Position Paper: How to re-establish peace on the Israeli-Lebanese border and on the Golan Heights?

The conflicts over the border between Israel and Lebanon and over the Golan Heights are long lasting and complex issues involving multiple factors [1-7, 14-18]. At stake in these conflicts is the stability of the region for millions of citizens and refugees caught up in violence. The Golan Heights also represent great strategic importance for both Syria and Israel; militarily due to its great vantage point [15, 20]. The Golan Heights also offer the prospect of oil and consequently economic enrichment for whichever country has a claim to this land [19]. Another precious resource in the region, water, is present in the Golan Heights and currently provides a third of Israel’s water supply. Furthermore the Golan Heights is a fertile region providing food for whoever claims the land. A deal between Israel and Syria would involve dismantling of the Jewish settlements in the Golan Heights; the compensation to these residents if this occurred is estimated to be around $10 billion. Furthermore public opinion in Israel is against withdrawal from the Golan Heights making a deal increasingly unlikely [15].

The respect of borders and of the sovereignty of countries plays a vital role in keeping stability in the region. The respect of international law, U.N. resolutions and of the Geneva Convention constitutes key factors in keeping peace. At stake in the border conflict between Israel and Lebanon is the potential for widespread civilian and military casualties for both sides. Furthermore damage to infrastructure would be important for both sides at war especially in Lebanon due to Israel’s strike capability and their capability to target important facilities. Moreover another war would create economic and social issues [8]. Conflict in the region would go against U.S. interests of “promoting peaceful democratic reform and economic development in the region” [12]. Furthermore conflict in Lebanon or in the Golan Heights would destabilize the region further and threaten Israeli security, a critical U.S. ally in the region. The current civil war in Syria has already destabilized the region creating a huge influx of refugees into neighbouring countries increasing tensions in the region. In addition economic problems in Lebanon are caused by decreased investment due to worry of further conflict as well as the sudden influx of Syrian refugees: this has led to a slowed economic growth, in the 1-2% range in 2011-13, after four years of averaging 8% growth. Syrian refugees have increased the labour supply, but pushed more Lebanese into unemployment. Consequently this has lead over the years to Lebanon’s debt-to-GDP ratio becoming the third highest in the world [13].

The move towards an agreement between Israel and Syria has been interrupted by the descent of Syria into civil war and the unrest has caused a number of incidents along the border [14, 15, 18]. The Syrian civil war has shown how conflict allows terrorist groups, in this case ISIS, to strengthen its hold. Thus a conflict in Lebanon or in the Golan Heights would allow terrorist groups to have an area to operate in, in terms of planning and training, thus posing a direct threat to the U.S. homeland as well as its allies [12].

For a variety of reasons the U.S. generally supports the Israeli government in border conflicts between Israel and Lebanon and over the Golan Heights. Promoting democracy and fighting terrorism are high up on the U.S.’s agenda: Israel, fitting both of these criteria, makes it a close ally in the Middle East [12]. In addition the strong Jewish lobby in the U.S., being a large pool of votes, pushes U.S. foreign policy to favour Israel. Another reason for the U.S.’s support for Israel is the strong historical ties that the U.S. and Israel have: they have been allies for over 60 years, and the U.S. government was the first to recognize the state of Israel [22]. The U.S. has a long history of supporting Israel through foreign aid: “Israel is the largest cumulative recipient of U.S. foreign assistance since World War II” [21]. The U.S. government strongly opposes Hezbollah, considering it a terrorist organisation, thus supports Israel in its opposition to Hezbollah [9, 11]. Equally the U.S. supports Lebanon by providing foreign aid, reinforcing its armed forces and aiding its economy: the U.S. wants Lebanon to remain a democratic government which prospers and thus providing stability in the region [10, 12], The U.S. opposes the Syrian totalitarian regime due to its ideology and morals which oppose the U.S.’s Furthermore the Syrian regime is suspected of having used chemical weapons against civilians [9]. As a consequence the U.S. and Syria are usually adversaries however over the Golan Heights the U.S. condemns the Israeli government for annexing the Golan Heights. “The United States disagreed with the Israeli move as a violation of international law Article 47 of the Geneva Convention” [14, 15, 20].

Re-establishing peace in the Golan Heights is near impossible at a time in which Syria has a civil war: for the peace talks to recommence in-between Syria and Israel the war in Syria must have ceased. When this time comes the peace talks must resume rapidly in order to solve the ongoing issues. The U.S. government has rejected Assad’s proposal of a cooperation with Syria to fight ISIS, due to the Syrian’s totalitarian regime as well as its suspected use of chemical weapons against civilians. The U.S. government is also fighting the Islamic State however they are trying to fight against them in Syria in a way which does not benefit the Assad regime [24]. The U.S. has reached a consensus with Iran over its nuclear program; this milestone could only be met with concessions on both parts. This is a step in the right direction in ensuring peace and further stability in the region promoting the U.S.’s current agenda. Furthermore Iran has agreed to help fight ISIS: Iran’s military strength and presence in the region will help weaken the ISIS threat in this region, without the intervention of the U.S. army, as well as to the U.S. homeland and its allies [23].

To prevent further conflict between Israel and Lebanon the effect of the conflict in Syria on Lebanon must be limited so as not to further destabilize an already unstable nation. In order to limit the vast numbers of refugees fleeing to country’s such as Lebanon and causing a great strain on Lebanese infrastructure and resources the Syrian people must be aided in Syria. An effective way to offer support would be to improve humanitarian access into Syria through a multilateral effort supported by Iran, a close Syrian ally, who should encourage the Assad regime to allow further foreign aid [10, 12]. Another way of preventing further conflict between Lebanon and Israel, due to Lebanon’s instability, would be to increase funding for humanitarian aid for the Syrian refugee population in Lebanon. This funding could come from European allies as well as Gulf States, hence limiting the financial impact on the Lebanese economy: “Through example and diplomatic pressure, urge interested states and regional partners to ensure the $6.5 billion UN appeal for humanitarian aid for Syria and refugee-hosting communities in Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and other neighbouring countries is fulfilled.” [10, 12]. Furthermore working with the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) and increasing their funding, to increase Lebanon’s border security, would help fight against terrorist threats entering the country as well as weakening the terrorists. This would decrease the chance of terrorist attacks upon Israel from within Lebanon, mainly from Hezbollah, and thus deescalate tensions on both sides. The U.S. and the international community must also address Lebanon’s mounting economic with greater resources and coordination [12, 13].

**How to re-establish peace on the Israeli-Lebanese border and on the Golan Heights?**

Evidence on the Israeli- Lebanese border conflict

1. <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unifil/background.shtml>

Palestinian commando operations against Israel and Israeli reprisals against Palestinian bases in Lebanon intensified. On 11 March 1978, a commando attack in Israel resulted in many dead and wounded among the Israeli population. The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) claimed responsibility for that raid. In response, Israeli forces invaded Lebanon on the night of 14/15 March, and in a few days occupied the entire southern part of the country except for the city of Tyre and its surrounding area.

