

A Question of 'Government' Control: Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Efforts in Afghanistan Since 2001

A Monograph

by

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14. ABSTRACT Since the fall of the Taliban in late 2001, the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA), the United States, the United Nations, and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) have funded and led four different Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) programs. Despite a significant investment in time and treasure, all of them have failed to significantly reduce the number of insurgents or <i>arbaki</i> (militia). This monograph seeks to answer why these programs failed despite incorporating ideas from the prominent DDR schools of thought. Utilizing Stathis Kalyvas' theory of <i>The Logic of Violence in Civil War</i> as a lens, this monograph argues that GIROA and ISAF did not have sufficient control of territory to entice insurgents or <i>arbaki</i> to reconcile and/or reintegrate with the government. Further, in areas GIROA nominally controlled in northern and western Afghanistan, regional powerbrokers who actually controlled these areas balked at these programs. Based on this analysis, this monograph recommends that in the future DDR programs should be incorporated into Phase IV planning, and when implemented by international organizations the Department of Defense should fully support them.					
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Abstract

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Since the fall of the Taliban in late 2001, the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA), the United States, the United Nations, and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) have funded and led four different Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) programs. Despite a significant investment in time and treasure, all of them have failed to significantly reduce the number of insurgents or *arbaki* (militia). This monograph seeks to answer why these programs failed despite incorporating ideas from the prominent DDR schools of thought. Utilizing Stathis Kalyvas' theory of *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* as a lens, this monograph argues that GIROA and ISAF did not have sufficient control of territory to entice insurgents or *arbaki* to reconcile and/or reintegrate with the government. Further, in areas GIROA nominally controlled in northern and western Afghanistan, regional powerbrokers who actually controlled these areas balked at these programs. Based on this analysis, this monograph recommends that in the future DDR programs should be incorporated into Phase IV planning, and when implemented by international organizations the Department of Defense should fully support them.

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Acronyms

ADRP	Army Doctrine Reference Publication
AMF	Afghan Military Forces
ANA	Afghan National Army
ANBP	Afghan New Beginnings Program
ANBP-DDR	Afghan New Beginning Program's Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration
ANSF	Afghan National Security Forces
APRP	Afghan Peace and Reintegration Program
ASF	Afghan Security Forces
AQ	Al-Qaeda
AQI	Al-Qaeda in Iraq
DDP	District Development Projects
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration
DIAG	Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups
DOD	Department of Defense
DPC	Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups Provincial Committees
GIRoA	Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
HPC	High Peace Council
HQN	Haqqani Network
IAG	Illegally Armed Groups
IC	International Community
IDDRS	Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Standards
ISAF	International Security and Assistance Force
ISIS-KP	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria – Khorasan Province
ISW	Institute for the Study of War

JS	Joint Secretariat
MOI	Ministry of Interior
MOD	Ministry of Defense
MMAS	Master of Military Art and Science
MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
NDS	National Directorate of Security
NGO	Non-governmental organizations
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
OIF	Operation Iraqi Freedom
PJST	Provincial Joint Secretariat Team
PPC	Provincial Peace Council
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Teams
PTS	Programme Tahkim Sulkh
SSR	Security Sector Reform
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
USFORA	United States Forces Afghanistan
USSOF	United States Special Operations Forces

Introduction

Every age has its follies; perhaps the folly of our age could be identified as an unmatched ambition to the change the world, without even bothering to study it in detail and understand it first.

—Antonio Giustozzi, *Decoding the New Taliban*

After the devastating attacks on September 11, 2001, American military forces quickly invaded Afghanistan and toppled the Taliban, utilizing United States Special Operation Forces (USSOF), Central Intelligence Agency paramilitary officers, and precision guided munitions from the US Air Force's panoply of platforms. In less than seventy days the US military had successfully invaded 'the graveyard of empires' and emplaced a new, pro-Western leader in office, Hamid Karzai. Furthermore, almost sixteen months later, the US military, alongside its 'coalition of the willing', would topple its long-time nemesis, Saddam Hussein, in less than thirty days in a dashing 'race' to Baghdad. Indeed, America's primacy in international relations likely reached its apogee when Marines from the 1st Marine Division pulled down the statue of Saddam Hussein at Firdos Square in Baghdad. Both the initial phases of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) in Afghanistan and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) were a stunning display of American military supremacy, underscoring the United States' creativity and flexibility in Afghanistan as well as its conventional dominance in Iraq.¹

However, fourteen years later, those images of Hussein's statue and USSOF on horseback with their erstwhile Northern Alliance allies harkens back to halcyon days. In Afghanistan, the Quetta Shura Taliban, along with other groups, including Al-Qaeda (AQ), the Haqqani Network (HQN), and now the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria – Khorasan Province (ISIS-KP), have frustrated the international

¹ Benjamin Lambeth, *The Unseen War: Allied Air Power and the Takedown of Saddam Hussein* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2013), 59-175; Seth Jones, *In the Graveyard of Empires: America's War in Afghanistan* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2010), 86-108.

community's attempts to build a stable, democratic republic in the Hindu Kush.² In Mesopotamia, the American military struggled mightily to subdue Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), a multi-layered Sunni-nationalist insurgency led primarily by Baathist sympathizers, as well as to combat a wide array of Shia militant groups, only to have their hard-won semblance of stability shattered by the emergence of a new and improved AQI, the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS).³ Indeed, despite spending nearly three trillion dollars in both countries and losing nearly 7,000 service members, the American military is still struggling to confront the paradox of the post-Cold War environment: how to foster stability in post-conflict environments without dredging up images of imperialism.⁴

These unwelcome results transpired despite a zealous mid-course shift in American strategy to counterinsurgency (COIN), specifically intended to address issues of stability. Indeed, after violence in Iraq plummeted following General David Petraeus' much vaunted 'surge', service members began teaching the tenets of Field Manual (FM) 3-24, the US military's newly minted COIN manual, to recently arrived service members.⁵ However, Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) programs were curiously absent in this publicly-consumed manual, even though DDR has been a frequent quiver in the international community's (IC) arsenal to help keep violence from reemerging in scores of civil wars.

Although the effectiveness of DDR varies significantly across countries where it has been implemented, the United Nations (UN) and the World Bank have used this process to disarm former combatants, demobilize their infrastructure, and reintegrate combatants back into society. However, DDR—or even what to do with former combatants—gets a mere paragraph in the well-known FM 3-24, though Joint Publication (JP) 3-24, the US military's joint doctrine on counterinsurgency, and Army

² Hassan Abbas, *The Taliban Revival: Violence and Extremism on the Pakistan-Afghanistan Frontier* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 219-223.

³ David Kilcullen, *Blood Year: The Unraveling of Western Counterterrorism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 37-86.

⁴ Eric Y. Shibuya, *Demobilizing Irregular Forces* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2012), 2; Amy Belasco, *The Cost of the Iraq, Afghanistan, Other Global War on Terror since 2001* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2014), 1-5.

⁵ Field Manual 3-24, *Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2007).

Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 3-07, the Army's recent doctrine on stability operations, both give considerably more attention to DDR.⁶ JP 3-24 and ADRP 3-07, however, advise that DDR planning should begin quickly and not necessarily be saved for the end of the conflict—advice arriving too late for either of these conflicts.⁷

Initially, the United States and ISAF did not focus on such programs. Indeed, from 2001 to 2009, the United States spent a paltry \$20 million dollars on DDR programs, representing far less than one percent of the overall money spent in Afghanistan during this period.⁸ After spending billions on Security Sector Reforms (SSR), specifically the development of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), the US government paid little attention, and often intentionally undercut efforts by its partners, to create a path to bring insurgents and warlords back into Afghan society or to make peace with GIROA.⁹ In short, the United States had overlooked a tool to achieve what Prussian strategist Carl von Clausewitz described as the ultimate objective of war: the creation of a durable peace.¹⁰

However, the IC was also largely blind to the need to disarm and demobilize the scores of armed groups in Afghanistan, even though the country had been awash with such groups since the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in 1978. Although the 2001 Bonn Agreement, which officially ushered in a post-Taliban future in Afghanistan, stipulated that “all mujahidin, Afghan armed forces and armed groups should come under the control of the Interim Authority,” the nascent Afghan government was incapable

⁶ FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*; Joint Publication 3-24, *Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2009); Army Doctrine Reference Publication 3-07, *Stability* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2012).

⁷ FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, 217; JP 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, VIII-12-18; ADRP 3-07, *Stability*, 3-15 – 3-17

⁸ US Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, Office of the SIGAR (Washington, DC: October 2008), 29.

⁹ *Ibid*, 21-43.

¹⁰ Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. and ed. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 90-92.

of enforcing this mandate.¹¹ Two crucial years lapsed before the end of the Bonn Agreement in 2001 and the implementation of the first DDR program in 2003.

GIRoA, ISAF, and the UN enacted four DDR programs from 2003-2016. The first DDR initiative was nestled under President Hamid Karzai's early attempts at SSR which started in December 2002. This first initiative started in 2003, when the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) began implementing DDR via its Afghan New Beginnings Program (ANBP).¹² Japan provided nearly two-thirds of the budget for ANBP and played a heavy role in its conception despite its lack of history or experience in managing such programs.¹³ The ANBP's DDR was largely aimed at demobilizing former militia commanders who had coalesced into the Afghanistan Military Force (AMF). The AMF was a hodgepodge of anti-Taliban militias, nominally under GIRoA control, who were seen as an expedient bridging force until the Afghan National Army (ANA) could be developed.¹⁴ In 2005, the Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups (DIAG), technically a separate program, though instituted under the UNDP's ANBP, focused on disarming all illegal armed groups (IAG) left out of DDR. Both programs struggled mightily. In 2005, the third program, the *Programme Takhim Sulh* (PTS), or Strengthening Peace Program, was launched through a presidential decree that specifically targeted the Taliban and was truly led by GIRoA.¹⁵

Thus, from 2003-2010, the fledgling Afghan government was at various times implementing three different programs. The first two programs received lukewarm support from the United States, both

¹¹ United Nations, *Provisional Arrangements in Afghanistan Pending the Re-Establishment of Permanent Government Institutions*, (Bonn, 2001), 1.

¹² Antonio Giustozzi, "Afghanistan: 'Chaotic Peacekeeping and DDR'", in *Post-conflict Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration*, ed. Antonio Giustozzi (London: Routledge, 2012), 42.

¹³ Caroline Hartzell, *Missed Opportunities: The Impact of DDR on SSR in Afghanistan* (Washington, DC: United States Institute for Peace, April 2011), 4.

¹⁴ Antonio Giustozzi, *The Army of Afghanistan: A Political History of a Fragile Institution* (London: Hurst & Company, 2015), 123.

¹⁵ Deedee Derksen, *The Politics of Disarmament and Rearmament in Afghanistan* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2015), 5-17.

financially and via policy coordination.¹⁶ In fact, the US focused primarily on building and funding the new ANA and often employed the very militias that DDR was designed to demobilize. Indeed, because the new ANA was newly hatched, the United States needed to rely on the Afghan Security Forces (ASF), who were *arbaki* (militias) that US forces, especially USSOF, used to guard bases and search local nationals from 2001 to 2005, and were only disbanded due to pressure from non-governmental organizations (NGO).¹⁷

In late 2009, US Central Command Commander General David Petraeus, incoming ISAF Commander General Stanley McChrystal, and Secretary of Defense Robert Gates designed the ‘surge’ of US forces in Afghanistan and concurrently agreed on “the need for both reintegration of lower-level former Taliban fighters into Afghan society and reconciliation with senior Taliban commanders.”¹⁸ In 2010, while President Barrack Obama’s Afghanistan surge began trickling into the country, GIROA convened a Consultative Peace Jirga to restart the reconciliation and reintegration process with the Taliban.¹⁹ The Afghan Peace and Reintegration Program (APRP) was created from this Jirga and through consultations with the IC. The APRP was chosen as a way to reintegrate supposedly non-ideologically motivated foot soldiers, while simultaneously reconciling high-ranking Taliban commanders via dialogue. Concurrently, a surge of coalition and Afghan forces would pressure the Taliban and its allies on the battlefield.²⁰ Unlike the three previous iterations of DDR, the APRP received the full backing of ISAF,

¹⁶ Ahmed Rashid, *Descent into Chaos: The US and the Disaster in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia* (New York: Penguin Books, 2008), 209.

