (ICT).

INTRODUCTION

Opium production and trade in Afghanistan and Pakistan has provided funding and support for terrorists in these countries, helping them to fund their operations and even gain public support and influence governments. Militant groups operate in environments where they are supported by tribal and lineage ties, criminal organizations, and other militant groups.¹

Since Coalition forces in Afghanistan drove the Taliban regime from power in Kandahar, many insurgents fled to Pakistan, a country now commonly regarded as a safe haven for insurgent groups. According to an article in *Foreign Affairs* “every major Afghan insurgent group ... has established its command-and-control headquarters on the Pakistan side of the border.”² These groups have largely operated in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of Pakistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Baluchistan. These areas provide environments with low levels of government interference, informal *hawala*-type trading systems, and in some cases, support from elements of the Pakistani military and intelligence service.

Profits gained from the drug trafficking industry support terrorist group operations and the resulting “narco-terrorism” constitutes a security threat to the international community. The term “narco-terrorism” has been defined in various ways. Oxford dictionary inclusively defines it as “terrorism associated with the trade in illicit drugs.”³ In the United States, it has most recently been used to refer to the “recognized association between drug trafficking and terrorism.”⁴ This report will seek to address the nature and scope of this threat by exploring the influence of the Taliban in both Afghanistan and Pakistan, and will include its relationships with other extremist organizations.

¹ Jonas Hartelius, “Narcoterrorism,” *East-West Institute*, March 2008, <http://www.ewi.info/system/files/reports/Narcoterrorism.pdf>

² Seth G. Jones, “Why the Haqqani Network Is The Wrong Target,” *Foreign Affairs*, November 6, 2011, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/136646/seth-g-jones/why-the-haqqani-network-is-the-wrong-target>

³ “NarcoTerrorism,” *The Oxford Online Dictionary*, 2013, http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/narcoterrorism

⁴ David A. Haupt, “Narco-Terrorism: An increasing threat to US National Security,” December 6, 2009, p. 1, <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a530126.pdf>

It will address the threat that these groups pose to the international community by detailing extremist involvement in global trade routes originating in Afghanistan. It will analyze the policies and actions of Afghanistan, Pakistan, and of the United States that have sought to decrease the prevalence of terrorism supported by the opium trade.

While extremist organizations profit from the Afghan drug trade, it is important to understand that they are only part of a complex web of criminal organizations, individual traffickers, government officials, and other elements that have a hand in the lucrative industry. Criminal activities in Afghanistan undermine the rule of law and complicate security operations focused on interdiction. This report will focus on the main extremist groups that profit from the Afghan drug trade. It will explore their relationship with individual traffickers, criminal organizations, state governments, and intelligence services to the extent that it is relevant to understand the networks that support their operations. These intricate criminal networks should not be oversimplified, and the focus on extremist groups in this report is not meant to undermine the importance of other elements.

TRAFFICKING AND TRADE

Criminal organizations, including terrorist organizations, are involved in or benefit from the various stages of opiate production that include cultivation, transport, and final production.

A World Bank report outlines the general structure of criminal networks involved in the opium trade in Afghanistan.⁵ The network generally operates hierarchically, beginning with farmers and continuing on to small scale and local traders, then graduating to traffickers and key traffickers.⁶ Higher-level players in the hierarchy operate with greater levels of secrecy and lower levels of

⁵ Mark Shaw, "Drug Trafficking and the Development of Organized Crime in Post-Taliban Afghanistan," *UNODC and The World Bank*, November 28, 2006, pp. 200-205,

http://siteresources.worldbank.org/SOUTHASIAEXT/Resources/Publications/448813-1164651372704/UNDC_Ch7.pdf

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 203

direct involvement in trafficking, putting them outside of the control of law enforcement. Instead of participating directly in the trafficking process, key traffickers often supervise laboratories, control supply, and regulate market prices.⁷ These high-level traffickers typically retain important political connections that allow them to supply protection for the drug trade.

Tribal, familial, and trade networks are critical to the Afghan drug trade. Tribal individuals have connections within their tribes that facilitate border crossings and business transactions. Extremist groups utilize these connections to recruit members and penetrate trafficking networks. As an example, the Pashtun tribe is prevalent on both sides of the Durand Line between Afghanistan and Pakistan.⁸ A network of Pashtun members of criminal organizations and extremist groups helps to facilitate trade across this line.

Tribal and familial affiliations also play an important role in transactions made through the *hawala* system of informal, trust-based trading that involve transfers of cash and goods between mainly Pashtun *hawaladars*. While the system is mainly used for licit goods, its lack of government regulation has allowed it to serve to launder drug trade payments. *Hawaladars* have international connections, mostly in Iran, Pakistan, India, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the UAE, and Oman.⁹

AFGHANISTAN

Afghan Trade Routes

Afghanistan is central to the world's opium and heroin trades. Almost the world's entire heroin is produced from Afghan opiates, and the country has more than enough to meet the global

⁷ Mark Shaw, "Drug Trafficking and the Development of Organized Crime in Post-Taliban Afghanistan," *UNODC and The World Bank*, November 28, 2006, pp. 200-205, http://siteresources.worldbank.org/SOUTHASIAEXT/Resources/Publications/448813-1164651372704/UNDC_Ch7.pdf. 201

⁸ *Ibid.*, 110

⁹ Samuel Munzele Maimbo, "The Money Exchange Dealers of Kabul: A Study of the Hawala System in Afghanistan," *The World Bank*, 2003, http://www-wds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2003/10/16/000090341_20031016085357/Rendered/PDF/269720PAPER0Money0exchange0dealers.pdf

demand for these drugs.¹⁰ The opium economy is the country's "largest source of export earnings," and comprised an estimated thirty-six percent of the country's licit GDP as of 2005-2006.¹¹

Although elaborate heroin trafficking routes that originate in Afghanistan are difficult to trace, some summary information can be provided on main routes. Both opium cultivation and heroin production is most heavily concentrated in Helmand province in the country's south. The province accounts for forty-four percent Afghanistan's opium production and an estimated sixty percent of cultivation.¹² Nangarhar, Kandahar, Badakshan, Uruzgan, and Farah provinces account for another thirty-five percent of opium production.¹³ From these provinces, heroin is trafficked along three main routes, including to Nimroz, Farah and Hirat, to eastern and Northern Afghanistan, and to the Pakistani Baluchistan borders with Helmand, Nimroz, and Zabol.¹⁴

About half of Afghan opiates travel through Pakistan, with the rest traveling through Central Asia and Iran. Eighty three percent of opiates are consumed in Europe and Asia¹⁵. The most commonly used routes from Afghanistan include routes the "Southern Route", the "Balkan Route," and the "Northern Route."¹⁶ These patterns are characterized by transport to areas with high demand from Iran, Pakistan, and Central Asia. The most common trade routes include transport to Southeast Asia through Pakistan and Iran and to Russia and Europe through Central Asia.

