

**INTERNATIONAL SECURITY / MIDDLE EAST UPDATE**  
**June 2 - 9, 2011**

1. [Ambassador Nominee Will Work for Shared U.S.-Afghan Vision](#) (06-08-2011)
2. [Obama Supports Second Term for U.N.'s Ban Ki-moon](#) (06-07-2011)
3. [Nuclear Watchdog Calls for Iran's Cooperation on Nuclear Arms](#) (06-07-2011)
4. [U.S. Maintains Enduring, Consistent Commitment to Asia](#) (06-06-2011)
5. [Press Briefing by Defense's Gates, Afghan President Karzai](#) (06-05-2011)
6. [U.S. Condemns "Senseless" Violence in Yemen](#) (06-03-2011)
7. [Trans-Atlantic Cooperation and a Spirit that Binds Us](#) (06-02-2011)

-----

**1. [Ambassador Nominee Will Work for Shared U.S.-Afghan Vision](#) (06-08-2011)**

By MacKenzie C. Babb  
Staff Writer

Washington — Ryan Crocker, President Obama's nominee to be the next U.S. ambassador to Afghanistan, says that if confirmed by the U.S. Senate, he will work toward the U.S.-Afghan shared vision of an Afghanistan that "can stand on its own feet and plot its own course toward its destiny."

He said the core U.S. goal in working with Afghanistan toward a brighter future is "to disrupt, dismantle and defeat al-Qaida" and to deny the terrorist group a safe haven within Afghan borders. Crocker [told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee June 8](#) that U.S. efforts to pursue this goal are focused on three mutually reinforcing surges — military, civilian and diplomatic. He called the killing of al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden by U.S. forces May 1 an important step, but said much work remains to be done.

Crocker also commended the more than 1,100 U.S. civilian experts serving alongside U.S. and Afghan troops to establish the conditions "for a sustainable and irreversible transition of security responsibility" from international forces to the Afghan government. Crocker said supporting this transition is a key U.S. priority and, if confirmed, he will work to continue the "responsible, conditions-based transfer to Afghan security lead."

He said the process is set to begin in July with the transition of lead security responsibility to the Afghan national security forces in seven provinces and municipalities, which contain about 25 percent of the Afghan population. The transfer is planned to be complete by the end of 2014.

“As transition proceeds and Afghan leadership strengthens across the country, a process of political reconciliation will become increasingly viable,” Crocker said. “In turn, successful reconciliation will reduce the threat to the Afghan government, making transition more sustainable.”

He said the United States supports the peace effort launched by the Afghan government to reconcile insurgents who renounce violence, abandon ties with al-Qaida and abide by the constitution of Afghanistan.

“If former militants are willing to meet these red lines, they would then be able to participate in the political life of the country under their constitution,” Crocker added.

He said he would maintain efforts to support the country’s long-term reconstruction, sustainable economic development and the strengthening of key Afghan institutions “critical to ensuring the transition is sustainable and irreversible.”

Crocker emphasized the United States and its allies will continue to support the Afghan government through an enduring commitment outlined in the Strategic Partnership Declaration, to “provide a road map for our long-term political, economic and security cooperation.”

Crocker previously served as ambassador to Iraq, Pakistan, Syria, Kuwait and Lebanon before his April nomination to serve in Afghanistan.

---

## **2. Obama Supports Second Term for U.N.’s Ban Ki-moon (06-07-2011)**

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.  
Staff Writer

Washington — President Obama supports U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon’s bid for a second term as head of the world’s largest international organization, the White House said June 7.

“Under Ban’s leadership, the United Nations has played a critical role in responding to crises and challenges across the globe, including most recently supporting democratic transitions in Côte d’Ivoire and earthquake-affected Haiti, the conduct of the referendum on South Sudan’s self-determination, and efforts to resolve the political and humanitarian crisis in Libya,” White House press secretary Jay Carney said in a prepared statement.

At a June 6 press conference, Ban formally announced he was seeking a second five-year term.

“This morning, I sent a letter to the membership of the General Assembly and the Security Council, offering, humbly, myself for consideration for a second term as secretary-general of the United Nations,” Ban told reporters at U.N. headquarters in New York.