¹⁷ Antonio Guistozzi, *Koran Kalashnikov and Laptop: The Neo-Taliban Insurgency in Afghanistan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 166; Thomas Ruttig, “Loya Paktia’s Insurgency: The Haqqani Network as an Autonomous Entity,” ed. Antonio Guistozzi, in *Decoding the New Taliban: Insights from the Afghan Field* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 87; Sarah Chayes, *The Punishment of Virtue: Inside Afghanistan After the Taliban* (New York: Penguin Books, 2006), 279-280.

¹⁸ Robert Gates, *Duty: Memoirs of a Secretary at War*, (New York: Alfred Knopf, 2014), 361.

¹⁹ US Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, Office of the SIGAR (Washington, DC: July 2010), 8.

²⁰ Deedee Derskin, “Impact of Illusion?: Reintegration under the Afghan Peace and Reintegration Program,” in *Getting it Right in Afghanistan*, ed. Scott Smith, Moeed Yusuf, Colin Cookman (Washington, DC: USIP Press, 2013), 216.

the United States, and the UN, and received generous funding by international donors. However, APRP ended in May 2016, after failing to reintegrate significant numbers of fighters in eastern or southern Afghanistan and also failing to reconcile with the Taliban movement.²¹

Why did these programs fail to make a serious impact on the insurgency and the number of *arbaki*? Despite misperceived notions on Afghan culture, the country enjoys a long history of reconciliation. In fact, reconciliation is “integral to Afghan statecraft and (the) local practice of war.”²² For example, in *Pashtunwali*, the famed Pashtun tribal cultural code, reconciliation is a time-honored tradition incorporated under *tiga*, where a tribal elder will act as a mediator between warring parties to address grievances.²³ If Afghan culture is not to blame, then, perhaps the blame for DDR’s failure lies with the IC? Or were the programs poorly designed and thus destined for failure? These are the questions that this monograph will attempt to analyze and answer. Although there were many factors that hindered DDR’s success in Afghanistan, this monograph argues that the lack of GIROA control was likely the overarching reason why these four programs were unsuccessful. To do so, this monograph leverages Stathis Kalyvas’ arguments on the primacy of control in dictating local nationals’ behavior in civil wars as a lens. Accordingly, this paper argues that DDR efforts repeatedly failed because GIROA was never strong enough to control enough terrain to elicit the requisite level of collaboration from either insurgents or warlords.²⁴ This lack of GIROA control is supported by the facts that the numbers of participants associated with these programs are highly suspect, and those that did demobilize were quickly remobilized by regional power brokers whose ties to GIROA were always tenuous and transactional at

²¹ Derksen, *The Politics of Disarmament and Rearmament in Afghanistan*, 17-23.

²² Michael Semple, *Reconciliation in Afghanistan*, (Washington, DC: USIP Press, 2009), 13-14.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Stathis Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 1-

best.²⁵ In short, it appears that the Taliban and other former mujahedeen commanders may have contested GIROA's dominance enough to stymie these DDR programs.

In sum, DDR's repeated failure in Afghanistan has not been adequately answered. There are many schools of thought that offer answers for where these programs went astray. The following literature review covers the major schools of thought concerning DDR, and specifically focuses on selected scholarly articles written by Afghan experts after the fall of the Taliban. Taking insights from this literature review, this monograph develops a theory as to why DDR activities in Afghanistan were so unsuccessful. This theory is then tested by analyzing the case studies of the ANBP's DDR, DIAG, PST, and APRP programs. The monograph concludes by making recommendations on the future use of DDR programs.

Literature Review

Despite being a relatively new concept, the literature on DDR is vast and contains a diversity of opinion on its proper implementation. In addition, there is even debate as to the moniker, DDR, as many contend that this traps practitioners into always beginning with disarmament when other confidence-building measures are needed before groups voluntarily disarm.²⁶ Further, how can former insurgents possibly reintegrate in the first place, considering they were never truly part of the government to begin with? These semantic questions underscore the wide divergence of opinion on DDR and what constitutes a successful DDR program. However, before analyzing the major schools of thought on DDR, a common definition of DDR is needed.

The UN's Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standard (IDDRS), an 800 page volume designed to help DDR practitioners, characterizes DDR as a complex process with

²⁵ Antonio Giustozzi, "Afghanistan: 'Chaotic' Peacekeeping and DDR," 57-72.

²⁶ Shibuya, *Demobilizing Irregular Forces*, 24-27.

“political, military, security, humanitarian, and socio-economic dimensions” that supports “ex-combatants” to become “active participants of the peace process,” with the overarching goal of contributing “to security and stability in post-conflict environments.”²⁷ JP 3-24 and ADRP 3-07 largely echo all of IDDRS’ definitions, adding that successful DDR programs “help end an insurgency and establish sustainable peace.”²⁸ In short, DDR is a multi-phased process that seeks to largely disarm and dismantle insurgents, IAGs, and even former security forces with the overall goal of reintegrating them back into society. This usually begins with disarmament: “the collection, documentation, control and disposal” of weapons and ammunition of “former insurgents and the population.”²⁹ This is generally followed by a two-step demobilization process involving the “processing of combatants and reinserting them into society” with ‘transitional assistance prior to long term reintegration, with the overarching goal of discharging “active combatants from armed forces or other armed groups.”³⁰ In essence, demobilization breaks up armed groups and provides a path towards long-term settlement. DDR ends with reintegration, a controversial and tricky phase where former combatants “acquire civilian status” and “become contributing members of the local population.”³¹ This last phase is obviously a long-term effort that usually requires economic assistance and durable reconciliation between combatants.³² Although there is no consensus on these doctrinal definitions, they provide a useful springboard with which to view the dominant schools of thought on DDR.

There are at least six schools of thought on DDR. Of these, Antonio Giustozzi, an Afghanistan expert and scholar on DDR, labeled four of them—the dominant neo-liberal school, as well as the

²⁷ United Nations, *Introduction to Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Standard (IDDRS)* (New York, 2014), 1.

²⁸ JP 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, VIII-12; ADRP 3-07, *Stability*, 3-14 – 3-17.

²⁹ United Nations, *IDDRS*, 1.

³⁰ *Ibid*, 2.

³¹ JP 3-24, VIII-12-13.

³² IDDRS, 1; JP 3-24, VIII-12-13; ADRP 3-07, 3-15.

developmental, politics first, and security first schools—and introduced another school, that of state-building.³³ The first four schools Giustozzi identifies have a longer history in academic literature, while the state-building school that was introduced by Giustozzi, and the flexibility school, are more recent categories that developed after pushback from a wide array of authors who identified problems with the four canonical schools.

The neo-liberal viewpoint is the most influential of the six and is largely predicated on Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler's seminal article, "On Economic Causes of Civil War."³⁴ The two authors take an economic-centric viewpoint on the impetus of rebellions. In short, the authors contend that combatants are more apt to participate in armed conflict due to economic reasons than due to perceived grievances. Accordingly, an improved economy reduces the likelihood of conflict because it changes the cost-benefit analysis for participants. In essence, this viewpoint argues that combatants will not fight when they have more to lose economically from joining a rebellion. Thus, followers of this approach argue that economic incentives are the cornerstone for reintegrating former combatants. Of course, this solution is not always viable, since many war-ravaged countries do not have the ability to offer proper economic incentives for former combatants, especially in countries like Afghanistan that largely survive through financial aid. Further, many businesses are hesitant to offer employment to former combatants, and former combatants cannot always find employment inside the government.³⁵ For example, in its infancy ANA officers were overwhelmingly non-Pashtun, due to the Ministry of Defense (MOD) being run by former Northern Alliance members (who were primarily Tajik, Uzbek, or Hazara). These officers were loath to re-arm their ethnic rivals, regardless of their Taliban association.³⁶

³³ Antonio Giustozzi, "Introduction", in *Post-Conflict Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration: Bringing State-building Back In*, ed. Antonio Giustozzi (London: Routledge, 2012), 9-16.

³⁴ Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, "On Economic Causes of Civil War," *Oxford Economic Papers* 50, no. 4 (1998), 563.

³⁵ Giustozzi, "Introduction," *Post-Conflict Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration*, 9-10.

³⁶ Antonio Guistozzi, *Koran, Kalashnikov, and Laptop: The Neo-Taliban Insurgency in Afghanistan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 181-189.

The second school of thought can be described as structurally focused, or what Giustozzi labeled as ‘developmental’.³⁷ It echoes the neo-liberal school with its focus on the reintegration of former combatants into society over disarmament and demobilization. However, while the neo-liberals emphasize economic incentives for former combatants, structural advocates argue for the need to address the ‘root causes’ of conflicts so that combatants can be properly integrated into society. This type of long-term process reflects a holistic approach that necessitates effective coordination throughout all levels of society. For example, Alpaslan Ozerdem’s 2002 article, “Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration of Former Combatants in Afghanistan” not only called for changes in the DDR implementation process, but also for “the rehabilitation of infrastructure such as water supplies, sanitation, electricity... which plays a significant role in the successful reintegration.”³⁸ Fixing such underlying problems often requires a herculean effort in war-torn countries that are frequently bereft of human capital. The critiques of this approach are fairly obvious. First, the likelihood of fixing such structural issues is probably outside a DDR program’s purview. Second, such attempts often backfire. According to recent US government reports, the injection of tens of billions of dollars into Afghan society with the ostensible goal of fixing many of the country’s structural problems led to staggering levels of corruption. This undermined confidence in GIRoA, the United States and ISAF, fueled more grievances, and, ironically, pushed many into the insurgency.³⁹

The third and fourth fields of thought focus on demobilization instead of reintegration. The third approach is what Giustozzi labels ‘politics first’.⁴⁰ These scholars argue that without the political will needed to provide a stable security environment and a minimum socioeconomic foundation that fosters

³⁷ Giustozzi, “Introduction,” 10-12.

³⁸ Alpaslan Ozerdem, “Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration of Former Combatants in Afghanistan: Lessons Learned from a Cross-Cultural Perspective,” *Third World Quarterly* 23, no. 5 (October 2002): 961-975.

³⁹ US Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Corruption in Conflict: Lessons Learned from the US Experience in Afghanistan*, Office of the SIGAR, (Washington, DC: September 2016), i-iii.

⁴⁰ Giustozzi, “Introduction,” 12.

reintegration, DDR will inevitably fail.⁴¹ In essence, the political space needed in finding a durable peace should take precedence over DDR. Often DDR participants have used these programs to gain an advantage over their antagonists by scuttling efforts to integrate their rivals back into society. Robert Muggah's 2005 article, "No Magic Bullet," chronicles many failed DDR efforts by the World Bank and the UN.⁴² According to Muggah, both organizations placed too much emphasis on the technocratic process, instead of focusing on achieving a political compromise between combatants, which led to an increase in violence in post-conflict societies. Indeed, former mujahedeen commanders consistently manipulated the ANBP programs so they could either reap the rewards themselves or staff the ANA with their commanders.⁴³ Moreover, consistent Afghan provincial buy-in for the APRP was often lacking, especially amongst provincial National Directorate of Security (NDS) chiefs who often scoffed at reconciling with the Taliban. These critiques have led to a general consensus that nearly all parties must not only own DDR, but have substantial buy-in. This consensus is underscored by the IDDRS' repeated calls for all parties to participate in DDR and that the UN's role is to merely support DDR.

The fourth school of thought is aptly labeled 'security first'. As the moniker suggests, security and stability are the driving factors behind a successful DDR program. For example, in 2003, Mark Sedra argued that the lack of security in Afghanistan represented a major obstacle for the successful implementation of DDR, and that without improved security, DDR would fail.⁴⁴ This is one reason that DDR is inherently tied to overall SSR. Indeed, while the Japanese were in charge of crafting the ANBP, other international actors, like the United States and Italy, were responsible for standing up the ANSF and

⁴¹ Ibid, 12-13.

