

The Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit

# **DISTRICT COUNCILS**

## **The Missing Middle of Local Governance**

Proceedings from an AREU Roundtable Discussion, 27 June 2011



July 2011

## Introduction

On 27 June 2011, AREU convened a roundtable on local governance in Afghanistan, with a specific focus on district councils. This topic was suggested by attendees of an earlier AREU seminar, held on 15 June 2011 to coincide with the release of a major AREU report entitled *Local Governance in Afghanistan: A View from the Ground*. The report as well as a podcast and a policy note emanating from the study are available from [www.areu.org.af](http://www.areu.org.af).

Present at the roundtable were representatives of the UK Department for International Development, the Afghanistan Social Outreach Program, the European Union, the Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission, its Provincial Affairs Directorate, and the NATO Senior Civilian Representative, along with AREU researchers Abhilash Medhi and Wamiqullah Mumtaz. The event began with a presentation of key AREU research findings by Douglas Saltmarshe and was followed by a discussion among participants, chaired by Douglas Saltmarshe.

## Presentation Notes

There is a pressing need to address the dysfunctions of district government in Afghanistan. While considerable resources and effort have been invested in the formation of provincial councils and, through the National Solidarity Programme (NSP), to village councils, there has been a lack of concerted attention to the district. This has resulted in a “missing middle” in local governance, which must be addressed if current initiatives focused on the development of provincial administrative structures are to be effective. Without adequate attention to the district, any gains made at the provincial level are likely to be severely compromised—provincial bodies require information on planning needs and priorities from the district, and district-level implementation and oversight mechanisms are essential if resources are to be efficiently applied.

The consequence of an unclear policy toward the development of a single coherent mechanism for district governance was seen during the research to be damaging the effectiveness of planning, service delivery and representation. There was a particular problem with representation. The failure of the 2010 Inter-Ministerial Commission to come to a clear decision on allocating responsibility for district representation has been damaging, and the formation of constitutionally-mandated District Councils remains a distant prospect:

- The intended 2010 elections for District Councils have been postponed to some unspecified future date.
- The draft laws on local government are yet to be finalised.
- There are competing representative bodies operating at the district level, none of which have sufficient powers or independence to hold the executive to account or to adequately undertake their duties of representation.
- Responsibility within central government for the administration of local government below the provincial level is damagingly confused.

These statements point to prevarication and unwillingness to target resources towards district governance. However, the need for building district capacity, to fill the “missing middle,” was a clear finding of AREU’s research. Nevertheless, certain initiatives have taken place in respect of district governance, but what has been their impact and how widely are these issues being discussed? How open is the debate, or is there any genuine debate, particularly in respect of representation? In the light of the lessons learnt from

AREU's research on District Development Assemblies (DDAs) and the two forms of District Community Councils (DCCs) under the Afghanistan Social Outreach Program (ASOP)—all of which are separate from the planned District Councils mentioned above—a number of questions arise that are proposed for discussion at this roundtable.

***Some Research Findings on District Governance:***

**The District:** The *woluswal* (district governor), a presidential appointee, is responsible for coordinating and monitoring district line ministries' efforts to provide service delivery, justice and security. District offices have no budget, and work as branches of the provincial administration which pays salaries, transport and incidentals. The *woluswal* is the government's point of interaction with the public. *Woluswals* chair weekly coordination meetings between line ministries and other development actors present in the district, as well as weekly security meetings with the Afghan National Police (ANP), National Directorate for Security (NDS), Afghan National Army (ANA) and International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), if present.

The number of line ministries varies in each district. Fewer ministries were seen in remote districts and in those with security problems. Researchers found that even in districts with a supposed ministry presence, few staff were regularly attending to their tasks. By contrast, districts targeted by the Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG) District Delivery Programme saw a higher tempo of administration and line ministry activity with better staffing and a higher work rate.

Corruption was an ever present issue at both provincial and district levels. Members from a number of district administrations were engaged in extorting rents in various ways. There were reports from every province of bribery and connections undermining the civil service recruitment process. The influence of powerholders and patronage networks pervaded all levels of local government administration.

**District Representation:** There is no universally applied system for district representation in Afghanistan. The subnational governance policy paper finalised by IDLG in spring 2010 describes the nature of district governance and provides district councils similar powers and duties at the district level as the provincial councils have at the provincial level. While the policy paper states that elections will take place in 2010 and that the district councils will receive sufficient funding to undertake their mandated tasks, no elections have yet been organised. Reasons cited related to the expense and complexity of elections along with the need to identify boundaries between certain districts.