“Throughout my time in office, I have sought to be a bridge-builder — among the member states, within the United Nations system and among a rich diversity of global partners,” Ban added. “Finding common ground is central to delivering results.”

He has already won the support of the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council — China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States — but the final decision rests

with the entire U.N. General Assembly. The South Korean foreign minister from 2004 to 2006, Ban began his first term in January 2007.

“The United Nations is an imperfect but indispensable institution,” Carney said. “The secretary general has made important reforms, such as increasing the hiring of women to senior posts and proposing the deepest reduction in the U.N.’s budget in more than a decade.”

Carney’s statement said the United States “strongly supports further efforts for reform to improve effectiveness, streamline bureaucracy, reduce costs, and update business practices to improve the United Nations’ ability to meet its mandate to promote global peace and security, human rights and development.”

### [U.S. Support for Ban Ki-moon’s Re-election](#)

---

### **3. Nuclear Watchdog Calls for Iran’s Cooperation on Nuclear Arms (06-07-2011)**

By Jeff Baron  
Staff Writer

Washington — The head of the international nuclear watchdog agency says Iran isn’t cooperating in the investigation of substantial evidence that the country has military dimensions to its nuclear program — and President Obama says that could mean more sanctions.

“Iran is not providing the necessary cooperation to enable the agency to provide credible assurance about the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran, and therefore to conclude that all nuclear material in Iran is in peaceful activities,” Yukiya Amano, director-general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), told the IAEA Board of Governors at the start of a weeklong meeting June 6 in Vienna.

Iran has said that its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes only, but the United States and other countries have challenged that assertion. Iran is under international sanctions for failing to meet what Amano called “all relevant obligations in order to establish international confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear program.”

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said at a news conference June 7 in Tehran that despite Amano’s comments, there is nothing the international community can put forward to induce Iran to cease enriching uranium.

China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States have expressed disappointment after previous meetings with Iran over its nuclear program. Following a White House meeting June 7 with German Chancellor Angela Merkel, President Obama told reporters: “We agreed that Iran’s continuing nuclear program and its refusal to engage in any meaningful talks with the international community remain a very serious concern. So we agreed that if the International Atomic Energy Agency this week determines again that Iran is continuing to ignore its international obligations, then we will have no choice but to consider additional steps, including potentially additional sanctions, to intensify the pressure on the Iranian regime.”

Amano referred to a report submitted by IAEA experts to the board a week earlier. It raised questions on whether Iran has been working on technology necessary to build nuclear warheads. Iran has denied pursuing that technology. Amano said the evidence suggests “the existence of

possible military dimensions to Iran's nuclear program. There are indications that certain of these activities may have continued until recently."

Amano also said the IAEA has concluded that a secret site in Dair Alzour, Syria — destroyed by an Israeli bombing raid in 2007 — "was a nuclear reactor which should have been declared to the agency."

"It is deeply regrettable that the facility was destroyed — allegedly by Israel — without the agency having been given an opportunity to perform its verification role. Rather than force being used, the case should have been reported to the IAEA," Amano said.

---

#### **4. U.S. Maintains Enduring, Consistent Commitment to Asia (06-06-2011)**

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.  
Staff Writer

Washington — Even in times of change and competing global demands, the United States will maintain its enduring and consistent commitment to Asia and its security, Defense Secretary Robert Gates says.

"Under President Obama that engagement has not only been sustained, it has been broadened and enhanced in a variety of ways," [Gates said at the 10th annual Shangri-La Dialogue](#) June 4 in Singapore. It was Gates' fifth consecutive appearance at the annual regional security conference sponsored by the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies. The conference is named for the hotel where it's held.

Gates said the annual meeting was held at a time of significant challenges for the United States at home and abroad, and when questions are being raised about the credibility of its commitments around the world.

Conducting two protracted and costly military operations, in Iraq and Afghanistan, has strained the U.S. military's ground forces and worn down America's appetite for similar interventions, Gates acknowledged. And the United States is emerging slowly from a serious recession at a time of growing debt that puts pressure on the U.S. defense budget.