On 15 March 1978, the Lebanese Government submitted a strong protest to the Security Council against the Israeli invasion, stating that it had no connection with the Palestinian commando operation. On 19 March, the Council adopted resolutions [425 (1978)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/425%281978%29) and [426 (1978)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/425%281978%29), in which it called upon Israel immediately to cease its military action and withdraw its forces from all Lebanese territory. It also decided on the immediate establishment of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) with three broadly defined purposes: confirming the withdrawal of Israeli forces; restoring international peace and security; and assisting the Government of Lebanon in ensuring the return of its effective authority in the area. The first UNIFIL troops arrived in the area on 23 March 1978.

1. <http://www.un.org/press/en/2000/20000618.sc6878.doc.html>

“After consultations throughout the weekend, the Security Council this afternoon endorsed the work done by the United Nations as mandated by the Security Council, including the Secretary-Generals conclusion that, as of 16 June, Israel had withdrawn its forces from Lebanon in accordance with Security Council resolution 425 (1978).

In a statement read out by its President, Jean-David Levitte (France), the Council noted with serious concern reports of violations that had occurred since 16 June, and called upon all parties to respect the line identified by the United Nations.

It called on all parties concerned to cooperate fully with the United Nations and to exercise the utmost restraint.”

1. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/7381389.stm>

After eight Israeli soldiers had been killed and two captured by the Lebanese group Hezbollah, Israel and Hezbollah engaged in a 33-day war in which Hezbollah fired a hail of rockets into Israel and the Israelis bombed Lebanese towns, villages and infrastructure but made little headway in ground operations.

1. <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unifil/background.shtml>

On 11 August 2006, the Security Council, following intense negotiations, passed [resolution 1701 (2006)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1701%282006%29) calling for a full cessation of hostilities in the month-long war based upon, in particular, “the immediate cessation by Hezbollah of all attacks and the immediate cessation by Israel of all offensive military operations” in Lebanon, and called on both Israel and Lebanon to support a permanent ceasefire and comprehensive solution to the crisis. By resolution 1701, the Council has significantly enhanced UNIFIL (from about 2,000 troops just before the war to the authorized level of 15,000 military personnel) and expanded its original mandate. For the first time, the Council also decided to include the Maritime Task Force as part of UN peacekeeping operation

1. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/aug/04/lebanon-israel-tree-border-clash>

Five people died in the most serious clash between the two countries since the war of 2006.

Unifil, the UN force that has monitored the border since the ceasefire that ended that conflict, said that investigations had established that the tree, which Israeli troops were cutting down when Lebanese forces fired on them, was south of the "blue line" which marks the border.

"Following the exchange of fire between the Lebanese army and the Israeli army across the blue line in El Adeisse, the Unifil investigators were on the ground and commenced investigations," it said. "The investigations are still ongoing and the findings will be intimated on [their] conclusion.

"Unifil established, however, that the trees being cut by the Israeli army are located south of the blue line on the Israeli side."

Unifil confirmed that [Israel](http://www.theguardian.com/world/israel) had notified it of its intention to carry out routine maintenance work on trees along the border, and that Unifil passed the information on to the Lebanese army.

The Lebanese army admitted that its soldiers opened fire on troops from the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) in the confrontation.

1. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-25399340>

The cross-border violence is the most serious since 2010, when an Israeli officer was shot dead by a Lebanese army sniper, sparking clashes in which three Lebanese soldiers were killed.

There has been sporadic cross-border violence since 2006, when Israel and the Lebanese Shia militant group Hezbollah fought a month-long war.

Two Israeli soldiers and a Spanish peacekeeper were killed on Wednesday in an exchange of fire between Hezbollah and Israel, one of the most violent clashes between the two sides since a 2006 war.

1. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/01/29/us-mideast-israel-lebanon-idUSKBN0L10XD20150129>

The soldiers were killed when Hezbollah fired five missiles at a convoy of Israeli military vehicles on the frontier with Lebanon.

The peacekeeper, serving with a U.N. monitoring force in southern Lebanon, was killed as Israel responded with air strikes and artillery fire, a U.N. spokesman and Spanish officials said.

1. <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/a-war-like-no-other-israel-vs.-hezbollah-in-2015>

A general conflict could be expected to produce significant military and civilian casualties on both sides. Fighting on the ground in southern Lebanon and perhaps northern Israel would likely produce the most military casualties. And if civilians were present amid ground operations -- a likelihood in southern Lebanon -- they would suffer significant casualties in those areas. Civilian casualties should also be expected in areas where air and rocket/missile strikes are conducted, especially when defense measures are inadequate.

Damage to civil infrastructure can be expected in both Israel and Lebanon. If Hezbollah can sustain high rates of fire on Israel, some weapons will get through and some targets will be struck, whether through sheer numbers or greater accuracy. And since Hezbollah operates from within civilian areas, Israeli strikes would cause some damage there even when precautions and precision tactics are employed. Lebanese infrastructure such as bridges, roads, and communications facilities would also be targeted because of their military utility.

Such a war would likely cause widespread social and economic disruption in Israel and Lebanon. Hamas was able to achieve this in southern Israel last year, and attacks further north showed the potential for countrywide disruption under sustained rocket fire. Similarly, the 2006 war demonstrated that Israeli air operations could reach deep into Lebanon with significant economic and social impact. A new war would likely bring more widespread air attacks with even broader effects.

Accepting that Hezbollah, like Hamas, cannot be destroyed by military action alone, Israel would likely focus on achieving limited but clear strategic objectives in a new war, such as substantially reducing the group's military capabilities and damaging enough infrastructure to sully its reputation as defender of Lebanon, perhaps increasing public antagonism toward it in the process.

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And an extended conflict with significant casualties could increase pressure to expand the mission. A major conflict with Hezbollah could also complicate Israel's relations with the United States. If Israel initiates large-scale operations, Obama administration sources might call for restraint, perhaps even painting the action as an effort to collapse the Iranian nuclear negotiations

A major conflict would also have important implications for the Syria war. Fighting could spread into Syria along the Golan frontier and bring Assad regime forces under Israeli fire. Hezbollah could also be forced to withdraw troops from Syria in order to meet an Israeli offensive in southern Lebanon, weakening the critical support it has provided to Damascus. And if the group suffers major military losses to Israel, its long-term ability to lend such support could be compromised.

