

Dutch Dilemmas in Afghanistan

**Dilemmas and contradictions in the Dutch parliamentary debate about liberal
peacebuilding in Afghanistan, 2001-2010**

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Summary

This thesis explores how the underlying dilemmas and contradictory policy inherent to and resulting from liberal peacebuilding affected Dutch political decision-making and policy in the peacebuilding missions in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2010. It specifically focuses on four main elements of liberal peacebuilding: security sector reform, democratization, economic liberalization, and human rights. After a brief introduction to the three generations of liberal peacebuilding scholarship, three periods in the Dutch campaign in Afghanistan are analyzed: development aid and initial peacebuilding operations (2001-2004), the provincial reconstruction mission in Baghlan province (2004-2005), and Task Force Uruzgan (2005-2010). Many dilemmas and contradictory policy were part of the Dutch parliamentary debate about and policy for this campaign. However, it is argued that not all of these issues were identified or debated sufficiently. Nonetheless, Dutch parliamentarians and ministers seemed to have progressed alongside the dominant liberal peacebuilding scholarship, slowly gaining a better understanding of liberal peacebuilding's complexities. Finally, recommendations are made that aim to improve liberal peacebuilding research and policy.

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List of Abbreviations

ANA	Afghan National Army
ANP	Afghan National Police
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Rehabilitation
IBL	Institutionalization Before Liberalization
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
SSR	Security Sector Reform
TFU	Task Force Uruzgan
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

Political parties

CDA	Christen-Democratisch Appèl (Christian center-right party)
CU	ChristenUnie (Christian center party)
D66	Democraten '66 (center party)
LPF	Lijst Pim Fortuyn (far-right party)
PvdA	Partij van de Arbeid (social-democrat party)
PVV	Partij voor de Vrijheid (far-right party)
SGP	Statelijk Gereformeerde Partij (Calvinist conservative party)
SP	Socialistische Partij (socialist party)
VVD	Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie (liberal right party)

Introduction

Liberal peacebuilding has been riddled with dilemmas and contradictions ever since its inception at the end of the Cold War. For over a quarter-century policymakers and scholars alike have struggled to find improvements to this incredibly complex endeavor, but an ideal approach is yet to be discovered. Liberal peacebuilding is ‘the dominant critical intellectual framework currently applied to post-Cold War policies and practices of post-conflict intervention.’¹ It includes such elements as market-oriented economic reform, democratization, security sector reform, and promoting human rights and liberal values. At its core is the assumption that liberal democracies are inherently peaceful, and that this model should therefore be spread to conflict areas to create durable peace there.

With this thesis I aim to explain the likely dilemmas and contradictions within the Dutch parliamentary debate and policy regarding the liberal peacebuilding missions in Afghanistan from 2001 to 2010. The main research question I will therefore be answering is:

How have dilemmas and contradictory policy inherent to and resulting from liberal peacebuilding affected Dutch political decision-making and policy for the peacebuilding missions in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2010?

Although the Dutch contributions to the peacebuilding missions started in 2002, I have marked the beginning of the timeframe in 2001. This is because I expect that the process of decision-making was already in motion shortly after the terrorist attacks on September 11th 2001. For the end of the timeframe, I chose the end of the mission in Uruzgan province in 2010. Within this timeframe and apart from the latter mission, the Netherlands also contributed with a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Baghlan province. This timeframe provides a longer-term perspective with which I can conduct a meaningful analysis and detect possible developments over time. All Dutch missions analyzed in this thesis were conducted as part of the International Security Assistance

¹ M. Sabaratnam, ‘The Liberal Peace? An Intellectual History of International Conflict Management, 1990-2010’, in: S. Campbell, D. Chandler and M. Sabaratnam (eds.), *A Liberal Peace? The problems and practices of peacebuilding* (London 2011) 13-30, here 13.

Force (ISAF), which was led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). In the next chapter I will elaborate on how I will tackle the main research question.

Liberal peacebuilding is no easy task. History has proven that much, with the failure of many missions to build sustainable peace and create solid democratic institutions that promote liberal values.² Nonetheless, liberal peacebuilding is as of yet the only viable approach to peacebuilding, because no real alternatives have been offered by its critics.³ However, the lack of significant liberal peacebuilding successes, and mounting criticism challenged policymakers and scholars alike to finally devise a successful liberal peacebuilding approach. This makes it all the more important to critically analyze past liberal peacebuilding missions and lay bare their (implicit) contradictions, and the dilemmas policymakers face, but also point out the opportunities and successes of liberal peacebuilding. This way, assumptions in the political discourse can make way for evidence-based arguments that guide policymakers to making better decisions.

Currently, much research has already been conducted in order to learn from liberal peacebuilding's threats and opportunities. Scholars such as Roland Paris, David Chandler, Oliver Richmond, and Susanna Campbell have made important contributions to the liberal peace debate, which I will discuss in the theoretical framework. More relevant to this thesis' case, liberal peacebuilding in Afghanistan has been thoroughly researched by, for example, Shahrbanou Tadjbakhsh and Michael Schoiswohl, Jonathan Goodhand and Mark Sedra, Toby Dodge, and Roger Mac Ginty.⁴ Tadjbakhsh and Schoiswohl, for example, have critiqued democratization in Afghanistan as an element of liberal peacebuilding. They argue that 'install[ing] democracy' has led to Afghans being the recipients of democracy rather than its driving force.⁵ Mac Ginty has analyzed cooperation between Afghan warlords and liberal peacebuilding actors and how this

² R. Paris, 'Critiques of Liberal Peace', in: Campbell, Chandler and Sabaratnam (eds.), *A Liberal Peace?*, 31-51, here 31.

³ R. Paris, 'Alternatives to Liberal Peace?', in: Campbell, Chandler and Sabaratnam (eds.), *A Liberal Peace?*, 159-173, here 159.

⁴ S. Tadjbakhsh and M. Schoiswohl, 'Playing with Fire? The International Community's Democratization Experiment in Afghanistan', *International Peacekeeping* 15 (2008) no. 2, 252-267.; J. Goodhand and M. Sedra 'Rethinking liberal peacebuilding, statebuilding and transition in Afghanistan: an introduction', *Central Asian Survey* 32 (2013) no. 3, 239-254.; T. Dodge, 'Intervention and dreams of exogenous statebuilding: the application of Liberal Peacebuilding in Afghanistan and Iraq', *Review of International Studies* 39 (2013) no. 5, 1189-1212.; J. Goodhand, 'Corrupting or Consolidating the Peace? The Drugs Economy and Post-conflict Peacebuilding in Afghanistan', *International Peacekeeping* 15 (2008) no. 13, 405-423.; R. Mac Ginty, 'Warlords and the liberal peace: state-building in Afghanistan', *Conflict, Security & Development* 10 (2010) no. 4, 577-598.

⁵ Tadjbakhsh and Schoiswohl, 'Playing with Fire?', 252.

apparent contradiction can be explained with respect to the liberal peacebuilding framework. Because Afghanistan was the target of such a large-scale liberal peacebuilding mission much research has been done that combines Afghanistan as a case and liberal peacebuilding as a framework. Finally, the Dutch peacebuilding missions in Afghanistan have been given much attention by research institute 'Clingendael', as well as individual scholars such as Beatrice de Graaf, George Dimitriu, Thijs Brocades-Zaalberg, Christ Klep, Eric Pouw and Paul Ducheine.⁶

This body of research, however, leaves a clear hiatus. In multiple search engines (Picarta, Utrecht and Leiden University Library databases, Google Scholar) I could not find research that critically analyzes Dutch peacebuilding missions in Afghanistan with the liberal peace theory as a framework. With this thesis I aim to fill this apparent hiatus in the scientific debate, and provide a new perspective on the Dutch peacebuilding missions in Afghanistan. For instance, how did the government deal with the call for promoting women's rights despite likely hostility towards this in patriarchic Afghanistan? Did the Dutch government fail to identify any policy contradictions? And how did the hybrid model to liberal peacebuilding affect parliamentarians for opting to preserve traditional governance structures? Moreover, I think that this research will enrich the current liberal peacebuilding debate among scholars as a whole, because it provides a national perspective on the mostly international endeavor of liberal peacebuilding. These national perspectives of liberal peacebuilding states sometimes tend to be overlooked or generalized in the relevant literature. Therefore, these states' different agendas, approaches and failures are not analyzed sufficiently, despite being a potential source of learning. Lastly, I also hope to contribute to the political debate by giving insight into how Dutch parliamentarians and cabinet members have dealt with contradictions and dilemmas in liberal peacebuilding decision-making. By having an understanding of these issues decision-makers can make better informed decisions about future peacebuilding missions and contribute to their success.

It should be noted that I am not able to fully analyze all possible aspects of liberal peacebuilding. Due to time and resource limitations, I therefore limit myself to the

⁶ For example: J. van der Lijn, 3D 'The Next Generation': Lessons learned from Uruzgan for future operations (The Hague, Netherlands Institute of International Relations Clingendael 2011); G. Dimitriu and B. de Graaf, 'The Dutch COIN approach: three years in Uruzgan, 2006-2009', *Small wars & Insurgencies* 21 (2010) no. 3, 429-458; C.P.M. Klep, *Uruzgan: Nederlandse militairen op missie, 2005-2010* (Amsterdam 2011); P.A.L. Ducheine and E.H. Pouw, *ISAF Operaties in Afghanistan: oorlogsrecht, doelbestrijding in counterinsurgency, ROE, mensenrechten & ius ad bellum* (Nijmegen 2010).

liberal peace elements of security sector reform, democratization, economic liberalization, and human rights. I have chosen these elements, because they are almost always mentioned in the existing literature as very important to liberal peacebuilding.⁷ First, security sector reform (SSR) is very important in liberal peacebuilding, because it aims to improve local capabilities to fight crime and protect itself from foreign and domestic military intrusion. Examples of measures within this element are: training of police officers and soldiers, reform of police and army organization structures, donation or lease of materiel to the host country's security sector, and demobilization of militias. Apart from this element being a clear part of durable peacebuilding, it also has a liberal aspect. The state having the monopoly on violence is a typically liberal value, whereas in Afghanistan this monopoly was in the hands of warlords in many rural areas.⁸ Democratization and economic liberalization are also characteristic of liberal peacebuilding, as opposed to 'regular' peacebuilding, because they specifically promote liberal values and structures of government and the economy. Typically, democratization is sought by the creation of a constitution, judicial sector reforms, promoting local ownership of institutional authority and accountability, and holding democratic elections. Economic liberalization includes measures such as replacing illegal sectors with licit alternatives, removing trade barriers like import quota and export taxes, fiscal policy reform, and privatization of various sectors. Lastly, human rights are characteristic of liberal peacebuilding as well. Many elements of it, such as women's rights, are still only accepted and practiced in liberal Western nations. Afghanistan, for instance, is still very patriarchic and the years of strict shariah law under the Taliban regime have marginalized the role of women in Afghan society.⁹ Human rights promotion often appears as part of a new constitution and legislature, punishment of human rights abusers, and political inclusion of women. Why I have chosen these particular elements therefore, is because they are indispensable to the specific means and ends of liberal peacebuilding. Please note that these elements are inclusive and sometimes overlap. For instance, constitutional reform can be a part of democratization and of human rights. Also, civil society is often mentioned as a separate

⁷ For example: E. Begby and J.P. Burgess, 'Human security and liberal peace', *Public Reason* 1 (2009) no. 1, 92.; B. Boutros-Ghali, *An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peace-making and Peace-keeping* (New York 1992) paragraph 55.; E. Newman, R. Paris and O.P. Richmond, *New Perspectives on liberal peacebuilding* (Hong Kong 2009) 8-9.

