

# INTERNATIONAL ORPHAN CARE AFGHANISTAN PROJECT



*Mankind owes to the child the best it has to give* - United Nations Declaration

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## WITNESS STATEMENT

**Witness Name:**

M. Hasan Nouri, P.E., Fellow

**Titles:**

President - Rivertech Inc.  
Chairman-International Orphan Care

**Date of Hearing:**

Thursday, June 19, 2003

**Name of Congressional  
Committee:**

House Committee on International Relations

**Building and Room:**

Rayburn House Office Building, Room 2172



Good Morning Mr. Chairman, Honorable Representatives, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation in being invited to state my opinion on the challenges facing the United States in its strategy to reconstruct and stabilize Afghanistan. Based on your invitation I also would like to mention the horrific conditions under which the children of Afghanistan live.

Soon after we liberated the people of Afghanistan from the barbaric rule of the Taliban and inhuman treatment by Al Qaeda, the United States repeatedly promised extensive support to the Afghan people in rebuilding their nation. A vision of a peaceful Afghanistan with a stable civil society and a growing economy was planted firmly in the mind's eye of the Afghan people, the American people, and people throughout the Middle East and the world. However, this year's proposed USAID budget for Afghanistan has been limited, and the international donors, led by the United States, have pledged insufficient amounts, and even those amounts are not materializing as actual allocations. Now, we are beginning to see the Afghan people protesting in the streets of Kabul. It is very sad that it has come to this, only one year after seeing them dance in the streets and welcome American liberation from the Taliban.

Lack of proper support by the United States coupled with an ineffective government in Afghanistan has resulted in the loss of hope by the Afghan people. For a government to succeed in Afghanistan it must have no allegiance or loyalty to any foreign power or nation. Unfortunately, the current government in Afghanistan carries the scar of being installed by the United States. During the proceedings of formation of an Afghan transition government in December 2001 in Bonn, Germany and the subsequent Loya Jirga (Grand Assembly) in Kabul, Afghanistan in June of 2002 we should have learned from the mistakes of previous experiences by the British and the former Soviet Union. During the period of 1842 through 1930 the British Empire did not succeed in installing a government in Afghanistan. After 12 years of blatant interference and genocide the former Soviet Union also did not succeed in installing a communist government in Afghanistan.

After 88 years of trials and tribulations the British Empire finally succeeded in the establishment of a government that had no allegiance or loyalty to the British. The British were amenable to that government of Afghanistan because it also had no loyalty or allegiance toward the former Soviet Union or Nazi Germany. Mohammad Nadir Shah, the father of Mohammad Zahir Shah, the former King of Afghanistan who is now residing in Kabul, formed that government. We should have learned from the mistakes of the past and promoted a government that had no allegiance to us but would have been effective in preventing production of narcotics and continuation of terrorism. According to recent reports by one of our Board Members who returned from Afghanistan last week production of narcotics in Afghanistan is rampant. He estimates the current production of narcotics in Afghanistan to be twice as much as it had existed during the Taliban rule.

At this point of my testimony I would like to attract your attention to the Peace Plan by Mohammad Zahir Shah, the former King of Afghanistan, which I presented before the House Committee on International Relations on May 9, 1996 and again on November 7, 2001. Please see Figure 1 and note that Struggle Against Terrorism and Narcotics was an integral part of that plan.



Unfortunately, this plan by Mohammad Zahir Shah was not implemented, and he was sidelined by our direct interference. If we left the process of Loya Jirga that had succeeded in Afghanistan for centuries alone, Mohammad Zahir Shah could have played a key role in the establishment of a legitimate national government.

Mr. Chairman: Now six years later I would like to present to you another plan which is summarized on the attached Figure 2. As this figure shows the reconstruction program of Afghanistan must be implemented parallel to the re-creation of State. It is important that the plan be implemented with assistance from the international community and not just the United States.

Consistent with the Bonn process of 2001 and the Emergency Loya Jirga of 2002, plans are under way for the final Loya Jirga to take place in Kabul in June of 2004. The 2004 Loya Jirga will provide the Afghan people with the opportunity to establish a legitimate constitutional government consistent with the Peace Plan by Mohammad Zahir Shah. We are hopeful that the proceedings of that Loya Jirga will be conducted under the supervision of the international community and not just the United States. An effective and legitimate government will succeed in reconstructing the infrastructure of Afghanistan as well as establishing the well-being of the children.

