

We cannot meet the serious challenges we face in Afghanistan through military action alone. Our military mission must be augmented with the strength of our diplomacy and depth of our ability to improve economic opportunity. As a subcommittee chair on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, I have a unique perspective on the situation in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

To achieve success in the region, we must develop a robust diplomatic and economic strategy to counter the resurgence of Al-Qaeda and Taliban extremists in Afghanistan and their spread into Pakistan. The wide range of political, social, and economic problems that underpin Afghanistan's conflicts must be addressed with non-military initiatives including development, humanitarian aid, and diplomacy. Paramount among these is the inclusion of women in Afghanistan society; free from persecution and fear.

American military presence may be a short-term option to improve stability in Afghanistan, but increased U.S. troop levels will not bring long-term security to Afghanistan. Instead, our military involvement must be driven by a military strategy that includes clear and achievable objectives.

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