¹⁰ "Addiction, Crime, and Insurgency: The transnational threat of Afghan opium," *UN Office On Drugs and Crime (UNODC)*, October 2009, p. 25, http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Afghanistan/Afghan_Opium_Trade_2009_web.pdf

¹¹ Edouard Martin and Steven Symansky, "Macroeconomic Impact of the Drug Economy," *The World Bank*, November 28, 2006, p. 25, http://siteresources.worldbank.org/SOUTHASIAEXT/Resources/Publications/448813-1164651372704/UNDC_Ch2.pdf

¹² "Addiction, Crime, and Insurgency: The transnational threat of Afghan opium," *UN Office On Drugs and Crime (UNODC)*, October 2009, pp. 17, 78, http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Afghanistan/Afghan_Opium_Trade_2009_web.pdf

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 78

¹⁴ "The Global Afghan Opium Trade," *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)*, July 2011, http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Studies/Global_Afghan_Opium_Trade_2011-web.pdf

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 17

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 61-63, 103

Afghan opiates trafficked to Pakistan on the “Southern Route” continue to “Iran, China, South-East Asia, North America, and Africa.”¹⁷ Once in Asia, Afghan heroin “combines with locally produced heroin to meet regional demand, as well as being trafficked onward to Oceania.”¹⁸ Heroin to be trafficked to Iran is stored in small villages along the Iranian border in Farah and Herat provinces.¹⁹ Much of the heroin trafficked out of Iran moves along the “Balkan Route” through Turkey, where it continues to Southeast and Western Europe. Heroin trafficked through Iran also reaches the Middle East, Europe, North America, the Caucasus, and increasingly Africa.²⁰ Opium trafficked through Central Asia typically goes through Tajikistan, where it enters from the “Badakhshan, Takhar and Kunduz provinces of Afghanistan.”²¹ Heroin trafficked through Central Asia arrives in Russia – one of the largest heroin consumers – and China, where they are either consumed or continue along the “Northern Route” “across Eastern Europe, Northern Europe, and into Western and Central Europe.”²²

Quetta Shura Taliban (QST)

The Afghan Taliban, known as the Quetta Shura Taliban (QST), is the country’s largest insurgent group with an estimated twenty-five thousand militants. Three thousand of these members belong to the Haqqani network and one thousand are affiliated with the Hizb-I-Islami Gulbuddin

¹⁷ “Addiction, Crime, and Insurgency: The transnational threat of Afghan opium,” *UN Office On Drugs and Crime (UNODC)*, October 2009, pp. 114-120, http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Afghanistan/Afghan_Opium_Trade_2009_web.pdf

¹⁸ “The Global Afghan Opium Trade,” *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)*, July 2011, p. 19, http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Studies/Global_Afghan_Opium_Trade_2011-web.pdf

¹⁹ “Addiction, Crime, and Insurgency: The transnational threat of Afghan opium,” *UN Office On Drugs and Crime (UNODC)*, October 2009, p. 63, http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Afghanistan/Afghan_Opium_Trade_2009_web.pdf

²⁰ “The Global Afghan Opium Trade,” *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)*, July 2011, p. 19, http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Studies/Global_Afghan_Opium_Trade_2011-web.pdf

²¹ “The Global Afghan Opium Trade,” *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)*, July 2011, p. 29, http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Studies/Global_Afghan_Opium_Trade_2011-web.pdf

²² “Addiction, Crime, and Insurgency: The transnational threat of Afghan opium,” *UN Office On Drugs and Crime (UNODC)*, October 2009, p. 65, http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Afghanistan/Afghan_Opium_Trade_2009_web.pdf

(HIG).²³ Since the Taliban regime in Afghanistan was toppled in 2001, the QST has been run out of the city of Quetta in the Pakistani province of Baluchistan. Muhammad Omar, the Taliban's spiritual leader, is generally highly regarded and referred to by insurgents as the "leader of the faithful."²⁴ The leadership council (*shura*) includes mainly Afghan Taliban members, but also includes representation of the Haqqani Network and elements of the Pakistani Taliban.²⁵

Since the implementation of interdiction and alternative livelihoods strategies, opium poppy cultivation has shifted to the south of the country, where the Taliban insurgency is concentrated.²⁶ Helmand province remains at the core of the Afghan insurgency and is responsible for about half of opium production.²⁷

Although Muhammad Omar declared opiate production and trafficking to be *haram* (against Islam) in 2000, the Taliban still profits from its cultivation and is associated with the drug trade.²⁸ In main opium cultivation provinces, Taliban insurgents collect a ten percent religious tax (*ushr*) from opium farmers.²⁹ In addition to the tax, the Taliban profits by providing protection to drug traffickers, an activity that increased in prevalence after the implementation of the NATO interdiction policy in Afghanistan.³⁰ Insurgents receive an estimated seventy to one hundred million

²³ Kenneth Katzman, "Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy," *Congressional Research Service*, May 20, 2013, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL30588.pdf>

²⁴ Seth G. Jones, "Why the Haqqani Network Is The Wrong Target," *Foreign Affairs*, November 6, 2011, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/136646/seth-g-jones/why-the-haqqani-network-is-the-wrong-target>

²⁵ Waldman, Matt, "The Sun in the Sky: The Relationship Between Pakistan's ISI and Afghan Insurgents," *Crisis States Research Center*, June 2010

²⁶ "Is Poverty Driving the Afghan Opium Boom?" *UNODC*, March 2008, p. 3, <http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Afghan-poverty-paper-2008.pdf>

²⁷ William A. Byrd And Doris Buddenberg, "Introduction and Overview, Afghanistan's Drug Industry," *UNODC and The World Bank*, 2013, p. 10, http://www.unodc.org/pdf/Afgh_drugindustry_Nov06.pdf

²⁸ Moreau, Ron, "The Taliban's Life of Luxury," *Newsweek*, June 12, 2013, <http://mag.newsweek.com/2013/06/12/the-taliban-s-new-role-as-afghanistan-s-drug-mafia.html>

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Mark Shaw, "Drug Trafficking and the Development of Organized Crime in Post-Taliban Afghanistan," *UNODC and The World Bank*, November 28, 2006, p. 197 http://siteresources.worldbank.org/SOUTHASIAEXT/Resources/Publications/448813-1164651372704/UNDC_Ch7.pdf

USD per year from opium production according to a report by the Congressional Research Service.³¹ Other studies have estimated this number to be even higher.