⁸ G. Dorronsoro, *Revolution Unending, Afghanistan: 1979 to the Present* (London 2005) 25-33.

⁹ *Ibidem*, 285-301.

element, but can just as well be categorized within democratization. Where this overlap occurs, I will mention this and sometimes refer to a different section.

In order to present a solid and meaningful analysis, I will be using multiple types of sources. Primarily, I will analyze the relevant minutes of the Dutch Second Chamber (parliament) in plenary debates and Defense, Foreign Affairs, and Development Cooperation committee meetings. All meetings and debates regarding liberal peacebuilding missions in Afghanistan will be analyzed for information relevant to the scope and purpose of this thesis. In addition, I will also include all related policy documents sent to parliament, working visit reports, hearing minutes, *Kamervragen* (written questions from parliamentarians) with government responses, and government reports. I access all of these documents at the following website: <https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl/> (publicly accessible). There I enter the search query 'Afghanistan', and adjust parameters to the relevant timeframe. I will then filter out irrelevant documents, such as a plenary debate about the assassination on Dutch filmmaker Theo van Gogh.¹⁰ In this example, Afghanistan was only mentioned twice, and not of relevance to this thesis' purpose. Relevant documents are analyzed for the four liberal peacebuilding elements mentioned above, as well as for more general statements about (liberal) peacebuilding. Of particular interest to my analysis are instances of disagreement or consensus, new insights, historical references, as well as implicit or explicit contradictions and dilemmas in policy (propositions). With this method, I expect to garner the most empirical evidence without sacrificing thoroughness in the relevance assessment of documents. As a service to non-Dutch readers, I will translate all Dutch statements used in my analysis to English by default. Despite possibly losing some minor linguistic nuances in this translation, I believe that eliminating possible language barriers outweighs this issue. For the theoretical and conceptual framework of this thesis, I will use a broad range of literature regarding the liberal peace theory and its critiques, and liberal peacebuilding in practice. Related concepts and literature, such as securitization, will be introduced as well where necessary.

Due to limitations in time and resources, I am not able to analyze every single element of liberal peacebuilding, as I have mentioned above. Moreover, I am not able to conduct field research in Afghanistan to assess the impact of Dutch liberal peacebuilding

¹⁰ Debat over de aanslag op de heer Th. van Gogh, *Verslag der handelingen van de Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal* (hereafter: *HTK*) 2004-2005, 22-1278 - 22-1332.

missions independently. I therefore base my conclusions about this on the official parliamentary evaluations of the particular missions, as well as reports from Dutch research institute 'Clingendael', and other secondary sources. Because the timeframe of this research is relatively recent, some documents are still classified. For instance, the minutes from cabinet meetings could have provided a valuable source of evidence, but will only become publicly accessible after twenty years (between 2021 and 2030 in this particular case). Needless to say these documents cannot be analyzed currently, but should be once they become public. Lastly, I am not able to use local Afghan sources that have not been translated to English or Dutch, because of my limited knowledge of Arabic.

This thesis will first explore the liberal peacebuilding debate in the 'Theoretical Framework'. I will discuss its empirical and philosophical foundations, its broad range of critique, and related concepts in order to provide background information to the main analysis. Next, the sub-questions presented earlier will be answered in each chapter of the main analysis, adjusted to the particular chapter's timeframe. In the following chronological order, I will be analyzing the initial liberal peacebuilding operations since late 2001, the provincial reconstruction mission in Baghlan province, and the Dutch contribution in Uruzgan province. Each chapter will have a sub-conclusion in order to summarize the findings for that particular period. Then, with all the sub-questions answered for this thesis' entire timeframe, the main research question will be answered in the conclusions. Finally, I will make some recommendations for policy and further research using the results of my analysis.

Theoretical framework

In this chapter, I will discuss liberal peacebuilding, its related concepts, and its major strands of critique. Liberal peacebuilding, also more broadly referred to as the liberal peace, quickly became popular under Western policymakers after the end of the Cold War.¹¹ It is based on the notion that democracy and liberal values inherently promote and sustain peace. Democracies will not fight each other, 'because democracies' shared norms of compromise and cooperation prevent conflicts of interest from escalating into violence.'¹² Various studies have shown that there is indeed a strong correlation between the presence of democracy and a liberal market economy in a given country, and its mostly peaceful behavior towards other states.¹³ Although empirical evidence has only been presented fairly recently around 2000, philosophers Immanuel Kant, John Locke and Adam Smith already argued for democracy's relatively peaceful nature in the eighteenth century.¹⁴ These philosophical and empirical findings provided the basis for liberal peacebuilding since the end of the Cold War.

In 1992, UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali presented a report titled *An Agenda for Peace*, now widely regarded 'as the foundational text for the policy of 'post-conflict peacebuilding'.'¹⁵ In this document Boutros-Ghali defined this policy as 'action to identify and support structures which will tend to consolidate peace and advance a sense of confidence and well-being among people'.¹⁶ These structures were quickly decided to be democratic, and the sense of confidence and well-being as needing to be facilitated by liberal values and the market economy. This was, of course, inspired by the liberal peace theory explained above.

Ever since *An Agenda for Peace*, there have been a few successes in liberal peacebuilding, but arguably more failures. As such, the practice of liberal peacebuilding, and its underlying assumption of the liberal peace actually working at all, have been

¹¹ Sabaratnam, 'The Liberal Peace?', 14.

¹² T. Paffenholz, 'Civil Society beyond the Liberal Peace and its Critique', in Campbell, Chandler and Sabaratnam (eds.), *A Liberal Peace?*, 139.

¹³ S. Chan, 'In Search of Democratic Peace: Problems and Promise', *Mershon International Studies Review* 41 (1997), 59-91.; J. Ray, 'Democracy Cause Peace?', *Annual Review of Political Science* 1 (1998), 27-46.; B. Russett and H. Starr, 'From Democratic Peace to Kantian Peace: Democracy and Conflict in the International System', in: M. Mildarksy (ed.) *Handbook of War Studies* (Ann Arbor 2000) 93-128.

¹⁴ R. Paris and T. Sisk (eds.), *The Dilemmas of Statebuilding: Confronting the Contradictions of Postwar Peace Operations* (London 2009) 10.

¹⁵ Boutros-Ghali, *An Agenda for Peace.*; Sabaratnam, 'The Liberal Peace?', 14.

¹⁶ Boutros-Ghali, *An Agenda for Peace*, paragraph 32.

under heavy and diverse criticism. In this thesis the liberal peacebuilding debate and its critiques will not be the sole focus of analysis. After all, the main goal of my analysis is to uncover and explain the Dutch implementation of liberal peace in its peacebuilding contribution in Afghanistan, given the dilemmas and contradictions that are possibly part of it. However, in order to put the political assumptions and discourse into historical and theoretical perspective it is crucial to discuss the many critiques of liberal peacebuilding to a certain extent. For example, the Dutch government may have decided to adopt a bottom-up approach to human rights promotion, or a hybrid approach to democratization. This theoretical framework works as a reference point that is necessary to make sense of possible discourse developments or policy alterations. Often, authors discern three generations of liberal peacebuilding research. I will start by discussing the first generation that started near the end of the Cold War in 1989. Then I will examine the critiques on the classic top-down approaches to liberal peacebuilding, often employed in the 1990s, that make up the second generation. Finally, the third generation will be discussed with particular attention to the hybrid model to liberal peacebuilding, which is a compromise between bottom-up and top-down approaches. Lastly, I will explain in which way the theoretical framework will be used in my analysis.

The first generation scholarship focused on liberal peacebuilding missions between 1989 and 1999, and continued to dominate the liberal peacebuilding debate until around 2003. The dissipation of the Soviet Union and the Security Council deadlock that was subsequently lifted gave renewed self-confidence to the UN as a peacebuilder in the many civil wars in this period. After all, Russia did not actively try to veto Security Council peace mission proposals, unlike the former Soviet Union. Liberal democracy as the catalyst for peace was to be the central focus for UN peacebuilding operations, as was confirmed by Boutros-Ghali's *Agenda for Peace*. However, no liberal peacebuilding mission in these years was a certifiable success. Liberal peacebuilding in Cambodia and Liberia seemed successful, but soon after the UN left these countries saw a resurgence of violence and dismantling of democratic structures. Other missions also failed to bring durable success, such as in Rwanda, Bosnia, and Angola.¹⁷ The first generation liberal peacebuilding scholarship did not help to explain the failure of these many peacebuilding missions. Oftentimes scholars remained descriptive of single missions,

¹⁷ Paris, 'Critiques of Liberal Peace', 34.

and did not create hypotheses of broader structural causes and effects.¹⁸ The practice and scientific debate of this first generation was dominated by a top-down approach, with states as the primary actors in peacebuilding. Additionally, there was a tendency to implement democratization processes and liberal values as soon as possible after the violent conflict ended.¹⁹ It was thought that this approach would produce lasting peace the fastest, given the *zeitgeist* that liberal democracies inherently promoted peace.

A key author within the second generation of liberal peacebuilding scholarship, Roland Paris delved deeper into the structural causes of the previous peacebuilding failures. In his book *At War's End* (2004) he examined fourteen liberal peacebuilding missions that were conducted between 1989 and 1999. Paris found that a vast majority of these missions failed because of the peacebuilders' overeagerness to introduce liberal values quickly after negative peace was achieved.²⁰ According to Paris, quick economic privatization and rapid elections often led to renewed conflict, crime or non-liberal forms of government.²¹ In order to avoid such failures, Paris proposed the strategy of 'Institutionalization Before Liberalization' (IBL).²² He argued that many of the previous liberal peacebuilding missions had pushed too quickly for economic liberalization and elections: 'peacebuilders should delay the introduction of democratic and market-oriented reforms until a rudimentary network of domestic institutions, capable of managing the strains of liberalization, have [sic] been established.'²³ Although seemingly costly in both time and resources in comparison to the traditional 'quick-fix' approach, IBL has a much better chance of creating sustainable peace, as Paris claims.²⁴

Because no successful strategy had been devised in the 1990s, other scholars also started broadening their scope of liberal peacebuilding critique. Not only did they conduct 'cross-case comparisons', they also looked for causes of liberal peacebuilding failures, and assessed liberal peacebuilding through various critical theories. Examples of scholars making cross-case comparisons are Doyle and Sambanis, and Fortna.²⁵

¹⁸ Paris and Sisk, *The Dilemmas of Statebuilding*, 6.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, 6.