⁴² Robert Muggah, "No Magic Bullet: A Critical Perspective on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) and Weapons Reduction in Post-Conflict Context," *The Round Table* 94, no. 379 (April 2005): 239-252.

⁴³ Giustozzi, "Afghanistan: 'Chaotic' Peacekeeping and DDR," 57-72.

⁴⁴ Mark Sedra, "New Beginning or Return to Arms? The Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Process in Afghanistan" (paper presented at *State reconstruction and international engagement in Afghanistan* at the London School of Economics and Political Science, 30 May – 1 June 2003), 8.

the new Afghan judicial system, respectively. The focus on ‘security first’ has often led to the co-optation of warlords or other power brokers into the government in order to create security before the implementation of DDR. This approach has been repeatedly pushed in Afghanistan by the United States. Accordingly, such advocates of “security first” are often charged with focusing on short-term security instead of long-term stability. For example, critics of the Afghan Local Police often point to reported instances of abuse and Afghanistan’s long, sordid history with *arbakis* as arguments that the program will undercut Afghanistan’s long-term stability.⁴⁵

The last two schools of thought do not necessarily emphasize on any one part of DDR in particular. Giustozzi’s 2012 collection of DDR essays, *Post-Conflict DDR: Bringing State-building Back In*, spearheaded a new argument for successful DDR, focusing on incorporating DDR into state-building. According to Giustozzi, DDR is almost always implemented in “isolation from state building” despite it being “difficult to envisage post-conflict stabilization” without a “viable state.”⁴⁶ Giustozzi points to the wasted effort of ‘ad-hoc structures’ used to implement DDR, especially since these are usually deconstructed after completion. He argues that the demobilization of mass armies has ushered in “the beginning of the modern welfare state” for many countries.⁴⁷ In short, this school contends that by incorporating the state into DDR, the state will be strengthened, and this will lead to successful DDR.

Finally, the sixth school encompasses a group of scholars who urge practitioners to focus on flexibility and cultural issues while crafting DDR. This school incorporates a wide array of scholars who advocate additions to the previous five schools of thought. Eric Shibuya’s *Demobilizing Irregulars* forcefully argues for focusing on ‘social context’ as it will ‘always trump bureaucratic arrangements and technocratic processes.’⁴⁸ Further, he urges DDR agents need to be ‘mentally flexible’ during

⁴⁵ Mujib Mashal, “Afghan Plan to Expand Militia Raises Abuse Concerns,” *The New York Times*, October 16, 2015.

⁴⁶ Giustozzi, “Introduction”, 16-18.

⁴⁷ Ibid, 16.

⁴⁸ Eric Y. Shibuya, *Demobilizing Irregular Forces* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2012), 138-139.

implementation instead of ‘overlaying a previous successful model.’⁴⁹ Shibuya’s argument echoes similar ones made by Afghan scholars like Barnett Rubin, Deedee Dersken, and Giustozzi that were made in response to the UN using its Africa DDR template on the ANBP programs.⁵⁰ Ironically, earlier scholars repeatedly pointed to a lack of doctrine for DDR, likely spurring the 800 page IDDRS that, in turn, prompted calls for flexibility in DDR implementation.

Although there is wide divergence of opinion amongst scholars within these six viewpoints, a few points are repeatedly echoed throughout the scholarship. First, the primary aim of DDR programs should be the “prevention of conflict resurgence.”⁵¹ By this standard, all four of the post-Bonn DDR efforts in Afghanistan failed. Second, DDR is not a ‘magic bullet’ that will automatically lead to stability. Indeed, DDR programs are but one tool that should be used when maintaining peace in post-conflict environments. Last, it should be stressed that implementing DDR programs is inherently difficult. Many of these societies have endured high levels of violence over decades and outside intervention is always fraught with peril, since outsiders, who lack intimate knowledge of the environment, often inject ‘solutions’ to problems that can cause unintended consequences in complex environments. However, despite these areas of agreement, there is no consensus on DDR: will it endure repeated failures like that seen in Afghanistan, or do successful cases in Liberia and Rwanda indicate its ability to achieve success in some circumstances?

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Deedee Dersken, *The Politics of Disarmament and Rearmament in Afghanistan*, 5-21; Giustozzi, “Afghanistan: ‘Chaotic’ Peacekeeping and DDR,” 57-62; Barnett Rubin, “Identifying Options and Entry Points for Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration in Afghanistan,” (paper presented as part of the BICC-E Conference, “Afghanistan: Assessing the Progress of Security Reform, One Year After the Geneva Conference,” 4-11 June 2003).

⁵¹ Giustozzi, “Introduction,” 7.

A Theory of Control for DDR

All of the abovementioned schools of thought provide a solid foundation to view the viability of the post-Bonn DDR programs. A cursory examination of ANBP-DDR, DIAG, PST, and APRP find that these programs exhibited flaws consistent with many of the schools of thought. For example, state-building was not truly tied into either the ANBP-DDR, DIAG or the PST, likely hindering their effectiveness, among other factors.⁵² However, Afghan capacity-building played a significant role in APRP. Moreover, all four programs were implemented when Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) were doling out hundreds of millions of dollars in development aid to assuage endemic structural issues throughout Afghanistan.⁵³ In fact, many of the early problems identified in both the ANBP-DDR, DIAG and the PST programs were ostensibly tweaked in the development of APRP, with varying levels of success. However, despite these attempts, Afghanistan “is at serious risk of political breakdown in 2016,” according to James Clapper, the US Director of National Intelligence. In fact, according to the UN, in 2015 civilian casualties reached their highest levels of the entire conflict, despite the numerous attempts to build stability and governance.⁵⁴ Unfortunately, in 2016, civilian casualties eclipsed 2015’s total.⁵⁵ In short, despite nearly a billion dollars spent on DDR programs, insurgents and warlords are stronger now than ever before.⁵⁶

⁵² Derksen, *The Politics of Disarmament and Rearmament in Afghanistan*, 5-20.

⁵³ The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, *The Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Program (APRP): Programme Document*, The National Security Council (Kabul, Afghanistan: Printing Office, 2010), 2 -21.

⁵⁴ David Jolly, “Afghanistan Had Record Civilian Casualties in 2015, UN Says,” *New York Times*, 14 February 2016.

⁵⁵ Habib Khan Totakhil and Jessica Donati, “U.N. Report Says Civilian Casualties at Record High in Afghanistan,” *Wall Street Journal*, 6 February 2017.

⁵⁶ Rod Nordland and Joseph Goldstein, “Afghan Taliban’s Reach is Widest Since 2001, U.N. Says,” *New York Times*, October 11, 2015; Mujib Mashal, Joseph Goldstein, and Jawad Sukhanyar, “Afghans Form Militias and Call on Warlords to Battle Taliban,” *New York Times*, May 24, 2015.

Although these six schools have merit for analyzing the four main DDR programs, given the failure of DDR in Afghanistan despite the influence of these schools on the development of Afghan programs, perhaps there is a better way to understand the reasons why DDR efforts were unsuccessful? This monograph will argue that Kalyvas' thesis in *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* is a better lens to examine and understand why these four Afghan DDR programs were not successful.⁵⁷ Kalyvas' theory offers distinct advantages for a cogent analysis of the DDR programs. First, Kalyvas' theory presents more nuance than the security-first argument while shedding doubt on the importance of development and rectifying grievances. Indeed, unlike the security-first argument, Kalyvas' theory states that the government needs to be strong enough to hold terrain to ensure defectors to the government side. Next, Kalyvas' theory mirrors counterinsurgency doctrine's mantra of "Clear, Hold, Build," espoused by French counterinsurgency expert, David Galula, and stressed in FM 3-24.⁵⁸ In support of this monograph's argument, this counterinsurgency strategy often resulted in stability and cooperation from fence-sitters in areas where coalition forces had overwhelming control of the population. However, this stability proved fleeting when the ANA or ISAF were unable to maintain this control for extended periods of time. Indeed, terrain that was turned over to the ANSF to hold was often lost.⁵⁹ Despite spending lavishly on reconstruction projects and capacity-building at the national and provincial level, fence-sitters would often turn back to the Taliban once ISAF or GIRoA lost control of an area; Kalyvas' theory can help explain this phenomenon.

⁵⁷ Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*.

⁵⁸ David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Security International, 1964); FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, 5-51—5-80.

⁵⁹ For memoirs that recount such Afghanistan experiences see: Daniel Green *The Valley's Edge: A Year with the Pashtuns in the Heartland of the Taliban* (Washington, DC: Potomac Books, 2012); Carter Malkasian, *War Comes to Garmser: Thirty Years of Conflict on the Afghan Frontier* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); Graeme Smith, *The Dogs Are Eating Them Now: Our War in Afghanistan* (Canada: Alfred Knopf, 2013); Ann Scott Tyson, *American Spartan: The Promise, the Mission, and the Betrayal of Special Forces Major Jim Gant* (New York: Harpers, 2014); Sarah Chayes, *The Punishment of Virtue: Inside Afghanistan After the Taliban* (New York: Penguin Books, 2006)

Kalyvas sought to answer why there are variations in violence in civil wars and why these are so violent (or perceived to be). Kalyvas finds that previous theories are lacking, including ‘greed and grievance’, break down of order, polarization of pre-war cleavages, and the inherent ‘barbaric’ nature of civil war. The Yale political science professor convincingly asserts that these theories were inadequate due to different biases that clouded previous scholarship. For example, previous scholarship asserted that civil wars were more violent due to the inherent nature of combatants facing those they were intimately familiar with. This, however, overlooks the barbaric nature of conventional conflicts and likely occurs out of sympathy for the victims and, thus, misconstrues the “description of the violence for the symptoms.”⁶⁰

Although civil wars produce an abundance of carnage, according to Kalyvas indiscriminate violence is counterproductive. It is counterproductive because both the insurgents and the government are vying for control of the population. For example, GIRA currently faces three populations: those under GIRA control, those under insurgent control, and those that they compete for with the insurgents. However, because it is very difficult to identify any of these population’s true allegiances, due to fence-sitting and hedging, utilizing indiscriminate violence is counterproductive as it may simply push the undecideds into supporting the insurgents. Rather, selective violence against known insurgent collaborators is a better instrument to deter the populace as a whole from collaborating.⁶¹

Further, Kalyvas argues that the control of territory will determine who collaborates, rather than the ideology of the population.⁶² Kalyvas describes a range of control on a scale from one to five, with incumbent dominance in zone one and insurgent dominance in zone five. In these zones, collaboration with either side will be high, as it is essentially safe for the population to do so. However, where the government only enjoys the preponderance of control in zone two and, similarly, the insurgents in zone four, collaboration will not be nearly as high due to the risk that collaborators will be punished by the

⁶⁰ Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, 32-51.

⁶¹ Ibid, 146-172.

⁶² Ibid, 210-245.

opposing side, since neither side has complete control and therefore cannot prevent retaliation against collaborators. Finally, collaboration is likely to be minimal in zone three, the proverbial no-man's land, where neither side has control. Accordingly, since neither side has much control, information on likely collaborators is minimal. Thus, the amount of selective violence is likely to be negligent, since such violence requires knowing who is a collaborator.

Though Kalyvas' theory is focused on where more and less-selective violence is likely to occur in a civil war, his 'zones of control' can also be used to understand the collaboration, or lack thereof, with DDR programs. This monograph argues that DDR programs likely only succeeded in areas under GIRoA control and that attempts to woo insurgents with development projects and clemency largely fell on deaf ears in southern and eastern Afghanistan, where the Pashtun-led insurgency is strongest and GIRoA control is weak. In short, if GIRoA did not control the territory, then DDR programs were likely to fail. Thus, if Kalyvas' theory is applied to DDR, then combatants, be they warlords or insurgents, are likely to participate in DDR programs where GIRoA is in full control (zone one). GIRoA will likely have some levels of success in areas where they have a preponderance of control (zone two), and considerably less, in areas that are close to or in zone three, or are in danger of switching to insurgent control.

