2009 Afghanistan Recommendations

The following recommendations for strengthening Afghanistan’s peace and reconstruction processes were developed by a group of Afghan women leaders convened by the Institute for Inclusive Security in October 2009.

1. **Strengthen Afghan ownership of development initiatives by:**
   - Identifying development priorities in partnership with the local population, specifically through shuras and village councils;
   - Using culturally appropriate interlocutors such as women doctors and community leaders to consult with both men and women; and
   - Partnering with local civil organizations to implement development initiatives, helping ensure their sustainability.

2. **Expand strategies for tackling government corruption by:**
   - Establishing an independent oversight and investigative body to monitor and hold the Afghan Government accountable for increasing the transparency and responsiveness of government;
   - Developing a more comprehensive and consistent vetting process that is applied stringently to government appointments at all levels;
   - Expanding education programs across the country to develop a professionalized, competent workforce; and
   - Addressing obstacles to women’s voting (i.e., lack of adequate women staff, voter coercion, etc.) in preparation for the 2010 parliamentary elections.

3. **In defining US strategy, emphasize equally creation of a strong Afghan National Army and Police and establishment of a functioning, independent judicial system by:**
   - Increasing the emphasis on strengthening judicial process, training judges, and increasing the number of female judges at all levels in the judicial system;
   - Mandating that all Afghan National Police and Army officials are trained on the constitution, civil code, and human rights law—with a particular emphasis on women’s rights; and
   - Adapting traditional justice mechanisms, which are inherently discriminatory toward women, to ensure judicial recourse for all Afghans. The use of these traditional mechanisms should be integrated into a much larger effort to create a professionalized, independent, national justice system.

4. **Collaborate with women civil society leaders to disseminate information about the US mission and objectives in Afghanistan in order to increase public awareness of and the legitimacy of efforts.**