1. Congressional Research Service Report for Congress 2006 <https://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/75271.pdf>

The conflict has posed its own set of challenges for U.S. policy toward Lebanon. In a broader sense, the war has jeopardized not only the long-term stability of Lebanon but has presented the Bush Administration with a basic dilemma. On one hand, the Administration is sympathetic to Israeli military action against a terrorist organization; President Bush has spoken in favor of Israel’s right of self-defense. On the other hand, the fighting dealt a setback to Administration efforts to support the rebuilding of democratic institutions in Lebanon. One commentator suggested “the two major agendas of his [Bush’s] presidency — anti-terrorism and the promotion of democracy — are in danger of colliding with each other in Lebanon.” If Lebanon disintegrates through a return to communal civil strife or becomes closely aligned with Syria or Iran, U.S. goals could be seriously affected. The United States would lose a promising example of a modernizing pluralist state moving toward a resumption of democratic life and economic reform and quite possibly face a return to the chaos that prevailed in Lebanon during the 15-year civil war. conditions would be likely to foster terrorism, unrest on Israel’s border, and other forms of regional instability. Moreover, the growth of Syrian or Iranian influence or some combination of the two could strengthen regional voices supporting extremist and likely anti-Western views associated with clerical regimes (Iran), totalitarian models (Syria), or a militant stance toward Israel. A viable cease-fire, on the other hand, could be an initial step toward further progress in the long quest for regional peace.

Lebanon is an important factor in U.S. calculations regarding regional security, particularly regarding Israel and Iran. Congressional concerns have focused on the prominent role that Hezbollah, an Iran-backed Shiite militia, political party, and U.S.-designated terrorist organization, continues to play in Lebanon and beyond, including its recent armed intervention in Syria. Congress has appropriated more than $1 billion since the end of the brief Israel-Hezbollah war of 2006 to support U.S. policies designed to extend Lebanese security forces’ control over the country and promote economic growth. The civil war in neighboring Syria is progressively destabilizing Lebanon. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, nearly one million predominantly Sunni Syrian refugees have fled to Lebanon, equivalent to close to one quarter of Lebanon’s population.

Regional supporters and opponents of Syrian President Bashar al Asad are using Lebanon as a transit point and staging ground in a wider regional conflict. Hezbollah has intervened in Syria in support of Asad, and Sunni extremist groups based in Syria are cooperating with Lebanese and Palestinian Sunni extremists in Lebanon to carry out retaliatory attacks against Hezbollah targets.

1. Congressional Research Service Report for Congress 2014 [https://fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/**R42816**.pdf](https://fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/R42816.pdf)

The U.S. intelligence community told Congress in its 2014 Worldwide Threat Assessment that, “Lebanon in 2014 probably will continue to experience sectarian violence among Lebanese and terrorist attacks by Sunni extremists and Hezbollah, which are targeting each-others’ interests.…Increased frequency and lethality of violence in Lebanon could erupt into sustained and widespread fighting.” In January 2014, the U.S. State Department warned against all travel to Lebanon in light of growing terrorist threats. The question of how best to marginalize Hezbollah and other anti-U.S. Lebanese actors without provoking civil conflict among divided Lebanese sectarian political forces remains the underlying challenge for U.S. policy makers. The ongoing political deadlock and the prospect of executive, legislative, and security force leadership vacuums amplify this challenge. This report provides an overview of Lebanon and current issues of U.S. interest. It provides background information, analyzes recent developments and key legislative debates, and tracks legislation, U.S. assistance, and recent congressional action. It will be updated to reflect major events or policy changes.

Since 2006, the United States has granted over $1 billion in assistance to Lebanon, with the following goals:

Supporting the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 1559 and 1701;

Reducing sectarianism and unifying national institutions;

Providing military equipment and basic supplies to the Lebanese Armed Forces

(LAF);

Providing support to the Internal Security Forces (ISF) for training, equipment and vehicles, community policing assistance, corrections reform, and communications; and

Increasing economic opportunity.

1. <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/13/world/middleeast/13mideast.html?pagewanted=all>

The White House released a statement condemning the Hezbollah raid, calling it an “unprovoked act of terrorism” and holding Syria and Iran responsible because of their longstanding support for the group. The [United Nations](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/organizations/u/united_nations/index.html?inline=nyt-org) representative to southern Lebanon, Gier Pedersen, also criticized the raid, calling it “an act of very dangerous proportions.”

1. [**http://www.cfr.org/lebanon/renewed-conflict-lebanon/p33083**](http://www.cfr.org/lebanon/renewed-conflict-lebanon/p33083)

**Implications for U.S. Interests**

Renewed conflict in Lebanon threatens U.S. interests in three principal ways. First, it would exacerbate regional instability, further undermining the U.S. interests in promoting peaceful, democratic reform and economic development in the region. Lebanon's descent into sectarian strife would deepen Sunni-Shiite tensions across the area, intensifying regional rivalries and potentially destabilizing neighboring countries at a time when the United States intends to "rebalance" its foreign policy priorities.

Second, renewed conflict in Lebanon could threaten the security of Israel, a critical U.S. ally, especially if jihadists gain a significant foothold in Lebanon.In particular, al-Qaeda–linked groups may seek to establish a presence close to Israel's northern border in order to perpetrate attacks on Israel. Moreover, in a number of follow-on scenarios, Israel could be drawn directly into Lebanon, further compounding regional tensions and adversely affecting other U.S. priorities in the region.

Third, renewed conflict in Lebanon would allow for ungoverned territory to be exploited by al-Qaeda and affiliated groups, with potential threats to the U.S. homeland. Should the situation in Lebanon deteriorate, Sunni jihadist groups already infiltrating the Lebanese arena could find more leeway to operate, both in terms of training as well as planning and launching attacks. These groups could use Lebanon to recruit operatives to undertake attacks in Europe or the United States.

**Preventive Options**

Given the direct linkage between Syrian spillover and Lebanese instability, resolution of the conflict in Syria would be the most effective path for preventing renewed strife in Lebanon. Yet, prospects for resolving Syria are remote at this time. Instead, a strategy that focuses on mitigating the spillover effects of the Syrian conflict while bolstering Lebanon's resilience and diminishing its sectarian tensions offers the best path forward. Specifically, to prevent renewed conflict in Lebanon, the United States has three broad sets of policy options

*Mitigate the spillover effects of the Syrian conflict.* Efforts to ensure humanitarian access to civilians inside Syria and insulate Syria's neighbors from spillover would help prevent renewed conflict in Lebanon. This option presents numerous challenges given the lack of international consensus on Syria and the entrenched nature of the Syrian conflict. It would also entail a broadening of the dialogue with Iran beyond nuclear-related issues, which has hitherto not been U.S. policy. Specific measures the United States could take to contain spillover from the Syrian conflict include the following:

* *Work with the United Nations and relevant global and regional actors to vastly improve humanitarian access into Syria, pursuant to UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2139.* Faced with roadblocks from the Syrian regime on granting access to humanitarian organizations providing medical and food aid in rebel-controlled areas, the United States should seize on the UN consensus embodied by UNSCR 2139 to launch a full-bore multilateral effort, including the EU, Russia, and Iran, to increase humanitarian access. In particular, the United States should take advantage of Iran's professed willingness to support humanitarian access, encouraging Tehran to leverage its influence with Damascus to provide greater international access for aid.

