

**Prepared Statement of  
Brian A. Nichols  
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for  
International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs  
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Chairman Feinstein, co-Chairman Grassley, and Senators, thank you for the opportunity to discuss the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement’s (INL) role in the U.S. Government’s counternarcotics (CN) efforts in Afghanistan.

INL administers a variety of counternarcotics, rule of law, corrections, and police training programs in Afghanistan in support of U.S. policy objectives and at the direct request of the Government of Afghanistan. Our efforts in Afghanistan are vital to the larger interagency and international fight to counter the narcotics trade, which we know fuels the insurgency, undermines the Afghan government by fostering corruption, and erodes both the Afghan economy and social structure through financial dependence and physical addiction amongst many Afghan families.

To set the stage, let me note that according to United Nations estimates, in 2010 roughly 3,600 metric tons of illicit Afghan opiates – worth an estimated \$65 billion on the global market – was introduced to the drug economy in Afghanistan, with much of it exported by criminal actors via Central Asia, Iran, and Pakistan. We know that cross-border narcotics smuggling is a key funding source for insurgent operations in Afghanistan, and narcotics traffickers actively collude with anti-government elements to protect smuggling routes in exchange for funding and weapons. Afghanistan’s success in eliminating or degrading this important funding source for the insurgency, with support from the international community, will have a direct bearing on the ability of U.S. and coalition forces to confidently turn over security responsibilities to the Afghan Government.

While Afghanistan continues to supply an estimated 77 percent of the world’s opium, several positive and consistent trends have emerged in the last four years. After reaching a peak cultivation level of 193,000 hectares (ha) in 2007, nationwide poppy cultivation fell by more than one-third to 123,000 ha in 2009.

Even amid the highest farm-gate and trader-level opium prices since 2004, illicit opium poppy cultivation remained stable and did not increase in 2010.

In 2006, high levels of illicit cultivation occurred throughout the country and only six of Afghanistan's 34 provinces were considered "poppy free" by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). By 2009 and 2010, due to the Government of Afghanistan's efforts and U.S. and coalition support, 20 Afghan provinces were poppy-free, and large scale cultivation is concentrated in areas of the south where general instability has allowed criminal networks and insurgent groups to thrive. These gains remain fragile, and reductions in illicit cultivation remain closely tied to parallel gains in security, governance, and development, as well as strong support to central and provincial Afghan authorities from the international community. But they are notable none the less.

To help address these challenges, the State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, which I help to lead, supports our Afghan, interagency, and international partners in implementing portions of the U.S. Counternarcotics Strategy for Afghanistan, which was announced by the late Ambassador Richard Holbrooke in early 2010 and is aligned with Afghanistan's own National Drug Control Strategy and President Obama's National Drug Control Strategy. INL programs directly support U.S. government counterinsurgency goals at both ends of the drug supply chain by targeting the insurgent-narcotrafficker nexus while also enhancing support for licit agriculture, counternarcotics law enforcement, institutional capacity building, demand reduction, public information, and rule of law. The effectiveness and sustainability of all of these efforts hinge on building the Afghan Government's capacity to take on increasing responsibility in the fight against narcotics. Transitioning counternarcotics responsibilities to be fully Afghan-led is our goal and is the only sustainable way of managing the threat from Afghan narcotics over the long-term.

### **A Focus on the Insurgent-Narcotrafficker Nexus**

Given the focus of the U.S. Government strategy to reduce support insurgents receive from the drug trade, interdiction efforts led by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) are a cornerstone of U.S. programs in Afghanistan. With support from INL and the Department of Defense (DOD), DEA actively mentors and conducts joint operations with vetted units within the Counternarcotics Police of Afghanistan (CNPA). While DEA's mission focuses mainly on operational and investigative mentoring, INL assistance provides facilities operations and maintenance support (food service, custodial, electrical power generation, and

other administrative support) , and separately provides specialty mentors to teach CNPA officers critical administrative support skills, such as record-keeping, supply chain management, human resources, and other administrative functions necessary to support their law enforcement activities.

As a result of DEA, INL, and DOD support and mentoring, the CNPA's specialized units are now able to conduct their own investigations and operations, request warrants, and execute them. In 2010, the CNPA along with their DEA mentors, conducted over 100 operations, and Afghan and international forces together seized over 11 metric tons of heroin – including the largest heroin seizure in history of 5.7 metric tons – a 700 percent increase from the 2009 level. One tangible outcome of this partnership was a major operation in February of this year, where DEA and a vetted CNPA unit, supported by INL's air wing, seized more than four metric tons of morphine base during a series of raids in Achin District, Nangarhar province. Overall, according to International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) statistics, Afghan and coalition forces have seized over four tons of heroin already this year, along with more than 43 tons of opium.