²⁰ Negative peace is the absence of violent conflict despite the causes for conflict still being present.

²¹ Paris and Sisk, *The Dilemmas of Statebuilding*, 2.

²² R. Paris, *At War's End* (Cambridge 2004) 7-8.

²³ *Ibidem*, 7.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, 8.

²⁵ M. Doyle and N. Sambanis, 'International Peacebuilding: A Theoretical and Quantitative Analysis', *American Political Science Review* 94 (2000) no. 4, 779-801.; V.P. Fortna, 'Inside and Out: Peacekeeping and the Duration of Peace after Civil and Interstate Wars', *International Studies Review* 5 (2003) no. 4, 97-114.

Others examined the role of 'conflict economies in explaining peacebuilding outcomes' to look for root causes of liberal peacebuilding failures, such as Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler.²⁶ Critical theories, such as securitization, cosmopolitanism and post-structuralism, were introduced to the liberal peacebuilding debate by authors like David Chandler, Mark Duffield and Michael Pugh.²⁷ Additionally, statebuilding became a widely accepted precondition for successful liberal peacebuilding, with Roland Paris' IBL as an important contribution. Statebuilding entails improving the national and local government structures and their capacities to provide basic services to its citizens, such as enforcing the monopoly on violence. Good examples of missions that employed a more slow-and-steady second generation-type approach, taking into account statebuilding as well, were conducted in Sierra Leone, Kosovo and East Timor in 1999.²⁸

During this time, liberal peacebuilding was also contested by several scholars. Political scientist Jeffrey Herbst somewhat controversially called for the complete dismissal of liberal peacebuilding as a viable way of turning conflict into sustainable peace.²⁹ Most, however, called for reforms within the framework of liberal peacebuilding. As an example, the bottom-up approach was one of the second generation's proposals for reform of how liberal peacebuilding would need to be conducted. Proponents argued that the traditional top-down approach was flawed and could not produce the kind of peace that would seep into the more remote parts of a country. This was due to the often limited reach and authority of the host state, especially shortly after violent conflict, with Afghanistan and Iraq being clear examples of this. Examples of this school of thought are Jarat Chopra and Tanja Hohe. They argued that policy should be geared towards interaction between peacebuilders and the local grassroots level, which would result in a more engaged and informed civil society, eventually leading to more sustainable peace.³⁰ Many non-governmental organizations such as Seeds for Peace and Interpeace currently practice bottom-up peacebuilding. This

²⁶ P. Collier and A. Hoeffler, *Greed and Grievance in Civil War* (Washington 2001).; Quote from Paris and Sisk, *The Dilemmas of Statebuilding*, 7.

²⁷ D. Chandler, *Bosnia: Faking Democracy after Dayton* (London 2000).; M. Duffield, *Global Governance and the New Wars: the Merging of Development and Security* (London 2001).; M. Pugh, 'Peacekeeping and Critical Theory', *International Peacekeeping* 11 (2004) no. 1, 39-58.

²⁸ Paris, 'Critiques of Liberal Peace', in Campbell, Chandler and Sabaratnam (eds.), *A Liberal Peace?*, 35.

²⁹ For example: J. Herbst, 'Let Them Fail: State Failure in Theory and Practice', in: R.I. Rotberg, *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences* (Princeton 2003).; P. Englebort and D.M. Tull, 'Postconflict Reconstruction in Africa: Flawed Ideas about Failed States', *International Security* 32 (2008) no. 4, 106-139.

³⁰ J. Chopra and T. Hohe, 'Participatory Peacebuilding', in T. Keating and W. A. Knight (eds.), *Building Sustainable Peace* (Edmonton 2004) 241-261.

shows that the practice of liberal peacebuilding is not necessarily tied to the contemporaneous liberal peacebuilding generation, nor to state actors.

The second generation of liberal peacebuilding scholarship made way for even more skepticism since the end of the 2000s, because there were still no successes to prove the contemporaneous methods were effective. This third generation delved into the underlying tensions and dilemmas of liberal peace- and statebuilding, adding a deeper level of analysis than the preceding two generations. Third-generation scholars sought to detect and explain the implicit contradictions that liberal peacebuilding is often accused of.³¹ Roland Paris again, Michael Barnett, Cristoph Zurcher, Timothy Sisk and Astri Suhrke are good examples of third generation authors. Barnett and Zurcher, for instance, sought to explain the contradiction between external statebuilding and promoting strong institutions.³² Suhrke, together with Torunn Wimpelmann Chaudhary and Orzala Ashraf Nemat, analyzed women's rights promotion in Afghanistan, concluding that it was fraught with contradictions and tensions between liberal values and the local reality.³³ Identifying such issues would, in turn, teach policymakers that peace- and statebuilding is an extremely complex endeavor for which no one-strategy-fits-all approach exists.

Arguing for a compromise between the previously mentioned top-down and bottom-up approaches, Roger Mac Ginty proposed 'the concept of hybridity as a way of capturing the interaction between internal and external actors' in liberal peacebuilding.³⁴ Hybridity is a typical approach within the third generation, because it recognizes the agency of both state actors and local actors, thus emphasizing the complexity of liberal peacebuilding. This approach would include all actors involved, recognizing that each has the power to influence peacebuilding processes and outcomes. Top-down approaches '[overlook] the agency of local actors and their power to ignore, subvert, sit-out, exploit and resist external interventions', according to Mac Ginty. On the other hand, he warned to not romanticize local, indigenous and customary practices as if

³¹ Paris and Sisk, *The Dilemmas of Statebuilding*, 15-16.

³² M. Barnett and C. Zurcher, 'The peacebuilder's contract: how external statebuilding reinforces weak statehood', in: Paris and Sisk, *The Dilemmas of Statebuilding*, 23-52.

³³ T. Wimpelmann Chaudhary, O. Ashraf Nemat and A. Suhrke, 'Promoting Women's Rights in Afghanistan: The Ambiguous Footprint of the West' in: Campbell, Chandler and Sabaratnam (eds.), *A Liberal Peace?*, 106-120.

³⁴ R. Mac Ginty, 'Hybrid Peace: How Does Hybrid Peace Come About?' in: Campbell, Chandler and Sabaratnam (eds.), *A Liberal Peace?*, 209-225, here 209.

sustainable peace can only be achieved through them.³⁵ By considering the concept of hybridity, Mac Ginty argued that the deadlock between proponents and opponents of liberal peacebuilding could be lifted.³⁶

A broad agenda and the Dutch approach

Since the terror attacks on September 11th 2001, liberal peacebuilding has most likely never been purely altruistic. A main objective of the War on Terror was to fix failed states in order to remove terrorist safe havens from where new attacks could be planned. In both Afghanistan and Iraq, this framework of securitization was clearly articulated; promoting liberal values and human rights in these states was often considered a side mission, as a means of satisfying the peacebuilders' constituencies. Securitization is the framing of policy subjects in terms of security, often justifying considerable measures to retain or regain that security.³⁷ In the case of Afghanistan, a US-led coalition sought to oust the Taliban regime and arrest or kill the 9/11 mastermind Osama Bin Laden. This invasion also gave rise to the Bush doctrine, stating that the US would not distinguish between terrorists and those who harbor them. Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) was the military campaign that sought to achieve the Bush doctrine's objectives and ran partly in parallel to ISAF, which by contrast was mainly aimed at peacebuilding. In Iraq, the possibility of Saddam Hussein's regime acquiring nuclear weapons was the officially stated primary reason for the US-led invasion of the country in 2003. This shows that liberal peacebuilding is not always a primary objective and therefore sometimes not receives the planning and resources it requires.³⁸

After some years of Dutch military presence in Afghanistan, a certain 'Dutch approach' was noticed by US officials. For instance, US President Barack Obama stated: '[the Dutch troops are] extraordinary not only in a military capacity, but also [for their] insight into the local culture and the local politics.'³⁹ This 'Dutch approach' was heralded

³⁵ Mac Ginty, 'Hybrid Peace', 211.

³⁶ Ibidem, 209.

³⁷ R. Taureck, 'Securitization theory and securitization studies', *Journal of International Relations and Development* 9 (2006) no. 1, 53-61, here 54.

³⁸ CNN, 'Bush announces opening of attacks' (version October 7th 2001), <http://edition.cnn.com/2001/US/10/07/ret.attack.bush/> (September 8th 2016).

³⁹ White House, 'Remarks by President Obama and Prime Minister Balkenende of the Netherlands after meeting' (version July 14th 2009), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-obama-and-prime-minister-balkenende-netherlands-after-meeting> (September 21st 2016).

by US officials repeatedly, including then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. Although many Dutch observers and officials accepted this praise keenly and rhetorically reinforced its uniqueness, the Dutch approach was not as innovative as many liked to believe. Moreover, the minor successes in Uruzgan were not necessarily attributable to the Dutch approach, which combined Defense, Diplomacy, and Development, often referred to as the 3D-approach. Military historian Thijs Brocades-Zaalberg critically analyzed the Dutch approach and came to that conclusion. He pointed to other factors that explain the success in Uruzgan, such as its relative peace and quiet which facilitated less kinetic operations and more reconstruction efforts. Moreover, the American praise was 'aimed at convincing the Dutch to prolong their military presence in Uruzgan', Brocades-Zaalberg noted.⁴⁰ In sum, the Dutch approach was rather a discursively reinforced 'self-congratulatory' concept than a proven successful liberal peacebuilding method.⁴¹

Finally, the difference between post-settlement and post-conquest peacebuilding should also be noted. Post-settlement peacebuilding starts from a situation in which the peacebuilding actors were not themselves directly part of the conflict. Post-conquest peacebuilding is the opposite of this, with peacebuilding actors having participated in the particular conflict, such as in Iraq and Afghanistan. That post-conquest, as opposed to regular post-settlement, liberal peacebuilding presents its own unique set of challenges and dynamics is apparent. Peacebuilding missions in Iraq and Afghanistan can therefore not be entirely compared to the typical post-settlement UN peacebuilding missions. Local support and respect for peacebuilders can certainly be less in such cases of post-conquest liberal peacebuilding.⁴² Trusting people to rebuild the country who recently invaded it is arguably challenging. Indeed, the question arises whether it is even possible to conduct a successful post-conquest liberal peacebuilding mission.

Implementation

As I have mentioned in the introduction, the main research question is: 'How have dilemmas and contradictory policy inherent to and resulting from liberal peacebuilding

⁴⁰ T. Brocades-Zaalberg, 'The Use and Abuse of the 'Dutch Approach' to Counter-Insurgency', *Journal of Strategic Studies* 36 (2013) no. 6, 867-897, here 890.

⁴¹ Ibidem, 892.