**National Area-Based Development Programme (under MRRD):** DDAs have been established under the UN Development Programme (UNDP)'s National Area-Based Development Programme (NABDP), implemented by the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) and operating from regional offices. UNDP describe DDAs as having a catalytic development role at the district level through establishing links between village-level Community Development Councils (CDCs) and CDC clusters under the NSP with stabilisation and governance initiatives.

According to NABDP programme documents, "under the Local Governance and DDA Institutionalization component, the programme hinges upon elevating the capacity of the DDA, as a community-based institution, to play a catalytic development facilitation role at the district level. This will broaden the role of the DDA, from community representative body to a multi-stakeholder coordination and oversight mechanism." This is going as close as possible to becoming a district council without actually being one.

The main problem that DDAs faced was their lack of regular access to funds. In some instances they would receive a small amount for operating costs, and in a very few locations some compensation for undertaking oversight. Most DDAs were hampered in undertaking activities by a lack of salaries, offices or transport. The most common activity undertaken by DDAs was implementing World Food Programme distributions or food for work projects of which there were consistent reports of corruption. DDAs offered an avenue for submitting projects for funding and in some study provinces a few infrastructure projects were being channelled to DDAs via the NABDP. Where district development plans were produced by DDAs, there was no evidence of donor take-up. Although district plans, where they existed, may have contributed to Provincial Development Plans, the latter have largely been ignored by central planners in Kabul. While an interesting stop gap initiative, the DDAs lacked support, were weakly regulated, not effectively monitored and there were no sanctions for deviant behaviour.

**Afghanistan Social Outreach Programme (under IDLG):** The sole formal organisations to fulfil the role of district representation in its fullest sense have been the 35-45 member DCCs under the USAID-funded ASOP initiative. The first of these was formed in Wardak in 2008. A second phase of the programme was started in January 2010 to run until June 2012 and is intended to cover 100 districts in 18 provinces. ASOP has a provincial office where they are present and a district liaison officer for each district. The provincial offices have responsibility for *shura* relations, capacity building and monitoring and evaluation. This support structure is one of the features that distinguish the DCCs from the DDAs. The second difference is that DCCs are salaried, with members receiving US\$125 per month. Thirdly, DCCs are directly concerned with political issues, building local government and reintegration. A DCC has three committees concerned with conflict resolution, development and peace and security.

With the exception of Helmand, DCC members are selected by drawing upon existing leadership structures. The ASOP manual emphasises that councillors should be selected by local criteria and that it is inappropriate for the programme to dictate to communities which members they should select. In general, they encountered difficulties associated with the lack of clear district structures and some tension between the function of the DCCs (under IDLG) and the DDAs (under MRRD). In Helmand the DCCs appeared to have eclipsed DDA operation. In Laghman, the DCC model has developed from a previous tribal *shura* and has evolved an approach appropriate to how the US government delivers aid. In Wardak, the Taliban has proscribed the DCCs as it did with the DDAs.

The DCC model that has emerged in Helmand was distinctively and interestingly different in approach. In each district a council has been established through a process of consultation and then a constituency-based competitive election that resulted in a DCC. After training, the DCC met at least twice monthly and was involved in planning, prioritisation, resource allocation and monitoring of DDP funds and in oversight of an expanded local civil service staff. As in other ASOP councils, the DCC has three sub-committees. However, in a reversal of the more common ASOP practice, the *woluswal* was accountable to the DCC and reported regularly to it. Decision making and horse trading in the DCC was taking place much like in any other political context, wherever it might be. Significantly, there was also an integrative element to the approach whereby Taliban permission was needed for members to stand for the council and the Taliban ensured they were kept informed of council meetings.

### **Capacity Building**

There is an identified need to make more funds available to meet the training needs of civil servants, provincial council members and district councils (when they are to

come into being). However, above all, there needs to be a coordinated approach to training, and the different techniques used by the many organisations involved need to be consolidated into a unified approach. The types of training on offer also need to be reassessed, and could be more focused on providing mentoring models that deliver on a regular, little-and-often basis. Provincial training facilities run by the Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission (IARCSC) would benefit from further development, and conducting training in provincial centres would help foster a stronger sense of provincial identity among district-level officials. Mentoring must be encouraged within provincial and district offices to enable recruits to learn from those with longer service. Capacity building initiatives could also be linked to performance assessment mechanisms and salary upgrades. Given their relatively small numbers and the nature of their tasks, customised training must be developed for provincial councillors (and district councillors). This should be in line with their capacity, paying adequate attention to training materials, concepts used and issues of translation.

