

Can the Afghan state survive?

An exchange with National Security Advisor Hanif Atmar, and EU Special Representative Franz-Michael Mellbin

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The recent decision by President Obama to extend the US troop presence in Afghanistan beyond 2016 underlines that 15 years after the international intervention to end the Taliban regime, Afghanistan remains confronted with a fragile security situation. At the same time, the US decision also underlines the commitment of the international community to continue its support to the Afghan government in military, political and economic terms. Two forthcoming events next year – the July NATO summit in Warsaw and the October 2016 Ministerial Conference in Brussels – will determine the level and extent of these commitments, which will to a great extent be determined by the confidence the Afghan government is able to inspire in its international partners

The National Unity Government under the leadership of President Ghani and his Chief Executive Abdullah has made tangible progress since coming into office a year ago although setbacks in security and economic development threaten to undermine its legitimacy and sustainability in the long run. Regional actors, although increasingly aware of the negative implications for their own security and stability of a deteriorating situation in Afghanistan, have yet to signal a stronger and more coherent approach towards Kabul – which makes all the more necessary stronger political engagement with Afghanistan’s neighbours.

Finally, Afghans make up a significant percentage of the migrants and refugees making their way to Europe. This underlines not only the necessity of supporting the Afghan government to stem migration flows from Afghanistan but also the necessity for Afghanistan to remain within the contemporary strategic setting to which European countries, as well as the EU, must react.

Schedule	
08:30	Welcome and introduction Dr Antonio Missiroli , EUISS Director
08:40-08:50	Minister Hanif Atmar , Afghan National Security Advisor
08:50-09:00	Ambassador Franz-Michael Mellbin , EUSR for Afghanistan
09:00-10:00	Discussion