⁴² A. Suhrke, 'The Dangers of a Tight Embrace: Externally Assisted Statebuilding in Afghanistan', in: Paris and Sisk, *The Dilemmas of Statebuilding*, 227-251.; D. Edelstein, 'Foreign Militaries, Sustainable Institutions, and Postwar Statebuilding', in: Paris and Sisk, *The Dilemmas of Statebuilding*, 81-103.

affected Dutch political decision-making and policy for the peacebuilding missions in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2010?' I will divide this main research question into four sub-questions that break down liberal peacebuilding into the elements of security sector reform, democratization, economic liberalization, and human rights. This leads to the following sub-questions: (1) How has security sector reform, as an element of liberal peacebuilding, affected Dutch political decision-making and policy for the peacebuilding missions in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2010?; (2) How has democratization, as an element of liberal peacebuilding, affected Dutch political decision-making and policy for the peacebuilding missions in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2010?; (3) How has economic liberalization, as an element of liberal peacebuilding, affected Dutch political decision-making and policy for the peacebuilding missions in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2010?; and (4) How have human rights, as an element of liberal peacebuilding, affected Dutch political decision-making and policy for the peacebuilding missions in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2010? Each of these sub-questions will be answered with respect to the particular chapter's timeframe.

In each chapter I will analyze a particular timeframe within the Dutch liberal peacebuilding campaign in Afghanistan. First, I will start with the period between September 11th 2001, the terrorist attacks on US soil, and the final government decision for sending a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) mission to Baghlan province on June 28th 2004. In the second chapter I will analyze policy and the political debate about this PRT mission in Baghlan that lasted until October 1st 2006. The third chapter will span the Dutch role as lead nation in Uruzgan province from August 1st 2006 until August 1st 2010. Finally, I summarize my conclusions and make recommendations for further research and policy in separate chapters. Please note that the documents I will be analyzing are not necessarily dated within said timeframes due to relevant decision-making processes preceding the start of the missions. For the sake of clarity and structure I have chosen these timeframes, but I fully acknowledge that some Dutch liberal peacebuilding efforts cross these boundaries. The Dutch contribution to OEF, for instance, ran in parallel to the initial post-9/11 years as well as the Baghlan PRT mission. Nonetheless, I believe that the structure I present provides a clear framework that is based around the most significant Dutch liberal peacebuilding contributions in Afghanistan.

For each liberal peacebuilding element, I analyze the political debate and policy documents relevant to it. With the political debate, I mean the plenary debates and committee meetings in the Dutch parliament (*Tweede Kamer*). Policy documents include documents regarding planning, evaluation (after and during missions), and policy changes or reaffirmations. Due to limitations in time I am sadly not able to include minutes from the *Eerste Kamer* (the Dutch Senate), but I expect that the most significant empirical evidence by far can be found in the parliamentary minutes. When politicians are mentioned I will explicitly note their party affiliation and whether this party was a part of the government coalition or the opposition (for ministers this last addition is disregarded). I realize that a parliamentarian from a given party does not necessarily have to agree with a minister from the same party, nor do ministers from one party have to agree. However, it can indicate why certain government approaches are supported or not by parliamentarians. I will also assess what arguments were given for a particular point of view or policy decision, and attempt to place these findings in the liberal peacebuilding debate. Afterwards, I will answer the main research question and make recommendations for further research.

Chapter One

Emergency aid and initial liberal peacebuilding, 2001-2004

As previously mentioned, I have marked the first phase of the Dutch participation in the missions in Afghanistan from September 11th 2001 to June 28th 2004. During this time the Netherlands limited its efforts to donations to various funds, indirect support in the broader Middle East region, and backfill of US military units. For instance, on November 9th 2001 the government agreed to a US request for military assistance in the Caribbean (backfill), in Afghan airspace (force protection and airlift capabilities) and around the Arabian Peninsula (marine patrols). A total of 1400 troops were deployed for these purposes.⁴³ In addition, the Dutch government donated €30 million for emergency aid and €40 million for reconstruction efforts by February 2002.⁴⁴ With these minor and indirect contributions to the nascent liberal peacebuilding mission in Afghanistan, the Dutch government initially could not significantly influence the mission's course and focus. Nevertheless, there was much discussion in parliament about how a possible Dutch peacebuilding contingent would have to operate. In this chapter I will analyze the parliamentary debate in the Defense, Foreign Affairs, and Development Cooperation committee meetings between September 11th 2001 and the decision for the first peacebuilding mission in Baghlan province on June 28th 2004. I will separately analyze the four elements of liberal peacebuilding discussed earlier, after which I summarize my findings.

Security Sector Reform: minimal involvement

In this phase of Dutch liberal peacebuilding in Afghanistan, the parliamentary debate about Security Sector Reform (SSR) was relatively superficial and uniform. All parties and the government agreed broadly about the need for an Afghan police force and military. This way, the Afghan people would get ownership of their future, argued the ministers of Defense and Foreign Affairs (both from the rightist liberal party *Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie*, VVD, coalition).⁴⁵ The peacebuilding nations were advised

⁴³ D.A. Hellema, *Dutch Foreign Policy: the Role of the Netherlands in World Politics* (Dordrecht 2009) 373.

⁴⁴ Brief van de minister voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (January 31st 2002), *Tweede Kamer archive dossier* (hereafter: *TK*) 2001-2002, 27 925 no. 44, 5.

⁴⁵ Brief van de ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken en van Defensie (October 23rd 2001), *TK* 2001-2002, 27 925 no. 18, 3.

by ISAF and OEF to only assist the Afghan interim government in training police and troops instead of circumventing the interim government.⁴⁶ This, of course, would further enhance Afghan ownership. From the theoretical liberal peacebuilding perspective, this approach of both encouraging ownership in SSR and assisting the interim government is somewhat ambiguous.⁴⁷ Of course, not helping the interim government would not be peacebuilding at all, but this implicit contradiction was not pointed out and discussed in the parliamentary debates. Encouraging ownership in Afghan SSR could have also been a way of decreasing the (perceived) length of the peacebuilding campaign in Afghanistan. After all, if the Afghan government could provide domestic peace and security the international community (including the Netherlands) would not have to anymore.

Democratization: externally assisted ownership

With regards to democratization in Afghanistan much was discussed between committee members and ministers. It was clear early on with all politicians involved that a vacuum of power needed to be prevented, and reconstruction needed to start as soon as possible.⁴⁸ The government even entertained the idea that ‘traditional power structures could offer a starting point’ for democratization.⁴⁹ However, this idea of ‘customary or indigenous peacemaking’ was soon replaced by a traditional top-down approach.⁵⁰ All committee members and relevant ministers agreed that the host state should have full authority and sovereignty over the country in fields where this was possible, in accordance with UN resolution 1378.⁵¹ Ministers De Grave and Van Aartsen warned, however, that ‘the credibility of the new government will depend on short-term improvements in living conditions and concrete progress in the areas of order, stability and good governance.’⁵²

The top-down approach was soon supported with the idea of expanding the embryonic Afghan government’s authority from the state capital Kabul and environs to

⁴⁶ Brief van de ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken en van Defensie (December 21st 2001), *TK* 2001-2002, 27 925 no. 35, 9.

⁴⁷ Suhrke, ‘The dangers of a tight embrace’, 227.

⁴⁸ Brief van de ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken en van Defensie (October 23rd 2001), *TK* 2001-2002, 27 925 no. 18, 3.

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*, no. 18, 3.

⁵⁰ Mac Ginty, ‘Hybrid Peace’, 216.

⁵¹ Debat over de recente ontwikkelingen in Afghanistan (November 15th 2001), *HTK* 2001-2002, 24-1762.; United Nations Security Council, Resolution 1378 (November 14th 2001).

⁵² Brief van de ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken en van Defensie (December 21st 2001), *TK* 2001-2002, 27 925 no. 35, 8.

other provinces. With so-called Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) peacebuilders aimed to support the Afghan government in achieving this expansion of authority. Disarmament and rehabilitation of former combatants, recruitment and training of police and army personnel, and reconstruction were such areas that PRTs would advise the Afghan government in. A US and UK PRT pilot was soon followed by a German PRT, which sparked debate about whether to send a Dutch PRT as well. Proponents of this idea were, for example, Bart van Winsen (Christian center party, CDA, coalition) and Geert Wilders (VVD, coalition), and Farah Karimi (Green leftist party, Groenlinks, opposition).⁵³ The Minister of Foreign Affairs, however, remained hesitant about deploying a Dutch team, because the role of a PRT and its mandate were not clear yet, he stated.⁵⁴ The Netherlands would not decide to deploy a PRT until June 28th 2004, and therefore missed an opportunity of being a frontrunner in this area.⁵⁵

Another important aspect of democratization, elections, requires examination within the Dutch parliamentary debate and related policy as well. The Netherlands had more than likely very little influence in setting the election timeline for Afghanistan. This timeline was largely set on December 5th 2001 by the 6+2 conference in Bonn, consisting of the Afghan interim government and Afghanistan's neighboring countries, plus Russia and the US. Nonetheless, barely any doubts were raised about the elections being too early, despite the need for security and solid institutions in the entire country to hold them.⁵⁶ Only the Foreign Affairs Minister, then Jaap de Hoop-Scheffer (CDA, coalition), raised some doubts about the organization timeline of the elections, calling it 'ambitious and tight on time.'⁵⁷ Only 3 years had passed between the US/UK invasion on October 7th 2001 and the first round of elections in October 9th 2004. In addition, several other considerations regarding the '[s]equencing, design, and the extent of international oversight' of the elections were not included in the debate.⁵⁸ It is possible that such doubts were conveyed confidentially to the '6+2', but this would need to be analyzed when such documents are made public. From the available documents, though, it seems

⁵³ Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (April 10th 2003), *TK 2002-2003*, 27 925 no. 89, 10.; Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (July 24th 2003), *TK 2002-2003*, 27 925 no. 97, 1-3.

⁵⁴ Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (April 10th 2003), *TK 2002-2003*, 27 925 no. 89, 5.

⁵⁵ Brief van de ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken en Defensie en voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (June 28th 2004), *TK 2003-2004*, 27 925 no. 133.

⁵⁶ T.D. Sisk, 'Pathways of the political: electoral processes after civil war', in: Paris and Sisk (eds.), *The Dilemmas of Statebuilding*, 196-223, here 202-203.

⁵⁷ Brief van de minister en de staatssecretaris van Buitenlandse Zaken (April 28th 2003), *TK 2002-2003*, 27 925 no. 92, 2.

⁵⁸ Sisk, 'Pathways of the political', 197.

that liberalization was put before institutionalization or at least in parallel to it. Despite elections (and democratization as a whole) being part of liberalization as well as institutionalization processes, elections cannot improve the liberalization process without adequate institutions. Only transparency, safety, easily accessible voting offices, and absence of coercion and fraud can produce legitimate electoral outcomes. Apparently, too little attention was paid to these preconditions by parliamentarians and ministers. Concluding anachronistically, Paris' IBL strategy was not yet adopted by Dutch liberal peacebuilding policymakers nor by parliament.