*Reinforce Lebanese resilience.* The United States can also consider measures that bolster Lebanon's resilience given the likelihood of continued Syrian spillover. This option is only feasible with a substantial influx of resources. It should therefore be undertaken in concert with European allies, particularly the United Kingdom and France, and the Gulf states, especially Saudi Arabia. These measures include the following:

* *Work with the LAF and international partners to dramatically enhance Lebanon's border security.* The United States, together with the United Kingdom and France, should accelerate ongoing efforts to improve surveillance and controls along Lebanon's northern and eastern frontiers. The United States could initiate discussions with the UN to explore expanding the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) beyond its current area of operations in the south, thereby relieving the LAF of operating in particularly sensitive areas.

*Deescalate sectarian tensions.* The United States can work directly or indirectly through a variety of channels, including critical European and Gulf allies, to help reduce sectarian tensions inside Lebanon. Though the measures noted below are feasible, the United States should also encourage regional allies with deeper influence in Lebanon, such as Saudi Arabia, to resist the temptation to stoke sectarianism in Lebanon. Options include the following:

**Recommendations**

Resolving Syria's conflict would dramatically diminish prospects for renewed strife in Lebanon, but the likelihood of a resolution in the near term is slim. Instead, spillover from Syria's protracted civil war threatens to destabilize an already volatile situation in Lebanon. Concerted efforts should be made to lessen its likelihood and mitigate the effects of unrest should it occur. To achieve these goals, the United States should implement the following recommendations.

* *Deepen U.S. intelligence sharing and information gathering so as to have better insight into Lebanon's internal politics.* These measures should be undertaken by the Department of State and the CIA.
* *Intensify diplomacy in concert with the United Nations, United Kingdom, France, and Saudi Arabia to tamp down sectarian tensions and promote reconciliation in Lebanon.*These measures, undertaken by the Department of State, would focus on both Lebanon and the region.

– Open discussions with both Saudi Arabia and Iran on diminishing sectarian tensions. Consider the establishment of a regional dialogue that includes Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Iran, and Iraq and Turkey that aims to deescalate tensions in Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq.

* *Enhance Lebanese security, especially along the porous Lebanese-Syrian border, and pursue measures that strengthen security institutions, especially the LAF and the ISF.* These measures should be enacted alongside France, the United Kingdom, and Saudi Arabia, all of whom share important equities.

– Bolster U.S. defense and security assistance and cooperation with the LAF and focus new training efforts on Sunni enlisted soldiers. Pursue broader reforms and training that strengthen the institution's reputation as a national, not sectarian, force.

– Explore the possibility of expanding UNIFIL's mandate to assist with enhancing border security elsewhere in Lebanon beyond the Blue Line.

* *Address Lebanon's mounting socioeconomic ills with greater resources and strong coordination with regional allies, the European Union, and international financial institutions.* Expand economic development assistance programs that target impoverished areas of north Lebanon and the Palestinian camps.
* *Bolster support for the Syrian refugee population in Lebanon, with special focus on the needs of children.*

– Through example and diplomatic pressure, urge interested states and regional partners to ensure the $6.5 billion UN appeal for humanitarian aid for Syria and refugee-hosting communities in Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and other neighbouring countries is fulfilled. While public shaming of Gulf countries for their paltry contributions may be tempting, this tactic could easily backfire. The appointment of a new UN Syria envoy possibly could be linked to aid commitments. However, given that the Gulf continues to hold the UN in disdain, as evidenced by Saudi Arabia's rejection of a Security Council seat, the special envoy may not prove a useful leverage point.

1. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2034rank.html#le>

Spillover from the Syrian conflict, including the influx of more than 1 million Syrian refugees, has increased internal tension and slowed economic growth to the 1-2% range in 2011-13, after four years of averaging 8% growth. Syrian refugees have increased the labor supply, but pushed more Lebanese into unemployment. Chronic fiscal deficits have made Lebanon’s debt-to-GDP ratio the third highest in the world; most of the debt is held internally by Lebanese banks. Weak economic growth limits tax revenues, while the largest government expenditures remain debt servicing and transfers to the electricity sector. These limitations constrain other government spending and limit the government’s ability to invest in necessary infrastructure improvements, such as water, electricity, and transportation.

Evidence on the Golan Heights border conflict

1. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2008/may/21/golan.background>

**November 1947:** [Syria](http://www.theguardian.com/world/syria) opposes the UN partition plan for Jewish and Arab states that paves the way for the creation of Israel.

**May 1948:** As the British mandate in the region ends, the state of Israel is declared. Syria joins other Arab countries in invading Israel.

**July 1949:** Israel and Syria sign an armistice, although some fighting continues.

**June 1967:** Israel attacks Syria, capturing the Golan Heights, 460 square miles of strategically crucial land that also borders Jordan. The conflict becomes known as the six-day war.

**October 1973:** Syria attacks and tries to regain the Golan Heights but is repelled.

**1974:** After a series of other clashes, Syria and Israel agree to withdraw their forces, ending all significant military conflict in the Golan Heights.

**1981:** Israel announces it has annexed the Golan Heights. This is not recognised internationally. Today, there are an estimated 18,000 Israelis living there.

**December 1999:** Israel's prime minister, Ehud Barak, and the Syrian foreign minister, Farouk al-Sharaa, meet for the highest-level talks between the two countries.

**January 2000:** US-brokered discussions over the return of most of the Golan Heights to Syria collapse over disagreements about whether Israel should hand back a tiny parcel of land by the Sea of Galilee, a key water source for Israel.

**June 2007:** Israel says it is willing to trade land for peace if Syria's president, Bashar Assad, cuts ties with Iran and hostile guerrilla groups.

**September 2007:** Israeli warplanes drop bombs inside Syrian territory. Israel refuses to discuss the target, but in April 2008 the US releases a video it says shows the bombed facility was a nuclear plant being built with North Korean help.

**April 2008:** Assad tells a Qatari newspaper that Turkey has been mediating in talks between Israel and Syria for the past year.

**May 2008:** Israel and Syria confirm there are indirect talks aimed at reaching a "comprehensive peace agreement".

1. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-14724842>

Israel seized the Golan Heights from Syria in the closing stages of the 1967 Six-Day War. Most of the Syrian Arab inhabitants fled the area during the conflict.

An armistice line was established and the region came under Israeli military control. Almost immediately Israel began to settle the Golan.

Syria tried to retake the Golan Heights during the 1973 Middle East war. Despite inflicting heavy losses on Israeli forces, the surprise assault was thwarted. Both countries signed an armistice in 1974 and a UN observer force has been in place on the ceasefire line since 1974.

Israel unilaterally annexed the Golan Heights in 1981. The move was not recognised internationally.

There are more than 30 Jewish settlements on the heights, with an estimated 20,000 settlers. There are some 20,000 Syrians in the area, most of them members of the Druze sect.