Those are some of the realities the United States faces, he said, and they are vitally important to the American people. But irrespective of tough times, the United States' interest as a Pacific nation will endure.

"The United States and Asia will only become more inextricably linked over the course of this century," Gates said.

Gates noted that with this visit to Singapore, he has made 14 trips to Asia in the four and a half years he's been the defense secretary; Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton will embark on her eighth trip to Asia in July; and President Obama has traveled to Asia each year he has been in office.

On June 3, Gates met with China's minister for national defense, General Liang Guanglie. They met on the sidelines of the security conference for about an hour to further develop military-to-military relations between the two nations.

U.S. engagement with Asia is based on four vital principles:

- Free and open commerce.
- A just international order that emphasizes rights and responsibilities of nations and fidelity to the rule of law.
- Open access by all to the global commons of sea, air, space and now cyberspace.
- Resolving conflict without the use of force.

Gates cited the enduring commitment to Japan following World War II and a rapid response to Japan following the devastating earthquake and tsunami March 11; the U.S. alliance with South Korea to strengthen security on the Korean Peninsula; and the U.S.-Vietnam partnership on a range of issues that includes trade and investment, education and health, and security and defense.

Gates said the United States is “also now working together with China to build a positive, cooperative and comprehensive relationship. In that effort, we are seeing the fruits of bold decisions by three American presidents in the 1970s, Republicans and Democrats, to build a rapport between the two nations that ultimately resulted in the normalization of relations in 1979.”

Also remarkable, Gates said, is the transformation in the U.S.-India relationship over the past decade to a partnership based on shared democratic values and vital economic and security interests — one that “will be an indispensable pillar of stability in South Asia and beyond.”

While building nation-to-nation relations has been critical, the United States has also worked on multilateral cooperation with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and in other venues.

Gates is retiring from U.S. government service later in June, and CIA Director Leon Panetta has been named by Obama to succeed Gates. A Senate confirmation hearing with Panetta is scheduled for June 9.

[Defense Secretary Gates on U.S. Commitments in Asia](#)  
[Defense's Gates on Asia-Pacific, Other Security Issues](#)

---

## **5. Press Briefing by Defense's Gates, Afghan President Karzai (06-05-2011)**

U.S. Department of Defense, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, June 4, 2011  
Joint Press Conference with Secretary Gates and President Karzai from Kabul, Afghanistan

PRES. KARZAI: (Translated.) In the name of God, merciful (inaudible) dear media members, ladies and gentlemen, it's such a pleasure and honor to once again welcome a deeply respected personality and a friend, His Excellency Robert Gates, defense secretary of the United States.

I'm so sorry to report that (inaudible) in one month's time, he will depart from the defense ministry and will continue his life. Secretary Gates is among the personalities, who in the past four and a half years, been in close and very direct contact with the people of Afghanistan, with the government of Afghanistan, and for years he has continued to treat to the fullest possible extent a

friendliness and he has supported and he's understood Afghanistan's position, and he's always had an understanding of the realities and the truth and the realities on the ground. And as far as we are aware, he was fully (inaudible) of Afghanistan in the U.S. administration. He was always backing our position and our expectations.

Throughout these years he has done a great deal in helping equip and train Afghanistan's security forces. It was during his term as the defense secretary where Afghanistan security forces received most of the attention. And today, I repeat that due to the support and the assistance he has given to the Afghanistan security forces and our defense ministry and due to the respect that he has to the people of Afghanistan and due to the very friendly intention that he has towards the people of Afghanistan. And if I may tell you a secret – he has said the people (inaudible) the U.S. and the government to listen to the people of Afghanistan to listen to the government of Afghanistan.

So, based on all these services and all these, we are happy to have (inaudible) a state medal to (inaudible) continued success even when he is out of the defense ministry. And I hope that he would continue to promote Afghanistan's position when he's outside the Defense Department. And I would hope that he would continue to help us in our difficult struggle.