## Discussion

7: When I came to work with ISAF, I noticed initially there was a strong focus on the district, and less on provinces. Often it has been the case that certain areas are not missed, but the links between them are. The World Bank has been looking at fiscal sustainability and focusing on the district level seems unaffordable long-term. I have been working to try and change the focus of stabilisation from a focus on the district alone to now looking at links to the provincial centre, because provinces are likely the lowest level to which government can be effectively deconcentrated. The provincial councils have had two elections so there is something there to work with. We are encouraging district-level programming to work through the province. Thus, it won't be missed out, but we want to move from a district-level focus to a more holistic approach.

2: I'm quite new to Kabul, but what I'm hearing seems to be making sense. A provincial focus is increasing, but sub-national structures are too complicated, so it's extremely important to discuss what will survive after transition. How will district-level bodies link to the provincial council or structures?

3: It's an interesting question. But I noted in your report that you said the district level was the lowest level where government should be taking place.

DS: Yes, it is our view that the district represents the lowest feasible administrative tier through which administration can realistically take place and services be delivered in a coordinated manner.

3: Regarding district boundaries and the administration of districts—sometimes with very large populations. If we moved to the provincial level, it would be almost impossible to govern in districts because it would be so hard to define local groups. If the province was the last line of administration, that would be hard, because distinct entities exist below it. So many people live in rural conditions, and when we create district councils, they often serve large numbers of people.

2: Just to clarify. We're not suggesting provincial level governance only, but maybe if we get the funds to that level, they may flow much more easily to districts.

7: Yes, the district level is needed and a district council could assess local needs and express them to the province and then draw down the resources. But we could see a much broader spectrum of government institutions at the provincial level. ISAF is

always trying to fill civil service positions in districts, with difficulty. It makes sense to have fully functioning government at the province, but with district councils making them accountable.

3: Among many people I find a lack of definition of what governance is at the district level. People want to talk about who does what, concentrating on ASOP and DDAs, and they talk about who should do what—"these people do development and these people do governance"-but what should actually be taking place? Maybe there should be criteria about what is government is. I was talking to someone from MRRD and wanted to discuss who should be doing what. Can we draw back and say, "What do we want to see happening?" Once that's done we can work out who and how, and which groups should be elected.

AM: Let's take a look at the name: "The Missing Middle." On the basis of our evidence through the study, we felt administration and local governance appears like an hourglass, consolidated at the provincial level but not really reaching down. Then at the village level development activity and to some extent governance takes place through CDCs (Community Development Councils) constituted under NSP. People are disenchanted at the district level and below because as a rule provincial-level bodies are not readily accessible, such as is the case with the judiciary. Disputes are most often settled in the villages. Resources don't flow down to the district level and mechanisms to ensure formalised rule of law do not reach up. We do talk about the need for provincial and district-level accountability, which is why the need for a district-level representative body. All are part of a web and must happen simultaneously. Vesting all authority in line departments can result in fragmentation at the local level.

5: Thanks for the very interesting study. It brings up a lot of important issues that we must consider. One issue here is the reform process, either on the military or civil side. They are all vertical, but don't consider the district as a whole, as an entity. How can these vertical relationships be clarified? Kabul can't dictate how links must occur locally. We are working on a model council, but it's a very complex task, and we can't solve all issues from Kabul. We are right now planning and working on the model province concept, so that we can see how to cut the problems into smaller sizes. We must see the district not as only as various representatives of line ministries, but as a whole. Currently they are seen as tertiary units, but we must move beyond that. Take ID cards for example, several entities are involved: the Ministry of Interior, provincial administrations, maliks, mullahs. But when we undertake reform in Kabul, we do not consider links with other entities. We want to establish how at the district and village levels we can bring about comprehensive and holistic reform. However, the design of Public Administration Reform was supported by donors who didn't want to get into the complexity of what it really implies. It's easier to stay in Kabul and redesign ministries. We were designing a new project with the World Bank but they were concerned it was too complex and that time and resources would be spent producing a fragmented administration that brought no benefit.