In order to test this hypothesis on the relationship between GIRoA control and DDR effectiveness, this monograph analyzes each of the DDR programs described above. These case studies will show that GIRoA and its allies only had fleeting success in DDR programs in areas that were under government control—zone one. In areas where the insurgency contested control, zone two, or had a preponderance of control, zone four, and total control, zone five, these DDR programs largely failed. Indeed, the number of demobilized fighters was paltry in the south and east, where the Pashtun insurgency was, and remains, strongest. In zone three, DDR programs also failed because both sides had negligible control of the population, and thus the populace and local insurgents had little incentive to collaborate.

However, these studies will also show the need for more refinement to Kalyvas' theory. Although Kalyvas' theory holds merit, the model is overly bifurcated between insurgents and the incumbent (*i.e.*, the

government) without adding any shades of grey between the two sides. In Afghanistan, who is labeled an ‘insurgent’ is quite malleable. Often, these ‘insurgents’ are simply combatants in tribal feuds over resources, with the Taliban label used as a pejorative by those tribes in power to disenfranchise their rivals.⁶³ Moreover, the Afghan insurgency contains at least four major groups: the Quetta Shura Taliban, AQ, the HQ, and the Afghan affiliate of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, ISIS-Khorasan Province (ISIS-KP).⁶⁴ This excludes the large criminal element that fuels the insurgency via the opium trade and other groups that contribute to the insurgency, like Tehrik-i Taliban (Pakistani Taliban). These groups may not only be combatting the government, but also each other. ISIS-KP is currently battling Al Qaida and the Peshawar Taliban for control of provinces in the east, like Nuristan.⁶⁵ In the north and west, so-called government forces are more likely to be under the sway of provincial power brokers than GIROA. Accordingly, GIROA can, and has, reconstituted those *arbaki* (militias) that ‘demobilized’ so that GIROA can contest the forces of the power brokers. In short, the narrative of incumbents (government) versus insurgents does not provide an accurate depiction in a kaleidoscope-like battlefield in Afghanistan. However, since the focus of this monograph is on GIROA’s efforts to implement DDR, the main question of control is incumbent (GIROA) versus any of the other groups contesting control.

In order to measure Kalyvas’s concept of control, this monograph will utilize openly reported information from the Brookings Institute’s Afghan Index and other non-profit organizations, such as the Institute for the Study of War, on violence levels, and United Nations’ maps indicating levels of insurgent control. These violence levels will be used to attempt to identify areas where GIROA likely was or is in zone one control. This monograph will also leverage historical studies to identify areas that are usually under the control of certain warlords, which could indicate a high level of security but not necessarily

⁶³ Mike Martin, *An Intimate War: An Oral History of the Helmand Conflict* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

⁶⁴ Lauren McNally and Paul Bucala, *The Taliban Resurgent: Threats to Afghanistan’s Security* (Washington, DC: Institute for the Study of War, 2015), 9-26

⁶⁵ Mujib Mashal, “Afghan ISIS Branch Makes Inroads in Battle Against Taliban,” *New York Times*, October 13, 2015.

government control (zone one for an insurgent group). For example, Vice President Dostum maintains significant sway in his home province of Jowzjon, and until teaming up with Afghan President Ashraf Ghani, Dostum had a mercurial relationship with GIRoA. Lastly, utilizing Kalyvas' theories on the relationship between violence and control does not necessarily discount the other issues identified in previous scholarship. In fact, in many cases, GIRoA likely lacks control in certain areas due to a lack of development, security, or state capacity. However, this monograph views control as the most important factor in determining the level of success for Afghanistan DDR programs.

ANBP's DDR and DIAG

After the 2001 Bonn Agreement, Western powers began to realize that the nascent Afghan government was largely at the mercy of warlords like future Balkh Provincial Governor Atta Mohammad Noor, future Vice President Rashid Dostum and regional power broker Ismael Khan, who reigned supreme in Balkh, Jowzjan, and Herat provinces, respectively.⁶⁶ Indeed, fighting between Atta and Dostum resulted in the death of hundreds in the early months after the fall of the Taliban.⁶⁷ Karzai's weak interim government, whose power rested largely on the back of former Northern Alliance commanders and coalition soldiers, doled out twenty of the initial thirty-two provincial governorships to militia commanders or those strongly allied with them.⁶⁸ This weakness also infected the newly founded MOD, which was headed by Mohammad Qasim Fahim (Marshall Fahim), a Jamiat-e Islami leader who had close ties to warlord Ahmad Massoud, the famed 'Lion of Panshvir.' Though nominally under Karzai's control, Fahim was actually in a stronger position than Karzai, who rose to power on the back of USSOF and American airpower rather than Afghan support, during his ascendancy from near obscurity to

⁶⁶ Deedee Derskin, *The Politics of Disarmament and Rearmament in Afghanistan*, 7-8.

⁶⁷ Mark Sedra, "New Beginning or Returns to Arms? The Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Process in Afghanistan" (paper presented at London School of Economics and Politics Science, 30 May -1 June 2003), 1-5.

⁶⁸ Giustozzi, *Koran, Kalashnikov, and Laptop*, 16.

power.⁶⁹ Indeed, Karzai's position was so weak in Kabul that Karzai informed Robert Finn, America's first Ambassador to Afghanistan post-2001, that Fahim intended to assassinate him.⁷⁰ Fahim, who later served as Karzai's first Vice President, created the militia-heavy Afghan Military Forces (AMF) to bridge the security gap until the Afghan National Army was properly resourced. During his reign as Minister of Defense from 2002-2004, Fahim filled the AMF with cohorts from his Shura-ye Nazar faction of Jamiat.⁷¹ The AMF would balloon in size and largely controlled terrain in the north and west.

Ironically, the first Afghan DDR was squarely focused on reigning in the influence of the government's own Minister of Defense. Western powers grew frustrated with their inability to reform the AMF into a more state-controlled enterprise, rather than an alliance of Fahim's choosing, which led to DDR gaining momentum in 2002 as part of a wider SSR push.⁷² President Karzai proposed that the international community lead the DDR effort during a conference in Japan in early 2003.⁷³ The UNDP created the ANBP to work in "strict cooperation with the Ministry of Defense" in order to transition selected AMF members into the fledgling ANA.⁷⁴ The program had two goals: to break the chain of command between former militia commanders and their men, and to demobilize fighters while ensuring that they could become economically independent.⁷⁵ The Taliban, and other private militias, were beyond the scope of the original DDR. Instead, this plan initially aimed to reintegrate one hundred thousand AMF

⁶⁹ Joshua Partlow, *A Kingdom of Their Own: The Family Karzai and the Afghan Disaster* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 2016), 46-53; Bette Dam, *A Man and a Motorcycle: How Hamid Karzai Came to Power* (Amsterdam: Ipso Facto Publishing, 2014), 67-84.

⁷⁰ Partlow, *A Kingdom of Their Own*, 61-63.

⁷¹ Giustozzi, *The Army of Afghanistan*, 125.

⁷² Giustozzi, *Koran Kalashnikov, and Laptop*, 169.

⁷³ Hartzell "Missed Opportunities," 4.

⁷⁴ Giustozzi, "Afghanistan: 'Chaotic' Peacekeeping and DDR," 57.

⁷⁵ Derskin, *The Politics of Disarmament and Rearmament in Afghanistan*, 9.

personnel, though this was later reduced to sixty thousand personnel, due to suspicions that the total number of AMF personnel was inflated so that commanders could enrich themselves during DDR.⁷⁶

The ANBP's DDR program was a three-phase program that lasted from October 2003 to November 2005. The MOD provided ANBP officials with lists of AMF members to be demobilized during the initial disarmament phase. Mobile Disarmament Units (MDU) toured the north to meet with commanders to begin the process.⁷⁷ To qualify for the program, fighters needed to have served in the AMF for eight months and have a working weapon to hand in. After the fighters had been disarmed, they immediately began the process of being demobilized by a caseworker at an ANBP regional office. Former AMF members were photographed, finger printed, and interviewed to establish reintegration preferences. The process was completed after the fighters swore an oath that they would not rearm for illegitimate reasons.⁷⁸ The reintegration phase consisted of three components: emergency employment and food aid, job training for ex-combatants, and a monthly cash stipend of approximately \$650 for two years for senior commanders. Additionally, some AMF units, instead of going through this process, would simply transition into the ANA.⁷⁹

The ANBP DDR program concluded its efforts on July 1, 2006 and boasted some nominally impressive figures. The program claimed to have disarmed approximately 64,000 personnel, reintegrated 53,000, and decommissioned 260 AMF units. It collected over 100,000 weapons and transferred nearly

⁷⁶ Barbara Stapleton "Disarming Militias—DDR and DIAG and the Implications for Peace Building" (paper presented at "Peace Building in Afghanistan—Local, Regional and Global Perspectives," a conference in Stockholm, Sweden, November 6-7, 2008); Simonetta Rossi and Antonio Guistozi, "Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration of Ex-Combatants in Afghanistan: Constraints and Limited Capabilities," *Crisis State Research Centre*, June 2006, 4.

⁷⁷ United States Institute for Peace, "Missed Opportunities," Hartzell, 5.

⁷⁸ Ibid, 6.

⁷⁹ Ibid, 6-8.

13,000 heavy weapons to the MOD. Additionally, approximately 900 AMF officers were integrated into the ANA.⁸⁰

Despite the ANBP's claims to having both met its objective and satisfied GIRoA with its efforts, these numbers hide the program's overall weakness. First, the quality and quantity of these weapons were highly questionable. Indeed, approximately 36% were unserviceable or replicas.⁸¹ Further, the AMF managed to hand over only 56% percent of the weapons they had originally registered, suggesting that 'demobilized' fighters had successfully gamed the system.⁸² Next, only 2% of AMF personnel transitioned to the ANA, far below original goals. Of the 7,350 officers registered for reintegration into the ANA, only 900 were accepted. Part of this was due to age requirements and US plans to only have AMF personnel constitute 10-20% of the newly formed ANA.⁸³ This left many commanders without a command position, though the ANBP tried to ameliorate this with reintegration packages. Moreover, other AMF commanders, who were politically connected with patrons in Kabul, found homes in the Afghan National Police, though often these men were not truly under the control of the Ministry of Interior (MOI). In fact, most of them answered only to their former AMF commander.⁸⁴ Finally, out of the eight regions targeted, the Kabul and Kunduz regions, which were under the control of a faction linked to Minister of Defense Fahim, constituted nearly 56% of all reintegrated militiamen, suggesting that monetary incentives from demobilization were disproportionately given to specific groups.⁸⁵ Indeed,

⁸⁰ United Nations Development Program, *Report on the Evaluation of DDR and CIP in Afghanistan: Summary Report* (Kabul, September 2007), 8.

⁸¹ Guistozzi, "Afghanistan: 'Chaotic' Peacekeeping and DDR," 59.

⁸² Rossi and Guistozzi, "DDR of Ex-combatants in Afghanistan: Constraints and Limited Capabilities," 4.

⁸³ United States Institute of Peace, "Missed Opportunities," Hartzell, 7.

⁸⁴ Guistozzi, *Koran, Kalashnikov, and Laptop*, 166-168.

⁸⁵ Rossi and Guistozzi, "DDR of Ex-Combatants in Afghanistan," 5.