In its 2010 report, “U.S. Counternarcotics Strategy in Afghanistan,” the Senate Drug Caucus noted the importance of the CNPA vetted units and recommended that the number of Afghan personnel in these units be increased. We couldn't agree more, and have taken steps to support development in this regard. In fact, between 2009 and 2011, with interagency support, the CNPA was able to double the size of its National Interdiction Unit (NIU) from just over 250 to 538 elite officers, and the Sensitive Investigative Unit (SIU) expanded from just under 40 officers to 77 vetted and trained specialty officers. This expansion required a similar increase in support for the State Department's assistance to the CNPA, but we believe the value is well worth the effort – and we have worked to ensure that the expanded cadre of specially trained and vetted officers will be sustainable by the CNPA. INL is also working with DEA and DOD to support the CNPA's new regional bases, with appropriate facilities and mentoring support. We have also tripled the number of mentors we have provided to the vetted units from two to six over the past year to supplement DEA's increased operational and investigative mentoring.

Many narcotics arrests made by CNPA personnel are channeled to the Counter Narcotics Justice Center (CNJC), a center for the investigation, prosecution, detention, and trial of major narcotics cases (defined as those concerning more than 2kg of heroin, 10kg of opium, or 50kg of hashish) as well as narcotics-related corruption and weapons cases. This is another critical area of the

counternarcotics, criminal justice, and rule of law continuum where INL support is helping the Government of Afghanistan develop capacity. Currently, INL provides on-site mentoring, funding for Department of Justice mentors, salary support for the protective guard force employed to protect the CNJC, and facility support,. The majority of the CNJC's cases consist of low-to-mid-level traffickers, but these cases are now handled routinely and professionally, with conviction rates well over 80 percent. As the Drug Caucus recommended in its 2010 report, INL and DOJ intend to build upon these successes to prepare the judicial system for increasingly high-level drug trafficking cases. Between April and June of 2011, the CNJC courts oversaw 177 convictions in the Primary Court, 183 convictions in the Appeals Court, and 212 convictions in the Supreme Court, which confirms that major progress continues.

### **Comprehensive Supply Reduction**

Another cornerstone of the U.S. Counternarcotics Strategy in Afghanistan that INL programs support is the development of sustainable agricultural alternatives to opium poppy. INL supports these objectives, led by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), by developing programs that communicate the harms of the drug trade to Afghan citizens, introduce an element of risk into the crop planting decisions of Afghan farmers, and encourage provincial leaders to reduce poppy cultivation in their areas of responsibility.

Engaging Afghan leaders and citizens on the dangers of narcotics cultivation, trafficking, and use is a critical element of our supply reduction programs. INL supports the Ministry for Counter Narcotics (MCN) Public Information campaign, which is a year-round, nationwide effort to inform and shape public opinion on narcotics issues by reaching people through personal engagement and radio, television, and print media. With our support, the MCN convened 25 provincial conferences, 72 district jirgas (assemblies of elders), and 11 ulema (religious leaders) conferences prior to the fall 2010 poppy planting season to inform farmers of the dangers of opium and to encourage them to cultivate licit crops instead of poppy. To sustain a long-term reduction in poppy cultivation and drug consumption in Afghanistan, INL is supporting the second year of a joint MCN and Ministry of Education preventative drug education and life skills program for Afghan elementary, middle, and high school students. In addition to our direct work with the MCN, INL also partners with the Voice of America and Afghan non-governmental organization (NGOs) to implement

innovative CN media messaging projects to reach other target audiences, as well as coordinating our messages with interagency partners and ISAF.

Essential to developing and monitoring effective supply reduction programs is an accurate understanding of narcotics cultivation, eradication, and price data. INL supports the expansion of CN research, monitoring, and verification capacity within the MCN, which is legally mandated to monitor and coordinate the implementation of the Afghan National Drug Control Strategy. With INL funding, MCN works with UNODC to produce annual, authoritative reporting on illicit opium cultivation trends in Afghanistan. In turn, these public reports form the objective statistical basis for INL support to MCN-led supply reduction programs, such as the Good Performers' Initiative and Governor-Led Eradication. All INL support to UNODC research projects aims to embed technical experts within the Afghan government to provide on-the-job statistical and survey analysis training, with the goal of strengthening the Afghan government's own ability to independently assess the progress of drug control efforts in their country so that they will be able to conduct these important studies on their own in the future.