Although the drug trade provides substantial funding to the Taliban, the insurgent group has largely shifted to profiting by manipulating the legal economy in areas where they operate.³² In these regions, insurgents smuggle licit goods, charge protection fees for shipments, and tax all facets of the economy. The group is also partially funded by wealthy individuals, especially from Persian Gulf countries.³³

PAKISTAN

Pakistan Trade Routes

At its height in the 1980s, Pakistan's opium cultivation was the highest in the world and drove the country's economy.³⁴ Pakistan was also central to the global heroin trade, which was sustained with the support of the country's largest intelligence agency, – the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) – and the Pakistani military. While poppy cultivation has largely been eradicated, cultivation still exists and there has been re-emergence in recent years. Currently, two thousand hectares of opium poppy farmland is estimated to exist in the country. Most of this cultivation is found in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (formerly the Northwest Frontier Provinces), Khyber Agency, Dir, Bannu, and in non-traditional areas including Orakzai, Kurram, North and South Waziristan, and Baluchistan.³⁵

³¹ Kenneth Katzman, "Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy," *Congressional Research Service*, May 20, 2013, p. 17, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL30588.pdf>

³² Vanda Felbab-Brown, "Counterinsurgency, Counternarcotics, and Illicit Economies in Afghanistan: Lessons for State-Building," *Brookings Institution*. October 21, 2009, p. 202

³³ Kenneth Katzman, "Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy," *Congressional Research Service*, May 20, 2013, p. 17, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL30588.pdf>

³⁴ Vanda Felbab-Brown "The Drug-Conflict Nexus in South Asia: Beyond Taliban Profits and Afghanistan," *Brookings Institution*, 2010, p. 102, http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2010/5/regional%20counternarcotics%20felbabbrown/05_regional_counternarcotics_felbabbrown.pdf

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 103

Low levels of government interference and tribal connections facilitate heroin smuggling into Pakistan's FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa areas.³⁶ Criminal elements of tribes residing on both sides of the Afghanistan/Pakistan border control heroin routes into FATA from Afghanistan.³⁷ The Taliban escorts heroin smugglers from Afghanistan to the Chaman official border crossing in Nangarhar, Pakistan as well as to unofficial crossings in Helmand and Nimroz, Afghanistan.³⁸

Pakistan's Baluchistan province is the main point of entry for drug trafficking into Iran because of low levels of border control and proximity to Helmand and Nimroz provinces.³⁹ Central trafficking facilities are located in Peshawar, and heroin-processing labs likely exist in the FATA on its Afghan border.^{40 41}

Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP)

The Pakistani Taliban is mainly comprised of the Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP), a network of Pakistan-based, mostly Pashtun, militias.⁴² It is the largest insurgent group in Pakistan with an estimated thirty thousand militants operating under its umbrella.⁴³ The group is led by Hakimullah Mehsoud, who resides in South Waziristan. The main goal of the TTP is to defy the Pakistani government, mainly by challenging the army presence in North Waziristan, Swat Agency and the FATA.⁴⁴ The insurgent groups also support the Afghan Taliban's goals of working against

³⁶ "The Global Afghan Opium Trade," *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)*, July 2011, pp. 29-30, http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Studies/Global_Afghan_Opium_Trade_2011-web.pdf

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 114

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 29-30

³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 75-78

⁴⁰ Shanty, Frank, *The Nexus*, (New York: Praeger Security International: 2011), p. 34

⁴¹ "The Global Afghan Opium Trade," *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)*, July 2011, p. 36, http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Studies/Global_Afghan_Opium_Trade_2011-web.pdf

⁴² "Mapping Militant Organizations: The Taliban," *Stanford University*, November 28, 2012, <http://www.stanford.edu/group/mappingmilitants/cgi-bin/groups/view/367>

⁴³ Kenneth Katzman, "Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy," *Congressional Research Service*, May 20, 2013, p. 153, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL30588.pdf>

⁴⁴ Abbas, Hassan, "A Profile of Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan," CTC Sentinel, 1.2., *Combatting Terrorism Center at West Point*, January 2008, <http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/files/CTC%20Sentinel%20-%20Profile%20of%20Tehrik-i-Taliban%20Pakistan.pdf>

NATO forces to regain control of Afghanistan. The group was designated a Foreign Terrorist Organization by the United States in September 2010.⁴⁵

The TTP profits from the drug trade in North Waziristan where they rob vehicles and charge protection fees to drug convoys crossing the Pakistan-Afghanistan border.⁴⁶ They also are known to conduct these criminal operations in the Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the Afghan city of Khost.⁴⁷ In Khost, as well as in Bajaur and Oraksai Agencies, they operate alongside the Haqqani Network and Al Qaeda.⁴⁸ Neither the Afghan Taliban nor Pakistani Taliban have been directly connected to cultivation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa or FATA, although there is some evidence that they engage in drug-production and trafficking activities in these provinces.⁴⁹

The group's Mehsoud and Wazir branches profit from similar activities in South Waziristan. The Wazir branch, formerly led by the now deceased Mawlawi Nazir is thought to cooperate with the ISI and the Pakistani military.⁵⁰ Nazir has reportedly ordered militants to avoid combating the Pakistani army. The branch is also thought to protect shipments on the Angoor Adda border crossing located on the South Waziristan border with Paktika that are then sent to Baluchistan⁵¹ It is believed that the group conducts these activities with the help of "corrupt officials from the Frontier

⁴⁵ Kenneth Katzman, "Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy," *Congressional Research Service*, May 20, 2013, p. 16, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL30588.pdf>

⁴⁶ Peters, "Crime and Insurgency in the Tribal Areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan," *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, October 15, 2010, p. 31, <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a536511.pdf>

⁴⁷ "Addiction, Crime, and Insurgency: The transnational threat of Afghan opium," *UN Office On Drugs and Crime (UNODC)*, October 2009, pp. 101-123, http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Afghanistan/Afghan_Opium_Trade_2009_web.pdf

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 124

⁴⁹ Gretchen Peters, "Crime and Insurgency in the Tribal Areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan," *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, October 15, 2010, <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a536511.pdf>

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 82

⁵¹ Gretchen Peters, "Crime and Insurgency in the Tribal Areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan," *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, October 15, 2010, p. 83, <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a536511.pdf>

Constabulary” of the Pakistani military.⁵² The Wazir branch has clashed with Uzbek militants in the region over the control of smuggling routes.⁵³

The Hizb-I Islami Gulbuddin (HIG), led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar operates mostly in the provinces of Kunar, Nuristan, Baghlan, and Kunduz in Northern Afghanistan.⁵⁴ While the U.S. has labeled Gulbuddin Hekmatyar a “specially designated global terrorist,” HIG has not been given the Foreign Terrorist Organization designation.⁵⁵ The insurgent group raises funds by taxing the local population on opium poppy cultivation and taxing shipments to Central Asia. After 1994, many HIG members integrated into Al Qaeda or the Taliban.⁵⁶ The group maintains agreements with the Quetta Shura Taliban – the most powerful militant group in the region – and Haqqani network to share control and profits in areas where they operate together. This cooperation is inconsistent and fighting for control is known to occur.⁵⁷

Lashkar-e Islam (LeI) is the most active criminal group operating in Khyber Agency in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas.⁵⁸ Increased policing of North and South Waziristan has pushed much of drug trafficking to Khyber.⁵⁹ Khyber is now one of the most important points of entry from Afghanistan to Pakistan. LeI has been known to attack trucks using the Khyber route and