## Strategic importance

While still under Syrian control, the Golan Heights were used to bombard Israeli territory below

Southern Syria and the capital Damascus, about 60 km (40 miles) north, are clearly visible from the top of the Heights while Syrian artillery regularly shelled the whole of northern Israel from 1948 to 1967 when Syria controlled the Heights.

The heights give Israel an excellent vantage point for monitoring Syrian movements. The topography provides a natural buffer against any military thrust from Syria.

The area is also a key source of water for an arid region. Rainwater from the Golan's catchment feeds into the Jordan River. The area provides a third of Israel's water supply.

The land is fertile, with the volcanic soil being used to cultivate vineyards and orchards and to raise cattle. The Golan is also home to Israel's only ski resort.

## Stumbling blocks

Israel captured the Golan Heights from Syria in 1967

Syria wants to secure the return of the Golan Heights as part of any peace deal. In late 2003, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad said he was ready to revive peace talks with Israel.

In Israel, the principle of returning the territory in return for peace is already established. During US-brokered peace talks in 1999-2000, then Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak had offered to return most of the Golan to Syria.

But the main sticking point during the 1999 talks is also likely to bedevil any future discussions. Syria wants a full Israeli withdrawal to the pre-1967 border. This would give Damascus control of the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee - Israel's main source of fresh water.

Israel wishes to retain control of Galilee and says the border is located a few hundred metres to the east of the shore.

Israeli troops exercise on Mount Hermon, which Israelis enjoy using as a winter playground

A deal with Syria would also involve the dismantling of Jewish settlements in the territory. An Israeli newspaper estimated in 1999 that compensation for the settlers would run to $10 billion.

Public opinion in Israel appears not to favour withdrawal. Opponents say the heights are too strategically important to be returned. An opinion poll in January 2004 suggested that a majority of Israelis opposed plans to hand back the Golan to Syria.

## On-off talks

Indirect talks between Israel and Syria resumed in 2008, through Turkish government intermediaries, but were suspended following the resignation of Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert over a corruption inquiry.

The new Israeli government under Binyamin Netanyahu elected in February 2009 indicated that it was determined to take a tougher line over the Golan, and in June 2009, the Syrian leader said there was no partner for talks on the Israeli side.

**Syrian civil war**

The new US administration of President Barack Obama - who took up office in January 2009 - declared the restarting of talks between Israel and Syria to be one of its main foreign policy goals, but the advent of civil war in Syria in 2011 put paid to any progress.

Syrian fighting reached the Golan ceasefire lines in 2013, when Israel returned fire after rebel shells landed in Golan. Israeli and Syrian Army troops exchanged fire across their lines in May.

1. <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/undof/mandate.shtml>

The United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) was established by [Security Council resolution 350 (1974)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/350%281974%29) of 31 May 1974 to:

* Maintain the ceasefire between Israel and Syria;
* Supervise the disengagement of Israeli and Syrian forces; and
* Supervise the areas of separation and limitation, as provided in the May 1974 Agreement on Disengagement.

1. <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/undof/background.shtml>

In the Israel-Syria sector tension remained high, and from March 1974 the situation became increasingly unstable. Against this background, the United States undertook a diplomatic initiative, which resulted in the conclusion of an [Agreement on Disengagement between Israeli and Syrian forces [S/11302/Add.1, annexes I and II]](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/11302/Add.1) . The Agreement provided for an area of separation and for two equal zones of limited forces and armaments on both sides of the area, and called for the establishment of a United Nations observer force to supervise its implementation. The Agreement was signed on 31 May 1974 and, on the same day, the

Security Council adopted [resolution 350 (1974)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=s/res/350%281974%29) PDF Documentby which it set up the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF).

1. <http://www.jpost.com/Arab-Israeli-Conflict/Air-raid-sirens-sound-in-the-Golan-Heights-IDF-investigating-399418>

Two projectiles fired from Syria struck the Golan Heights on Tuesday, triggering air raid sirens.  
  
The IDF said the mortar shells were stray projectiles fired in the course of battles between Assad regime forces and rebel organizations in southern Syria. The shells failed to cause injury or damage. Locals heard the blasts that they caused upon impact.  
  
The IDF did not return fire.  
  
On Sunday night, the Israel Air Force struck and killed four terrorists who crossed into Israel from Syria and planted explosives near an abandoned IDF post.  
  
The incident, which occurred at 9:30 p.m. on the northern Golan Heights near the Druse village of Majdal Shams, began when Combat Intelligence Collection units identified four men planting the explosives on the eastern side of the border fence, within Israeli territory.  
  
It came after international media reports said the Israel Air Force carried out strikes on strategic missile bases in Syria late on Friday night, reportedly intercepting an Iranian-Syrian attempt to smuggle advanced missiles, perhaps Scuds, to Hezbollah’s numerous weapons depots in Lebanon. The IDF has declined to comment on the reports.

1. <http://www.globes.co.il/en/article-1000824062>

A month before US President Barack Obama is due to visit Israel, the Israeli government has awarded the first license to drill for oil on the Golan Heights. The license covers half the area of the Golan from the latitude of Katzrin in the north to Tzemach in the south.

In the past, the US government reacted angrily when Israel approved construction in eastern Jerusalem ahead of a visit by Vice President Joe Biden.

1. Congressional Research Service

Israeli-United States Relations

Updated April 5, 2002

Clyde R. Mark, Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division

<http://www.policyalmanac.org/world/archive/crs_israeli-us_relations.shtml>

**The Golan Heights**

Although the United States considers the Golan Heights to be occupied territory subject to negotiation and Israeli withdrawal, it sympathized with the Israeli concern that Syrian control of the Heights prior to 1967 provided Syria with a tactical and strategic advantage used to threaten Israel’s security. The Begin and Shamir governments rejected any withdrawal from Golan; on December 14, 1981, the Knesset passed legislation applying Israeli “law, jurisdiction, and administration” to the Golan Heights, in effect, annexing the territory. The United States disagreed with the Israeli move as a violation of international law (Article 47 of the Geneva Convention which forbids acquisition of territory by force, and U.N. Security Council Resolution 242), and as a violation of the spirit of the Camp David peace process.

1. Congressional Research Service

Israel: Background and U.S. Relations

Jim Zanotti, Specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs

June 1, 2015

[https://www.fas.org/sgp/**crs**/mideast/RL33476.pdf](https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RL33476.pdf)

**Introduction**

U.S.-Israel defense, diplomatic, and economic cooperation has been close for decades. U.S. policymakers often consider Israel’s security as they make policy choices in the region. Israel has relied on U.S. support for its defense posture, despite reported private and sometimes public disagreements between U.S. and Israeli officials on how to respond to and prioritize various security challenges. Congress provides active oversight of the executive branch’s dealings with Israel. Some Members of Congress have criticized actions by the Obama Administration and previous U.S. Administrations for being insufficiently supportive of Israel, and occasionally have authorized and appropriated funding for programs benefitting Israel at a level exceeding that requested by the executive branch. Other Members oppose what they describe as U.S. support of Israel without sufficient scrutiny of Israel’s actions.