Today, we had detailed discussions and conversations with his excellency and his accompanying delegation on the war on terror, on the situation in Afghanistan and in the region. And, again, with his excellency we took up the issue of the civilian casualties and on behalf of the people of Afghanistan we humbly asked and suggested to his excellency that the bombardments and the raids over the Afghan houses not be repeated.

And while are the partners and we are allies in the war, the people of Afghanistan do not wish and want to see their houses being bombarded and the civilians being killed and innocent lives being lost. And on the night house searches, night raids and detentions and arrests, we also had discussions about the detentions and the house searches.

We spoke on the joint commission or committee that exists to talk about how to take forward the issues. So we hope that we could soon reach to a conclusion and to a discussion. But, again, on the issue of the bombarding of the Afghan houses, we conveyed the concern of the Afghan people to the U.S. administration and to the U.S. Defense Department. This is people's expectation and demand.

We also talked about the strategic agreement between – the partnership agreement between Afghanistan and the United States. We see that agreement for the benefit of the country on which we are now in discussion and we have expressed our views and our proposals and we hope that we could interact further on the details of the agreement so an agreement could finally be reached where the interests of both countries could be served.

And I also thanked his excellency for the U.S. assistance and cooperation for the education, for health, for the road buildings, and for the strengthening of the Afghan institutions. I once again on behalf of the people of Afghanistan, I thank his excellency. And through him, U.S. government and U.S. public for all they have done to Afghanistan. We appreciate all which you've done and we hope that the civilian casualties, again, not be repeated.

And I once again welcome you, your excellency, to Afghanistan, to Kabul. And it is such a pleasure to see you again. And I hope you accept the State Medal of Honor that we awarded to you for the two services you've done. And I hope that this should not be the last visit of you, not as the

defense secretary but we hope to see you more often and we hope to interact with you and we hope to receive you as a very respected guest of the people of Afghanistan.

Thank you.

SEC. GATES: Thank you, Mr. President. And thank you for the award you just presented to me on behalf of the Afghan people. I am deeply honored.

As the president indicated, this is my 12th and last visit to Afghanistan as United States secretary of defense. In each case, Mr. President, I have appreciated the gracious hospitality you and your colleagues and the ministry of defense have extended to me and my colleagues. I've greatly valued our personal friendship and the honest and forthright dialogue that we have always had.

Two sovereign countries as different as the United States and Afghanistan will never look at everything the same way, but I believe we have built the foundation of a real partnership that will be sustained into the future to the benefit of both our people.

Over the next few days I'll spend most of my time visiting U.S. and coalition forces in the field as well as some of their Afghan comrades. It will be my last chance as defense secretary to look them each in the eye and thank them for their service and their sacrifice on behalf of the future of Afghanistan, the stability of this key region, and the security of the United States.

And because this is my final visit to this country as secretary, I would like to take this occasion to offer some broader reflections to the Afghan people about how we got here, the struggle we are in, and the way ahead.

Twenty years ago, the United States walked away from Afghanistan in the wake of the Soviet withdrawal, believing that our job was done, that what happened here subsequently would not affect our own security and national interests. I remember this all too well, as I was in a senior position in the American government at the time. That tragic miscalculation was exposed by the attacks of September 11th, 2001.

In the years that followed the fall of the Taliban regime, the international effort in Afghanistan, both civilian and military, suffered from a lack of focus, coordination and resources, and too often a lack of respect for Afghan sensitivities and Afghan sovereignty.

When I took this post in December 2006, just over four and a half years ago, the Taliban resurgence was well underway and picking up momentum. In response, the total international military commitment to Afghanistan has increased threefold to nearly 150,000 troops representing more than 45 countries. Over the past year and a half, international forces working with the Afghan army, as well with the Afghan national and local police have made significant military gains, ejecting the Taliban from population centers and their traditional strongholds in the south and the east.

Osama bin Laden, the Taliban's spiritual and strategic ally, the international terrorist whose use of Afghanistan precipitated our military intervention here, is now gone.

All that said, there is weariness in both of our countries over the duration and costs of this conflict. I am keenly aware that ISAF military operations have at times impacted the Afghan people in unwelcome ways from minor but grating inconveniences to in some rare but tragic cases civilians accidentally killed or injured – losses we mourn and profoundly regret.