Economic liberalization: counternarcotics and subsistence

Regarding economic liberalization for Afghanistan, a clear focus on narcotics can be derived from the parliamentary debates and policy documents in the early Dutch liberal peacebuilding efforts there. No policy or discussion could be found that regarded other elements of economic liberalization in this period, such as fiscal and trade policy. These will therefore not be discussed in this section. At least, several committee members seem to have understood the important economic role of poppy farms and heroin production in Afghanistan, and the possible consequences of a crackdown. Bert Koenders (of the social-democratic *Partij van de Arbeid*, PvdA, opposition) and Karimi (Groenlinks, opposition), for instance, emphasized the importance of replacing poppy farms with alternative crops in order to provide poppy farmers with a licit alternative.⁵⁹ Moreover, destroying these peoples' source of income would likely turn them against ISAF and the Afghan government, and into the hands of warlords or Taliban. The government shared Koenders' opinion, but also noted the fact that 70% to 90% of heroin used in Europe originated from Afghanistan.⁶⁰ This implies that the Dutch government, likely alongside other European nations, also took into account its domestic heroin abuse problems. Cristopher Cramer confirmed that statebuilding indeed is a multi-level challenge: 'the dilemmas of statebuilding are acutely dependent not just on national politics or aid policy and resource flows, but also on regional interests and international politics.'⁶¹ Lastly, without authority over the entire country, the Afghan government could not effectively enforce the opium ban. These dilemmas and

⁵⁹ Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (July 24th 2003), TK 2002-2003, 27 925 no. 97, 4, 7.

⁶⁰ Brief van de ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken, van Defensie en voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (June 25th 2003), TK 2002-2003, 27 925 no. 95, 4.

⁶¹ C. Cramer, 'Trajectories of accumulation through war and peace', in: Paris and Sisk (eds.), *The Dilemmas of Statebuilding*, 129-148, here 136.

complications eventually led the Dutch government to not engage actively in drug enforcement with the later PRT in Baghlan from 2004 till 2006.⁶²

Human rights: pragmatism versus idealism

The Dutch government has had a focus on human rights promotion in the decade or so before the Afghanistan invasion.⁶³ These initial years of liberal peacebuilding in Afghanistan prove no different. But, again, dilemmas within liberal peacebuilding are clear from the parliamentary debate and the challenges policymakers have mentioned. Early on, the Dutch government called for embedding human rights in the Afghan constitution to-be and for them to be an integral part of the reconstruction process.⁶⁴ Women's rights were also often mentioned separately, as the rights of women in Afghanistan were especially violated in the wake of hyper-conservative interpretations of shari'a law.⁶⁵ For instance, Minister of Development Cooperation Eveline Herfkens (PvdA) called for inclusion of Afghan women in domestic decision-making and gender-sensitive budgeting of expenses at the 2002 International Conference on Reconstruction Assistance to Afghanistan.⁶⁶

Several parliamentarians encountered the dilemma between statebuilding and human rights promotion. Former Foreign Affairs Minister Van Aartsen (then parliamentarian for the VVD) stated that pragmatism should be a part of the human rights question.⁶⁷ In response to this, Karimi (Groenlinks) stated: 'You can never be pragmatic with regards to war criminals and human rights abusers.'⁶⁸ She also wondered why the Dutch government would accept working with Afghan warlords, despite their alleged war crimes.⁶⁹ In a later document, this apparent dilemma translated into more idealistic liberal peacebuilding policy. This report about the Dutch contribution at an international donor conference for Afghanistan (March/April 2004)

⁶² Brief van de ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken en Defensie en voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (June 28th 2004), *TK 2003-2004*, 27 925 no. 133, 13.

⁶³ Hellema, *Dutch Foreign Policy*, 388.

⁶⁴ Brief van de ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken, van Defensie en voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (May 31st 2002), *TK 2001-2002*, 27 925 no. 60, 3.

⁶⁵ Brief van de minister en de staatssecretaris van Buitenlandse Zaken (April 28th 2003), *TK 2002-2003*, 27 925 no. 92, 2.; Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (January 24th 2002), *TK 2001-2002*, 27 925 no. 42, 12.; Brief van de minister voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (January 31st 2002), *TK 2001-2002*, 27 925 no. 44, 4.

⁶⁶ Brief van de minister voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (January 31st 2002), *TK 2001-2002*, 27 925 no. 44, 4.

⁶⁷ Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (December 12th 2002), *TK 2001-2002*, 27 925 no. 75, 3.

⁶⁸ *Ibidem*, 5.

⁶⁹ *Ibidem*, 5.

stated that ‘the Netherlands pleaded for focusing on [...] respect for human rights [...], and good governance, in particular thwarting the power of warlords and other undemocratic local leaders.’⁷⁰ Cramer illustrates this classic liberal peacebuilding contradiction: ‘this tension creates a dilemma for supporters of peacebuilding: whether to prioritize stability and hope for a gradual improvement in the reach of the state, or to insist on statebuilding even where this may threaten the political settlement underpinning peace.’⁷¹ In some cases it may very well be beneficial to a peacebuilding project to retain non-democratic forms of government and security providers, which in this case would have been warlords and their militias. Indeed, this would have come at the cost of trading the liberal for peace, which is precisely what the discussion between Karimi and Van Aartsen exemplifies.⁷² The gap between idealistic and pragmatic human rights policy would continue to be part of the parliamentary debate in the following years of Dutch liberal peacebuilding in Afghanistan.

Conclusions

In this chapter I have analyzed the liberal peacebuilding debate about Afghanistan between September 11th 2001 and June 28th 2004 in the Dutch parliamentary debate and government policy documents. What became clear in general is that there was relatively much consensus about how the analyzed liberal peacebuilding elements needed to be implemented in Afghanistan. Apart from a discursive flirt with indigenous peacebuilding from the ministers of Defense and Foreign Affairs, both parliament and government agreed on a top-down approach to peacebuilding with encouragement of Afghan ownership. With regards to SSR and democratization, assistance from peacebuilders coupled with, again, Afghan ownership and responsibility was the broadly accepted course of action. The third element that I have analyzed, economic liberalization, was dominated by the rampant drugs production in Afghanistan, specifically poppy farmers (a key component of heroin). Some party representatives and the relevant ministers foresaw possible problems with a crackdown on this industry. They feared that it would turn large parts of the country against ISAF and the Afghan interim government, and into the hands of warlords. In sharp contrast, a discussion

⁷⁰ Brief van de ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken en Defensie en voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (April 16th 2004), *TK* 2003-2004, 27 925 no. 127, 4.

⁷¹ Cramer, ‘Trajectories of accumulation through war and peace’, 134.

⁷² L.R. Andersen, *Security Sector Reform and the Dilemmas of Liberal Peacebuilding* (Copenhagen, Danish Institute for International Studies 2011) 14.

arose about actually working together with warlords in the debate about human rights. The VVD argued that this option should not be dismissed as a form of pragmatic liberal peacebuilding, while Groenlinks wanted to have warlords answer for their (continued) human rights abuses and war crimes.

Such dilemmas and contradictions in policy were a recurring theme in this period of Dutch liberal peacebuilding in Afghanistan. Sometimes these were openly acknowledged and discussed, as in human rights and economic liberalization, but at other times they were not. This was mainly absent in cases of friction between external assistance and Afghan ownership, as with SSR and democratization. Lastly, I can conclude from the analysis that an IBL strategy was not yet employed by Dutch parliamentarians or policymakers. Liberalization, the promotion of liberal values and practices, was put before or at least in parallel to institutionalization. This is because no real doubts were raised about the sequencing, design, or the extent of international oversight of the Afghan elections. Of course, this may be a result of political ignorance of peacebuilding challenges at that time. After all, scholarship revealing these challenges was only slowly emerging. Dutch politicians and policymakers can, however, not be praised for innovative or predictive policy in the early years of liberal peacebuilding in Afghanistan.

Chapter Two

Provincial reconstruction in Baghlan

In this chapter I will analyze the Dutch parliamentary debate about and government policy for the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Baghlan province. On June 28th 2004 the Dutch government made the decision to send about 120 troops to Baghlan province as the main component of this PRT (along with a small number of civilian advisors). This PRT, under ISAF authority, was tasked with assisting the Afghan government in improving stability and safety, increasing its authority, making reconstruction efforts possible (by the state or NGOs), and other related tasks.⁷³ The Netherlands was not the first PRT in Afghanistan. First, the US led a PRT in Paktia province in 2002, and Germany had one stationed in Kunduz province since late 2003. Positive experiences with these pilots led the Dutch government to increase its scope in its ISAF contributions. Having a PRT in Afghanistan also meant that the Netherlands had a seat and vote in the 'PRT Executive Steering Committee', thus creating room for the Dutch government to influence the Committee's policy priorities.⁷⁴ Whether this perk was one of the primary reasons for the Dutch contribution is not clear from the analyzed documents. The Dutch PRT contribution in Baghlan province ended on October 1st 2006.

The Dutch government decided not to further extend the mission, because the next mission in Uruzgan province required a relatively large military presence. Running both missions would not be possible due to logistical issues, according to the government.⁷⁵ On December 22nd 2005, an extensive government report was presented that looked into the possibility of a Dutch mission in Uruzgan.⁷⁶ This date will therefore mark the end of this chapter's timeframe. Since then, the parliamentary debate was dominated by this new (possible) mission. Discourse after this date will therefore be analyzed in the following chapter. Similar to the previous chapter, I will first discuss the liberal peacebuilding element of SSR, followed by democratization, economic

⁷³ Brief van de ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken en Defensie en voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (April 16th 2004), *TK 2003-2004*, 27 925 no. 127, 8.

⁷⁴ Brief van de ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken en Defensie en voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (June 28th 2004), *TK 2003-2004*, 27 925 no. 133, 13.

⁷⁵ Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (October 5th 2005), *TK 2005-2006*, 27 925 no. 190, 7.

⁷⁶ Brief van de ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken, van Defensie en voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (December 22nd 2005), *TK 2005-2006*, 27 925 no. 193.

liberalization, and human rights. This way, the sub-questions for this particular period will be answered. Finally, I will summarize my findings in a separate section.

Security Sector Reform: a broader mandate

In line with the previous years of Dutch liberal peacebuilding efforts in Afghanistan, the government chose a top-down approach and attempted to minimize the Dutch footprint as much as possible. With regards to SSR, the PRT in Baghlan was given quite narrow and restrictive mission objectives: apart from playing the role of conflict mediator, '[a] PRT can [...] advise and assist in the disarmament of militias, for example by creating and monitoring weapons depots, and in building up [...] the new Afghan army, and training police'.⁷⁷ On July 2nd 2004, the Minister of Defense Henk Kamp (VVD) confirmed these restrictions of the PRT, stating that 'we are not there in lieu of the police or the army, which we are not going to train either'.⁷⁸ From the side of parliament, no objections were made or critical questions asked about this approach to SSR. This is surprising, because the Afghan government was still deemed incapable of fully enforcing a monopoly on violence.⁷⁹ Less than 21,000 soldiers and 35,000 police officers had been trained by early 2005 for a country almost sixteen times the size of the Netherlands; by comparison, the Netherlands has roughly double the number of police and military.⁸⁰ Apparently, Afghan ownership was still preferred over better guidance and assistance in the security sector. This particular approach of the Dutch government corresponds to the so-called 'monopoly model' of SSR, which 'aims at establishing a legitimate state monopoly over the use of the coercive force'.⁸¹

In contradiction to what Kamp stated earlier about Dutch PRT involvement in training, the PRT later actually did assist in training and even set up a course for police officers. This becomes clear from a letter from the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Defense,

⁷⁷ Brief van de ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken en Defensie en voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (June 28th 2004), *TK 2003-2004*, 27 925 no. 133, 8.