Jamiat-i Islami's domination of the ANBP DDR process from inside the MoD underscores reports that estimated that up to 80% of all re-integrees were fake combatants.⁸⁶

GIRoA's inherent weakness necessitated that it bargain with regional power brokers to control the provinces. Thus, the ANBP DDR process that aimed at reducing the militia's strength in the countryside was undercut by GIRoA because Karzai needed those very militias to maintain control. In fact, a significant portion of the fighting before Karzai won the 2004 presidential election was between local factions "vying for both control on the ground and recognition by the government."⁸⁷ Indeed, the neo-Taliban insurgency was still in its infancy during the majority of the ANBP DDR process, suggesting that there were multiple active non-Taliban factions. This factional infighting is underscored by the feelings of insecurity that those in northern and western Afghanistan felt during 2001-2005.⁸⁸ Though the Taliban insurgency would not truly begin to gain momentum until 2006, when they assassinated a Canadian government official and began copycatting IED techniques from the Iraqi battlefield, the ANBP DDR process may have actually increased their growth.⁸⁹ For example, the Taliban successfully recruited some AMF commanders to attack ISAF convoys after their reintegration into the ANA failed.⁹⁰ In Helmand, the 93rd AMF Division was selected for disarmament, primarily due to provincial politics that tied back to President Karzai. Unfortunately, once the DDR process began, the Taliban began a merciless assassination campaign against GIRoA in Helmand, who was now weakened without the AMF's protection. The Taliban took advantage of GIRoA's weakness by instituting a shadow government that laid the foundation for the Taliban's resurgence. Thus, the ANBP DDR program, even when it was

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Semple, *Reconciliation in Afghanistan*, 29.

⁸⁸ Barnett Rubin, *Afghanistan from the Cold War through the War on Terror* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 263-265.

⁸⁹ Semple, *Reconciliation in Afghanistan*, 28.

⁹⁰ Mohammad Osman Tariq Elias, "The Resurgence of the Taliban in Kabul: Logar and Wardak," in *Decoding the New Taliban: Insights from the Afghan Field*, ed. Antonio Giustozzi (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 53.

properly implemented, often changed the balance of power in ways that the Taliban used to their advantage.⁹¹

In 2005, the IC could no longer ignore the fact that other non-AMF IAGs continued to be a problem to the nascent Afghan government. At the request of GIROA, the DIAG began in order, “to mitigate the instability caused by the remaining IAGs.”⁹² The UNDP, through its management of the ANBP, would take the lead in this project, with Japan, again, being the main donor.⁹³ Unlike the ANBP DDR, DIAG did have ISAF support through the Joint Secretariat (JS) that also included representatives from the United Nations Mission Afghanistan (UNAMA). The JS and the Afghan-owned Disarmament & Reintegration Committee, headed by former second Vice President Mohammad Karim Kahlili and managed by future Minister of Defense Mohammad Massoom Stanikzai, steered DIAG.⁹⁴ DIAG had three main objectives: disarm and disband IAGs; strengthen support for GIROA; and enhance community stability.⁹⁵

The DIAG Provincial Committees (DPCs) led the DIAG process at the provincial level. Provincial governors and provincial chiefs of police nominally staffed the DPCs, although this was not in fact implemented. Further, ISAF and UNAMA also were supposed to be involved as well. The DPCs were tasked with finding IAGs and targeting them for disarmament and disbandment (demobilization). Compliant IAGs were then supposed to be disarmed but were not offered direct economic incentives to do so. This was likely due to Japan’s fears of being viewed as supporting criminal elements.⁹⁶ If IAGs did

⁹¹ Mike Martin, *An Intimate War: An Oral History of the Helmand Conflict* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

⁹² United Nations Development Program Afghanistan, *Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups (DIAG): Annual Project Report 2010*, (Kabul, 2010), 5.

⁹³ Derskin, *The Politics of Disarmament and Rearmament in Afghanistan*, 11.

⁹⁴ Stapleton, “Disarming the Militias,” 7-8.

⁹⁵ UNDP, *DIAG Annual Report 2010*, 5.

⁹⁶ Giustozzi, “Afghanistan: ‘Chaotic’ Peacekeeping and DDR,” 57.

not comply, ANSF, with the support of ISAF, were to force them into compliance, though this did not occur in practice.⁹⁷ If IAGs disarmed and demobilized, the districts that hosted them were labeled ‘peace districts’ and had the opportunity to receive DIAG District Development Projects (DDPs) that were implemented through the Ministry for Rehabilitation and Rural Development (MRRD).⁹⁸ Once IAGs disarmed, they were monitored by the DPCs to ensure they stayed compliant.

Similar to DDR, DIAG’s numbers were seemingly impressive. By 2009, 685 of the 987 IAGs targeted were disarmed and disbanded.⁹⁹ This improved to 759 IAGs disbanded by 2010, according to the last annual report published.¹⁰⁰ The UNDP claimed that they had successfully demobilized 94% of IAGs targeted. However, this seems to be far less than the original projections, that estimated there were 2,000 IAGs with nearly 130,000 fighters carrying approximately 336,000 small arms.¹⁰¹ Further, by the beginning of 2011, the program boasted collecting nearly 8,000 arms “despite a worsening security situation.”¹⁰²

However, like its predecessor program, these numbers are very misleading. First, the official estimates of IAGs in Afghanistan were far too low. In 2005, most estimates put the number of IAGs closer to 6,000 and ISAF estimated there to be upward of six million small arms in Afghanistan.¹⁰³ Moreover, according to the UNDP, an IAG consisted of “a group of five or more armed individuals

⁹⁷ Stapleton, “Disarming the Militias,” 8.

⁹⁸ UNDP, *DIAG Annual Report 2010*, 10.

⁹⁹ US Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, Office of the SIGAR (Washington, DC: October 2009), 67.

¹⁰⁰ Derskin, *The Politics of Disarmament and Rearmament in Afghanistan*, 12-13.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid*, 11-13.

¹⁰² UNDP, *DIAG Annual Report 2010*, 6-7; Derskin, *The Politics of Disarmament and Rearmament in Afghanistan*, 13.

¹⁰³ Derskin, *The Politics of Disarmament and Rearmament in Afghanistan*, 11; Giustozzi, “Afghanistan: ‘Chaotic’ Peacekeeping and DDR,” 60.

operating outside the law.”¹⁰⁴ This minimalistic definition likely helped spur ANBP officials to target ‘low hanging fruit.’¹⁰⁵ In other words, the program targeted insignificant groups that posed no threat to GIRoA in order to boost numbers and help the programs’ image in the IC.¹⁰⁶ Second, the weapons turned in were often antique rifles, rather than modern semi- or fully automatic weapons.¹⁰⁷ Even attempts in 2008 by the JS to tighten up the weapon collection criteria failed due to competing external pressure on provincial officials. Accordingly, IAG commanders continued their practice of confiscating villagers’ antique weapons and handing them over to DPC officials.¹⁰⁸

All of these issues underscore the lack of control GIRoA had to target IAGs effectively. Indeed, the vast majority of IAGs that disbanded resided in the north and west, a trend that would repeat in the APRP. Herat, Samangan, and Takhar provinces, all in the north, led the way with the most DIAGs disbanded. There were no IAGs disbanded in Helmand, Kandahar, Uruzgan, Paktia, or Khost, even though these are some of the most historically violent provinces of Afghanistan.¹⁰⁹ In areas like Kabul province, where GIRoA and ISAF’s presence were more pronounced, DIAG and the ANBP DDR’s ‘success’ was higher.¹¹⁰

As the Taliban insurgency continued to spread between 2005-2008, GIRoA again began to rely on the very IAGs that they were attempting to disband to keep control of the countryside. Unofficial compromises were hatched “involving the establishment of a façade process of disarmament,” where groups would be allowed to continue, as long as they were “willing to pay at least lip service to a

¹⁰⁴ Stapleton, “Disarming the Militias,” 9.

¹⁰⁵ Rashid, *Descent into Chaos*, 209.

¹⁰⁶ Stapleton, “Disarming the Militias,” 7.

¹⁰⁷ Giustozzi, “Afghanistan: ‘Chaotic’ Peacekeeping and DDR,” 61.

¹⁰⁸ Stapleton, “Disarming the Militias,” 9.

¹⁰⁹ SIGAR, *Quarterly Report October 2009*, 67.

¹¹⁰ Noah Coburn, *Bazaar Politics: Power and Pottery in an Afghan Market Town* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011), 128.

bureaucratic process.’¹¹¹ Indeed, the major militias, Jamiat-I Islami, Dostum’s Junbesh-I Milli, and Hizb-I Wahdat, nominally disarmed and disbanded selected groups and commanders, while retaining the vast majority of their numbers with the tacit approval of GIRoA.¹¹² In other words, the DDR numbers were largely a façade.

In short, both programs failed to dissolve the IAGs in Afghanistan. Although the ANBP DDR did help reduce the number of AMF, the vast majority of these fighters retained their status with their previously affiliated militia, and thus, a number of armed groups continued in the countryside.¹¹³ Although the neo-Taliban insurgency was picking up steam by 2005-2006, its presence in the west and north was nowhere near its current strength. To secure these provinces, GIRoA relied on the very militias it claimed it was trying to disband, shifting focus away from the ANBP DDR and towards the threat of the spreading insurgency. Indeed, UNDP documents often complained of the “continuing challenge of high levels of insecurity in many districts” that “limited movement” and their ability to properly meet with potential groups for disarmament.¹¹⁴ Further, even when these programs succeeded in insurgent strongholds, the ANA was often too weak to fill the security vacuum. Sher Mohammad Akhunzada, a Helmand powerbroker, underscores this point when he noted that the, “DDR did not take place at the right time. . . (it should’ve taken place) after the ANA was strong enough.”¹¹⁵ Lastly, Karzai often used both programs as a way to “weaken opponents while keeping intact the system of armed groups” he

¹¹¹ Giustozzi, “Afghanistan: ‘Chaotic’ Peacekeeping and DDR,” 61; Antonio Giustozzi, *Empires of Mud: Wars and Warlords in Afghanistan*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009) 191-192; Noah Coburn and Ann Larson, *Derailing Democracy in Afghanistan: Elections in an Unstable Political Landscape* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), 43.

¹¹² Giustozzi, “Afghanistan: ‘Chaotic’ Peacekeeping and DDR,” 63; Jones, *In the Graveyard of Empires*, 242.

¹¹³ Giustozzi, *Empires of Mud: Wars and Warlords in Afghanistan*, 91.

¹¹⁴ UNDP, *DIAG Annual Report 2010*, 18.

¹¹⁵ Tom Coghlan, “The Taliban in Helmand: An Oral History,” in *Decoding the New Taliban: Insights from the Afghan Field*, ed. Antonio Giustozzi (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 152.

needed to control swaths of territory.¹¹⁶ In fact, many former warlords, like Fahim and Abdul Rasul Sayyaf, withheld support for Karzai's 2004 presidential run until they were guaranteed that their groups would be excluded from the ANBP DDR.¹¹⁷ Other former Northern Alliance members viewed the programs as "aimed against non-Pashtun militias."¹¹⁸ Further complicating both programs' implementation, some IAG leaders also held positions in GIRoA and in provincial offices and thus were keen on seeing it fail.¹¹⁹ For example, DIAG's Afghan lead, Vice President Khalili, was on DIAG's list of ten most politically influential IAG commanders. Regardless, he steered the process due to his connections with Karzai.¹²⁰ Although DIAG's structure was largely incorporated into the APRP in 2010 and nominally continues today inside the MOI, these programs' efforts were crippled due to GIRoA and ISAF's inability to control the very terrain they needed to without the help of the very units they wanted to disband.

Programme Tahkim Sulh

The ANBP DDR and DIAG programs largely ignored the growing neo-Taliban insurgency in the south and east that began to pick up significant steam by late 2005. More importantly, the Taliban was not targeted for either program, due to a lack of support from the United States and ISAF, who continued to rely on a strategy of rooting out the Taliban from their strongholds via force, rather than reconciliation. In fact, the United States largely abstained from DDR until UNAMA convinced them it would be in the

¹¹⁶ Martine van Bijlert, "Unruly Commanders in Violent Power Struggles: Taliban Networks in Uruzgan," in *Decoding the New Taliban: Insights from the Afghan Field*, ed. Antonio Giustozzi (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 175.

¹¹⁷ Ahmed Rashid, *Descent into Chaos*, 255.

¹¹⁸ Rubin, *Afghanistan from the Cold War through the War on Terror*, 286.

¹¹⁹ Ibid, 240.

¹²⁰ Derskin, *The Politics of Disarmament and Rearmament in Afghanistan*, 12.