But we also know that the vast majority of civilian casualties in Afghanistan are caused by the Taliban, who intentionally target innocent men, women, and children with their terror attacks. And few Afghan citizens want to return to the cruel and despotic regime that so devastated this country during the 1990s.

Now we have reached an important inflection point in this struggle for the future of Afghanistan. The enemy has absorbed serious losses in leadership, manpower and territory over the last year and a half. At the same time, the Afghan army has seen dramatic gains in size and capability. The shift in military momentum provides the Afghan government an opportunity to strengthen the competence of its people through economic development, fair enforcement of the rule of law, attacking corruption and the provision of basic services.

This summer, ISAF will begin a gradual, responsible transition of security responsibilities to Afghan forces with the goal of removing all international combat troops by the end of 2014. As this transition moves forward, the Afghan people should remember two main things: first, while the U.S. and our coalition partners may draw down our military forces over time, we are committed to a long-term strategic partnership with Afghanistan.

We will continue to train, equip and support Afghan security forces and do what we can to help the government improve the lives of its citizens. In short, there will be no rush to the exits. And I know that Leon Panetta, President Obama's choice as my successor, shares this view as does General John Allen, who has been nominated to lead the ISAF when General Petraeus departs later this year.

We have all learned the catastrophic consequences for the Afghan people, for the region, and for the world, of allowing violent extremists allied with terrorists to dominate this country. While the international commitment here is strong and durable, that commitment is not infinite in either time or resources. For the upcoming transition to be successful, the Afghan government and security forces must be willing to step up and take more and more responsibility for governing and defending their own territory. This is the true manifestation of Afghan sovereignty. The international coalition wants to be a strong partner in this effort, but ultimately it is up to the Afghan people and their elected government to chart Afghanistan's destiny.

With that, I want to thank President Karzai again for his friendship, for his courageous efforts for so many years on behalf of the Afghan people, his steadfast defense of Afghan sovereignty and for the partnership he has sustained with the United States and our ISAF allies.

Finally, I would close by extending my best wishes and prayers to the Afghan people who have endured so much for so long, for their safety and success in these challenging times ahead.

Thank you.

PRES. KARZAI: Thank you very much. Very good. Secretary Gates would you like to take the first –

SEC. GATES: Okay.

Q: Thank you. Secretary Gates, do you think that along with beginning a drawdown of U.S. troops this summer that U.S. and ISAF should also make a change in strategy? And if I may ask a question also of President Karzai, sir, do you believe that ISAF and the United States need to

change strategy in view of the decapitation of al Qaeda and the continuing issue of civilian casualties?

SEC. GATES: Well, first of all, I think that it is too soon yet to see the consequences or meaning here in Afghanistan of the elimination of bin Laden. Our hope is that because of his personal relationship with Mullah Omar that his death will lead to a weakening of that relationship and perhaps the Taliban's willingness to walk away from al Qaeda and disavow them. But I think it's too early to tell. My hope is that we would have some indication perhaps later this year of the impact.

But I think the important thing is for us to see through where we are today. We have enjoyed a lot of success over the last year to 18 months. We need to continue that. I believe that if we can hold on to the territory that has been recaptured from the Taliban between ourselves and the Afghan forces and perhaps expand that security, that we will be in a position toward the end of this year to perhaps have a successful opening with respect to reconciliation or at least be in a position where we can say we've turned a corner here in Afghanistan. I think making any change prior to that time would be premature.

PRES. KARZAI: While we continue to work against terrorism and especially in the aftermath of the removal of Osama bin Laden, hopefully there will be a rethinking in the Taliban and in those elements who are not associated with international terrorist networks or with al Qaeda that they take this opportunity to return to their country in peace and in dignity and participate to the rest of the Afghan people in rebuilding their country.