⁷⁸ Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (July 2nd 2004), *TK 2003-2004*, 27 925 no. 139, 3-4.

⁷⁹ Lijst van vragen en antwoorden (July 5th 2004), *TK 2003-2004*, 27 925 no. 134, 11.

⁸⁰ United States Government Accountability Office, *Afghanistan Security: Efforts to Establish Army and Police Have Made Progress, but Future Plans Need to Be Better Defined* (Washington 2005) 2.; *Volkscrant*, 'Politie passeert Defensie als grootste werkgever' (version September 14th 2013), <http://www.volkscrant.nl/binnenland/politie-passeert-defensie-als-grootste-werkgever~a3509285/> (October 12th 2016).

⁸¹ Andersen, *Security Sector Reform and the Dilemmas of Liberal Peacebuilding*, 11.

and Development Cooperation dated June 3rd 2005.⁸² Political shifts cannot have been the cause for this change in policy, because the same cabinet was in office during this time: from May 27th 2003 to June 29th 2006. Bert Koenders (PvdA, opposition) criticized the government's inconsistent policy, arguing that this was due to 'the lack of clear political priorities for the deployment of Dutch troops'.⁸³ It is likely that the government gained a more realistic view of the realities on the ground, and that the unrealistic policy of exclusive assistance transformed into more direct involvement in SSR. This, however, is not acknowledged in the policy documents or debates. Later still, the government informed parliament that ISAF's plan of operations was to change, which meant that ISAF forces had to perform more tasks. This would have included training the Afghan National Army and Police (ANA, ANP).⁸⁴ However, the government immediately admitted that indeed the Dutch PRT 'already performs such tasks', and that 'in practice not much will change for this PRT'.⁸⁵ Apparently, parliament had no significant remarks about this course of action. In sum, it can be concluded that the Dutch government, and by extension the Dutch PRT, adopted a pragmatic approach to SSR in Baghlan province.

Democratization: top-down approach

From the outset of the mission in Baghlan, the Dutch government emphasized a top-down approach to democratization. In the letter to parliament that confirmed the decision to send a Dutch PRT, this was already made clear: 'For a further development to a safe and stable society in Afghanistan it is necessary that the central government's authority is increased, [and] the influence of local rulers curbed.'⁸⁶ UN Security Council resolution 1536 also emphasized this point, which the Dutch government referred to as one of the arguments for its approach.⁸⁷ From a broader perspective, the resolution, and the Dutch implementation of it, also reflected the academic support for top-down approaches. Paris and his predecessors all advocated top-down approaches to

⁸² Brief van de ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken en Defensie en voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (June 3rd 2005), *TK* 2004-2005, 27 925 no. 177, 20.

⁸³ Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (September 1st 2004), *TK* 2004-2005, 29 521 no. 9, 2.

⁸⁴ Brief van de ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken, van Defensie en voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (December 22nd 2005), *TK* 2005-2006, 27 925 no. 193, 14-15.

⁸⁵ Brief van de ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken, van Defensie en voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (December 22nd 2005), *TK* 2005-2006, 27 925 no. 193, 15, 24.

⁸⁶ Brief van de ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken en Defensie en voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (June 28th 2004), *TK* 2003-2004, 27 925 no. 133, 2.

⁸⁷ United Nations Security Council, Resolution 1536 (March 26th 2004), 2.; Brief van de ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken en Defensie en voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (June 28th 2004), *TK* 2003-2004, 27 925 no. 133, 3.

democratization with the state being the sponsor and recipient of liberal peacebuilding efforts. This implies that 'local rulers' would not have a place in this Dutch top-down approach to democratization. However, the reality on the ground would prove to be less clear-cut.

Warlordism has been a constant source of discussion within the liberal peacebuilding debate about Afghanistan. Roger Mac Ginty, for instance, conducted research about this phenomenon in which militia commanders, warlords or strongmen contest the central state's authority and monopoly on violence in their regions of influence. He argued that 'some of Afghanistan's warlords benefited from both state-building and state weakness', because of the contradictory liberal peacebuilding policy for the country.⁸⁸ In Dutch politics, warlordism was also a contested policy issue. As mentioned above, the Dutch government, and the UN, wished to curb the power of local rulers, which very likely included warlords as well. However, minister of Foreign Affairs Ben Bot (CDA) argued that replacing the embedded political structures of warlordism would not be possible yet.⁸⁹ This was mainly because the central Afghan state did not yet have the means to effectively enforce a monopoly on violence in the entire country. Karimi (Groenlinks, opposition) wondered why the international community would work together with warlords, despite some of them being alleged human rights abusers. In response, Bot admitted that it was a complicated situation, but that the Taliban and Al-Qaeda were seen as 'the bigger evil'. Tolerance of, and sometimes cooperation with warlords was thus accepted in many instances, despite the apparent moral conflict this creates in light of the liberal peace framework. Koenders (PvdA, opposition) identified this as a 'double strategy' that 'often undermines Karzai'.⁹⁰ It seems that some parliamentarians and the government as well realized the dilemmas this contradictory policy generated. However, despite this, there was no further discussion about how the PRT in practice should deal and had dealt with this contradictory policy.

Economic liberalization: narrow interpretations

With regards to economic liberalization, the drugs issue still dominated the parliamentary debate. Unanimously, the relevant committee members agreed that drug

⁸⁸ R. Mac Ginty, 'Warlords and the liberal peace: state-building in Afghanistan', *Conflict, Security & Development* 10 (2010) no. 4, 577-598, here 585.

⁸⁹ Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (July 5th 2004), TK 2003-2004, 27 925 no. 142, 22.

⁹⁰ Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (July 5th 2004), TK 2003-2004, 27 925 no. 142, 3.

enforcement in Afghanistan needed to be managed carefully to avoid estranging the local population from the central government. What became more highlighted, however, was the dilemma whether to assist the Afghan government in fighting the narcotics industry or not. This dilemma was indeed known by both parliament and the government. Koenders (PvdA, opposition), Harry van Bommel (socialist party, *Socialistische Partij, SP*, opposition), and Kees van der Staaij (Calvinist conservative *Staatkundig Gereformeerde Partij, SGP*, opposition) all asked questions regarding this dilemma.⁹¹ Van Bommel, for instance, asked several times what the government policy was towards providing alternative, legal sources of income to poppy farmers.⁹²

During the mission in Baghlan the debate about broader economic liberalization in Afghanistan finally started in the Dutch parliament, albeit very limited. One of the Dutch PRT's tasks was to stimulate economic growth in order to show the local population tangible results of the liberal peacebuilding efforts and to win their 'hearts and minds'.⁹³ The government presented a small number of economic projects that the PRT would be involved in, such as building hydro-electricity plants, and giving advice to small business owners.⁹⁴ However, Henk Jan Ormel (CDA, coalition) later wondered why not more effort was put into economic development in Afghanistan: 'Is sufficient effort put into the repair of roads, the energy supply, the water supply, education? Democracy without economic development is not viable.'⁹⁵ Cristopher Cramer agrees, stating that there 'can be no hope of statebuilding without efforts to secure a rapid rise in export revenue.'⁹⁶ Moreover, 'over 90 percent' of the total Afghan revenue in 2004-2005 came from external funds.⁹⁷ This aid dependency undermined the Afghan government's sovereignty, authority and legitimacy, thus endangering the democratization process.⁹⁸ This should have prompted Dutch politicians to pay adequate attention to this

⁹¹ For example: Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (July 5th 2004), *TK* 2003-2004, 27 925 no. 142, 8.; Vragen van het lid Koenders (PvdA) aan de ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken en van Defensie over de drugsteelt in Afghanistan (October 1st 2004), *Aanhangsel van de Handelingen der Tweede Kamer* (hereafter: *AHTK*) 2004-2005, no. 212, 443-444.; Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (June 28th 2005), *TK* 2004-2005, 27 925 no. 183, 10.

⁹² Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (July 5th 2004), *TK* 2003-2004, 27 925 no. 142, 8.; Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (June 28th 2005), *TK* 2004-2005, 27 925 no. 183, 5.

⁹³ Brief van de ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken en Defensie en voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (September 30th 2005) *TK* 2005-2006, 27 925 no. 185, 9.

⁹⁴ Brief van de ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken en Defensie en voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (September 30th 2005) *TK* 2005-2006, 27 925 no. 185, 9.

⁹⁵ Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (October 5th 2005) *TK* 2005-2006, 27 925 no. 190, 2.

⁹⁶ Cramer, 'Trajectories of accumulation through war and peace', 137.

⁹⁷ Suhrke, 'The dangers of a tight embrace', 231.

⁹⁸ *Ibidem*, 234.

extraordinary state of aid dependency.⁹⁹ It is all the more surprising that, apart from Ormel's remark, no other parliamentarians or policymakers addressed economic liberalization for Afghanistan and its potential implications for the Dutch liberal peacebuilding mission's success.

Human rights: women in Afghan society

The Dutch liberal peacebuilding approach in Afghanistan still contained a strong emphasis on human rights, and women's rights in particular. The Minister of Foreign Affairs Ben Bot (CDA) repeatedly mentioned the importance of promoting them. However, the PRT in Baghlan was not tasked with any direct actions toward the promotion of human rights. This was left to the NGOs in the province that the PRT would protect and assist. Nonetheless, the PRT had some influence in promoting human rights by 'monitoring human rights [...] and those of women in particular', and reporting abuses to the Afghan government.¹⁰⁰ It should be noted that the Dutch government recognized the difficult situation regarding women's rights in patriarchic Afghanistan: '[w]omen's rights are one of the most important themes, but are hard to improve at the same time, [...] because of the culturally determined negative stance towards this subject of large parts of the Afghan society.'¹⁰¹ Parliament agreed with Bot's statements, but failed to delve deeper into questions about feasibility, possible dilemmas, and practical implications for the PRT. This begs the question whether or not Dutch politicians really believed in feasible improvements to Afghan stances to women's rights. After all, the support or tolerance of warlords and strongmen in Baghlan added to the difficulty of promoting women's rights, because of their traditional views on the role of women in society.¹⁰² This served to exacerbate the dilemma between human rights promotion, democratization and SSR, but this was not pointed out by any parliamentarian.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have analyzed the Dutch parliamentary debate about and government policy for the PRT in Baghlan province between June 28th 2004 and December 22nd 2005. With regards to SSR, the Dutch government initially took a top-down approach. In

⁹⁹ World Bank, *Afghanistan. Managing Public Finance for Development* (Washington, 2005) viii.

¹⁰⁰ Brief van de ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken en Defensie en voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (June 3rd 2005), *TK* 2004-2005, 27 925 no. 177, 9.