ANA's interests to incorporate experienced AMF fighters.¹²¹ This resistance began to change in 2004, as Commander of Combined Forces Command-Afghanistan Lieutenant General David Barno became more amenable to reconciliation with the Taliban, possibly due to the deteriorating security situation in southern Afghanistan and Iraq. Accordingly, the United States nominally supported Karzai's 2005 presidential decree establishing the *Programme Tahkim Sulh* (PTS).¹²² PTS had twelve offices, primarily in the south and east, where the neo-Taliban led insurgency was beginning to challenge GIRoA's control between 2006 and 2008. Indeed, GIRoA and ISAF, led by Canada and the United Kingdom, were struggling to contain a resurgent Taliban in the south and US forces were doing what they could against the Taliban in the east.¹²³

Of all previous and subsequent programs, PTS was truly Afghan-owned and thus was quite different than previous and subsequent programs. By the time the program ended in July 2011 it boasted reconciling nearly 8700 insurgents.¹²⁴ It was led by Sighbatullah Mojaddedi, a former interim President of Afghanistan and former speaker of the National Assembly, who ran the program via the Independent National Commission for Peace. Of all the programs, PTS least resembled standard DDR programs because it was not run by the UN. The Independent National Commission's main purpose was to provide certificates to reconciled insurgents to prove that they had made peace with the new government. Afghan provincial commission members were tasked with persuading insurgents to lay down their arms, demobilize, and reintegrate back into society. Those who agreed met with Mojaddedi personally and received a letter from the former president stating they had reconciled. While there were reportedly minor financial incentives for insurgents to participate, there were a dearth of reconciliation services. Indeed,

¹²¹ Rubin, *Afghanistan from the Cold War through the War on Terror*, 313.

¹²² Derskin, *The Politics of Disarmament and Rearmament in Afghanistan*, 14-15.

¹²³ Derskin, *The Politics of Disarmament and Rearmament in Afghanistan*, 15; Smith, *The Dogs Are Eating Them Now: Our War in Afghanistan*, 94-95; Robert Burns, "Mullen: Afghanistan Isn't Top Priority," *USA Today*, November 11, 2007.

¹²⁴ Derskin, *The Politics of Disarmament and Rearmament in Afghanistan*, 16.

safe houses for recently reconciled insurgents were often in shambles and lacked security.¹²⁵ Many reconciled insurgents had nowhere to stay in Kabul, “but could not return to their home provinces” because “fighting was still raging there.”¹²⁶

In fact, it often seemed that PTS officials “were incapable of offering much except surrender.”¹²⁷ The program operated as more of a symbol of GIRoA’s supposed commitment to reconciliation than as a practical program. Moreover, like all previous and subsequent DDR programs, the overall numbers are highly suspect. In October 2007, former EU special representative to Afghanistan Michael Semple inspected all of the 4,634 individuals who had reconciled through PTS, and concluded that none of them were previously known insurgents.¹²⁸ Other reports stated that half of the program’s overall numbers were fake.¹²⁹ Even the 529 detainees that were released from US detention centers as part of an attempt to boost the program’s prestige were not high-level commanders.¹³⁰ Further, reconciled insurgents were often targeted by ANSF and ISAF despite having a certified letter from Mojadeddi; the certificate was often not worth the paper it was printed on.¹³¹

Although PTS suffered from numerous staffing and structural issues that hobbled the program, this monograph argues that the bigger issue was that for the majority of 2005 to 2011, GIRoA and ISAF did not control large portions of the Pashtun heartland where the neo-Taliban insurgency was strongest.¹³²

¹²⁵ Semple, *Reconciliation in Afghanistan*, 54-56; Joanna Nathan, “A Review of Reconciliation Efforts in Afghanistan,” *CTC Sentinel* 2, no. 8 (August 2009), 3.

¹²⁶ Derskin, *The Politics of Disarmament and Rearmament in Afghanistan*, 16.

¹²⁷ Smith, *The Dogs Are Eating Them Now: Our War in Afghanistan*, 94.

¹²⁸ Semple, *Reconciliation in Afghanistan*, 55.

¹²⁹ Matan Chorey and Jake Sherman, “The Prospects for Security and Political Reconciliation in Afghanistan: Local, National, and Regional Perspectives,” Workshop report (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Kennedy School/Tufts University, 2010) 8-9; Nathan, “A Review of Reconciliation Efforts in Afghanistan,” 1.

¹³⁰ Derskin, *The Politics of Disarmament and Rearmament in Afghanistan*, 16.

¹³¹ Semple, *Reconciliation in Afghanistan*, 55-56; Smith, *The Dogs Are Eating Them Now*, 94-95; Derskin, *The Politics of Disarmament and Rearmament in Afghanistan*, 16.

¹³² Giustozzi, *Koran, Klashnikov and Laptop*, 4; Smith, *The Dogs are Eating Them Now*, 1-2.

Indeed, even if the IC and the UN had provided more robust support, it is hard to see how PTS would have produced better results in the provinces it targeted, as the neo-Taliban insurgency was on the verge of crippling GIRoA in 2009.¹³³ Indeed, the Taliban's strength in the countryside continued to grow until President Obama ordered a 'surge' of US troops into Afghanistan. In short, neither ISAF nor GIRoA ever controlled the territory needed to induce many low-level fighters, much less senior commanders, to renounce the insurgency, accept the constitution, and reintegrate back into society.

APRP

As the insurgency raged in the countryside, in January 2010 at the London Conference, donors pledged approximately \$140 million for reintegration.¹³⁴ On June 2010, Afghan President Hamid Karzai presented the National Consultative Peace Jirga with a 16-point peace plan to reintegrate rank and file Taliban members, who he called 'wayward brothers', back into society, while seeking reconciliation with senior Taliban commanders. Karzai would go on to issue a formal decree on June 29, 2010 that would be the building block for APRP.¹³⁵ Members of the IC would give the plan their blessings during the Kabul Conference in July 2010. The United States pledged \$100 million to get the burgeoning program off the ground and \$50 million directly to GIRoA for the program.¹³⁶ In early September 2010, GIRoA gave the ministries their marching orders to build the new apparatus to target their wayward brothers. The Afghan

¹³³ Bob Woodward, "McChrystal: More Forces or Mission Failure," *Washington Post*, September 21, 2009.

¹³⁴ Deedee Derskin, "Impact or Illusion: Reintegration under the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Program," 216.

¹³⁵ Force Reintegration Cell Headquarters International Security Assistance Force, *A Guide to the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Program* (Kabul, Afghanistan: Government Printing, March 2012), 138-151.

¹³⁶ US Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, Office of the SIGAR, Washington, DC: Printing Office, July 2010, 8, 69-71; US Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, Office of the SIGAR, Washington, DC: Printing Office, October 2010, 91.

High Peace Council (HPC), which was staffed with regional powerbrokers, former jihadists, and Karzai loyalists, was set up to oversee the peace and reconciliation process and also act as an advisor to the President on the peace program.¹³⁷ Unlike previous DDR iterations, this effort received the full support of the US government, especially Special Envoy to Afghanistan Richard Holbrooke. Moreover, ISAF stood up the Force Reintegration Cell, initially led by British Major General David Brook, to support the program. ‘Afghan Hands’, DoD cultural experts, were tasked with enabling their Afghan partners in the provinces.

The three-phase program was rooted in the belief that the vast majority of insurgents “fight because of grievances” that usually originate due to local circumstances, and that “only a minority [were] ideologically motivated.”¹³⁸ Indeed, the neo-liberal and development schools of thought provided the theoretical underpinnings of the program, as the program offered developmental packages to assuage grievances.¹³⁹ The APRP was open to “all member of the armed opposition” who were willing to renounce their insurgent ties and live under the constitutional authority of the state.¹⁴⁰ The program’s overarching goal was to reintegrate thousands of insurgents and stabilize 4,000 communities in 220 districts over five years.¹⁴¹ Initially, the program focused on Helmand, Kandahar, Nangahar, Baghlan, Baghdis, Kunduz, and Herat provinces because these were locations “where the insurgency is the most serious” and where communities had shown “commitment to finding peace.”¹⁴²

¹³⁷ Thomas Ruttig, “Negotiations with the Taliban,” ed. Peter Bergen, *Talibanistan: Negotiating the Borders Between Terror, Politics, and Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 452.

¹³⁸ Force Reintegration Cell, *A guide to the APRP*, 10.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, *The Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Program (APRP): Programme Document*, The National Security Council (Kabul, Afghanistan: Printing Office, 2010), 2.

¹⁴¹ US Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, Office of the SIGAR (Washington, DC, July 2010), 69-71.

¹⁴² Force Reintegration Cell, Headquarters International Security Assistance Force *Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Program Frequently Asked Questions* (Kabul, Afghanistan: Government Printing Office, 2012), 2.

The first phase in the three-phase program was entitled “Social Outreach, Confidence-Building, and Negotiation.”¹⁴³ Eschewing the rigid doctrinal phasing of previous DDRs, the first step was designed to build capacity for GIRoA’s newly built APRP institutions at the provincial and district levels. Provincial governors were to establish Provincial Peace Councils (PPC) to begin community outreach at the grass roots level, while simultaneously receiving capacity training through NGOs. PPCs, aided by religious and other community leaders, were to focus on grievance identification and resolution.¹⁴⁴ These provincial bodies utilized standard questionnaires to conduct “grievance mapping” and determine “which disputes drive violence in a province.”¹⁴⁵ At the national level, the HPC, aided by the JS, who was responsible for implementing the APRP country-wide, began reaching out to victims of the Taliban to ensure that they understood the specifics of the program. In support, ISAF focused on kinetic and non-kinetic operations designed to drive insurgents into the program, constructing and synchronizing a communications plan with GIRoA, and leveraging USSOF’s Village Stability Operations initiative to boost APRP at the grass roots level.¹⁴⁶

Demobilization was the second phase of this program. However, disarmament was also incorporated into this step, though it appeared to play a minor role. Former combatants who agreed to demobilize were vetted by the MOI and the NDS. After they were confirmed to be actual insurgents, their biometric details were logged and their weapons registered. They were then placed on a restricted targeting list to ensure that ANSF/ISAF did not continue to target them.¹⁴⁷ Reintegrees were then provided transition assistance for three months (\$120 a month) that was provided by the PJST.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴³ The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, *APRP*, 6.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 8-9.

¹⁴⁵ Force Reintegration Cell, *A Guide to the APRP*, 13.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid*, 12.

¹⁴⁷ The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, *APRP*, 11

¹⁴⁸ Force Reintegration Cell, *A Guide to the APRP*, 14.

Reintegreees were also provided with disengagement training that was designed to offset perceptions that the reintegreees were dangerous. This training focused on civics, dispute resolution, and social responsibility. Lastly, reintegreees could ask for resettlement. GIRoA's security ministries were charged with reviewing these cases and determining if there was a location that would not only accept a reintegree but also determine if said reintegree would pose a threat to a community. In short, this second phase focused on certifying the authenticity of a former combatant, disarming him, and providing him initial assistance for the long process of reintegrating him back into Afghan society. ISAF provided minimal support during this phase, other than providing logistical and material assistance, though Afghan Hands were charged with guiding PJSTs through this step.¹⁴⁹

The third and last phase, entitled "Consolidate Peace and Support," was designed to incentivize communities to accept reintegreees through "a menu of recovery options."¹⁵⁰ GIRoA premised this last phase on the concept that all Afghans had suffered from thirty years of violence and thus all should receive the collected benefits of reintegration. If Afghan communities decided to accept reintegreees, they were eligible for literacy and vocational training via the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, integration to the ANSF, or community small work projects under numerous GIRoA agencies. PRTs were tasked to support PJSTs to ensure the development projects were implemented smoothly.¹⁵¹

The program picked up some early momentum in its infancy. Indeed, the prospect for reconciliation was very popular throughout Afghanistan, with nearly 73% of Afghans believing that reconciliation efforts between GIRoA and armed opposition groups would help stabilize the country.¹⁵² This perception was resilient despite the fact that the number of insurgent attacks doubled in 2010.¹⁵³ By

¹⁴⁹ Force Reintegration Cell, *A Guide to the APRP* 10.