The model province concept is finalised and we want to now choose a province and start trying the idea. We're looking from village to the district level and how they can be linked. There is education and health and water and agriculture and NSP in villages, but they are not linked to district administrations. CDCs report straight to MRRD, for example. Donors are supporting different ministries and are not considering how they can help the geographic areas. This also encourages ministries to seek resources for themselves.

This raises another big issue: how can ASOP councils and DDAs fund themselves in the long run? How can we support them when donors do not provide long-term funding? Villages are used to paying ten percent tax to local power-holders, so resources can be found. For centuries people have paid this ten percent, why not now? It is because there is external assistance? How long will it last? We need to start thinking about these things in line with exit strategy of the foreigners. In terms of relationships between district and province, we must also consider the link between Kabul and the province. The province is not involved in budgeting and Kabul gives what it wishes. This causes spending problems, because budget line items cannot be changed, etc. So we need functions delegated to provinces and maybe districts, so they can be responsible for their own lives, in terms of security or education or whatever field. We should not overload them, but allow them to manage their own issues as much as possible, leaving Kabul to look after international and regional issues. Why should I be responsible for recruiting to grade 10 in every province, and then spend months on this process? The delegation of authority is really needed for long-term sustainability. It may also help unemployment, foster personal responsibility and community responsibility. The insurgency is also benefiting from these problems.

DS: Thank you for a very interesting point of view. What do you think are the barriers to delegation?

5: There are some systemic issues, but mostly it's down to individuals. There is a mechanism for transferring responsibility down, but it's not working. Two years ago the Cabinet decided that provincial purchasing should be done in the province. But it has not taken place. Why? Because people have resources here in Kabul, but they do not have the will to release them.

7: So you think the legal framework is in place? It's just a matter of people giving authority?

5: Yes, I think it's there. I did an assessment last year on how much district budgets went to two provinces in the North. We went to the health and education ministries. We saw that provincial procurement committees had budgets and were spending them. It's up to the minister how much is delegated. It's now up to 100,000 Afs per signature for our regional leaders to spend, up from 50,000. It depends on ability and capacity, but the possibility is there.

DS: Let's turn back to this issue of definition of governance at the local level.

5: We don't have local governance. We have local administration, and it's a big difference. We are moving in that direction, such as through provincial councils. But most administrations in provinces have to wait for instructions from Kabul about what to do and when. How can we really expect a provincial administration to function when they must wait on every decision? But the legal basis is in the constitution: An article says that considering the administrative situation, the centre will transfer responsibility to other entities. There is therefore a legal basis to transfer and delegate powers.

AM: Can I draw your attention to the handout and the question: how much governance can Afghanistan afford?

5: It's a core issue in our model province concept. But we must see what is on the ground—without indicators of which sector, how much and how, it is a problem. Our model province concept involves finding this out. We need to understand how much national

and local resources are available. How much can we afford? Right now, the answer is not much, but there are resources that can be accessed. When working in Mazar, I went to see the municipality, and in district 1 or 10, you could not find more than a few bits of paper. They had no idea of the tax base and what could be collected. After six months I managed to increase the revenue by 200 percent. In addition there are many revenue leaks. When talking to donor friends, I always mention that a perception exists that the Ministry of Economy has low capacity, so they give additional responsibilities to the Ministry of Finance since they have capacity. The result is that now the MoF is overloaded with responsibilities for both revenue and expenditure. We must therefore also give different responsibilities to ministries according to mandate and ability.

2: I'm interested in your pilot idea, because it's not quite what I've been hearing: that the government will stay mostly centralised, and there will just be limited delegation: for example line ministries will cede powers but only to provincial line departments. Much can be done in terms of a provincial pilot. What will happen to taxes, can they spend them locally or must they give them to Kabul? Will line ministry resources be per capita as opposed to whatever formula is used now? Is the provincial pilot meant to start the discussion rolling? When will it start?

5: The concept has been approved and we are now consulting with stakeholders. We are using existing structures, not creating new ones. We'll use government clusters as the lead. Other clusters from Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) sectors will provide us with technical work groups. Provincial Administrative Assemblies will be the technical and operational body to integrate functions at the provincial and district levels. Of course, all government functions will be considered, including central government, including functions like finance, HR, M&E, etc, as well as service delivery functions such as land registration, which affects many people. So yes, it will cover everything.