⁵² Ayesha Siddiqa, “Pakistan's Counterterrorism Strategy: Separating Friends from Enemies,” *Council on Foreign Relations*, Winter 2011, <http://csis.org/files/publication/twq11wintersiddiqa.pdf>

⁵³ Peters, “Crime and Insurgency in the Tribal Areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan,” *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, October 15, 2010, p. 82, <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a536511.pdf>

⁵⁴ “Addiction, Crime, and Insurgency: The transnational threat of Afghan opium,” *UN Office On Drugs and Crime (UNODC)*, October 2009, p. 103, http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Afghanistan/Afghan_Opium_Trade_2009_web.pdf

⁵⁵ Kenneth Katzman, “Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy,” *Congressional Research Service*, May 20, 2013, p. 15, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL30588.pdf>

⁵⁶ Shanty, Frank, *The Nexus*, (New York: Praeger Security International: 2011), pp. 73-75

⁵⁷ Peters, “Crime and Insurgency in the Tribal Areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan,” *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, October 15, 2010, p. 33, <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a536511.pdf>

⁵⁸ “The Global Afghan Opium Trade,” *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)*, July 2011, p. 36, http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Studies/Global_Afghan_Opium_Trade_2011-web.pdf

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 36

gains significant revenue from collecting taxes on shipments for free passage.⁶⁰ LeI has a complex relationship with the TTP. Both groups function in the area, and the TTP has sought to reach a more concrete power-sharing agreement. However, LeI has avoided involvement in the global jihadist objectives of the TTP and clashes still occur between the groups.⁶¹

CROSS BORDER ACTIVITIES

Al Qaeda

It has been theorized that when sources of funding for Al Qaeda that existed prior to September 11, 2001 (9/11) and the ensuing “War on Terrorism” – such as funding from Islamic states – were largely curtailed, the organization turned to other sources of revenue including the Afghan drug trade.⁶² However, there is almost no concrete evidence to support this theory. Instead, most investigations have found that Al Qaeda’s core leadership – including the late Osama Bin Laden and the current leader Ayman al-Zawahiri – has prohibited the use of narcotics out of concern for maintaining ideological legitimacy.⁶³

Al Qaeda is known to have a strategic relationship with the Afghan Taliban, an organization that profits from the opium trade. Al Qaeda’s experienced and trained 055 Brigade assisted the Taliban in combating the Northern Alliance, an amalgamation of militias fighting against Taliban control.⁶⁴ Al Qaeda also received “arms, demolitions, and men” from the Taliban in exchange for providing fighters to assist in protecting the opium shipments of Afghan drug lord Haji Bashir Noorzai.⁶⁵ After 9/11, the relationship between Al Qaeda and the Taliban became much harder to trace as many operatives of both organizations fled to Pakistan during NATO operations. However,

⁶⁰ Peters, “Crime and Insurgency in the Tribal Areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan,” *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, October 15, 2010, pp. 69-70, <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a536511.pdf>

⁶¹ “Mapping Militant Organizations: Lashkar-e-Islam,” *Stanford University*, August 28, 2012, <http://www.stanford.edu/group/mappingmilitants/cgi-bin/groups/view/445>

⁶² Shanty, Frank, *The Nexus*, (New York: Praeger Security International: 2011), pp. 56-60

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 79

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 58

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 130

cooperation still exists between the two groups, and Al Qaeda maintains a particularly close connection to the Haqqani network.⁶⁶

After 9/11, Al Qaeda became a fragmented group operating without a central command structure.⁶⁷ While the drug trade has not been found to be a main source of revenue for the organization, lower-level Al Qaeda operatives may be involved in some stage of trafficking.⁶⁸ Furthermore, insurgent groups post-9/11 seek control in their areas of operation, while also to some extent maintaining power-sharing and profit-sharing agreements with other anti-government elements. It is possible in this environment that members of Al Qaeda's insurgency are profiting from the drug trade in areas where they have operational control. Evidence suggests that lower levels of Al Qaeda operatives have been involved in drug trafficking along the border of Afghanistan and Pakistan by protecting shipments of refined heroin.⁶⁹ In these regions, Al Qaeda has been found to maintain relationships with militant groups that profit from the drug trade.

Al Qaeda is the most influential militant group operating in Northern Afghanistan and profits from the trafficking of drugs from Kunduz, Takhar, and Badakhshan – a main area of opiate production – to Tajikistan.⁷⁰ Al Qaeda as well as other militant groups are thought to work with groups involved in drug smuggling and are paid to protect drug shipments headed to Central Asia.⁷¹ The Haqqani Network, Hizb-i-Islami Gilbuddin, and foreign groups including the IMU also operate in the region. Evidence exists to suggest that Al Qaeda maintains power sharing and funding

⁶⁶ Don Rassler and Vahid Brown, "CTC: The Haqqani Nexus and the Evolution of al-Qaeda," *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, July 14, 2011, <http://www.ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/CTC-Haqqani-Report-Rassler-Brown-Final-Web.pdf>

⁶⁷ "Addiction, Crime, and Insurgency: The transnational threat of Afghan opium," *UN Office On Drugs and Crime (UNODC)*, October 2009, pp. 123-124, http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Afghanistan/Afghan_Opium_Trade_2009_web.pdf

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 102-103

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 103

⁷⁰ Peters, "Crime and Insurgency in the Tribal Areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan," *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, October 15, 2010, pp. 39-45, 103, <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a536511.pdf>

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 43

distribution agreements with these groups, although they do not always cooperate and fighting is known to occur.⁷² Al Qaeda also operates in Southern Afghanistan, North and South Waziristan, and in the FATA areas, especially Mohmand and Bajaur.^{73 74}

Haqqani Network (HQN)

The Haqqani Network is a subset of the Afghan Taliban with an estimated three thousand members.⁷⁵ The group is connected to the Afghan Taliban, the Pakistani Taliban, Al Qaeda, and the Pakistani ISI.⁷⁶ Their diplomatic centrality has allowed them to exert considerable influence on the operations of these parties and has placed them central to insurgent networks. The Haqqani Network was designated a Foreign Terrorist Organization by the U.S. State Department on September 9, 2012.⁷⁷

The Haqqani Network is historically tied to the development of Al Qaeda and global jihad. The organization allowed Al Qaeda to establish training facilities in Haqqani-controlled territories, especially Waziristan and Loya Paktia.⁷⁸ This relationship continues today, with Al Qaeda continuing to operate in these territories and conducting operations alongside HQN.

