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Fact Sheet: Afghanistan and Pakistan: Strong Allies in the War on Terror

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Today, President Bush Spoke About The Struggle Between Moderation And Extremism That Is Unfolding Across The Broader Middle East. Terrorists and extremists are fighting to overthrow moderate governments in the region, take control of countries, and use them as bases from which to attack America and impose their hateful ideology on millions. Moderate leaders in the broader Middle East are standing against these extremists, working to secure a future of peace and freedom for their region and the world.

- **This Week, President Bush Met With Two Courageous Leaders Who Are Working For Peace – President Karzai Of Afghanistan And President Musharraf Of Pakistan.** With their help, we have killed or captured hundreds of al Qaeda leaders and operatives and put others on the run. Osama bin Laden and other terrorists are still in hiding, and our message to them is clear: No matter how long it takes, we will find you, and we will bring you to justice.

We Will Continue Working With Afghanistan's Government To Defeat Our Common Enemies – And Help The Afghan People Build A Free Nation That Will Never Again Oppress Them Or Be A Safe Haven For Terrorists

In Afghanistan, We Are Listening To The Advice Of President Karzai And Our Commanders On The Ground. Following the shifting arguments of critics would result in a strategy that is inconsistent and ineffective.

- **From The Beginning, The Critics Have Said We Are Failing, But Their Reasons Keep Changing.** In the first days of Operation Enduring Freedom, the critics warned that we were heading toward a "quagmire." Then the Taliban fell. Once operations began in Iraq, the critics held up the multinational Coalition in Afghanistan as a model, and said it showed everything we were doing wrong in Iraq. Now some of the critics who praised the multinational Coalition we built in Afghanistan claim that the country is in danger of failing because we do not have enough American troops there.

After 9/11, America Gave The Leaders Of The Taliban A Choice: Hand Over The Terrorists Or Share In The Terrorists' Fate. The Taliban regime chose unwisely, so within weeks of the 9/11 attacks, our Coalition launched Operation Enduring Freedom. By December 2001, the Taliban regime

had been removed from power, hundreds of terrorists had been captured or killed, and the terrorist camps where the enemy planned the 9/11 attacks were shut down.

The Liberation Of Afghanistan Was Only The Beginning Of Our Mission In That Country. We learned the lesson of the 1980s, when the United States had helped the Afghan people drive the Soviet Red Army from Kabul and then left the Afghans to fend for themselves. The Taliban came to power and provided a sanctuary for bin Laden and al Qaeda, and we paid the price when those terrorists struck our Nation and killed nearly 3,000 people in our midst.

- **After 9/11, We Began The Difficult Work Of Helping The Afghan People Rebuild Their Country And Establish A Free Nation On The Rubble Of The Taliban's Tyranny.** With help from the UN and Coalition countries, Afghan leaders chose an interim government and wrote and approved a democratic constitution. They held elections to choose a new President and more than six million Afghans defied terrorist threats and cast ballots to elect a new Parliament.
- **We Have Helped Afghans Build The Security Forces They Need To Defend Their Democratic Gains.** Our Coalition has trained and equipped more than 30,000 soldiers in the Afghan National Army and several thousand more are now in training at the Kabul Military Training Center. Afghans in uniform are determined to protect their nation and fight our common enemies, and America is proud to fight alongside such brave allies.

The Afghan Army And Police Are Fighting Alongside A Coalition Of Nations. At this moment, 21,000 American troops and more than 20,000 personnel from 40 countries are deployed in Afghanistan. Since taking over the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan in the summer of 2003, NATO has expanded it from a small force that was operating only in Kabul into a robust force that has taken responsibility for security in nearly 60 percent of the country.

We Are Working To Improve Quality Of Life For Local Afghans And To Help Extend The Authority Of The Central Government To Distant Areas Of The Country. Since the liberation of Afghanistan, the U.S. has provided more than \$4.5 billion for reconstruction throughout the country – including electricity, irrigation, water and sanitation, and other necessities.

- **Our Coalition And NATO Forces Have Deployed 23 Provincial Reconstruction Teams Across Afghanistan.** Teams led by Sweden, Norway, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Spain, Lithuania, Canada, Britain, the Netherlands, and the United States are now bringing security and reconstruction assistance to distant regions of the country. To link those distant regions to the capital, we are building and improving Afghanistan's roads.
- **Our Coalition Is Also Working With President Karzai To Strengthen The Institutions Of Afghanistan's Young Democracy.**

In Pakistan, President Musharraf Joined The Fight Against The Terrorists, And America Is Grateful For His Leadership

After 9/11, President Musharraf Was Faced With A Choice: Turn A Blind Eye And Leave His

People Hostage To The Terrorists Or Join The Free World In Fighting The Terrorists. Within two days of the attack, the Pakistani government committed itself to stop al Qaeda operatives at its border, share intelligence on terrorist activities and movements, and break off all ties with the Taliban government if it refused to hand over bin Laden and the al Qaeda leadership.

President Musharraf's Courageous Choice To Join The Struggle Against Extremism Has Saved American Lives. His government has helped capture or kill many senior terrorist leaders. For example, Pakistani forces helped capture Abu Zubaydah, Ramzi bin al Shibh, and Khalid Sheikh Mohammed.

Were It Not For Information Gained From Terrorists Captured With Pakistan's Help, Our Intelligence Community Believes Al Qaeda And Its Allies Would Have Succeeded In Launching Another Attack Against The U.S. The CIA's questioning of these and other suspected terrorists provided information that helped us break up a cell of Southeast Asian terrorist operatives groomed for attacks inside the U.S., disrupt an al-Qaeda operation to develop anthrax for terrorist attacks, stop a planned strike on a U.S. Marine camp in Djibouti, prevent a planned attack on the U.S. Consulate in Karachi, and foil a plot to hijack passenger planes and fly them into Heathrow Airport and London's Canary Wharf.

We Are Helping President Musharraf's Government Establish Stronger Control Over The Border Between Afghanistan And Pakistan. President Musharraf understands that terrorists hide in remote regions and travel back and forth across this border. We are:

- Helping equip Pakistan's paramilitary Frontier Corps;
- Funding the construction of more than 100 border outposts;
- Providing high-tech equipment to help Pakistani forces better locate terrorists attempting to cross the border; and
- Funding an air wing with helicopters and fixed wing aircraft.

America Is Also Supporting President Musharraf As He Takes Steps To Build A Modern And Moderate Nation, And Hold Free And Fair Elections Next Year. President Musharraf has a clear vision for his country as a nation growing in freedom and prosperity and peace, and as he stands against the terrorists and for the free future of his country, America will stand with him.

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