**U.S. Aid and Arms Sales to Israel**

Israel is the largest cumulative recipient of U.S. foreign assistance since World War II. Since 1976, Israel has generally been the largest annual recipient of U.S. foreign assistance, but has been occasionally supplanted since 2004 by Iraq and Afghanistan. Since 1985, the United States has provided approximately $3 billion in grants annually to Israel. In the past, Israel received significant economic assistance, but now almost all U.S. bilateral aid to Israel is in the form of Foreign Military Financing (FMF). U.S. FMF to Israel represents approximately one half of total FMF and 20% of Israel’s defense budget.

1. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/03/15/us-palestinians-israel-usa-timeline-idUSTRE62E45Z20100315>

Here are some milestones in Israel-U.S. relations:

1948 - President Harry Truman becomes the first world leader to recognize the newly-born Israel.

1. <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2015/07/iran-nuclear-deal-goldberg-frum-beinart/398816/>

But we can’t talk about Iran’s position in the region without acknowledging that today, the group most likely to commit another 9/11 on U.S. soil is ISIS. And Iran wants very badly to destroy ISIS, which is, after all, a genocidally anti-Shia group near their border. There are problems with Iran’s fight against ISIS, of course. It alienates the Iraqi Sunnis who we need to turn against the jihadis in their midst. But on the ground, Iran is the most potent force fighting ISIS—and if it has more money to do so, that’s not all bad. What’s more, if this deal makes it possible for the U.S. and Iran to coordinate their fight against ISIS more effectively, that’s good for American national security. And morally, if we can liberate the people who’ve been living under ISIS hell for the last year, that’s good too.

From a national-security and moral perspective, ISIS is the greatest threat and Iran, like Stalin during World War II or China during the Cold War, is a highly problematic partner against it. But in terms of ability to project power, it’s the best partner we’ve got.

1. Congressional Research Service

**Armed Conflict in Syria: Overview and U.S.**

**Response**

**Christopher M. Blanchard, Coordinator**

Specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs

**Carla E. Humud**

Analyst in Middle Eastern and African Affairs

**Mary Beth D. Nikitin**

Specialist in Nonproliferation

July 15, 2015

[https://www.fas.org/sgp/**crs**/mideast/RL33487.pdf](https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RL33487.pdf)

Syrian officials have stated their conditional willingness to serve as partners with the international community in counterterrorism operations in Syria, a position that reflects their apparent desire to create an image and role for the Asad government as a bulwark against Sunni Islamist extremism. However, the Obama Administration and several Members of Congress have rejected the prospect of counterterrorism partnership with President Asad, and Administration officials continue to call for a political transition and describe Asad as having lost legitimacy. Some Members of Congress and observers argue that the United State should seek to remove Asad from power or act militarily to protect Syrian civilians. Others express concern that disorderly regime change could further empower extremists or that civilian protection missions could prolong the conflict or involve the United States and its partners too deeply in stabilizing Syria over the long run. U.S. officials and Members of Congress continue to debate how best to pursue U.S. regional security and counterterrorism goals in Syria without inadvertently strengthening the Asad government. Similar questions arise in relation to options for countering the Islamic State without bolstering other anti-U.S. Islamists and vice versa. Anti-Asad armed forces and their activist counterparts have improved their coordination in some cases, but remain divided over tactics, strategy, and their long-term political goals for Syria. Powerful Islamist forces seek outcomes that are contrary in significant ways to stated U.S. preferences for Syria’s political future. The United Nations Security Council has demanded a halt to the use of chemicals as a weapon of war in the country and seeks continued Asad government cooperation with plans to verifiably dismantle its chemical weapons program.

Position Paper: How to fight against drug trafficking using the former silk road?

The Silk Road is an organised and established drug trafficking path which is controlled by dangerous and illegal organisations and groups; the Silk Road is at fault of providing more than 90 % of opium and heroin worldwide. At stake is the lives of millions of people around the globe affected by drug addiction; drug trafficking and it’s constant conflicts. Drug addiction affects deeply the U.S. as well as other European Allies; in the U.S. alone 40,393 people died of drug-induced causes in 2010; moreover it causes a strong issue for health care policies. The use of opium is also a major player in the transmition of HIV. The drug trafficking begins in Afghanistan and passes through Russia, Poland, Baltic States, Ukraine and China, it is a powerful chain of production with an enormous amount of money in it.

The U.S. takes a tough stance against drug trafficking due to its strong negative effects on people’s well-being and its impact on the economy.

The U.S. doesn’t believe in chemical destruction of the fields to prevent outrage in the population of Afghanistan which would lead them to join terrorist organisations.

The U.S. foreign policy agenda is to highlight and empower a multilateral coalition against the drug flow.

The U.S. has always been morally opposed to drug trafficking; In 1971, President Richard Nixon declared that illicit drugs were America’s “public enemy number one.”

How to eradicate the drug transition through the Silk Road?

The U.S. motions an international collaboration for organised anti-narcotic attacks on the strategic locations of the trafficking of the drugs.

The U.S. strongly recommends an improved boarder control to stop the drug circulation.

The U.S. proposes an armed UN mandate force to support the current boarder control to limit the drug flow and to find and destroy the illegal substances.

The U.S. also suggests economic findings and political agreements to help Afghanistan’s economy which is currently heavily reliant on drug revenue. The international community must aid Afghanistan to reshape it’s economy.

http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/drug-trafficking/central-asia.html

The Asian drug trade

Afghanistan has dominated the worldwide opium market for more than a decade. In 2009, the total quantity of opium produced in that country was 6,900 metric tons, accounting for 90 per cent of global supply. Afghan heroin feeds a global market worth some $55 billion annually, and most of the profits of the trade are made outside Afghanistan. Afghanistan and its neighbours are affected by trafficking as the drugs are moved to their key destination markets of Western Europe and the Russian Federation. About a third of the heroin produced in Afghanistan is transported to Europe via the Balkan route, while a quarter is trafficked north to Central Asia and the Russian Federation along the northern route. Afghan heroin is also increasingly meeting a rapidly growing share of Asian demand. Approximately 15-20 metric tons are estimated to be trafficked to China, while a further 35 metric tons are trafficked to other South and South-East Asian countries. Some 35 metric tons are thought to be shipped to Africa, while the remainder supplies markets in other parts of Asia, North America and Oceania.

[*Source: UNODC World Drug Report 2010*](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/WDR-2010.html)

## Regional focus

***UNODC response to illicit drug trafficking within the framework of the Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries***

The Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries covers UNODC support to anti drug trafficking efforts in the countries of Central Asia. The boom of opium production in Afghanistan echoes loudly through the political and social fabric of the region.

