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**TO:** Interested Parties  
**FROM:** Matt Bennett, Vice President  
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**RE:** Talking Points: President Obama's Dual Track Strategy for Afghanistan

## **A Dual Track Strategy for Afghanistan**

With the announcement of President Obama's new strategy for Afghanistan, some are questioning this renewed military commitment to that region. We believe that the President is right—we simply must provide enough American forces and other resources to constrict and crush al Qaeda and provide a measure of stability in Afghanistan to allow development to take root. Set forth below are some talking points for those leaders who support the President's initiative:

- Restoring stability in Afghanistan is vital to America's national security, and President Obama's plan is the right approach to achieve this important objective.
- President Obama plan for Afghanistan is a **dual track strategy** that combines a renewed and military effort to provide some basic security to the Afghani people with a robust diplomatic and development push to restore confidence and stability.
- For the first time, the United States will have a clearly defined mission in Afghanistan with real benchmarks to measure achievement.
- President Obama's announced deployment of 17,000 US troops will allow the international mission to finally reach the troops-to-population ratio in southern Afghanistan recommended by the Army Counterinsurgency Manual.
- Deploying 4,000 troops to train the Afghan National Army will allow Afghans to take a more active role in their security and help foster the legitimacy of the federal government.
- Under the President's plan, there will be no more blank checks for the Afghan government. They must fight corruption, take on the drug trade and share power appropriately with regional governments.
- Pakistan will receive substantial foreign aid to provide economic opportunities for their citizens, but in exchange it must cut all government ties with the Taliban.
- The President is right to realize this is a regional challenge and to bring all of the neighboring powers to the table. Addressing regional problems, such as the dispute over Kashmir, will free these countries to work for a more stable Afghanistan rather than pursue their narrow interests in the country.