7: You are looking at using existing systems, but a problem for donors is that it's unclear what's there. There is a policy, but it's not clear what exists and what is new. We are entering an era of increased appetite for reform, but when I talk to a government ministry they say, "This is our *tashkeel*," but there is less focus on impact and output. Last week Karzai said he'd look at provincial authorities. So, while I do dislike the idea that "transition" is everything, it may be an opportunity to leverage reform, look at structures, what are they and what they should be. But I'm nervous all authority will just go to the provincial governor, who is an extension of central control. Having a coordinating role for local governance makes sense, but should that role sit with governor? This is the first time I've seen this kind of appetite, so it may be a good time to use your model to assess and reform. Can it be used as a reform agenda too? Maybe there needs to be a vision on what local government should look like.

DS: There is an instrumental side of the debate that ignores the need for a separation of powers. We are looking at how powers can be transferred down. I take the points that are made on administrative issues, but how can central powers be devolved without a debate on prioritisation and buying in to governance. It comes back to accountability. How is the executive to be held to account? It is sidestepped, but who controls resources is key. These local initiatives look great, but how will they work? We suggest that much more work must go into making the pillars of the state both operate independently and interact between each other.

5: I have been involved in an assessment of the provincial council in Kandahar. Relationships, mechanisms and resources are limited. They have been given a guideline from the IDLG about meetings, about who is to attend and agendas. But not on how the

provincial council can monitor activities. Many provincial council members are illiterate and they have no technical secretariat to help with M&E functions and to assist with follow up and link with the administration. It's not possible to place these expectations on them. So we have developed a concept on how we can help provincial councils perform and also reach out technically, and link them to people in districts. This was well received by IDLG and the president, but there were not sufficient resources to include it in the pay and grading reform. We've talked to the Ministry of Finance and the Office of Administrative Affairs. If we identify a need for more resources through the pilot, the central government needs to provide appropriate support. It is the same with the provincial councils and departments like the Central Statistics Organization, lacking human resources. We have started working on the provincial council issue and the idea is that a permanent secretariat will operate, which will also help provide a memory for each new council that is elected.

DS: And from that you can see the idea of a provincial level civil service is emerging, which is good news, great. However, let us consider these remarks about complexity. Do matters need to be so complex? Are there more realistic ways we can think about how representation and administration can take place without such high levels of complexity?

5: I've never seen a simple system in another country. Everything is complex. If you are planning, budgeting, making policies, laws—you need information. Without it, there's trouble. So a structured information system is vital. Management information systems are a crosscutting issue. Every ministry needs one, and they all need to be integrated.

7: But there are new structures here, added perhaps without knowing what's there. You rightly said you'll work with Provincial Administrative Assembly, but the Provincial Development Committee is essentially the same thing with the international community added.

2: Part of the complexity derives from the need to deal with the security side of things. Ultimately, this needs to be designed out. ASOP is doing work for a non-functioning judiciary and the police, but let's look at what was put in for security reasons.

7: So you need a roadmap on how to get there.

2: Yes, there needs to be discussion. The technical solutions are there, but what we need is to be given the opportunity to implement them.

DS: Can you define what you mean by "opportunity"?

2: Donors and the government to sit together and decide.

7: That's right, its political will, but the state wants to stay centralised.

2: And fragmentation can equal more money too.

5: If we wait to again update the plan, another two years passes, and more problems occur. So I say let's take the good things that exist and start implementing them, and take out what is impractical. I hear criticisms of the sub-national policy. I say, there has never been one before, but now there is an approved policy that we can use. Let's start with the useful and practical parts of what exists. Times and needs will change, but it's now been a year with no implementation. So I recommend to international partners, stop criticising and let's make some moves.

7: I don't think the international community thinks there is room to revise the policy. But IDLG is looking at what is possible and coming up with a three to five year plan for implementing the policy. It's a ten year policy and we need to know what's feasible. There's no discussion about revising it.

4: Would a good starting point be to clarify IDLG and MRRD's roles? Most overlap is between them. I wonder do they have communication and coordination mechanisms between each other?

5: This is the main problem: communication, synchronisation, coordination. We had District Development Assemblies, so why ASOP *shuras*? We need to restructure. Some bodies are unpaid but with resources, others are paid with no resources. It created problems. We need one strong district body to deal with security, admin and development—and they must all link together, and you can't really have one without the other.