⁷² Shanty, Frank, *The Nexus*, (New York: Praeger Security International: 2011), p. 80

⁷³ Peters, "Crime and Insurgency in the Tribal Areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan," *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, October 15, 2010, <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a536511.pdf>

⁷⁴ "Addiction, Crime, and Insurgency: The transnational threat of Afghan opium," *UN Office On Drugs and Crime (UNODC)*, October 2009, p. 123, http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Afghanistan/Afghan_Opium_Trade_2009_web.pdf

⁷⁵ Kenneth Katzman, "Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy," *Congressional Research Service*, May 20, 2013, p. 43, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL30588.pdf>

⁷⁶ Don Rassler and Vahid Brown, "CTC: The Haqqani Nexus and the Evolution of al-Qaeda," *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, July 14, 2011, pp. 8-14 http://www.ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/CTC-Haqqani-Report_Rassler-Brown-Final_Web.pdf

⁷⁷ Kenneth Katzman, "Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy," *Congressional Research Service*, May 20, 2013, p. 16, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL30588.pdf>

⁷⁸ Don Rassler and Vahid Brown, "CTC: The Haqqani Nexus and the Evolution of al-Qaeda," *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, July 14, 2011, p. 8, http://www.ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/CTC-Haqqani-Report_Rassler-Brown-Final_Web.pdf

The group has a base in North Waziristan, a region that has been a central priority for U.S. security policy.⁷⁹ The faction operates mostly in southeastern Afghanistan and in northern provinces near Kabul including Khost and Loya Paktia, where it is the most influential insurgent group and has established a shadow government.⁸⁰ The Haqqani network is believed to benefit from the protection of the Pakistani ISI. The Haqqani's strategic position has led to its deep involvement in drug trafficking networks, especially heroin smuggling.⁸¹ Although it has not been found to be directly involved in trafficking operations, it profits from taxing and facilitating trade.⁸²

The Haqqani Network is closely linked to the Pakistani Taliban, and works with the organization in criminal activities including smuggling, kidnapping, and extortion in Khost, Northwest Pakistan, and North Waziristan.⁸³ Haqqani military commanders are thought to have tribal ties with the Khost tribe in Tanai as well as business connections that facilitate drug smuggling in these areas.⁸⁴

The Haqqani Network is also connected to the Afghan Taliban and represented on the Quetta Shura.⁸⁵ In southern Afghanistan they work alongside the QST as well as HIG, although fighting still occurs between groups.⁸⁶ In this region, most profits from the drug trade are made by taxing the opium trade, especially in Helmand and Kandahar provinces.

⁷⁹ Waldman, Matt, "The Sun in the Sky: The Relationship Between Pakistan's ISI and Afghan Insurgents," *Crisis States Research Center*, June 2010, pp. 16-18

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 16

⁸¹ "The Global Afghan Opium Trade," *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)*, July 2011, pp. 35-36, http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Studies/Global_Afghan_Opium_Trade_2011-web.pdf

⁸² Peters, "Crime and Insurgency in the Tribal Areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan," *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, October 15, 2010, pp. 43-48, <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a536511.pdf>

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ "The Global Afghan Opium Trade," *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)*, July 2011, p. 36, http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Studies/Global_Afghan_Opium_Trade_2011-web.pdf

⁸⁵ Don Rassler and Vahid Brown, "CTC: The Haqqani Nexus and the Evolution of al-Qaeda," *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, July 14, 2011, p. 12, http://www.ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/CTC-Haqqani-Report_Rassler-Brown-Final_Web.pdf

⁸⁶ Peters, "Crime and Insurgency in the Tribal Areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan," *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, October 15, 2010, p. 33, <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a536511.pdf>

The involvement of the Haqqani Network in the opiate trade is also supported by their relationship with Pakistan's ISI.⁸⁷ The intelligence service maintains an alliance with HQN, and uses the network to support Pakistan's objectives in negotiations with the Taliban. Evidence indicates that the ISI influences and possibly even controls HQN operations.

Foreign Groups

The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) became an important drug courier in Afghanistan in the 1990s.⁸⁸ The IMU is an Islamic extremist group that has participated in insurgencies and military attacks in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.⁸⁹ The IMU also attacks coalition forces under the direction of the Taliban and Al Qaeda.

The IMU has ties to various insurgent groups including Al Qaeda and the Taliban, and has operated in the drug trade in Waziristan and Takhar alongside these groups.⁹⁰ At its peak before 9/11, "the IMU may have transported seventy percent of the heroin from Afghanistan through Central Asia."⁹¹ Tajik and Uzbek familial, tribal, and trade networks as well as limited law enforcement facilitate the flow of opiates along the Tajikistan border with Afghanistan.⁹²

Takhar is arguably the most insecure province in Northern Afghanistan, and the only one in which foreign insurgent groups tax the drug trade.⁹³ The IMU and the Taliban control the North and some Southern parts of the province. IMU connections with ethnic Tajiks and Uzbeks in these areas

⁸⁷ Waldman, Matt, "The Sun in the Sky: The Relationship Between Pakistan's ISI and Afghan Insurgents," *Crisis States Research Center*, June 2010

⁸⁸ Vanda Felbab-Brown "The Drug-Conflict Nexus in South Asia: Beyond Taliban Profits and Afghanistan," *Brookings Institution*, 2010, p. 100,
http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2010/5/regional%20counternarcotics%20felbabbrown/05_regional_counternarcotics_felbabbrown.pdf

⁸⁹ "Terrorist Organization Profile: Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)," *START*, Accessed August 4, 2013,
http://www.start.umd.edu/start/data_collections/tops/terrorist_organization_profile.asp?id=4075

⁹⁰ "Opiate Flows Through Northern Afghanistan and Central Asia: A Threat Assessment," *UNODC*, May 2012,
http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Studies/Afghanistan_northern_route_2012_web.pdf

⁹¹ Shanty, Frank, *The Nexus*, (New York: Praeger Security International: 2011), p. 160

⁹² "Opiate Flows Through Northern Afghanistan and Central Asia: A Threat Assessment," *UNODC*, May 2012, p. 40,
http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Studies/Afghanistan_northern_route_2012_web.pdf

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 40

has allowed them to penetrate heroin trafficking routes in the area by gaining control over the border with Tajikistan.

The Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) conducts terrorist attacks in Western Europe and Turkey and operates with the goal of establishing an autonomous state in Turkey's Kurdish areas.⁹⁴ The PKK profits from drug shipments that have been transported to Eastern Turkey from Southern Afghanistan's poppy fields through Baluchistan in Pakistan and Iraq.⁹⁵ The organization receives payments for protection of heroin labs and in some cases may even control their operations.⁹⁶

GOVERNMENT COUNTERNARCOTICS AND COUNTERINSURGENCY EFFORTS

Afghan Government

The Afghan government's counternarcotics strategy is outlined in their National Drug Control Strategy (NDCS). It includes four main priorities, which are to disrupt the drug trade by targeting traffickers and backers, strengthen and diversify legal rural livelihoods, reduce demand for illicit drugs, and develop state institutions at the national and provincial levels.⁹⁷ Despite these policies, corruption plagues the Afghan government and decreases the effectiveness of counternarcotics strategy.