With this said, our campaign against terrorism will continue and the Afghan people will back and participate in this campaign against terrorism because we have suffered much more than any other nation at the hands of terrorists. The Afghan people would want that this campaign which they would support against terrorism does not bring them casualties in the form of more civilians bombarded or night raids that cause casualties towards civilians or detentions that cause suffering to our people. This is a demand that I've been for the past many years repeated with our allies and I will repeat it today again as I did in my meeting with the honorable secretary of defense, especially bombardment of civilian homes is an issue that the Afghans definitely want to end. We cannot take this anymore and the Afghans want a change in it.

With this change in the strategy, if you can call that, and with more emphasis on reconciliation with those Taliban who are not part of al Qaeda or were not part of any other terrorist network, the combination of an effective campaign on sanctuaries of terrorists, wherever they may be, and an effective campaign towards reconciliation and avoiding civilian casualties in Afghanistan, we will fully be behind our partners and will continue to work with them.

Q: (Translated.) (Inaudible) from One TV. Mr. President, while you are criticizing the international raids, bombardments, you are discussing the strategic partnership with the United States. Don't you think this would even increase the chances of those bombardments and all those raids? And my second question is that you have always spoken about the reconciliation with the world. It's like one-sided concessions and privileges to the Taliban, including a suggestion to lift the names of the Taliban from the (inaudible). Don't you think it's a one-sided way that you are taking while the Taliban do not show any act?

And my second question to Secretary Gates is that you are the – first, I welcome you to Afghanistan. And now that your term will be finished in one month, you spoke of Osama's elimination as success in Pakistan while last night another terrorist, Ilyas Kashmiri, was killed in

Pakistan. It all shows that terrorists are hiding in Pakistan or enjoying safe havens in Pakistan. And why haven't you taken strong measures to eliminate the havens in Pakistan?

And the other question is about the transition responsibilities –

SEC. GATES: One question to a customer.

PRES. KARZAI: (Translated.) On the strategic partnership agreement that you spoke of – so the main purpose of that strategic partnership between U.S. and Afghanistan is that we move from a situation where people are suffering to a situation where people can enjoy, and can enjoy the interests and where people could enjoy a sovereignty and their interests are served, and at the same time that the U.S. interests are also met and served in that strategic agreement. So this is a mutual document of interests.

And I believe the most important thing in the document that we seek is to be able to provide lasting peace for the people of Afghanistan, a sense of safety people can have in a country with progress and development, free from any far or close interferences. And if we reach to such an agreement, I believe this is going to be in the interest of our country and history will judge us accordingly.

SEC. GATES: The terrorist sanctuaries along the border, particularly on the Pakistani side, have been a continuing concern. The reality is in the last two years or so, I think the Pakistanis themselves have begun to realize that these terrorists are a challenge not only in terms of what goes on in Afghanistan, but are a challenge to the government and the people of Pakistan itself. And we have seen in just recent weeks a number of terrorist attacks inside Pakistan. I think this is the reason that the Pakistanis have deployed some 140,000 of their troops to the border areas. And frankly, their efforts in Swat and South Waziristan have disrupted some of these terrorist sanctuaries. We are always impatient. There is clearly more to be done. The sanctuaries are a problem and we will continue to work both with the government of Afghanistan and the government of Pakistan to try and deal with this problem.

PRES. KARZAI: Secretary Gates, any more questions or should we close off?

SEC. GATES: Julian?

Q: Mr. Secretary, you've spoken today about the need to keep military pressure on the Taliban and in advance of possible reconciliation talks in the winter. Does that not argue for keeping the same amount of combat power here at least through the summer in order to maintain that pressure?

And, Mr. President, do you think the Obama administration should take advantage of the July decision to withdraw more forces and reduce the number of raids going on and some of the other activities that you've complained about?

SEC. GATES: I think that we have enjoyed a great deal of success over the last two years in two respects. The first has been building the strength and quality of the Afghan national security forces. The Afghan security forces today are tens of thousands larger than they were two years ago.

