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Afghan ‘Exit Strategy’ Won’t Involve Removing Any Troops

By Jason Ditz

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A NATO summit in Estonia has culminated with the much-hyped “road map,” an exit strategy for the alliance from Afghanistan after nearly a decade of war. It will detail the alliance’s new strategy for the conflict and, as is so often the case, lower the bar for what constitutes ‘success’ in the nation.

Amazingly, [initial indications are that the “exit strategy” won’t involve actually removing any troops, but instead will hand over select provinces to the Karzai government while keeping the NATO troops there too for support.](#) This “handover” is expected to last decades, though officials were quick to note it was “not calendar-driven.”

The [public announcement has yet to come](#), but it looks as though the big winner in the strategy is President Karzai, as NATO civilian chief Mark Sedwill’s comments suggested the alliance will basically shrug off his government’s massive corruption, apparently in the hope that it will eventually grow into a responsible regime.

NATO Chief Anders Fogh Rasmussen warned that no exit strategy could involve a “run for the exits,” and there seems to be no danger of that, as the alliance’s plan seems to cement NATO’s presence as an occupying power over much of Afghanistan for untold decades to come.