While many factors affect poppy cultivation, local leaders wield considerable leverage over cultivation and eradication outcomes in their provinces, as we have witnessed in Helmand, Nangarhar, and Balkh. To leverage the support of provincial leaders, INL provides funding to the MCN's Good Performers Initiative, which funds high-impact development projects in provinces that demonstrate leadership in reducing illicit opium cultivation. Since the inception of the initiative in 2007, the number of poppy-free provinces has steadily increased from 6 in 2006 to 20 in 2009 and sustained in 2010, and overall nationwide cultivation has declined by more than one-third. As a result of this program, 80 initiative-funded development projects – including schools, road and bridge projects, irrigation structures, farm machinery projects, and hospitals, health clinics, and drug treatment centers – are either complete or ongoing in 30 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces.

As we have seen in Helmand province, where Governor Mangal has reduced opium poppy cultivation for three consecutive years amid the highest farm-gate opium prices since 2004, a small amount of eradication can have a significant impact on behavior. For this reason, INL continues to support the MCN's Governor-Led Eradication (GLE) program, which provides funding to provincial governments for expenses incurred during Afghan-led eradication in areas where licit agricultural alternatives exist. 2011 was a record year for GLE, due in large part to strong leadership from Minister for Counter Narcotics Zarar Osmani

Moqbel. With INL support and assistance, Minister Osmani led a proactive provincial outreach campaign – jointly implemented with the high-level participation of other Afghan line ministries – to convince governors in key provinces to plan for and implement these robust campaigns. As a result, eradication increased from 2,380 hectares in 2010 to 3,917 ha in 2011, a jump of more than 65 percent. In addition, seven more provinces participated in GLE in 2011 than in 2010.

## **Reducing Illegal Drug Use and its Consequences**

Widespread drug addiction is a significant threat to Afghanistan's future. Addiction not only provides a sustainable domestic market for drug traffickers, but also threatens the health of the next generation of Afghans. A recent INL-funded study on second-hand opium smoke in Afghanistan uncovered alarmingly high concentrations of opiates in Afghan children, far exceeding rates documented in adults in other countries. Broader, long-term U.S. objectives for Afghanistan are undermined by a complex range of substance abuse issues, including child, adolescent, and female addiction; drug use related to decades of conflict; and the absence of a drug treatment infrastructure or trained professional staff prior to 2008. To respond to these challenges, INL is working with the Afghan government, the Colombo Plan (an international organization), UNODC, and the World Health Organization to develop a drug treatment system for Afghanistan. INL currently supports 29 drug treatment centers in 16 provinces, including six centers for women with adjacent centers for drug-addicted children; this constitutes well over half of the available treatment options within Afghanistan. INL support includes providing funding for operational expenses at these centers, as well as working closely with the Colombo Plan to develop curriculum and administer professional training to Afghan treatment providers. INL has funded UNODC to develop the first treatment protocols worldwide for treatment of opiate addicted children. In addition, to overcome methodological problems in recent surveys conducted by the international community in Afghanistan, INL will conduct the first scientific study of Afghan national drug use, to be completed by 2012 using toxicological evidence (such as hair and urine) from up to 2,000 individuals in 22 provinces (security permitting at the time of the survey).

## **The Way Forward**

The challenges of reducing the threat of Afghan narcotics remain profound. The U.S. and international partners have helped the Government of Afghanistan achieve a great deal, yet drug production and the drug trade continue to undermine

all aspects of the Government of Afghanistan's ability to build political stability, economic growth, and establish security and rule of law. Drug-related corruption reinforces impunity and a dangerous perception of the Government's impotence. For these reasons, the collective CN efforts of the Afghan Government, the United States, and the international community remain critical. The success of these programs will help set the conditions for a successful drawdown of U.S. military assets in Afghanistan and sustain the progress made over the last ten years in all sectors – including security, education, health, economic development, and governance – into the future.

At the same time, we recognize that changing attitudes and entrenched behaviors with regard to narcotics is a long-term endeavor. For this reason, we continue to increase our focus on Afghanization and the gradual transition of responsibility to the Afghan government. INL CN programs will continue to build basic human and administrative infrastructure within the Afghan Ministry of Counter Narcotics and Ministry of Interior through mentoring, training, and materiel support. Government of Afghanistan counternarcotics institutions must be able to independently prepare and defend budget requests to Afghanistan's Parliament, design and implement Afghan-led CN efforts, develop systems for recruiting, promoting, and retaining qualified personnel, and ensure the supply of essential supplies such as uniforms and fuel. This work is neither flashy nor quick, but it is essential to enabling the dual transitions to civilian- and Afghan-lead that will occur in the coming years.

We look forward to continuing to work to meet evolving challenges on the ground and working with our interagency partners, including DEA, the Office of National Drug Control Policy, and DOD, to meet these important shared objectives. I and my colleagues at the State Department's INL Bureau are grateful for the attention paid to these important issues by the Drug Caucus, and for your continued support of our important work. Thank you for your time this afternoon and in advance for what I'm sure will be a meaningful conversation.