The children of Afghanistan continue to be the victims of 25 years of war. A 1997 survey sponsored by UNICEF revealed some shocking statistics explaining the emotional distress of Afghanistan's children. In a random, scientific sampling of 310 children in Kabul, 72 percent of respondents said someone in their family had died from fighting during the previous four years. Ninety-five percent had personally witnessed violence during fighting. Fifty-three percent had seen someone killed or injured by land mines or unexploded ordnance. Sixty-six percent had seen someone killed in a rocket attack. An equal percentage had seen dead bodies or body parts. Eighty-one percent had been uprooted from their homes by fighting. And 90 percent believed that they would eventually be killed in fighting.

Robin Pierson, a freelance reporter, who returned from Afghanistan last month and assists the International Orphan Care, provides the following report. "In visiting several school sites and observing thousands of children, it appears that the children of Afghanistan are very eager and ready to learn. However, they have no books or desks - or even a pencil - let alone proper school buildings to protect them from the blazing sun of summer or the cold winds of winter. Their teachers have virtually no teaching tools and several told us that they had not been paid for three months. Without proper schools and medical facilities, I fear that Afghanistan may once again descend into chaos. With this next generation, we have a chance to teach these children that there is more to life than violence, sickness and suffering". Finally, I must state that if violence in Afghanistan remains the norm of life, it can quickly spread and become routine in the region and the Middle East. That would pose enormous risks to the United States and our allies in the region.

# INTERNATIONAL ORPHAN CARE

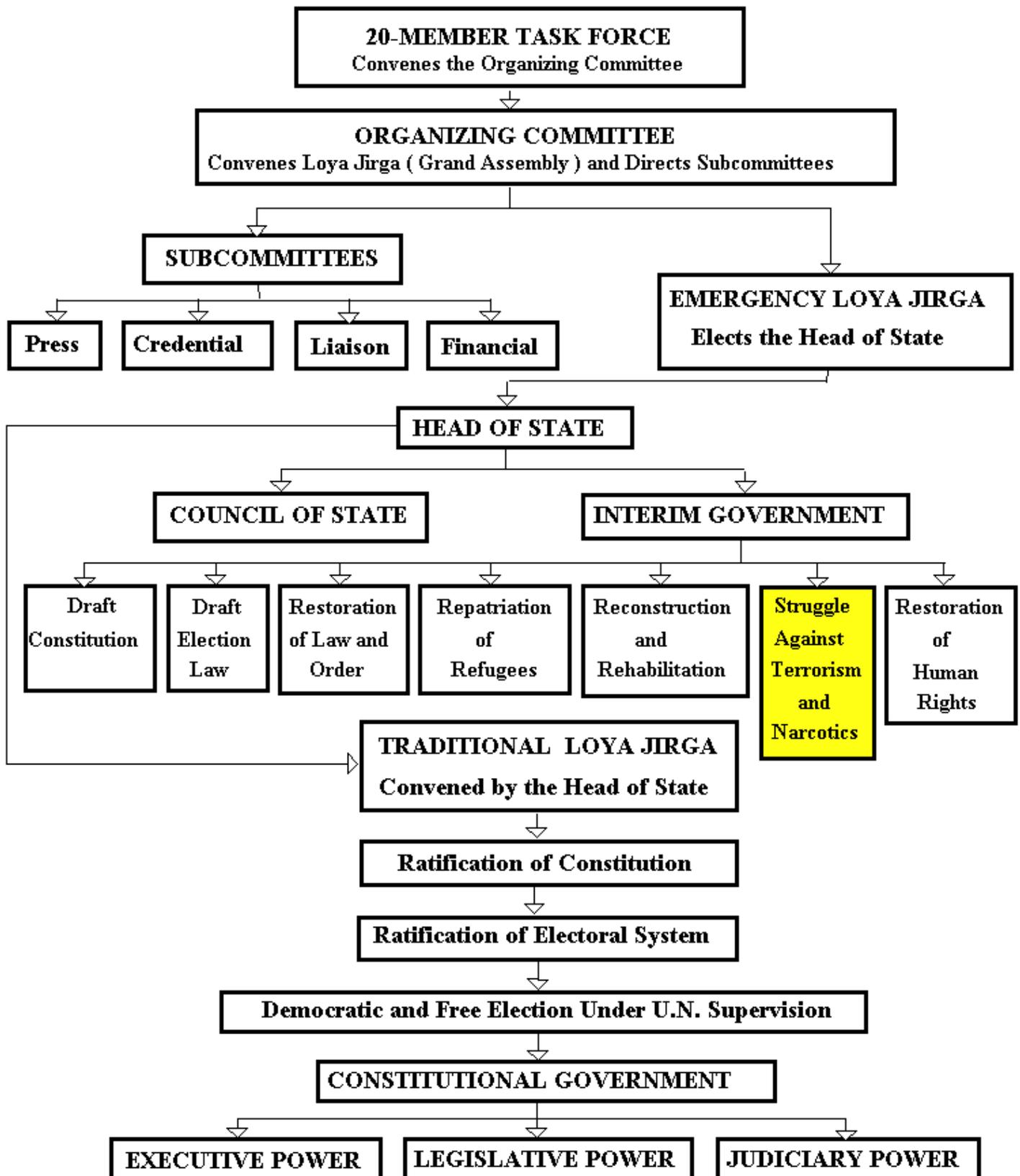
*Mankind owes to the child the best it has to give –*