Trafficking of opiates occurs along diverse trajectories with a vast array of methods but transport by road continues to be the most frequent for large quantities. Every year, approximately 375 tons of heroin flow from Afghanistan to the rest of the world and Southern Afghanistan acts as the primary heroin manufacture and export point towards Iran and Pakistan. Approximately 160 tons of heroin was trafficked through Pakistan in 2009, putting an estimated $650 million in the pockets of drug traffickers. 115 tons of heroin was estimated trafficked into Iran towards Turkey and Western Europe. The other path from Afghanistan is the northern route which carried an estimated 90 tons of heroin on different paths through the Central Asian States to the Russian Federation and beyond. Reports also indicate a growing importance of these northward trafficking routes for Afghan opiates flowing into China.

Besides opiates, reports show a growing prevalence of cannabis production in Central Asia. The hashish trade has grown in recent years, and total production today may rival that of Europe's traditional supplier, Morocco. All of Afghanistan's neighbours are reporting increases in cannabis seizures, and cannabis production has been reported in 20 of Afghanistan's 33 provinces. With entrenched smuggling networks, widespread insecurity and a drug-based economy, Afghanistan is ideally placed to become a major player in the global hashish market.

The Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries will provide a platform under which the shared responsibility between the countries in the region (Afghanistan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan) and the international community can be strategically planned and implemented as recommended by several Commission on Narcotic Drugs and UN Security Council resolutions.

The Regional Programme aims to target drug trafficking related threats via a number of goals which, in general, aim to increase the capacity of the countries of the region in combating drug trafficking. Goals of the Regional Programme include increasing border controls and information sharing amongst the countries of the region. By initiating frameworks and fora for cooperation, these countries can improve their ability to monitor their respective borders, as well as share vital information which will mutually support border control efforts. The Regional Programme also seeks to increase use of evidence-based, joint investigations, as well as the use of forensic evidence. In particular, the Regional Programme will include promulgating regional standards and standard operating procedures in order to encourage improvements in national capacities and facilitate more effective international cooperation.

***UNODC response to illicit drug trafficking, regional initiatives in Central Asia***

The **Paris Pact Initiative (PPI)** represents a determined attempt by the international community to tackle the threat posed by the illicit production of opium in Afghanistan, in a spirit of partnership and cooperation. In May 2003, at a Ministerial Conference on *Drug Routes from Central Asia to Europe*, hosted in Paris by the French Government, more than 55 Countries and international organisations subscribed to the principle of shared responsibility in the fight against opiates trafficking from Afghanistan. UNODC launched the Paris Pact Initiative Phase I, in September 2004. This first phase was principally a regional coordination programme for countries affected by Afghan heroin trafficking, and concentrated principally on strengthening border controls, continuing to develop regional cooperation, and on activities within the field of Counter Narcotics Enforcement (CNE) including legal reform and institutional frameworks.

The **Triangular Initiative (TI)** was established in direct response to the Paris Pact Expert Round Table recommendations, which called for greater cooperation in the field of counter-narcotics. The Triangular Initiative aims to enhance cross-border cooperation in the field of counter-narcotics enforcement among Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran. The TI has been a major stimulus in drawing together Ministers and senior officials from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran to discuss and agree upon measures to improve cross-border cooperation in countering narcotics trafficking and the smuggling of precursor chemicals, to and from Afghanistan.

The **Rainbow Strategy (RS)** is an umbrella framework to facilitate the implementation of priority actions identified at the Paris Pact Expert Round Tables. This strategy consists of several operational plans. Each plan addresses key targets, allowing for constructive engagement with prime regional actors, facilitating and supplementing interventions from national governments and other Paris Pact partners.

The **Central Asian Regional and Information Coordination Centre (CARICC)** aims to facilitate information and intelligence exchange and analysis, and to assist in the coordination of operational activities of the various law enforcement agencies in the region including police, drug control agencies, customs, border guards and special services and thereby improve effectiveness in countering drug trafficking. The centre started limited operation in November 2007 within its pilot phase. CARICC has coordinated operations on precursors control (TARCET I, II), and will coordinate operation TARCET III, which is scheduled for 2011. CARICC also coordinated a number of bilateral and multilateral operations between the member states and CARICC partners which resulted in dismantling the drug trafficking channels, seizures of drugs and arrests of the drug dealers.

***UNODC response to illicit drug trafficking, Country Programmes in Central Asia***

**Promoting the Rule of Law and Public Health in Pakistan** (2010-2014) contains responses to drug trafficking, including activities to enhance legislative regimes, increase knowledge and capacity of drug enforcement officials and improve interdiction capabilities, related both to drugs and precursor chemicals.

**Technical Cooperation on Drugs and Crime in the Islamic Republic of Iran** (2011-2014) seeks to support the Islamic Republic of Iran in combating its many drug-related challenges. In particular, drug trafficking decreases security, destabilizes the region and brings untold public health costs. In particular, the Regional Programme aims to decrease drug trafficking via more effective and efficient border controls, communication and interdiction efforts. The Programme also establishes a framework to support the Islamic Republic of Iran with decreasing drug demand and controlling the spread and treating HIV/AIDS.

The **Integrated Country Programme for Afghanistan** is currently being designed and drafted. UNODC plans on finalizing this draft and beginning implementation, in concert with the Afghanistan Government, in 2011

In response to the request of the President of Kyrgyzstan made to the UNODC in September 2011, UNODC is formulating an **integrated programme of assistance to support the efforts of Kyrgyzstan** in reviving the criminal justice capacities to prevent and combat drug trafficking, corruption and organized crime. UNODC is also launching a project to support the newly established State Service on Drug Control in Kyrgyzstan on 25 April 2011, which will become an important component of the integrated programme of assistance for Kyrgyzstan.

Plus de cinq ans après l’intervention de la coalition en Afghanistan, le commerce de l’opium est devenu le secteur le plus dynamique et le plus rentable. Les profits bruts des trafiquants afghans s’élèveraient à 2,14 milliards de dollars en 2005 et, d’après le Bureau des Nations unies de lutte contre la drogue et le crime (UNODC), l’opium aurait été pour près de 52 % à l’origine du PIB afghan en 2005. Depuis la chute des talibans, la production d’opium n’a cessé d’augmenter; un seuil avait déjà été franchi en 2004 avec 4 200 tonnes contre 185 tonnes seulement en 2001

[1] Le régime des talibans avait interdit la culture du...

[1

http://www.cairn.info/zen.php?ID\_ARTICLE=CPE\_065\_0030#no1

et, pour 2005, elle a été estimée à 4100 tonnes, la culture du pavot couvrant 104 000 hectares

[2] En 2003, la surface cultivée en pavot couvrait 80 000...

