

# Transatlantic Focus

## A USNATO Public Affairs Newsletter



### U.S., Afghanistan and Pakistan: "Joined by a Common Goal"



"We meet today as three sovereign nations joined by a common goal: to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al Qaeda and its extremist allies in Pakistan and Afghanistan, and to prevent their ability to operate in either country in the future."

– President Obama, May 6, 2009

On May 6, President Obama met with President Karzai of Afghanistan and President Zardari of Pakistan to discuss regional security and stability and coordination of efforts to combat extremism and promote development. In addition to the meetings of the Presidents, the U.S. leadership from the State Department, USAID, Justice Department, Agriculture Department and the intelligence community held breakout sessions with their Afghan and Pakistani counterparts. These consultations mark an unprecedented level of cooperation between the U.S., Afghanistan and Pakistan and will continue on a regular basis.

Within Afghanistan, President Obama discussed the need to grow Afghanistan's economy while providing an alternative to the drug trade by "tapping into the resilience and ingenuity of the Afghan people." He reiterated the importance of supporting free and open Afghan elections later this year and protecting the rights of all Afghans. "But to combat an enemy that is on the offensive," he said, "we need more troops, training, and assistance." The U.S. is sending 21,000 additional troops to Afghanistan to strengthen the NATO-led [International Security Assistance Force](#). President Obama also said he made it clear to President Karzai that the U.S. "will work with our Afghan and international partners to make every effort to avoid civilian casualties as we help the Afghan government combat our common enemy."

Regarding Pakistan, President Obama emphasized the need for supporting democratic institutions while helping its government confront insurgents. The U.S. is helping Pakistan combat the insurgency within its borders, including \$400 million in immediate assistance that was approved by the House Appropriations Committee on May 7. In addition, President Obama asked Congress for sustained funding of \$1.5 billion a year for the next five years in direct support to the Pakistani people – resources that will build schools, roads, and hospitals in Pakistan. "I want the Pakistani people to understand that America is not simply against terrorism – we are on the side of their hopes, and their aspirations," he said.

President Obama reiterated that his administration's [new strategy on Afghanistan and Pakistan](#) "reflects a fundamental truth: The security of Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the United States are linked." [more](#)

- [President Obama Remarks after Trilateral Meeting with Presidents Karzai and Zardari](#)
- [NSA Jones Briefing after Trilateral Meeting](#)
- [Secretary Clinton Remarks on Trilateral Consultations](#)
- [Special Representative Holbrooke Statement before Congress on the Future of the Pakistan-U.S. Relationship](#)
- [State Department Spokesman Statement on Trilateral Consultations](#)

### NATO



**NATO Appoints New SACEUR**  
Following a request from President Obama, NATO has agreed to appoint [U.S. Admiral James G. Stavridis](#) as Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (SACEUR). Admiral Stavridis is currently serving as Commander, U.S. Southern Command. [more](#)

- [NATO Announcement of New SACEUR](#)
- [Pentagon Announcement of New SACEUR](#)

### U.S.-Russia Relations



**U.S. and Russia Work on Key Issues Despite Differences**  
On May 7, Secretary Clinton and Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov met in Washington to discuss Euro-Atlantic security issues, Afghanistan, nuclear disarmament and a number of other areas where the U.S. and Russia have common interests. An area of particular U.S. concern is Georgia and the ministers exchanged views on the situation there and the need for stability.

### Piracy



**NATO Extends Counter Piracy Mission**  
On April 24, [NATO announced the decision to continue counter piracy activities](#) of Standing NATO Maritime Group 1 (SNMG1) off the coast of Somalia

and the Gulf of Aden until June 28. The piracy threat off the coast of Somalia is a persistent security concern that threatens commerce and the delivery of vital humanitarian assistance to millions of people in Africa.

NATO is committed to fighting the scourge of piracy. Last year's [Operation Allied Provider](#) and the ongoing efforts of [Operation Allied Protector](#) carried out by SNMG1 have made significant contributions to the international anti-piracy effort. NATO is currently considering a longer term operation to combat piracy of the coast of Somalia. [more](#)



**Anti-Piracy Efforts Show Some Success**

In remarks to the press after their meeting, Secretary Clinton said the "U.S. and Russia have a comprehensive agenda and are working on many issues simultaneously." She added that it is "old thinking to say that we have a disagreement in one area, therefore we shouldn't work in something else that is of overwhelming importance." Secretary Clinton cited the [NATO-Russia Council](#) as a forum that both the U.S. and Russia are committed to as an "open channel of dialogue." After their meeting, Secretary Clinton and Foreign Minister Lavrov headed to the White House for consultations with President Obama. [more](#)

- [Secretary Clinton and Foreign Minister Lavrov Remarks after Meeting](#)

### Video Message

	<p>Ambassador Volker on NATO's Role in Combating Piracy</p> <p><a href="#">Video</a>   <a href="#">Transcript</a></p>
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In testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Stephen Mull, Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Political-Military Affairs, said

international efforts to blunt maritime piracy off the coast of Somalia are beginning to show some success, but there is an international consensus that more must be done. Ambassador Mull told U.S. lawmakers that, in addition to efforts to deny pirates the financial benefits of their activities and to expand regional capacity for prosecution and incarceration, the U.S. is working with other countries "to ensure that military counter piracy operations are as robust and well-coordinated as possible."

He added that "Naval patrol interventions are increasingly active, international naval forces have intervened to stop dozens of attempted piratical attacks in the past nine months, and we're seeing a significant upswing in the number of countries willing to commit assets to the effort." [more](#)



- [Ambassador Mull Testimony on Anti-Piracy](#)

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