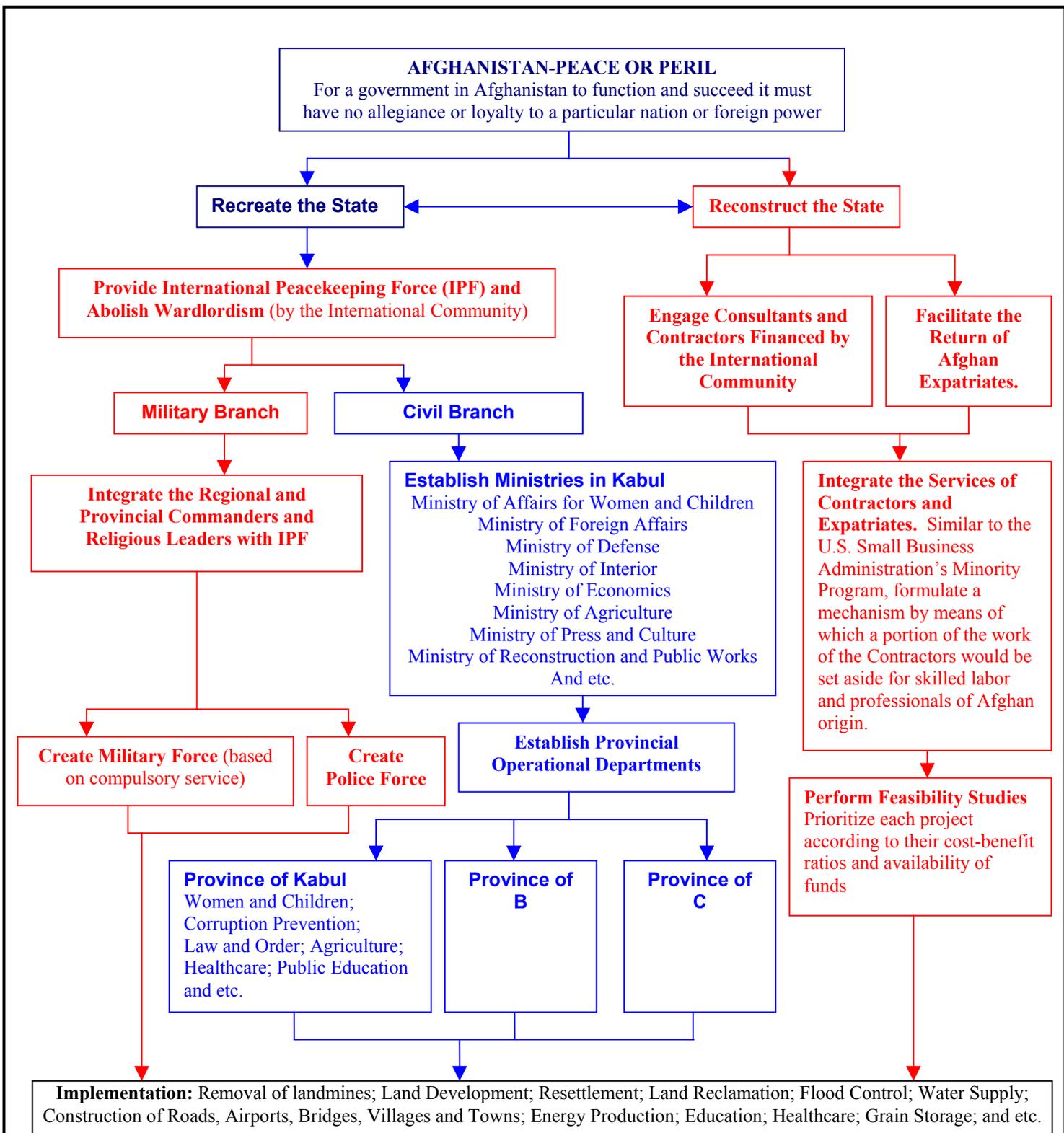
United Nations Declaration

Figure  
1

## PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT

BY MOHAMMAD ZAHIR SHAH, THE FORMER KING OF AFGHANISTAN





**Note:** This plan is prepared by Hasan Nouri ([hnouri@rivertec.com](mailto:hnouri@rivertec.com)) and is in conformance with the Three-phase Peace Plan proposed by Mohammed Zahir Shah, the former King of Afghanistan.