The deep-seated nature of narcotics networks makes it difficult for the central government to crack down on corruption at the provincial and local levels.⁹⁸ The central government is therefore hesitant to commit to comprehensive anti-corruption initiatives because the loss of support that

⁹⁴ "Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK)," *START*. Accessed August 4, 2013.

http://www.start.umd.edu/start/data_collections/tops/terrorist_organization_profile.asp?id=63

⁹⁵ "The Global Afghan Opium Trade," *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)*, July 2011, p. 55,

http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Studies/Global_Afghan_Opium_Trade_2011-web.pdf

⁹⁶ "Opiate Flows Through Northern Afghanistan and Central Asia: A Threat Assessment," *UNODC*, May 2012, p. 41

http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Studies/Afghanistan_northern_route_2012_web.pdf

⁹⁷ "National Drug Control Strategy," *Islamic Republic of Afghanistan Ministry of Counternarcotics*, January 2006,

http://s3.amazonaws.com/zanran_storage/www.afghanconflictmonitor.org/ContentPages/49545422.pdf

⁹⁸ Mark Shaw, "Drug Trafficking and the Development of Organized Crime in Post-Taliban Afghanistan," *UNODC and The World Bank*, November 28, 2006, pp. 200-205,

http://siteresources.worldbank.org/SOUTHASIAEXT/Resources/Publications/448813-1164651372704/UNDC_Ch7.pdf

these measures would cause. Karzai's Pashtun tribe and members of the Karzai family, including the President's half-brother Ahmed Wali Karzai, are influential in Kandahar and many of the southern regions of Afghanistan where opium cultivation is most prevalent.⁹⁹ Furthermore, many of the elements of the current government are former members of the Mujahideen, Taliban, and Northern Alliance that have been involved in drug trafficking in the past. It is speculated that this involvement often continued when individuals entered into the newly formed government.¹⁰⁰ These factors may be part of the reason the Karzai administration has not substantially decreased corruption or strengthened the country's policing and justice systems. President Karzai himself has appointed various regional governors and even high government officials that were previously involved in drug cultivation and trafficking, including his Vice President, Muhammad Fahim.¹⁰¹

While some corruption occurs on the national level, the corruption most prevalent and most critical to the drug trade is found at the regional and provincial levels.¹⁰² Corruption is perhaps most evident in the Ministry of the Interior, where Afghan National Police (ANP) commanders exercise substantial levels of control over the drug trade in many regions. The police accept bribes to allow drug convoy passage and also to appoint drug traffickers to high-level positions.¹⁰³ The trafficking route from Helmand and Kandahar in the south to the northern provinces of "Nangarhar, Badakhshan, and Takhar" has been referred to as "the corruption corridor." Along this route, corrupt government officials often take bribes to allow drug flows through checkpoints.¹⁰⁴ The judiciary is also rife with corruption; judges are known to accept bribes to let off high-level drug

⁹⁹ Kenneth Katzman, "Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy," *Congressional Research Service*, May 20, 2013, p. 12, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL30588.pdf>

¹⁰⁰ Shanty, Frank, *The Nexus*, (New York: Praeger Security International: 2011), p. 112

¹⁰¹ Thomas Schweich, "Is Afghanistan a Narco-state?" *New York Times*, July 27, 2008, <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/27/magazine/27AFGHAN-t.html?pagewanted=all>

¹⁰² Shanty, Frank, *The Nexus*, (New York: Praeger Security International: 2011), p. 112

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 112

¹⁰⁴ "The Global Afghan Opium Trade," *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)*, July 2011, p. 29, http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Studies/Global_Afghan_Opium_Trade_2011-web.pdf

traffickers.¹⁰⁵ Corruption in both ministries creates insecurity and weakens the rule of law, allowing the perpetuation of the drug trade.

Still, there are regions where cultivation reduction has occurred, incentivized by alternative livelihoods. In the province of Nangarhar, Governor Gul Agha Sherzai has kept “cultivation negligible by a combination of buy-offs of influential *maliks* (tribal elders), promises of alternative livelihoods, and threats of eradication of the poppy crops and imprisonment.”¹⁰⁶ In certain provinces, especially those closest to Jalalabad, eradication has worked, aided by the work of governors like Sherzai. Provinces farther from Jalalabad have had less success due to greater instability and less access to credit and other assistance.¹⁰⁷

Pakistani Government

Extremist groups are believed to receive support from the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) in addition to the revenue they receive from the Afghan drug trade and other criminal activity.¹⁰⁸ The country has historically supported groups that originated in the Mujahedeen and purportedly continues to support these insurgent groups. Their policy toward insurgent groups is based on a need for “strategic depth” in their continued struggles with India for control of Kashmir and territory around the Durand Line.¹⁰⁹ This is especially true considering that India has deepened its ties with the Afghan government during the Karzai administration.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁵ Shanty, Frank, *The Nexus*, (New York: Praeger Security International: 2011), p. 112

¹⁰⁶ Vanda Felbab-Brown, “Counterinsurgency, Counternarcotics, and Illicit Economies in Afghanistan: Lessons for State-Building,” *Brookings Institution*. October 21, 2009, p. 192

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 94

¹⁰⁸ Waldman, Matt, “The Sun in the Sky: The Relationship Between Pakistan’s ISI and Afghan Insurgents,” *Crisis States Research Center*, June 2010

¹⁰⁹ Jayshree Bajoria, “The Troubled Afghan-Pakistani Border,” *Council on Foreign Relations*, March 20, 2009, <http://www.cfr.org/pakistan/troubled-afghan-pakistani-border/p14905>

¹¹⁰ Kenneth Katzman, “Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy,” *Congressional Research Service*, May 20, 2013, p. 47, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL30588.pdf>

The ISI is thought to maintain alliances with groups that include the Pakistani Taliban and the Haqqani network in order to maintain its security when U.S. troops leave Afghanistan.¹¹¹ The intelligence service is crucial to Taliban operations, supplying insurgents with funding, sanctuary, arms, and training.¹¹² The ISI maintains the closest relationship with the Haqqani Network (HQN). The ISI not only provides arms and finances for the group but also influences its operations, likely even controlling the actions of HQN leader Jalaluddin Haqqani.¹¹³

Pakistan's military has increasingly supported counterinsurgency measures in certain areas including the northwest tribal areas.¹¹⁴ This is likely in part because, despite their ties with the Taliban, the ISI has lost control of many elements of the TTP. Pakistan's military controls counterterrorism operations and has conducted counterterrorist operations in Swat and South Waziristan but does not conduct operations in North Waziristan. The military differentiates between friendly and unfriendly Taliban, maintaining alliances with cooperative factions.¹¹⁵ The "friendly" Taliban in the country operate mostly out of North Waziristan and includes the Haqqani network. "Unfriendly" Taliban include the Nazeer and Mehsoud branches of the TTP and operate out of Swat, South Waziristan, some of North Waziristan, and much of the rest of Pakistan.

