



Policy Brief

## Afghanistan-Pakistan at the G8

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G8 Research Group

The G8 has committed more than 86,000 troops in Afghanistan and suffered more than 1,500 casualties in an effort to win the war against terrorism. In March, Canadian prime minister Stephen Harper said that the G8 has “invested heavily, and at considerable cost in lives, in helping Afghanistan to build a peaceful and stable state that will never again be a haven for terrorists.”

The G8 recognizes that stability in both Afghanistan and Pakistan, particularly in the border region, is critical for regional and global security. It has been engaged in Afghanistan since 2001. Since the 2007 Heiligendamm Summit, when the G8 and the governments of Pakistan and Afghanistan announced their joint commitment to secure the border region, the Afghanistan-Pakistan dimension has figured more prominently. In the lead-up to the 2008 Hokkaido-Toyako Summit, G8 foreign ministers launched the G8 Coordination Arrangement to enable the G8 to act as a convening force to bring together actors to discuss issues in the region.

At the London Conference on Afghanistan in January 2010, Afghan president Hamid Karzai pledged to combat corruption and assume more responsibility for security, basic services and democratic governance. In response, Harper told the G8 foreign ministers that “we at this table must continue to provide support, while ensuring the Afghan government lives up to its commitments.” Over the past three years, Canada has facilitated a dialogue between Afghanistan and Pakistan, known as the Dubai process, to bring border officials from each country together to address regional challenges. Building on this initiative, G8 foreign ministers announced the establishment of the Afghanistan-Pakistan Border Region Prosperity Initiative, developed jointly by the G8 and the governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan, with support from the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. The initiative supports building trade and border infrastructure to foster economic development and local employment in the border region.

At the Muskoka Summit, the G8 leaders will support the governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan in their efforts to restore stability to the border region, as well as to strengthen governance and security within their respective countries. G8 leaders will continue their efforts to facilitate dialogue between officials from Afghanistan and Pakistan through meetings of the G8 Coordination Arrangement. In addition, G8 leaders will continue to provide support for the fostering of economic development and infrastructure in the border region.

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Key Contacts: Professor Janice Stein, Director, Munk School of Global Affairs  
j.stein@utoronto.ca • 416-946-8909

The Honourable Bill Graham, former Minister of Foreign Affairs, former Minister of  
Defence • bill.graham@afai.ca • 416-920-2205

University of Toronto Media Relations Hotline  
media.relations@utoronto.ca • 416-978-0100

Key Source: G8 Information Centre • www.g8.utoronto.ca • g8@utoronto.ca