



HEADQUARTERS  
United States Forces-Afghanistan  
Kabul, Afghanistan  
APO AE 09356

March 4, 2011

The Honorable Lindsey O. Graham  
United States Senate  
SR-290 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510-4003

Dear Senator Graham,

Thank you for your recent question on funding for the Department of State (DoS). Like you, I believe this is a pressing matter of National Security. Indeed, I am very concerned that current discussions regarding possible cuts in DoS funding levels for Afghanistan will undermine our plans for a conditions-based transition to Afghan lead and our long-term goal of a stable and peaceful Afghanistan.

As you know, transition is soon to commence, and it will continue through the end of 2014 when the Afghan security forces will have the lead for security throughout the country. During this period, DoS will shoulder important responsibilities for economic development and national and sub-national governance capacity-building, which includes support for ministry development, rule of law, and long-term economic development and infrastructure projects. Without a fully-resourced DoS role, the hard-earned progress our troopers have made could be put at risk.

In short, the Embassy, including USAID, has to have the capacity to continue current capacity-building efforts and to absorb some missions currently funded and performed by military forces. I am confident that the Department of Defense and the Department of State can plan and execute a responsible and effective transition of our respective responsibilities – assuming we are *both* provided the necessary resources.

This is a pivotal time in Afghanistan. We should not put at risk the hard-won progress we have achieved or the potential for future gains. Indeed, as we look beyond 2014, it is clear that the State Department will shoulder the lion's share of requirements to support our enduring commitment to Afghanistan. The funding required to build that capacity must start now and continue for the foreseeable future.

Finally—and as always—thank you for your enduring support for our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen and their families.

Very respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "David H. Petraeus".

David H. Petraeus  
General, United States Army  
Commander