[2] . Le dernier rapport des Nations unies est encore plus alarmant : en 2006, la production afghane aurait augmenté de 59 % et atteindrait 6 100 tonnes sur 165 000 hectares, ce qui constitue environ 92 % du total produit dans le monde. Récemment, la culture s’est étendue vers le sud du pays, dans des régions difficiles d’accès et contrôlées par les néo-talibans, qui vivent et financent leurs activités en partie grâce à l’argent de la drogue

Les opiacés afghans empruntent plusieurs itinéraires jusqu’en Russie et en Europe, dont trois principaux : le premier passe par l’Iran, la Turquie et les Balkans (environ 40% des opiacés), le deuxième par le Pakistan (environ 36 %) et le troisième traverse l’Asie centrale et la Russie (environ 24 %).

Ancienne « Route de la soie » (depuis l’époque romaine jusqu’au XVe siècle), la route du Nord est rapidement devenue une des plus empruntées. En 2005, on estime que plus de 150 tonnes d’héroïne (équivalant à 900 millions de dollars) ont transité par l’Asie centrale, pour gagner les marchés européen et russe.

Une fois que les paysans ont vendu leur production d’opium, ce dernier est acheminé vers des laboratoires, situés pour la plupart au nord de l’Afghanistan, puis l’héroïne est achetée par des trafiquants et ensuite exportée à travers l’Asie centrale. Si le transport s’effectue de plus en plus par avion et par train, la route reste encore le principal moyen d’acheminement (camions, véhicules légers, autocars), vers l’Europe occidentale, via la Russie, les Etats baltes, la Pologne, l’Ukraine et la République tchèque.

An estimated 13.5 million people in the world take opioids (opium-like substances), including 9.2 million who use heroin

<http://www.drugfreeworld.org/drugfacts/heroin/international-statistics.html>

In 2007, 93% of the world’s opium supply came from Afghanistan. (Opium is the raw material for heroin supply.) Its total export value was about $4 billion, of which almost three quarters went to traffickers. About a quarter went to Afghan opium farmers

<http://www.drugfreeworld.org/drugfacts/heroin/international-statistics.html>

Smoking opium also causes damage to the brain, liver, kidneys and various other organs of the body.

<http://www.opium.org/opium-effects.html>

causing up to 100,000 deaths per year, spreading HIV at an unprecedented rate and, not least, funding criminal groups, insurgents and terrorists.

<https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/press/releases/2009/october/unodc-reveals-devastating-impact-of-afghan-opium-.html>

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 40,393 people died of drug-induced causes in 2010, the latest year for which data are available. The number of drug-induced deaths has grown from 19,128 in 1999, or from 6.8 deaths per 100,000 population to 12.9 in 2010.1

*https://www.whiteho****use****.gov/.../****consequences****\_of\_illicit\_****drug****\_****use****\_-\_fact...*



*https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL34543.pdf*

U.S. involvement in international drug control rests on the central premise that helping foreign governments combat the illegal drug trade abroad will ultimately curb illegal drug availability and use in the United States. To this end, the current Administration maintains the goal of reducing and eliminating the international flow of illegal drugs into the United States through international cooperation to disrupt the drug trade and interdiction efforts. The international component of the Administration’s 2014 National Drug Control Strategy centers on three specific goals: (1) collaborate with international partners to disrupt the drug trade, (2) support drug control efforts of major drug source and transit countries, and (3) attack key vulnerabilities of drug trafficking organizations (DTOs). Through international counternarcotics efforts—including reducing drug production and trafficking; promoting alternative livelihoods and demand reduction interventions; and strengthening rule of law, democratic institutions, citizen security, and respect for human rights—the Administration intends to protect public health and safety and contribute to overall national security.

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**U.S. Counternarcotics Strategy for Afghanistan**

Drug control policy in Afghanistan underwent a shift in strategy in June 2009, when the late

Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, who at the time was the Obama Administration’s Special

Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, announced a halt to U.S. eradication efforts in

Afghanistan and a concurrent increase in priority to agricultural development (or alternative livelihoods) assistance as well as interdiction.50 The drug policy shift was formalized with the

release of the Afghanistan and Pakistan Regional Stabilization Strategy in January 2010, which connected U.S. counternarcotics policy with U.S. counterinsurgency goals in the region. The January 2010 Regional Strategy had sections on combating the Afghan narcotics trade and disrupting illicit financial flows, among others.51 In March 2010, the State Department released an updated U.S. Counternarcotics Strategy for Afghanistan. It outlined two strategic goals—(1) counter the narcotics-insurgency nexus and (2) counter the narcotics-corruption nexus—coupled with several related objectives. Reiterating the January 2010 Regional Strategy, the March 2010 Counternarcotics Strategy confirms the U.S. government’s decision to “no longer fund or support large-scale eradication of poppy fields,” while condoning Afghan-led local eradication.52 The March 2010 Counternarcotics Strategy also emphasized the need to improve the connection between the U.S. government’s counternarcotics goals with the U.S. government’s counterinsurgency goals.

In December 2012, the State Department issued a revised U.S. Counternarcotics Strategy for Afghanistan in order to take into account the transition of security responsibilities to Afghan-led forces and a reduced U.S. and international presence. In the strategy, the Administration commits to building Afghan capacity to disrupt the illicit narcotics trade and to break the narcoticsinsurgency nexus. Key goals include (1) strengthening the Afghan government’s capacity to combat drugs with increasing degrees of responsibility, ownership, and independence; and (2) countering the narcotics-corruption nexus through and beyond the security transition.53

**Mais à Bruxelles, on refuse de faire la même chose sur le sol afghan.**  
  
Oui. Nous avons exactement l'image inverse en Afghanistan. On y détruit évidemment les champs également, mais mécaniquement, à la houe, à la faux, au sabre. Et en règle générale, cela arrive quand on trouve des plantations, par hasard. Tous les propriétaires terriens vous diront que cela ne résoudra pas le problème. Ca améliore les sols. Parfois, vous devez faucher un champ pour que les plants y poussent plus abondamment. Pourquoi l'OTAN a refusé d'utiliser des méthodes chimiques efficaces? Trois arguments ont été avancés par Richard Holbrooke, représentant spécial des Etats-Unis pour l'Afghanistan et le Pakistan, et par le porte-parole de l'OTAN, James Appathurai. Tout d'abord, détruire les champs priverait les paysans afghans d'une source de subsistance et, mécontents, ils rejoindraient les rangs des talibans. Ensuite, si les soldats de l'OTAN se chargeaient de ce travail, le danger pesant sur leurs vies serait encore plus important. Et enfin, cela aurait un prix. Une fois cette vision des choses exposée, les perspectives pour une chute substantielle de la production de drogue en Afghanistan ne sont pas réjouissantes.

http://fr.rbth.com/articles/2010/06/11/opium\_afghan\_sur\_la\_route\_de\_la\_soie.html

Very Interesting work! Both issues are accurately adressed. You have successfully portrayed you can take on the role of a diplomat, and have always put the USA’s needs in front. Your stance is clear as it should be as a delegate of the USA. The integration of documents was also very succesfully done.