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**Research Cover Sheet**

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# AFGHANISTAN

## Wheel of Culture

- Security needed at the lowest levels (Taliban, Coalition, etc)
- Tribal; often tribes don't get along – consensus will be difficult
- Varying degrees of improved infrastructure needed in most rural areas; as well as stability and peace

- Strategic neighbors/borders: China, Pakistan, Iran
- Biggest near term revenue prospects lie in mining mineral deposits
- Diverse geography: mountains, land-locked, deserts, Hindu Kush
- Harsh climate: agriculture suited for area (e.g. poppies)
- Cultural crossroads – few decided to remain and settle

- No outcomes = continues relationship
- Positive outcomes for Afghans that meet their interests
- Compromise that saves face
- Relationship has to be preserved in the outcome

- High need for social/group approval; Communal
- Relationship is more important than the topic
- Nepotism; Pashtunwali code of conduct; Saving face
- Loyalty in exchange for protection

- Sensitivities in the control of the ministries of defense, interior, education, justice
- Geographic power
- Can chose sides (e.g. amongst int'l supporters)
- Contest for power: both at the center and in the provinces
- 2004 Constitution deeply embeds Islam in country's governance – Shari'a Law
- Requires security assurances by UN Security Council
- Family & tribe (disparate levels of influence)

- Polychronic; emphasis on relationships
- Focused on near term issues – not long-term strategic concerns
- Time expands to the task
- Space: closer personal space for trust building

- Negotiation would require strong administrative support – Afghan gov't does not have this yet
- Leadership roles with President; in Provinces; in Districts; in Tribes, etc
- Village elder has power; age has wisdom/need to save face
- Role of women does not match Western bias

- Taliban retains relations w/al Qaeda and like groups
- Traditional methods versus Western models
- Core internal divisions among Afghan parties
- President has a heterogeneous constituency
- Tribes (through Elders) make decisions through formal and informal processes (e.g. Shuras)

- Centuries of conflict: British; 3-times Anglo-Afghan Wars; Soviets; civil war; insurgency; Coalition, etc
- Taliban captures Kabul--gains power (Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda relocates to Afghan); overthrown
- Mongol invasion in 1219 drove agrarian rural society
- Islam (Shari'a) as basic law
- British draw Durand Line in 1893 (w/Pakistan) – not tribally recognized

- Context dependent
- Avoid details; interpretation is required
- Every lens = unique interpretation
- High-context language
- Many different languages: #1 Pashtu, #2 Dari
- High illiteracy rate

- May utilize internationally designated facilitator (perhaps via U.N.)
- International supporters may help from sidelines in core Afghan internal divisions
- Use 3<sup>rd</sup> parties as a non-confrontational way to resolve problems

- Evade: so as to say 'no' – extends time
- Cooperate: w/overlapping interests
- Insist: with appropriate power

- Tribal system w/centralized power
- Long neglected education system; constant conflict
- Leadership positions selected by who you know; not always best qualified
- 4 major ethnic groups: Pashtuns, Tajiks, Hazaras, Uzbeks
- Politically, Taliban never required elections, but may desire rules that guarantee them political space and opportunity to contend for greater power
- Economy is too small to cover peacetime requirements – will rely on wide-range of donors
- Multilateral funding crucial for long-term reliable financing
- Village elders play a crucial local leadership role
- Shadow governance (Taliban, Hezb-i-Islami, etc)
- Shuras and Jirgas to decide affairs

- International community has been supporting political, social, economic reconstruction
- Constitution guarantees of human rights (particularly rights of women) against the alternative associated with Taliban rule
- Sensitivities over the control of Afghan Nat'l Army & Nat'l police – Taliban would not want former Northern Alliance foes in control of states coercive power
- Containing threat of narcotics; narcotics sales have been used to fund insurgent actions
- Years of dealing with foreign forces, NATO, Intern's Security Assistance Force (ISAF), etc

