

In addition to these new military measures, we're stepping up efforts on the civilian side. We're increasing our civilian presence with new personnel from USAID, and the Drug Enforcement Agency, as well as the Foreign Service. We're using Provincial Reconstruction Teams of military and civilian experts to help local communities fight corruption, improve governance, and jumpstart their economies. We're using Agricultural Development Teams to help Afghan farmers feed their people and become more self-sufficient. We're supporting Afghanistan's National Development Strategy, which helps the democratic government in Kabul offer greater support for the provinces in areas like health and infrastructure.

We're working with the Afghan authorities to prepare for elections of 2009 and 2010. Recently at an international conference in Paris, America pledged \$10 billion over the next two years to support Afghanistan's development. In all these ways, we're working to ensure that our military progress is accompanied by the political and economic gains that are critical to the success of a free Afghanistan.

As we take these new steps in Afghanistan, we must also help the government of Pakistan defeat Taliban and al Qaeda fighters hiding in remote border regions of their country. These extremists are increasingly using Pakistan as a base from which to destabilize Afghanistan's young democracy. In the past year, the Taliban, al Qaeda, and other extremist groups operating in these remote regions have stepped up their attacks against the Pakistani government -- hoping to stop that country's democratic progress, as well.

This morning, I called Pakistan's newly elected leader, President Zardari. I pledged the full support of America's government as Pakistan takes the fight to the terrorists and extremists in the border regions.

Defeating these terrorist and extremists is in Pakistan's interest -- they pose a mortal threat to Pakistan's future as a free and democratic nation. Defeating these terrorist and extremists is also Pakistan's responsibility -- because every nation has an obligation to govern its own territory and make certain that it does not become a safe haven for terror. America and our NATO allies will continue helping Pakistan in its efforts to defeat the extremists. The same terrorists who murdered innocent civilians in Karachi and Islamabad are plotting new attacks against the United States and Europe.

Each of these three places I've discussed today -- Iraq, Afghanistan, and parts of Pakistan -- pose unique challenges for our country. Yet they're all theaters in the same overall struggle. In all three places, extremists are using violence and terror in an attempt to impose their ideology on whole populations. They murder to impose their dark vision of the world. In all three places, America is standing strongly with brave elected leaders and determined reformers and millions of ordinary citizens who seek a future of liberty and justice and tolerance.

Defeating our enemies requires success on the military front. Together with our allies, we made substantial progress toward breaking up terrorist networks -- and we will not rest until they are destroyed. Defeating our enemies also requires success in the ideological battle. We must show the people of the broader Middle East a better alternative to a life of violence and despair, and that alternative is based on liberty. History shows that people who are given the choice between freedom and tyranny will choose freedom. And history shows that freedom will yield the peace we all want.