¹⁵⁰ The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, *APRP*, 6.

¹⁵¹ Force Reintegration Cell, *A Guide to the APRP*, 16; The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, *APRP*, 8-12.

¹⁵² Asia Foundation, "A Survey of the Afghan People: Afghanistan 2015," 47.

¹⁵³ Ian Livingston and Michael O'Hanlon, *Afghanistan Index* (Washington, DC: Brookings, October 31 2016), 8.

the end of 2010, with only a handful of PPCs fully functioning, nearly 650 fighters had begun the reintegration process.¹⁵⁴ Moreover, that number would nearly quadruple to nearly 2500 by the end of 2011.¹⁵⁵ The first few years of the APRP were by far some of the strongest years for reintegration, but even then, fractures in the program were beginning to show.

Although the APRP was being widely hailed as a burgeoning success by the general in charge of the program, problems were plainly visible.¹⁵⁶ Of the nearly 2500 reintegrees, 90% of them came from the north and west, where, other than northern Kunduz and Pashtun dominated districts of Herat, Baghlan and Faryab, ISAF and GIROA had varying degrees control.¹⁵⁷ In short, the majority of reintegrees hailed from areas that are not historic Taliban hotspots. Moreover, the authenticity of some of these supposed reintegrees were already in question, an uncertainty that lingered and would eventually call the program's numbers into doubt.¹⁵⁸ In September 2011, the head of the HPC, former Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani, was assassinated by the Taliban.¹⁵⁹ This assassination underscored the problems the APRP's staff were having going into Taliban controlled or disputed areas of rural Afghanistan to set up the structures necessary for the program.¹⁶⁰ Further, reintegrees became a prime target for the Taliban and many reintegrees complained that GIROA was unable to protect them from their former comrades.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁴ US Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, Office of the SIGAR, (Washington, DC: January 2011), 71-74.

¹⁵⁵ US Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, Office of the SIGAR (Washington, DC: January 2012), 104-109.

¹⁵⁶ International Security Assistance Force, "Commentary: Maj. General Hook's Thoughts as Outgoing FRIC Director," 6 October 2012.

¹⁵⁷ SIGAR, *Quarterly Report*, January 2011, 104-109.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Alissa Rubin, "Assassination Deals Blow to Peace Process in Afghanistan," *The New York Times*, September 20, 2011.

¹⁶⁰ US Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, Office of the SIGAR (Washington, DC: April 2012), 89-94.

¹⁶¹ SIGAR, *Quarterly Report*, January 2011, 104-109; United Nations Mission Afghanistan, *Afghan People's Dialogue on Peace: Building the Foundation for an Inclusive Peace Process* (Kabul, 2014), 10, 30-33.

In 2012, as the surge in American forces steadily decreased from its peak of 100,000 in 2011, the APRP program began to disintegrate.¹⁶² By mid-2012, the number of monthly reintegrees had dropped to half the normal rate of approximately seven hundred.¹⁶³ And by the beginning of 2013, the number would trickle down to approximately two hundred per month, with intermittent increases, for the next three years.¹⁶⁴ On the reconciliation side, President Hamid Karzai scuttled talks with the Taliban after a diplomatic kerfuffle over their newly established offices in Qatar.¹⁶⁵ Further, although Salahuddin Rabbani replaced his father as the head of the APRP's leading council, prominent figures on the council like former Taliban minister and senior peace envoy, Mawlawi Arsala Rahmani, continued to be assassinated.¹⁶⁶ By the end of the program in 2016, nearly 200 reintegrees were listed as assassinated, though this number is likely too low.¹⁶⁷ Lastly, although some of the Afghan-led organizations made progress in the west and north, where GIRoA and ISAF had some level of control over most districts and offered adequate security, these organizations stalled in more volatile provinces, leading some governors to distance themselves from the program.¹⁶⁸ This lack of institutional progress likely hindered the APRP's ability to spend their budget on time, leading many countries to withhold their donations.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶² Livingston and Hanlon, *Afghan Index*, 4.

¹⁶³ US Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, Office of the SIGAR (Washington, DC: October 2012), 103-107.

¹⁶⁴ US Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, Office of the SIGAR (Washington, DC: April 2013), 109-113.

¹⁶⁵ Rob Crilly and Ben Farmer, "Hamid Karzai Plunges Taliban Peace Talks into Doubt," *The Telegraph*, June 19, 2013.

¹⁶⁶ "Afghan Peace Negotiator Arsala Rahmani Shot Dead," *BBC News*, May 13, 2012,

¹⁶⁷ US Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, Office of the SIGAR (Washington, DC: April 2016), 145.

¹⁶⁸ US Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, Office of the SIGAR (Washington, DC: April 2013), 109-113.

¹⁶⁹ US Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, Office of the SIGAR (Washington, DC: July 2013), 120-123.

The APRP had reintegrated approximately eleven thousand insurgents when the program ended in 2016.¹⁷⁰ Considering that GIRoA estimated that there were between “32,000 and 40,000 combatants in Afghanistan” with only “8,000 to 10,000 full-time fighters,” these figures seem impressive.¹⁷¹ However, these figures—again—are very misleading. First, there were numerous cases of fake insurgents being flagged in the system. It is likely that these were allies of regional powerbrokers who were trying to cash in on the development programs. In Sar-e Pol, approximately two hundred reintegrees were scrubbed from the program.¹⁷² Additionally, in Uruzgan, Baghlan, and Kunduz provinces there were allegations of provincial GIRoA officials using the program to support their patronage networks, but this problem was likely endemic throughout Afghanistan.¹⁷³

Second, the overwhelming majority of these reintegrees came from the north and west, where GIRoA and ISAF have historically been the strongest and, until the last few years, largely controlled the terrain. According to the last provincial breakdown in June 2015, 70% of reintegrees came from these areas.¹⁷⁴ Of the reintegrees from the north and west, nearly half of them came from Baghdis and Baghlan. Although there are districts where the insurgency has had footholds—and have significantly increased their presence in the last two years—these two provinces are not historically Taliban strongholds. Further, nearly 60% of these reintegrees came into the program during the first two years, when ISAF numbers had surged throughout the country.¹⁷⁵ In the more volatile provinces, Nangarhar and Kandahar led the

¹⁷⁰ US Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, Office of the SIGAR (Washington, DC: July 2016), 145.

¹⁷¹ The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, *APRP*, 8-9.

¹⁷² Ben Farmer, “The Truth about Taliban Reintegration,” *The Telegraph*, February 11, 2012.

¹⁷³ Derskin, *The Politics of Disarmament and Rearmament in Afghanistan*, 21-43.

¹⁷⁴ United Nations Development Programme *Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme: 2015 Second Quarter Project Progress Report*, (Kabul, Afghanistan 2015), 18-19.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

way, accounting for nearly a third of all reintegrees.¹⁷⁶ Again, most of these reintegrees streamed into the program when ISAF and ANSF surged into these provinces as part of the ‘surge’. However, as the ISAF numbers began to drop and the ANSF was thrust into holding the terrain without their recently departed allies, the number of reintegrees correspondingly decreased.¹⁷⁷

In short, the evidence suggests that the APRP program floundered because GIRoA and ISAF never had sufficient control of the southern and eastern provinces, the base of strength for the neo-Taliban insurgency. Although there is a dearth of granular data with which to analyze district or province zones of control, historical patterns and insurgent estimates support this claim.¹⁷⁸ Even in the northern provinces, which were more closely controlled by GIRoA, aligned powerbrokers, and ISAF, and were responsible for 36 percent of reintegrees, demobilization has not lasted. In the past few years the insurgency’s strength has increased in the critical northern provinces, along with the simultaneous increase in the amount of pro-government militias.¹⁷⁹ Although it would be difficult to discount all of the APRP’s numbers as false, the fact that GIRoA currently only controls approximately 60 percent of all districts, raises serious doubt to the claim that a third of the insurgency has been reconciled.¹⁸⁰ Further, even in Helmand and Kandahar, where GIRoA and ISAF increased their levels of control during the surge, this did not translate into an increase in the number of reintegrees from these provinces.¹⁸¹ This likely

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid; United Nations Development Programme *Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme: 2013 Annual Project Progress Report* (Kabul, 2013), 18; United Nations Development Programme *Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme: Second Quarter Project Progress Report 2012*, (Kabul, 2012), 15.

¹⁷⁸ Antonio Giustozzi, *Koran, Kalshnikov, and Laptop*, 6; Nordland and Goldstein, “Afghan Taliban is Widest Since 2001”; Paul Tait, “Government Map Shows Dire Afghan Security Picture,” *Reuters*, April 5 2009.

¹⁷⁹ Gran Heward, “The 2015 Insurgency in the North (4): Surrounding the cities in Baghlan,” *Afghanistan Analyst Network*, October 21, 2015.

¹⁸⁰ Mujib Mashal and Eric Schmitt, “Afghan Security Crisis Sets Stage for Terrorists’ Resurgence,” *The New York Times*, December 2, 2016.

¹⁸¹ Jake Dressler, “Counterinsurgency in Helmand,” (Washington, DC: The Institute for the Study of War, January 2011), 8; Carl Forsberg, “Counterinsurgency in Kandahar,” (Washington, DC: The Institute for the Study of War, December 2010), 6-7; Carlotta Gal and Taimoor Shah, “After Losing Province in 2010, Afghan Taliban Strikes Back,” *The New York Times*, July 7, 2014.

occurred because of the blurring between who constituted the insurgency and who constituted GIROA. In Helmand, violence was often tribal in nature, and the use of the GIROA and Taliban labels were false, or easily used and shed monikers.¹⁸² In other words, ‘GIROA control’ is misleading, as regional strongmen would represent the government as long as it was in their interests, but could easily switch back to being ‘Taliban’ when that appeared to be more in their interests. Thus, reconciling or reintegrating insurgents was likely not always in these regional strongmen’s interests.

Analysis

Since the fall of the Taliban in December 2001, the UN, ISAF, the United States, and GIROA have spent hundreds of millions on four DDR programs and other minor reconciliation efforts.¹⁸³ Indeed, in 2005 alone, ANBP-DDR, DIAG and PTS were running concurrently, targeting the AMF, non-AMF militias, and the Taliban. Even the term ‘DDR’ has made it into the Pashto lexicon, much like ‘specialporce’ for special forces.¹⁸⁴ On paper, the four programs claim to have reintegrated approximately 90,000 personnel and collected nearly 130,000 light and heavy weapons.¹⁸⁵ Of the 90,000 reintegrated, nearly 20,000 were supposedly members of the neo-Taliban insurgency; the remaining personnel were *arbaki*, some of whom were previous members of the AMF. Thousands of projects were completed that directly benefited approximately four hundred thousand Afghans.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸² Martin, *An Intimate War*, 195-225.

¹⁸³ For further information on other minor programs like the Allegiance Program, Reconciliation and Justice Action Plan, and the Afghanistan Social Outreach Program, see Jonathan Nathan, “A Review of Reconciliation Efforts in Afghanistan,” *CTC Sentinel*, vol.2 no. 8, August 2009.

¹⁸⁴ Martin, *An Intimate War*, 149.

¹⁸⁵ The total of personnel reintegrated via DIAG is difficult to determine. As of 2010, the UNDP stated it had disarmed 759 IAGs, though the number of personnel in each IAG is not listed. Further, the number of weapons collected via PTS was not found. For the most conclusive numbers see: Derskin, *Politics of Disarmament and Rearmament in Afghanistan*, 1-18; US Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, Office of the SIGAR (Washington, DC: Printing Office, October 2016), 161.

¹⁸⁶ UNDP, *DIAG: Annual Project Report 2010*, 11; UNDP, *Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme (UNDP Support): 2015 Third Quarter Project Progress*, 16.