¹⁰¹ Lijst van vragen en antwoorden (July 5th 2004), *TK* 2003-2004, 27 925 no. 134, 12.

¹⁰² Wimpelmann Chaudhary, Ashraf Nemat and Suhrke, 'Promoting Women's Rights in Afghanistan', 115.

line with the monopoly model to SSR, the PRT would assist in establishing a monopoly on violence for the central Afghan government. Despite the initial restrictive policy towards training Afghan security forces, the PRT did in fact establish training programs, as the government later admitted. This change in policy could not have been from a cabinet change, because the same cabinet stayed in office during this particular period. It is likely that the government realized such a restrictive approach to SSR did not match the reality of the weak Afghan security sector.

Democratization in the mission in Baghlan was pursued from a top-down approach, which excluded local rulers from the envisioned Afghan political structure. This corresponded to the dominant academic support for such an approach at that time. However, a dilemma appeared between cooperating with warlords, thus tolerating their illegitimate rule and possible human rights abuses, and solely backing the central government. The latter option would complicate the fight against the Taliban and Al-Qaeda in the provinces where government authority was still minimal. Some parliamentarians and the government were aware of this dilemma, but there was no discussion about how the PRT would need to deal with this seemingly contradictory policy of liberal peacebuilding.

The drugs issue still dominated the debate about the Afghan economy and its liberalization process. However, the dilemmas that the Dutch government faced with this issue were better known by parliament than in the previous period. With regards to broader economic liberalization efforts, the parliamentary debate finally started, albeit very limited. In practice, the PRT would be tasked with small-scale local economic projects. Nonetheless Ormel (CDA, coalition) wondered why economic development for Afghanistan was rather neglected, despite its importance to democratization, Afghan ownership, and liberal peacebuilding as a whole. It is surprising that no other politicians paid sufficient attention to this element of liberal peacebuilding.

Finally, human rights remained prominent in the Dutch parliamentary debate during the mission in Baghlan. In addition, the Dutch government now realized that promoting women's rights in Afghanistan might be very difficult, because of embedded patriarchic political structures and culture. Parliament agreed with this stance, but a deeper discussion regarding feasibility, possible dilemmas, and practical implications for the PRT was not initiated. Consequently, this left room for contradictory policy between, for instance, promoting women's rights, and tolerating the presence of patriarchal

actors, such as warlords. In conclusion, the parliamentary debate about and policy of liberal peacebuilding in Baghlan contained some realization of liberal peacebuilding dilemmas and contradictions. However, this did not result in any policy reconsiderations or changes to try and resolve these issues. Only in SSR policy was indeed adapted, but this was the result of experiences on the ground, rather than of deep discussion in parliament.

Chapter Three

Task Force Uruzgan, 2005-2010

In order to strengthen the transatlantic ties with the US, and improve its international stature, the Dutch government decided to increase its involvement in the NATO-led ISAF on April 16th 2004.¹⁰³ It was decided that the Netherlands would become lead nation in the province of Uruzgan. This aligned with ISAF's timetable of building military presence in these unstable southern regions where Taliban influence was still significant. Over 1500 troops were sent to Uruzgan in the hopes of creating a stable peace there and improving the position of the Netherlands within the international community. The Task Force Uruzgan (TFU) was tasked with much of the same objectives as the PRT in Baghlan: training the ANA and ANP, promoting judicial and governance reforms, creating economic development projects, and increasing the central government's authority in the province. One major difference with Baghlan was the much higher risk of Taliban attacks, which asked for a higher troop presence and more serious equipment (such as heavy artillery). After a few months of preparation in Uruzgan, the mission started on August 1st 2006.

In contrast to the mission in Baghlan, parliament was much more divided about a potential Dutch participation in Uruzgan. Several motions to cancel or reconsider the government decision were tabled, whereas this did not occur previously in the Dutch liberal peacebuilding campaign in Afghanistan. Parties that were in some way against a Dutch mission in Uruzgan were the SP, Groenlinks and D66.¹⁰⁴ The PvdA also had strong doubts, but eventually supported a potential mission.¹⁰⁵ Apart from the meager parliamentary support, the government itself was not fully confident about the mission as well. This is exemplified by the fact that instead of making the decision by itself, it basically asked parliament to do this.¹⁰⁶ Finally, the public opinion of an increased military and financial commitment to Afghanistan was also quite unsupportive.¹⁰⁷ These factors made for a suboptimal political climate regarding the mission in Uruzgan, which

¹⁰³ J. Eijvoogel, 'Nederland in de wereld na 9/11', *Militaire Spectator* 180 (2011) no. 9, 376-386, here 381.

¹⁰⁴ Motie van het lid Marijnissen C.S. (February 2nd 2006), *TK 2005-2006*, 27 925 no. 204, 1.

¹⁰⁵ Debat over de Nederlandse deelname aan de International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Zuid-Afghanistan (February 2nd 2008), *HTK 2005-2006*, 3014.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibidem*, 3013-3035.

¹⁰⁷ J.S. van der Meulen and A. Vos, 'De publieke opinie over Uruzgan', *Militaire Spectator* 177 (2008) no. 7/8, 393-402, here 395.

in turn may have been conducive to inconsistent or contradictory policy. In this final chapter I will analyze the parliamentary debate about and government policy for the Dutch liberal peacebuilding mission in Uruzgan province. The timeframe for this chapter will be somewhat different from that of the mission itself in order to also capture preparatory debates and policy proposals: from December 22nd 2005 to February 20th 2010. As mentioned before, the starting point marks the first extensive government report that explores a possible Dutch mission in Uruzgan. The end date marks the resignation of the 'Balkenende IV' cabinet, which was due to a conflict between the PvdA and its coalition partners CDA and CU (Christian center party, *Christen Unie*). As a matter of fact, the cause for this political crisis was actually a possible second extension of Dutch military involvement in Uruzgan. The PvdA did not wish further Dutch military involvement, whereas the CDA and CU did. Consequently, the PvdA ministers offered their resignation. Like in the previous chapters, I will start with the liberal peacebuilding element of SSR, followed by democratization, economic liberalization, and human rights.

Security Sector Reform: hybridization

In comparison to previous years, a clear development in thinking about SSR can be seen in this period of liberal peacebuilding in Afghanistan. In line with the contemporaneous policy in Baghlan, training of the ANA and ANP was immediately started after the arrival of the Dutch troops in Uruzgan. Minister of Foreign Affairs Ben Bot (CDA) stated that 'with training [...] of the army and police Afghan safety structures will be strengthened further.'¹⁰⁸ In addition, Minister of Development Cooperation Agnes van Ardenne-van der Hoeven (CDA) also mentioned DDR and mine removal as one of the Dutch SSR tasks, referring to those performed in Baghlan.¹⁰⁹ Finally, Prime Minister Jan-Peter Balkenende emphasized Afghan ownership in the security sector: 'the Afghan government is primarily responsible for safety and stability.'¹¹⁰ With this approach, the top-down character of Dutch liberal peacebuilding in Afghanistan was reaffirmed.

New to the Dutch liberal peacebuilding debate regarding Afghanistan was the widely discussed exit strategy that SSR allegedly provided. In this case, the exit strategy entailed creating the conditions under which liberal peacebuilders can withdraw from

¹⁰⁸ Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (February 22nd 2006), TK 2005-2006, 27 925 no. 207, 51.

¹⁰⁹ Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (February 22nd 2006), 66.

¹¹⁰ Brief van de ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken, van Defensie en voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (September 1st 2006), TK 2005-2006, 27 925 no. 226, 2.

Afghanistan: making sure that the central government can sufficiently and durably enforce its monopoly on violence. Training and recruiting police and soldiers, ensuring they have adequate equipment, and demobilizing militias were all deemed crucial within this exit strategy. The government, as well as some members of parliament explicitly mentioned SSR as the exit strategy. Joël Voordewind (CU, coalition) was the first parliamentarian to state this exit strategy: ‘strengthening the Afghan security structures is crucial for durable stability and, in time, for the withdrawal of the international troops’.¹¹¹ The Ministers of Defense and Foreign Affairs agreed with Voordewind, as well as committee member Karien van Gennip (CDA, coalition).¹¹² However, Van Bommel (SP, opposition) questioned the viability of this exit strategy, because the Afghan security forces still dealt with a lot of corruption and desertion problems.¹¹³

A final aspect of SSR in the Dutch liberal peacebuilding debate in this period is hybridity. In a letter from the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Defense and Development Cooperation dated November 30th 2007, they argued that ‘traditional (and often tribally oriented) security processes’ needed to be incorporated into the Dutch SSR approach, next to Western policing models.¹¹⁴ This idea corresponds to the so-called ‘hybrid model’ of SSR, which stands at odds with the monopoly model that was previously pursued.¹¹⁵ The choice between both models is a dilemma in multiple ways: choosing a top-down or bottom-up approach, ‘direct or indirect forms of rule’, and reinforcing state security forces or ‘working with what is there’, i.e. warlords and militias.¹¹⁶ Surprisingly however, there was no response from parliament about this modified approach to SSR, and the surrounding dilemmas, until two years later. Peters (Groenlinks, opposition) argued on November 12th 2009 that her party did not wish involvement in ‘undermining double games, like the American financial support of the militias or drug connections from the Popalzai [tribe]’.¹¹⁷ Later, Van Bommel (SP, opposition) added to this: ‘you could say: we are paying the Afghan warlords with Dutch taxpayers’ money [...] and by

¹¹¹ Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (August 3rd 2007), *TK 2006-2007*, 27 925 no. 267, 4.

¹¹² Resp.: *TK 2006-2007*, 27 925 no. 267, 10.; Debat naar aanleiding van een algemeen overleg op 17 december 2007 over de Nederlandse bijdrage aan ISAF na augustus 2008 (December 18th 2007), *HTK 2007-2008*, 37-2971.; Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (February 6th 2008), *TK 2007-2008*, 27 925 no. 294, 4.

¹¹³ Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (December 17th 2009), *TK 2009-2010*, 27 925 no. 373, 5-6.

¹¹⁴ Brief van de ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken, van Defensie en voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (November 30th 2007), 27 925 no. 279, 34.

¹¹⁵ L.R. Andersen, Security Sector Reform and the Dilemmas of Liberal Peacebuilding, 12.

¹¹⁶ *Ibidem*, 5.

¹¹⁷ Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (December 17th 2009), 13.

paying [warlord Mathiullah Khan] we are orchestrating our own unsafety.’¹¹⁸ Apart from these two parties, no serious objections were made to the new hybrid approach to SSR. Important to note, is that this policy change led to clear contradictions from ministers later on. For example, Defense Minister Van Middelkoop (CDA) stated on December 18th 2007 that the ‘only right exit strategy [is to] transfer the responsibility for security to the Afghan security forces.’¹¹⁹ After all, hybridity in SSR does not exclusively focus on central government security forces. Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Verhagen (CDA) even defended Van Middelkoop’s contradictory statements, after Van Dam (PvdA, coalition) asked to what extent the Foreign Affairs Minister voiced the government’s position on SSR.¹²⁰ The hybrid model to SSR was therefore not fully embraced in the Dutch parliamentary debate nor was it fully understood or consistently applied by policymakers.

