

RELEASE IN PART B5,B6

From: PVerveer [redacted]
Sent: Sunday, April 22, 2012 11:59 PM
To: H
Subject: a few things

B6

There are a few things I wanted to convey to you from meetings last week:

AFGHANISTAN

I met with Stanekzai and two members of the Afghan High Peace Council when they were in DC last week. (They also had extensive Hill meetings with the likes of McCain, Feinstein, Kerry, etc)

The vulnerability of women to attack is still a major challenge and it's one of the reasons -- particularly with the recent attacks --- that the women are even more concerned about negotiations with the Taliban --- they just don't trust them. We've had to deal with a wave of press inquiries. The HPC women noted that Afghan women are working through peace commissions in each of the provinces and felt that participation at the local level will be particularly important, as this is where real reintegration and reconciliation has to take place if it is to succeed. AID/Kabul is trying to figure out what more can be done at the local level.

Stanekzai said that a delegation of Pakistani female parliamentarians came to Afghanistan last week representing different political parties, and both he and Karzai felt it had positive value since good relations with their neighbors is critical. I have felt for some time that the Pakistan women's caucus is one of the few bright spots of progress in Pakistan. (They have managed to get some important legislation passed against difficult odds.) Stanekzai felt if a group of prominent Pakistan and Indian women legislators -- in the company of their Afghan counterparts -- met with some of the Afghan male leaders, it might be a good influence. We will see what's possible.

Amb Hakimi told me that the Afghans have finally signed off, as you know, on the strategic partnership which is good news. The document has strong language on women so hopefully that will add value.

AUSTRALIA -

The head of AUS AID was in on Friday to discuss their collaboration with us on the Lower Mekong Initiative. They will be supportive and will also participate as "friends of LMI" at the Siam Reep meeting after the ASEAN ministerial.

He also said that at the NATO Chicago meeting, Australia would announce a 40% increase in their development assistance to Afghanistan, even as they draw down on the military side.

The news he brought from the South Pacific was not good. The women lost big in PNG so there will be no women in the next Parliament as the one who was there is retiring. He said there's so much money slushing around in PNG with the 16b Exxon investment -- it's having a corrosive influence.

He believes the US is a very influential external validator in the Pacific and hopes we can find ways to use that influence to get the Pacific Island nations to embrace reform and progress.

COLUMBIA - the meetings in Bogota went very well. The government wants to work with us on women, peace and security and transitioning from their 5-decades of conflict. They still confront many issues from land rights to violence against women. Among the assistance they need is help with gender-sensitive training for their military and police. We're going to see if South Com can help since this is the kind of thing Afri Com has done well.

On WPS, we're working with NDU to try to produce a book of best practices on women, peace and security for military and why it matters. Nancy McEldowney is now the acting president of NDU and she has been terrific.

When you go to Nepal, hopefully, you can support the women and government because they've got a terrific National Action Plan that the Norwegians helped with. The Norwegians also want to elevate the WPS in NATO which they will raise at the Chicago meeting.

TIME - our IWOC honoree from Kandahar won't be at the award ceremony because her mother is ill. There are some other inspirational women joining you.

AWARD - There is an interest in naming a State Department Award after you. It is only fitting to do so. If you aren't against the proposition, maybe we can think about what it should be recognition for.

JANE HARMON - wondered if you had a chance to ask Dilma Rousseff about heading the Council on Women World Leaders? She is working to make Thursday's dinner in your honor memorable.



B5

Sorry to have rambled so, but wanted to share this with you.