Despite such lofty numbers, these programs have proved to be almost entirely unsuccessful. Indeed, all four programs' numbers are almost certainly highly inflated. If nearly 20,000 insurgents had been reintegrated, it is hard to imagine how the Taliban insurgency has managed to surge across the country, nearly as powerful now as it was in 2001.¹⁸⁷ According to United States Forces Afghanistan (USFOR-A), as of October 2016, insurgents control or are contesting 32% of the country; approximately ten million Afghans live in this area.¹⁸⁸ Correspondingly, the *Institute for the Study of War (ISW)* estimates that the Taliban and the ISIS-KP control or are contesting approximately 40 district centers.¹⁸⁹ Further, the insurgency's strength in the historically 'peaceful' north has significantly increased, with approximately 15% of the region under Taliban control as of 2016.¹⁹⁰ The *ISW* mirrors USFOR-A's assessment, as they indicate the Taliban has areas of support or control in every province in the north and west. Indeed, according to the *ISW*, only Panshjer and Bamyan, two of Afghanistan's most tranquil provinces, have little to no areas of Taliban support or control.¹⁹¹ The spread of the insurgency to historically peaceful regions has proven too much for the approximately 320,000 personnel of the ANSF, as GIRoA is increasingly relying on the very *arbaki* the IC spent millions trying to disband.¹⁹² The

¹⁸⁷ Lynne O'Donnel, "The Taliban Now Hold More Ground Than At Any Point Since 2001," *Military Times*, June 16, 2015.

¹⁸⁸ US Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Quarterly Reported to the United States Congress*, Office of the SIGAR (Washington, DC: October 2016), 105.

¹⁸⁹ Catlin Forrest, *Afghanistan Partial Threat Assessment: November 22, 2016* (Washington, DC: Institute for the Study of War, 2016), 1.

¹⁹⁰ US Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Quarterly Reported to the United States Congress*, Office of the SIGAR (Washington, DC: October 2016), 105.

¹⁹¹ Forrest, *Afghanistan Partial Threat Assessment: November 22, 2016*.

¹⁹² Sudarasan Raghavan, "Afghan Government Turns to Militias as Taliban Gains Strength," *Washington Post*, October 29, 2015.

November 12, 2016 suicide attack on Bagram Airbase underscores this failure. The Taliban suicide bomber, Qari Naib, had reconciled with GIROA in 2008. The attack killed two American soldiers.¹⁹³

This monograph argues that these DDR programs failed to produce tangible results because GIROA, ISAF, and the United States never controlled enough territory to reintegrate either insurgents or *arbaki* members. While other factors also hindered the DDR programs' effectiveness, without forceful coercive mechanisms *arbakis* and insurgents did not feel compelled to leave their groups, and had little problem returning if they did leave. The APRP is the final culmination of these Afghan DDR programs to date, and this last iteration attempted to incorporate solutions to many of the problems that had plagued previous programs. While the APRP also suffered from rampant corruption and lack of technocratic ability, it is hard to see how alleviating these deficiencies would have necessarily improved the results of these programs, supporting this monograph's hypothesis that territorial control is a critical prerequisite for the successful implementation of DDR.

Do other DDR schools of thoughts offer insights into these programs' failures? First, while it is highly debatable if large portions of the insurgency are fighting for non-ideological reasons, the APRP's PPC were specifically designed to help identify grievances in the countryside and attempt to ameliorate them with economic incentives.¹⁹⁴ The APRP doled out millions in reconstruction projects to sweeten the pot for communities who were asked to welcome reconciled insurgents. Although it was difficult to put 'politics first' in the midst of an industrial-strength insurgency, the HPC was designed to find a political solution with the Taliban's senior leaders. Indeed, President Ashraf Ghani spent much of his early political capital on trying to find such a deal, but this was largely in vain.¹⁹⁵ The APRP and DIAG built

¹⁹³ Bill Roggio, "Bagram Suicide Bomber Reconciled with Afghan Government in 2008," *Long War Journal*, November 16, 2016.

¹⁹⁴ Matt Waldman, "Dangerous Liaisons with the Afghan Taliban: The Feasibility and Risks of Negotiations," in *Getting it Right in Afghanistan*, eds. Scott Smith, Moeed Yusuf, and Colin Cookman (Washington, DC: United States Institute for Peace Press, 2013) 51-73; Giustozzi, *Koran, Kalashnikov, and Laptop*, 33-81.

¹⁹⁵ Ali Latifi, "No More Peace Talks with Taliban, Afghanistan's President Says," *The Los Angeles Times*, April 25, 2016.

Afghan institutions like the HPC and the JS, approximately 32 PPCs, and numerous other provincial institutions that received capacity training by NGOs. The APRP and PTS were not overly rigid in the reintegration process. In fact, PTS barely mirrored the UN's template at all and definitely had Afghans in the lead, while the APRP attempted to have the Afghans in the lead throughout the process, as well. Finally, the north and west had fairly stable security, except for hot spots like Kunduz, Baghdis, and Baghlan. Indeed, during the majority of the time that ANBP-DDR and DIAG operated in earnest, security in the north and west was fairly strong, despite some early fighting after the fall of Kabul. Yet, despite all of this, these programs failed to significantly reduce the number of *arbaki* or insurgents.

The case studies of Afghan DDR programs suggest that Kalyvas' theory of control can be extended from understanding violence in civil wars to understanding where the cessation of violence, in the form of DDR programs, will occur. In Afghanistan, the overwhelming number of reintegrees came from the north and west, where the government aligned strongmen controlled the preponderance of territory. This obviously makes sense during the initial ANBP-DDR program that targeted the AMF, who primarily resided in this area. DIAG and APRP also had the overwhelming number of reintegrees hail from 'GIROA' strongholds in the north and west. Yet, these programs still failed to stop the resurgence of either *arbakis* or the insurgency. In fact, in provinces like Helmand and Kandahar, where GIROA and/or ISAF had increased control after the surge, the number of reintegrees did not rise? Why?

The dissonance likely rests with the bifurcation of Kalyvas' theory, which has two clearly defined and separate groups-- the incumbents and the insurgents. In Afghanistan, these identities are not stable; they are easily disposed of and often replaced. Indeed, provincial powerbrokers like Ishamel Khan, Abdul Rashid Dostum, Gul Agha Sherzai, former Uruzgan strongman Jan Mohammad, and Balkh Provincial Governor Atta Mohammad Nur have had tenuous relationships with the government for years. And this is just a partial list of powerbrokers. Indeed, Governor Nur, who has reigned supreme in Balkh since 2004, threatened civil war if Abdullah Abdullah was not declared the winner of the 2014 elections.¹⁹⁶ He has

¹⁹⁶ Pamela Constable, "Key Abdullah Ally Wars of Afghan Unrest if Vote Recount is One Sided," *Washington Post*, August 12, 2014.

also repeatedly mocked GIROA influence in his province and has labeled it a ‘show’.¹⁹⁷ In fact, Nur refused to step down from his office after President Ghani attempted to remove him. Ghani, humiliatingly, had to “reappoint” Nur as provincial governor, even though he had never actually left.¹⁹⁸ This is from a leader who has largely been a senior GIROA official for 15 years! Even the mercurial Vice President Dostum recently threatened violence against the government if it did not respect him or attempted to arrest him on allegations that he brutally raped and tortured a political rival.¹⁹⁹ In short, these powerbrokers may maintain control of the territory, nominally for GIROA, but this does not mean that they will abide by GIROA’s rules. Rather, these powerbrokers really work for themselves, not GIROA, and this explains why these powerbrokers would appear to support DDR programs, and pad the numbers of reintegrees while keeping their *arbaki* largely intact and loyal to them. Why did these programs largely fail? They failed because the programs’ intent did not usually align with regional powerbrokers’ interests.

In this type of granular level feud, Kalyvas’ label of who is an insurgent and who is an incumbent is particularly hard to discern. Accordingly, even when the ‘government’ had control in certain provinces, it was not in these leaders’ interest to participate in the program.²⁰⁰ The scene in Helmand is emblematic of the insurgency throughout Afghanistan: it is nominally headed by the Quetta Shura Taliban, but in fact it is largely decentralized and consists of a wide array of smaller groups.²⁰¹ In short, the insurgency is almost too diffused to label as one coherent entity with clearly defined zones of control. The same can be said of the government.

¹⁹⁷ Kay Johnson and Paritosh Bansal, “Leader in Afghanistan North Dismisses Kabul Government as Show,” *Reuters*, January 3, 2015.

¹⁹⁸ Hamid Shalizi and James Mackenzie, “Powerful Afghan Governor Pushes for Role on National Stage,” *Reuters*, January 30, 2017; Jawad Sukhanyar and Rod Norland, “They Cannot Remove Me by Force: A Strongman on Afghan Infighting,” *New York Times*, April 12, 2016.

¹⁹⁹ Mujib Mashal, “Afghan Vice President Hints That Turmoil Awaits if He is Not Respected,” *The New York Times*, October 25, 2016; Mujib Mashal, “Afghanistan Orders Arrests of Vice President’s Guards in Rape and Torture Case,” *The New York Times*, January 24, 2017.

²⁰⁰ Martin, *An Intimate War*, 195-252.

²⁰¹ Kilcullen, *Blood Year*, 167-184.

Overall, these programs failed because GIRoA/ISAF lacked true control of enough of Afghanistan's territory, and of its periphery to effectively enforce its mandates. Insurgents who lost control of a certain area could move to another district, or simply melt back through the historically porous border into the safety of Pakistan. Local power brokers were often more loyal to their tribe, party, or fighters, instead of having the loyalty to GIRoA necessary to truly implement these programs; therefore, GIRoA rarely if ever had a strong zone of control anywhere in the country. Even if these programs had been staffed with superb technocrats and operated at western-like levels of efficiency, it is difficult to see how this would have changed the reality on the ground. This monograph argues, that, in fact, it would not have.

Implementing DDR programs in the midst of an insurgency is always a hazardous proposition. Indeed, this is why DDR programs are usually implemented *after* a peace agreement between the warring parties has been signed. This peace, however, never truly occurred after the Bonn agreement. While the agreement called for the disbandment of the mujahedeen, it did not have any forcing mechanism to enable this to happen. In fact, the nascent Afghan interim government only had 6,000 personnel under arms by 2003 when they attempted their first DDR program.²⁰² In short, after the war, GIRoA lacked the coercive power to disband the militias. They would prove even weaker in controlling space in insurgent-infested territories. Indeed, without a concerted effort by the IC after the fall of Kabul by the international community, DDR programs targeting both militias and insurgents would likely have failed due to the lack of true government control.

Conclusion

This monograph has shown that Kalyvas' thesis, that who controls territory in a civil war largely dictates a populations' actions, explains why the four DDR programs in Afghanistan failed. Indeed,

²⁰² Ian Livingston and Michael O'Hanlon, "Afghanistan Index," *Brookings*, October 31, 2016, 6.

Kalyvas' theory largely holds to form: in areas outside of zone one (incumbent control), GIROA was incapable of successfully implementing these programs. However, in areas they nominally controlled, powerbrokers (the real incumbents) were not interested in successful DDR programs. The northern and western provinces offer a mirage of government control. Unfortunately, true zone one control in Afghanistan is very limited territorially, and further control by GIROA is critical. Despite being heavily financed by the IC, staffed with technocratic DDR experts, and leveraging Afghan-run institutions, these programs were unable to make an adequate dent in the insurgency or *arbaiki*. In short, until regional powerbrokers—the real incumbents—become vested into DDR's success, and more loyal to GIROA than themselves, these programs will fail, regardless of GIROA or the coalition's insistence otherwise.

Lastly, thinking of peace before the start of war is a bromide that has certainly seen a lot of ink spilled since Iraq began to deteriorate in 2003. Regardless, future commanders should have some understanding of DDR programs before the next invasion. Future commanders should insure that their actions are in line with the intent of DDR programs. This would alleviate the problem of utilizing forces that the IC is trying to disband. Although the current 'never again' mantra runs deep throughout the military as a consequence of the experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan, it is likely that US forces will one day find themselves in a similar situation. As before, they will attempt to restore stability, likely in a culture alien to the west. Hopefully, trying to make peace with the very fighters they vanquished will be a top priority. Understanding the strengths and limitations of these programs will help their chances of succeeding.

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