U.S. and Coalition Governments

The NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) works alongside the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), providing training and assisting in security and stability

¹¹¹ Jayshree Bajoria and Eben Kaplan, "The ISI and Terrorism: Behind the Accusations," *Council on Foreign Relations*, May 4, 2011, <http://www.cfr.org/pakistan/isi-terrorism-behind-accusations/p11644>

¹¹² Waldman, Matt, "The Sun in the Sky: The Relationship Between Pakistan's ISI and Afghan Insurgents," *Crisis States Research Center*, June 2010, p. 1

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 17-20

¹¹⁴ Ayesha Siddiqi, "Pakistan's Counterterrorism Strategy: Separating Friends from Enemies,"

Council on Foreign Relations, Winter 2011, pp. 150-153, <http://csis.org/files/publication/twq11wintersiddiqi.pdf>

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 151-152

operations.¹¹⁶ These forces include the Afghan National Army (ANA) and the Afghan National Police (ANP). The U.S. and its partners also support reconstruction, development, and strengthening institutions with Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs).¹¹⁷ A substantial drawdown by the end of 2014 is currently being enacted for U.S. forces in Afghanistan.¹¹⁸ Many other Western countries have already withdrawn from the country.

Counternarcotics policies have taken various forms since September 11, 2001. In 2002, the United Kingdom led a policy of compensated eradication that failed in less than a year, mostly due to problems with corruption.¹¹⁹ In 2004, interdiction policies were implemented, but were evaded by large-scale traffickers so that interdiction mainly affected smaller-scale traders.¹²⁰ These traders required protection to maneuver around interdiction efforts, giving the Taliban a chance for re-entry into the opiate trade.¹²¹ Eradication efforts were undertaken beginning in 2004 and were successful at the outset, especially in the main poppy-producing province of Nangarhar.¹²² However, poppy cultivation has recovered and reached near pre-eradication levels so that the drug trade continues to fund and empower insurgent groups.¹²³ The Afghan government continues to resist strong counter-narcotic efforts and also engages in corrupt actions that facilitate the industry's continuation.¹²⁴ This is likely because ties exist between individuals that are directly involved in or benefit from the drug trade and government officials.

¹¹⁶ Kenneth Katzman, "Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy," *Congressional Research Service*, May 20, 2013, pp. 30-33, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL30588.pdf>

¹¹⁷ "About ISAF: Mission," *NATO*. Accessed August 4, 2013, <http://www.isaf.nato.int/mission.html>

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 24

¹¹⁹ Vanda Felbab-Brown, "Counterinsurgency, Counternarcotics, and Illicit Economies in Afghanistan: Lessons for State-Building," *Brookings Institution*. October 21, 2009

¹²⁰ Mark Shaw, "Drug Trafficking and the Development of Organized Crime in Post-Taliban Afghanistan," *UNODC and The World Bank*, November 28, 2006, pp. 100-107, http://siteresources.worldbank.org/SOUTHASIAEXT/Resources/Publications/448813-1164651372704/UNDC_Ch7.pdf

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 105

¹²² Vanda Felbab-Brown, "Counterinsurgency, Counternarcotics, and Illicit Economies in Afghanistan: Lessons for State-Building," *Brookings Institution*. October 21, 2009, p. 93

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 192

¹²⁴ Thomas Schweich, "Is Afghanistan a Narco-state?" *New York Times*, July 27, 2008, <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/27/magazine/27AFGHAN-t.html?pagewanted=all>

The Karzai administration has insisted that eradicating the opium crop is devastating for the country's poor and that greater aid, not greater eradication measures, is needed in the country.¹²⁵ A United Nations report on drugs and poverty in Afghanistan supported these claims, finding that it is in fact wealthy Afghans in southern Afghanistan that account for much of the continued opium production. The report contends that not only infrastructure development and alternative crop funding, but also more effective eradication is necessary to deter continued opium poppy cultivation.¹²⁶

The U.S. counternarcotics strategy has shifted since 2009 from a focus on eradication to interdiction and alternative livelihoods. The previous strategy, as outlined in the 2007 budget, sought to partner with Afghan officials in provinces with high levels of opium production to support initiatives including an “opium poppy elimination program, drug enforcement and interdiction program, public diplomacy efforts, drug demand reduction programs, and drug control capacity building.”¹²⁷ Officials in these provinces were encouraged “to proactively campaign against farmers planting poppy, pressure farmers who do plant poppy to voluntarily replant in legitimate crops, and threaten forced eradication.”¹²⁸ In 2009, the U.S. turned more control of Counternarcotics to the Afghan government, focusing on “interdiction, justice reform, and law enforcement capacity building efforts, as well as building the capacity of the Afghan government [to] independently support counternarcotics activities.”¹²⁹ The U.S. ended opium poppy eradication, allowing the Afghan government to control eradication efforts. The U.S. government also undertook other means

¹²⁵ Thomas Schweich, “Is Afghanistan a Narco-state?” *New York Times*, July 27, 2008, <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/27/magazine/27AFGHAN-t.html?pagewanted=all>

¹²⁶ “Is Poverty Driving the Afghan Opium Boom?” *UNODC*, March 2008, <http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Afghan-poverty-paper-2008.pdf>

¹²⁷ “FY 2008 Budget Summary,” *The White House*, February 2007, http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/ondcp/Fact_Sheets/FY2008-Budget-Summary-February-2007.pdf

¹²⁸ “FY 2008 Budget Summary,” *The White House*, February 2007, http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/ondcp/Fact_Sheets/FY2008-Budget-Summary-February-2007.pdf

¹²⁹ “The National Drug Control Budget: FY 2013 Funding Highlights,” *The White House*, February 2012, http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/ondcp/fy_2013_bud_get_highlights.pdf

of reducing the supply of opium poppy through the Good Performers Initiative that provided rewards to farmers growing legal crops.¹³⁰

Criminal groups including extremist groups involved in the drug trade have changed their structures as a reaction to interdiction policies. Drug networks have been driven deeper underground and have been consolidated to have less players and more secrecy.¹³¹ These policies have also allowed groups to charge for the physical and political protection of drug traffickers.¹³²

The U.S. strategy for Pakistan seeks to “help Pakistan defend itself against the migration of labs from Afghanistan, reduce domestic demand, and curb drug trafficking into and through Pakistan.”¹³³ The strategy also attempts to address the potential threat of opium poppy cultivation moving into Pakistan and especially into areas where it had not traditionally been cultivated.¹³⁴ The Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) of the U.S. State Department organizes the policy in Pakistan in collaboration with Pakistan’s Anti-Narcotics Force.¹³⁵ U.S. counterinsurgency strategy has increasingly focused on securing Pakistan’s tribal regions on its borders with Afghanistan and Iraq.¹³⁶ This is particularly true for Waziristan, where the Haqqani Network has increasingly been targeted.¹³⁷

¹³⁰ Thomas Schweich, “Is Afghanistan a Narco-state?” *New York Times*, July 27, 2008, <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/27/magazine/27AFGHAN-t.html?pagewanted=all>

