

PRAP Canada statement on the John Manley Report issued January 21, 2008

As you may well be aware that a panel was appointed by the Prime Minister of Canada Mr. Stephen Harper to undertake an independent study of Canada's future role in Afghanistan's reconstruction.

Mr. Johan Manley – a former cabinet minister and a respected politician in Canada was appointed to the task. On January 21, 2007 the final report of the independent panel was presented to Prime Minister and released to the media.

We are pleased to inform you that the report reflects the realities of the day and is for the benefit of the Afghan people and modern Afghan governance.

Pashtun Research Advocacy and Policy Centre has contributed its thoughts and analysis to the John Manley report on the future of Canada's role in Afghanistan through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Canada.

Over the last two months the PRAP chairman Yar Taraky has visited Ottawa on behalf of PRAP Canada and participated in meetings with the Manley panel, senior political advisors as well as with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada Honorable Mr. Maxime Bernier

Most of our recommendations have found its place in the Manley report. Canada will stay committed to Afghanistan. Afghanistan's rebuilding will continue with the humanitarian aid from Canada.

PRAP Canada has brought the following issues to the table

1. Canada is not an invading force. If Canada was an invading force the Afghan people would fight until their withdrawal. What ever we see in the south of the country is not a war for freedom. It is a guerilla war initiated by extremist elements, who lost the power and are supported by their foreign lords. This war is not for the benefit of the Afghan people. This is not the Afghan's people fight.
2. Pashtun people are not supporting the insurgency although the majority of the insurgents are coming from Pashtun backgrounds of Afghanistan and Tribal areas. There are many reasons why this war is continuing in the south of the country. Please refer to PRAP studies for some answers. <http://www.prapcanada.com/cbcjamal.htm>
3. PRAP Canada is not supporting any funding from Canada and the USA that will legitimize or help to erect any fencing, mining or surveying of the Durand line. This is a disputed line that goes through Pashtun villages and lands. PRAP Canada is supporting the soft border line concept that will promote track two diplomacy, trade and cultural interactions among Pashtun population from both sides of the line in order to create an alternative to extremist crossings of the line.
4. PRAP Canada is encouraging the Federal government to adopt a new policy on Afghanistan that will enable Canada to have a stronger voice in Afghanistan's reconstruction. Canada shall participate in Afghanistan's technological

- development and governance. Canada has one of the best multicultural political systems in the world. Our best multicultural practices shall be shared with our Afghans counterparts.
5. PRAP Canada has advised the panel and the government to encourage local Pashtun NGO's, local tribal initiatives and local governance. PRAP believes that there is a lot of potential in the south of the country that has not been utilized.
 6. Canada's International Development Agency CIDA should develop a comprehensive strategy to support economic growth and micro enterprises along the Durand line for Pashtuns on both side of this soft border that will create a reasonable alternative to extremist ideas and activities.

We have the obligation to contribute our efforts to strengthening of the Afghan governance despite the failures we are experiencing and despite the corruption that is spreading in the government circles. We believe that Afghanistan will go through this stage and we see a vision of prosper and independent Afghanistan, where the Pashtun nation is an equal contributor in the process of reconstruction and rehabilitation.

PRAP Canada will continue to press the international community to support the Afghan and Pakistani governments in curbing the extremism and create long term plans for the Pashtun regions' economic revitalization.

PRAP Canada believes that Pashtuns free of extremism and war will be a better partner to other ethnic groups in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

PRAP Canada
21 January, 2008