Second, we have been quite successful over the last 18 months or so, and particularly in the Taliban heartland, in Helmand and Kandahar, as I indicated in my remarks in ejecting them. So it seems to me that between the successes that we've already enjoyed and the increased capacity of the Afghan forces, we are in a position – based on conditions on the ground, as the president has said – to consider some modest draw-downs beginning in July. We have to remember our goals here. It was

to deny the Taliban control of populated areas, disrupt and degrade the capabilities of al Qaeda, degrade the capabilities of the Taliban, and enable the Afghan security forces to be able to take greater and greater responsibility for security in the country. I think we've made significant headway in each of those principal objectives.

PRES. KARZAI: On the question of the July date and the decision of the U.S. government with regard to reduction of troops beginning in the month of July, the issue of numbers and the categories from the U.S. government to decide, of course, in consultation with the Afghan government. From the prospective of Afghanistan, the most important question is the implementation of the transition process that we have begun together, that this is done exactly as we have planned, that this is done according to the timeframe, that while this is happening that we make sure that the Afghans don't suffer the consequences of the war on terror and Afghan civilians see more and more of their own government engaging with them, they see the removal of parallel structures that are there right now, to see the removal of the parallel activities that are there right now that they are faced with the Afghan government responsible to the Afghan people and that our partners are here in a supportive role with Afghanistan to bring peace and stability to Afghanistan and most successful conduct against terrorism, whereby eventually the Afghan people will thank the United States and its allies greatly in bringing progress and stability and a lasting peace to this country.

With that objective, I'm sure we are all in agreement, especially in Washington. And I hope we can work it out as good as we speak about it.

Thank you very much.

[Fact Sheet: Doing Business in Iraq](#)

---

## **6. U.S. Condemns "Senseless" Violence in Yemen (06-03-2011)**

By Stephen Kaufman  
Staff Writer

Washington — The Obama administration condemned attacks against President Ali Abdullah Saleh's compound in the Yemeni capital of Sana'a as "senseless acts of violence," and said the country's political unrest must be resolved through negotiation.

[In a June 3 statement](#), White House press secretary Jay Carney said the United States condemns the violence "in the strongest terms," and he called on all sides to immediately cease hostilities and "pursue an orderly and peaceful process of transferring political power," as called for in an agreement brokered by Yemen's neighbors in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

"Violence cannot resolve the issues that confront Yemen, and today's events cannot be a justification for a new round of fighting," Carney said. "We urge all sides to heed the wishes of the Yemeni people, whose aspirations include peace, reform, and prosperity."

According to press reports, Saleh's presidential compound in Sana'a suffered a severe attack June 3, and Yemeni officials told media outlets that the president was wounded and is currently in a hospital. Clashes between Yemeni security forces and tribal groups have also occurred in many other areas of the capital.

President Obama sent John Brennan, his assistant for counterterrorism and homeland security, to discuss the situation in Yemen with officials in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. According to Carney, Brennan and his Saudi and Emirati counterparts expressed deep concern at the “deteriorating situation throughout Yemen.”

“Brennan said that the United States would continue to coordinate closely with both governments on developments in Yemen in an effort to help bring an end to the violence,” Carney said.

The White House’s principal deputy press secretary, [Josh Earnest, told reporters](#) traveling with President Obama June 3 that the Obama administration condemns the violence committed by both the pro- and anti-government forces, and repeated U.S. calls for President Saleh to accept the GCC’s proposal for a peaceful political transition.

“We hope that there will be and that there should be a negotiated settlement in Yemen, and that we believe that President Saleh should sign the agreement transferring power,” Earnest said.

---

## **7. Trans-Atlantic Cooperation and a Spirit that Binds Us (06-02-2011)**

By Mark V. Vlastic

Washington — Like many on both sides of the Atlantic, I’ve been watching President Barack Obama’s visit to Europe with great interest. And not just because this visit has taught us that President “O’Bama” is actually Irish — or the fact that he can trace his roots to the British Army (he is the grandson of a Kenyan who served as a cook in the Royal Army). I’ve been following the visit because the president’s travels through Europe have highlighted the importance of the trans-Atlantic relationship to millions — including myself.