¹³¹ Mark Shaw, “Drug Trafficking and the Development of Organized Crime in Post-Taliban Afghanistan,” *UNODC and The World Bank*, November 28, 2006, pp. 193-210, http://siteresources.worldbank.org/SOUTHASIAEXT/Resources/Publications/448813-1164651372704/UNDC_Ch7.pdf

¹³² *Ibid.*

¹³³ “FY 2008 Budget Summary,” *The White House*, February 2007, http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/ondcp/Fact_Sheets/FY2008-Budget-Summary-February-2007.pdf

¹³⁴ Vanda Felbab-Brown, “Counterinsurgency, Counternarcotics, and Illicit Economies in Afghanistan: Lessons for State-Building,” *Brookings Institution*. October 21, 2009, p. 103

¹³⁵ “INL Pakistan Counternarcotics Program,” *US Department of State*, Accessed August 4, 2013, <http://www.state.gov/j/inl/narc/c48593.htm>

¹³⁶ Kenneth Katzman, “Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy,” *Congressional Research Service*, May 20, 2013, p. 47, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL30588.pdf>

¹³⁷ Jones, “After the Withdrawal: A Way Forward in Afghanistan and Pakistan,” *RAND Corporation*, March 2013

CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Various terrorist groups have been thought to benefit from the opiate trade, whether from funding or direct involvement in the movement and sale of opiates. There is evidence that the Afghan and Pakistani Taliban, Islamic Movement in Uzbekistan (IMU), and the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), are involved in the trafficking and sale of narcotics. While the idea of a Taliban-Al Qaeda drug trafficking nexus has gained attention in recent years, there is little evidence to substantiate this claim. It is more likely that Al Qaeda benefits indirectly because of its association with the Taliban.¹³⁸

Criminal organizations and terror networks work with similar organizational structures. These organizations use illegal means such as bribes to gain power and influence, operate within a hierarchy that isolates leaders from criminal control, and are adaptable to changing circumstances.¹³⁹ This has allowed extremist organizations to take on characteristics of criminal networks and become something of “hybrids” that utilize their influence to gain financing from the drug trade.¹⁴⁰ While it has been argued that global jihadist groups are involved in a “nexus” with global jihad to control the drug trade in Afghanistan, it is difficult to draw such a straightforward conclusion from existing evidence. Still, militant and terrorist groups in the region, most of which are directly involved in or otherwise profit from the drug trade, have formed complex networks that often share the same central tenets. These organizations cause instability both regionally and in the global community. Profits from the drug trade, while they may or may not be the main source of profits sustaining these groups, help to support operations.

¹³⁸ Shanty, Frank, *The Nexus*, (New York: Praeger Security International: 2011), p. 80

¹³⁹ Mark Shaw, “Drug Trafficking and the Development of Organized Crime in Post-Taliban Afghanistan,” *UNODC and The World Bank*, November 28, 2006, pp. 193-210, http://siteresources.worldbank.org/SOUTHASIAEXT/Resources/Publications/448813-1164651372704/UNDC_Ch7.pdf

¹⁴⁰ Jonas Hartelius, “Narcoterrorism,” *East-West Institute*, March 2008, <http://www.ewi.info/system/files/reports/Narcoterrorism.pdf>

Operations during the War on Terrorism in Afghanistan greatly undermined the operational structure of militant groups including Al Qaeda and the Afghan Taliban.¹⁴¹ The long-term effect that counternarcotics and counterinsurgency strategies had on the opium trade was to push the Taliban out of Kandahar and into the south and northeast of the country, and into Pakistan.¹⁴² ¹⁴³ The Taliban largely turned away from opium as its main source of funding and turned instead to illegally profiting from all sectors of the economy. It also drove the drug trade deeper underground, creating a more hierarchical structure within the trade that allowed the Taliban to profit by charging protection fees to drug traffickers. While regions of Afghanistan became poppy-free after counternarcotics efforts, overall cultivation did not decrease, and instead became concentrated in certain areas. In these areas the opium trade only profits groups with the financial and political clout to evade interdiction.¹⁴⁴

Despite complications, the shift from eradication to interdiction was a wise move. The strategy disrupted the organizational structures of the Taliban and other drug traffickers and decreased negative sentiments against the U.S. that could widen the recruitment base for terrorists. Alternative livelihoods were also a well-guided policy that focused on incentivizing growing licit crops. However, the benefit of the alternative livelihoods programs never fully materialized.¹⁴⁵ Programs failed when they focused on short-term relief instead of sustained development, or when

¹⁴¹ Mark Shaw, "Drug Trafficking and the Development of Organized Crime in Post-Taliban Afghanistan," *UNODC and The World Bank*, November 28, 2006, p. 197,

http://siteresources.worldbank.org/SOUTHASIAEXT/Resources/Publications/448813-1164651372704/UNDC_Ch7.pdf

¹⁴² *Ibid.*

¹⁴³ "Addiction, Crime, and Insurgency: The transnational threat of Afghan opium," *UNODC*, October 2009, pp. 118-120, http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Afghanistan/Afghan_Opium_Trade_2009_web.pdf

¹⁴⁴ Mark Shaw, "Drug Trafficking and the Development of Organized Crime in Post-Taliban Afghanistan," *UNODC and The World Bank*, November 28, 2006, p. 205,

http://siteresources.worldbank.org/SOUTHASIAEXT/Resources/Publications/448813-1164651372704/UNDC_Ch7.pdf

¹⁴⁵ Vanda Felbab-Brown, "Counterinsurgency, Counternarcotics, and Illicit Economies in Afghanistan: Lessons for State-Building," *Brookings Institution*. October 21, 2009, pp. 197-200

funds were funneled away from their intended beneficiaries due to corruption. Continued aid in the region should focus on long-term sustainable development and greater access to micro-credit.¹⁴⁶

Education and public relations campaigns are also a necessary component of counterterrorism strategies. Winning over “hearts and minds,” as is currently emphasized in U.S. counterinsurgency strategy, is complicated by economic difficulties and anti-Western attitudes abetted by a continued military presence. The strategy in the region should therefore work within diplomatic channels to encourage Pakistan and Afghanistan to discourage the perpetuation of fundamentalist Islam, to encourage economic development, and to improve security bodies.¹⁴⁷

While it would be difficult to implement a comprehensive anti-corruption policy, avoiding corruption and making progress on counternarcotics efforts, especially at the provincial level, should be rewarded. Positive results, such as those seen in the province of Nangarhar under the direction of Governor Sherzai should be incentivized. Reform of Afghan security forces should continue to be a main priority.

Ultimately, building the capacity of the Afghan government and strengthening the rule of law are the most important goals for combating terrorism, insurgency, and the drug trade, especially as the U.S. prepares for a massive drawdown. It will be important continue training, advising, and providing resources to these ends.

¹⁴⁶ Vanda Felbab-Brown, “Counterinsurgency, Counternarcotics, and Illicit Economies in Afghanistan: Lessons for State-Building,” *Brookings Institution*. October 21, 2009, pp. 197-200

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

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