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NBR REPORT ON NARCO-JIHAD: DRUG TRAFFICKING & SECURITY IN AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN

Seattle, WA – In a new report, “Narco-Jihad: Drug Trafficking and Security in Afghanistan and Pakistan,” The National Bureau of Asian Research (NBR) assesses the impact of the drug trade in Afghanistan and Pakistan on counterinsurgency efforts and U.S. security interests in the region.

The report features three essays that examine narcotics production and trafficking—the economic lynchpin of the region—as a critical dimension of the insurgency. In “The Drug Economy in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and Military Conflict in the Region,” Vanda Felbab-Brown finds that without a legal alternative economy in place, poppy bans and eradication campaigns are socially and politically unsustainable, and render the local population vulnerable to Taliban mobilization.

In “Narco-Trafficking in Pakistan-Afghanistan Border Areas and Implications for Security,” Louise I. Shelley and Nazia Hussain find that drug traffickers are increasingly using routes through Central Asian states, further threatening NATO supply routes and intensifying resistance to ongoing military operations in both Afghanistan and the tribal areas of Pakistan. This development is largely the result of Russia’s integration into the global drug market. Ehsan Ahrari’s essay, “The Dynamics of ‘Narco-Jihad’ in the Afghanistan-Pakistan Region,” argues that the narco-trade will prolong the insurgency and calls for a comprehensive strategy that combats the growing “narco-jihad” in the region by treating Afghanistan and Pakistan as a single theater of war.

Vanda Felbab-Brown is a Fellow in Foreign Policy and with the 21st Century Defense Initiative at the Brookings Institution. Louise I. Shelley is Professor of Public Policy and Director of the Center for Terrorism, Transnational Crime and Corruption at George Mason University. Nazia Hussain is a PhD student in Public Policy at George Mason University. Ehsan Ahrari was Professor of Security Studies (Counterterrorism) at the Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies (APCSS) in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Download a copy of the report at www.nbr.org

To request an interview with the authors or for more information please contact media@nbr.org.

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