Like many Americans, I can trace my roots to Europe — to 1950 when the Vlastic family traveled from war-torn Europe to Ellis Island, New York. They were originally from Slovenia, but the Nazis moved them to Germany. And some 60 years later, it hardly crosses my mind to think — as recently as last week when I sat in an airport in Frankfurt — that the world is a very different place than when an immigration officer stamped a passport bearing the name “Vlastic” in 1950. Countries that were once recovering from war are now at peace — and not only are they no longer fighting, but they are working together to bring peace and prosperity to the world.

It was a Fulbright Scholarship that brought me to Europe after Georgetown University law school, and led to my service on the U.S. delegation to the Pan Am 103/Lockerbie trial, and later to the U.N. war crimes tribunal for the former Yugoslavia.

It was while serving at the tribunal that I witnessed, firsthand, the critical importance of the trans-Atlantic relationship and how it has led to numerous successes and the advancement of international justice and the rule of law. Indeed, in the first case I worked on at the tribunal, the Srebrenica genocide case, the lead investigator was from France and the lead prosecutor was from the U.S. Department of Justice. Later, in the Slobodan Milosevic case, the lead prosecutor was a British QC, while my supervising prosecutor was from New York. It was a privilege to learn from officials from both sides of the Atlantic as we served together to bring some sense of justice to those slaughtered in Bosnia. Our success in the Balkans is a direct result of strong trans-Atlantic relations.

In my more recent postings, serving as a White House fellow to Secretary of Defense Robert Gates and working on President Robert Zoellick's Stolen Asset Recovery (StAR) Initiative at the World Bank, I've noticed that like-minded Americans and Europeans, with their shared values and beliefs, are working together to confront some of the greatest challenges of our time.

I've seen it firsthand in Iraq and Afghanistan — Americans and Europeans striving to bring some semblance of peace and prosperity in war-torn regions. And our partnership is not just a military one — reinforced by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the strongest military alliance this world has ever known — but also a civilian and economic one.

It was in Mosul, Iraq, that I met a young Italian woman who briefed Secretary Gates regarding her provincial reconstruction team, and how she was working to improve the agricultural output in Iraq. And it was in Kandahar, Afghanistan, where I saw Dutch officials, working with Americans, trying to devise effective ways of working with tribal leaders and local government. These were not conscripts forced to travel to far-away lands; these were European and American volunteers, working together to help better lives, based upon what is now a trans-Atlantic tradition of working together to help those less fortunate than ourselves.

Indeed, it is this spirit — and a goal of a world free of poverty — that motivates those at the World Bank every day. And thus it was not surprising that the team helping the Haitian government recover millions of dollars of Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier's frozen assets in Switzerland was largely trans-Atlantic, including officials from Switzerland, France and the United States.

Put simply, ever since my time in The Hague, I've seen firsthand the good that comes about through the trans-Atlantic relationship. And in many ways, that good was demonstrated just recently, with the arrest of General Ratko Mladić, mastermind of the Srebrenica genocide.

For nearly 16 years, officials from the United States and Europe have been working together to bring Mladić to justice. And June 3, in a courtroom in The Hague, a man who was thought to be untouchable will be held to account for the slaughter of 8,000 Bosnian Muslim men and boys.

Without the trans-Atlantic efforts of European and American officials, I doubt that Mladić would ever see justice. But due to our common values, our common interests, and a spirit that binds us, we have worked together to help extend the rule of law and help end impunity.

We must recognize that challenges of the future — whether they be economic, climate, poverty, disease, unrest — are not simple. And for any one country, they may very well be insurmountable. But thankfully, we are not forced to tackle them individually. Thankfully, we may work with our friends and allies, and within the trans-Atlantic framework (NATO, the Atlantic Council, etc.), to tackle some of the greatest challenges to come.

---

*Mark V. Vlasic, an adjunct professor of law at Georgetown University and a partner at Ward & Ward PLLC, served on the Slobodan Milosevic and Srebrenica genocide prosecution trial teams at the U.N. war crimes tribunal and worked with the president's special envoy to Sudan while serving as a White House fellow to Secretary of Defense Robert Gates. He participated in the Atlantic Council's "Young Atlanticist" summit at the 2010 NATO Summit in Lisbon.*

---