DS: I'd like to bring in my colleague Mumtaz. He participated in a phone-in on Voice of America after the report's presentation, with many people calling in to discuss the issue of local governance. Mumtaz, what's your view? Is it an elite discussion? Does it need to be broadened?

WM: One issue that came up was the subnational policy. Many internationals and people in ministries know about the policy, but for many listeners it was a new concept. A key issue was implementation. Many people agreed on the idea, but how was a big question. People also talked about the different *shuras*, which result in such complexity. We know that there is a government structure, but implementation mechanisms are unclear. People complain about so many structures. There are NSP and ASOP *shuras*, there is a Peace Shura in Laghman, there are *shuras* for Health, for XYZ we have *shuras*. If it can be kept simple, the *shura* is a familiar and useful mechanism. Often people are in many *shuras*. They don't know what to prioritise or why they are sitting in these various *shuras* on different occasions. On the radio program, many people talked about provincial administrations. Corruption often came up and many questions were being asked about how to deal with it. One caller came from Sar-i-Pul, a remote province, and he talked about the problems in that province. He showed how sub-national governance issue relates to everybody's lives.

AM: One comment we make in the report is that we have an opportunity now, and I agree that transition can work in the government and donor interest. Because people may choose more wisely when there is a reduction in aid levels. But when choosing what to keep and promote, we must make sure that the decision is not hijacked.

4: I also agree with your point in the paper that resources to the village level are not only unsustainable but they also bypass the local government structures.

AM: Yes, that's why we argue for a district-level focus, because it's more realistic. Some village level structures don't report locally and overall we want to move toward more accountability.

7: Yes, and to have that we need a district council. We get bogged down on ASOP or DDA etc, but you're right we have a *shura* for everything. We will continue to have these problems, we need some sort of district council or an interim district council, but in the meantime we need to use what's there.

3: IDLG's attempt to achieve representation was through a local *jirga* system selected by means of election of up to 400 people. It's not special purpose. It's general, and meant

to represent everyone. And that's what the councils have become. Research is done before a *jirga* comes together, and it draws from clusters and existing bodies. Leaders are identified and form the *jirga*. It's not perfect, but the principle is sound.

7: I favour the Helmand model. The issue with ASOP is the funding and size, but these are not actually big issues and are easily overcome. For example, some form of stipend will probably be necessary in any case. But in the long-run we need to know what we want. Many are security/stabilisation focused, and we need to move toward what will be the mainstream model.

5: Let's get down to one single district council.

DS: Well, we've covered a lot of ground, from linkages to definitions. We started at the district and went from there to discuss many issues to return to the district again, and it is an appropriate place to end. AREU's research notes the need for simple, robust and accountable representative bodies. Silos have been identified as a problem. It has been noted that regions and districts need to be recognised. When will these issues be addressed by decision-makers? We discussed how in a complex environment there is a need to for simplicity, particularly in relation to the way that governance is intermingled with security issues. In our research we noted that interventions with dual objectives were not so successful. There is a need to be clear about what specific interventions are for. There need to be clear goals.

3: One thought before we wrap up. It is on the relationship between Afghan citizens and the government. Around the world, when people feel they have no voice, and the split becomes rigid and people feel left out, this brings dysfunction in the country. It is happening here, and this cannot be ignored. People are frustrated because people don't ask Afghans what they want or think about what they are getting. And so they look for other leadership models to give some control over their lives. Look at the Arab world—this explosion is happening because people have been excluded. This is an important principle that is not discussed here that often. There is talk about provincial councils, but they are not brought into play.

7: Unless it is through a superficial form of consultation that is just concerned with ticking boxes. When people see this and then see no result, it is also not good.

3: Yes, it creates cynicism.

7: Outreach has not been meaningful. Even when the process occurs, results don't stem from it.

5: Also, we need a new compact between government and the international community. Both blame each other. I hope a new partnership can develop. Ten years have passed, but let's start fresh today, that's what's needed. Of course there is a war, lack of capacity, but this is how it is and I hope we can start to work honestly and with a good understanding, and we can start to overcome.

DS: Thank you all for coming, it was a very refreshing exchange of views.

3: Thanks also for hosting this. To some extent we all live in silos. This has been a great opportunity for us. It's important and useful to talk these issues out.