Democratization: reality of hybridity

The initial year of Dutch liberal peacebuilding in Uruzgan saw a similar policy approach to democratization as in the previous mission in Baghlan. Different, however, was the actual implementation of the top-down approach. Instead of tolerating non-democratic or corrupt officials (which was often the case in Baghlan), the top-down approach was enforced better in Uruzgan. The Dutch government requested the Afghan president Hamid Karzai that the corrupt province’s governor and head of police be replaced.¹²¹ This request was granted even before the first Dutch troops set foot in Uruzgan, indicating great urgency from the Dutch government to pursue a serious top-down approach to democratization.¹²² Parliament largely agreed with the government’s approach, but there were some concerns that the replacement of these key figures might backfire or contradict Afghan sovereignty. For example, Bert Bakker (D66, coalition) warned that ‘[removing the governor] can also quite easily turn against you, [...] as well as the militia and other groups related to him [who can turn against you]’.¹²³ This

¹¹⁸ Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (March 1st 2010), *TK* 2009-2010, 27 925, no. 386, 4.

¹¹⁹ Debat naar aanleiding van een algemeen overleg op 17 december 2007 over de Nederlandse bijdrage aan ISAF na augustus 2008 (December 18th 2007), *HTK* 2007-2008, 37-2971.

¹²⁰ Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (March 1st 2010), 20.

¹²¹ Lijst van vragen en antwoorden (January 31st 2006), *TK* 2005-2006, 27 925, no. 201, 17.

¹²² Brief van de ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken, van Defensie en voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (April 18th 2006), *TK* 2005-2006, 27 925 no. 213, 2.

¹²³ Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (February 22nd 2006), *TK* 2005-2006, 27 925 no. 207, 31.

suggests that Dutch parliamentarians also acknowledged the possible pitfalls that the stronger top-down approach to democratization contained.

Roughly a year after the decision was made to deploy to Uruzgan, the parliamentary debate shifted to include Afghan ownership as a pillar in democratization efforts. From early 2007 onwards both parliament and the government emphasized the importance of Afghan ownership through a process of 'Afghanization': the transfer of authority and responsibilities from peacebuilders to the Afghan government. A government letter to parliament stated that 'involving Afghans in securing ownership, means that adaptation to the Afghan ways [...] is necessary.'¹²⁴ This was to include areas such as SSR, as mentioned above, and judicial reforms as well.¹²⁵ Nine months after this letter was sent, this new policy was reaffirmed and consolidated in the feasibility letter regarding a two-year extension of the Uruzgan mission:

A hybrid governance and security model, with both tribal and 'modern' elements, seems to be the most effective progress model in Uruzgan in the medium term (15 years). Tribal structures can be more effective in the Afghan context than (relatively new) provincial governance structures and therefore need to be harnessed by the Netherlands as an instrument for tackling issues in the fields of security, governance and development.¹²⁶

Note that it was immediately admitted that tensions could occur within this hybrid model, which would have to be resolved 'with creativity and determination'.¹²⁷

Tensions both inherent to and resulting from this hybrid model slowly became apparent to Dutch politicians. Embracing tribal elements and 'Afghan ways' also meant coping with tribal dynamics in provincial and national politics, as well as with warlords and strongmen in the security sector and governance structures. Certain key issues, such as the death penalty, appointment of warlords in parliament and Afghan poppy eradication strategies, were a source of discussion in parliament. For instance, when a 23-year old journalist was sentenced to death for blasphemy this caused outrage in

¹²⁴ Brief van de ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken, van Defensie en voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (March 23rd 2007), *TK 2006-2007*, 27 925 no. 248, 13.

¹²⁵ Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (August 3rd 2007), *TK 2006-2007*, 27 925 no. 267, 4.

¹²⁶ Brief van de ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken, van Defensie en voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (November 30th 2007), *TK 2007-2008*, 27 925 no. 279, 17.

¹²⁷ Brief van de ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken, van Defensie en voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (November 30th 2007), *TK 2007-2008*, 27 925 no. 279, 17.

Dutch parliament.¹²⁸ In line with Dutch law and treaties on human rights the death penalty was seen as inherently non-liberal and therefore incompatible with the liberal peacebuilding that the Netherlands pursued. Similar concerns were raised about the appointment of warlords in Afghan parliament and provincial governance positions, who were often seen as human rights abusers and undemocratic.¹²⁹ There thus existed a dilemma in the Dutch parliamentary debate: whether to tolerate non-liberal legislature, customs and structures to facilitate Afghan ownership, or deplore these practices at ‘the risk of imposing their agenda [...] without the necessary incorporation of local stakeholders.’¹³⁰

Economic liberalization: missed opportunities

The parliamentary debate about economic liberalization in this period was, again, dominated by the drugs issue. Initially, there was still much caution about a tough approach to drug enforcement. Most Foreign Affairs, Defense and Development Cooperation committee members and the government agreed that poppy farmers needed to be offered alternative livelihoods before their poppy would be eradicated.¹³¹ Otherwise, this might have decreased ‘support from local tribes and warlords’ and pushed poppy farmers ‘into the hands of the Taliban’, as was suggested.¹³² The dilemma that this situation created was exemplified by Van der Staaij (SGP, opposition): ‘According to us, [lines] would be crossed when, out of fear for losing support from the local people, you have to look the other way for activities regarding drug trafficking and

¹²⁸ Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (May 20th 2009), TK 2008-2009, 27 925 no. 333, 24.

¹²⁹ Verslag van Algemeen Overleg (March 1st 2010), TK 2009-2010, 27 925 no. 386, 4.; Telegraaf, ‘Zorg om lot Afghaanse journalist overgebracht’ (version January 24th 2008), http://www.telegraaf.nl/binnenland/20871584/Zorg_om_lot_Afghaan_overgebracht_.html (October 30th 2016).

¹³⁰ Quote from J. Narten, ‘Dilemmas of promoting ‘local ownership’: the case of postwar Kosovo’, in Paris and Sisk, *The Dilemmas of Statebuilding*, 252-283, here 257.; D. Chandler, ‘The Responsibility to Protect? Imposing the ‘Liberal Peace’’, *International Peacekeeping* 11 (2007) no. 1, 59-81.

¹³¹ Lijst van vragen en antwoorden (January 31st 2006), TK 2005-2006, 27 925, no. 201, 27-28.; Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (February 22nd 2006), TK 2005-2006, 27 925 no. 207, 7.; Brief van de ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken, van Defensie en voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (September 1st 2006), TK 2005-2006, 27 925 no. 226, 2.; Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (October 16th 2006), TK 2006-2007, 27 925 no. 236, 2.; Brief van de ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken, van Defensie en voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (March 23rd 2007), TK 2006-2007, 27 925 no. 248, 14.; Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (August 3rd 2007), TK 2006-2007, 27 925 no. 267, 3.

¹³² Lijst van vragen en antwoorden (January 31st 2006), 30.; Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (February 22nd 2007), no. 247, 1.; Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (December 17th 2009), TK 2009-2010, 27 925 no. 373, 28.

such.¹³³ The tension that exists between avoiding the alienation of local tribes and warlords, and supporting the Afghan drug eradication operations, is made very clear by Christopher Cramer:

If sources of wealth built up during war and carried over into peace lie in international networks and commodity chains that do not depend on state support [...] and may actively be linked to oppositional political projects, then there will be little support for statebuilding where it might be perceived as a threat to continued activity.¹³⁴

These sources of wealth are in this case drugs, and the oppositional political projects (to the liberal peacebuilding campaign) tribal governance and warlordism. Indeed, it can even be argued that by turning a blind eye on drug trafficking, the Dutch government would not have been linked to the Afghan government's poppy eradication programs. Consequently, this breach of unity might have decreased the perceived legitimacy and authority of the Afghan government by its people. In short, this particular dilemma potentially had very wide implications.

In any case, doubts were raised about the Afghan government's efficacy in drug enforcement.¹³⁵ This perceived lack of local capacity, coupled with crushing reports by the UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime), led to a generally tougher political stance on the drugs issue in April 2008.¹³⁶ Several parliamentarians argued that the Taliban had a great source of income from drug trafficking, and called for the direct participation of Dutch forces in drug enforcement. Maarten Haverkamp (CDA, coalition) and Voordewind (CU, coalition) even managed to have a motion supported by a parliamentary majority that requested the government to increase its counternarcotics efforts in Afghanistan.¹³⁷ However, the government maintained its 'light' approach, despite a newly broadened mandate for ISAF troops to 'target [drug] laboratories [...] and drug traffickers and their networks'.¹³⁸ Mainly, the Afghan government's responsibility for drug enforcement was referred to as the reason for this light approach,

¹³³ Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (February 22nd 2006), 43.

¹³⁴ Cramer, 'Trajectories of accumulation through war and peace', 135.

¹³⁵ Ibidem, 7.; Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (August 3rd 2007), 12.; Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (February 6th 2008), *TK* 2007-2008, 27 925 no. 294, 3.

¹³⁶ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *Afghanistan Opium Survey 2007* (Vienna 2007).

¹³⁷ Motie van de leden Haverkamp en Voordewind (May 27th 2009), *TK* 2008-2009, 27 925 no. 336.

¹³⁸ Brief van de ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken, van Defensie en voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (October 28th 2008), *TK* 2008-2009, 27 925 no. 325, 12.

as well as the precondition of providing alternative livelihoods to poppy farmers.¹³⁹ Nonetheless, the government did try to affect the Afghan counternarcotics policy in an attempt to avert conflicting policy sets between the two countries. For instance, the Afghan government accepted the Dutch condition that no poppy eradication operations be executed in Uruzgan.¹⁴⁰ In addition, eradication in other provinces needed to be managed in such a way that all tribes would be affected evenly.¹⁴¹ Full Afghan ownership, in this case, was thus compromised in order to prevent contradictory policy.

A final element of economic liberalization worth noting is fiscal policy. Referring to the previous SSR section, the debate about SSR as the exit strategy was surprisingly not accompanied by a discussion about Afghanistan's fiscal policies. After all, creating a durably effective security sector requires sufficient tax income to pay police salaries and military equipment for instance. Mark Sedra notes that only the ANA's costs in fiscal year 2004/2005 already amounted to a staggering '57 percent of the country's domestic revenues'.¹⁴² Of course, this huge gap between security sector costs and government income would have made a durable, financially independent monopoly on violence for the Afghan government impossible for many years to come. In short, if SSR was to be the Dutch exit strategy, then Afghanistan's aid dependency and fiscal policy needed to be part of this strategy just as much. However, this seemed to have been an issue with other national liberal peacebuilding debates as well, and not just with the Dutch debate.¹⁴³

Human rights: cross-cutting dilemmas

As mentioned in this chapter's democratization section, Afghanistan's death penalty and the appointment of warlords to key political and security positions were main discussion points in the Dutch parliamentary debate. From a liberal peacebuilding perspective these issues of course also conflicted with human rights standards. First, the death penalty got increased attention from Dutch politicians when a 23-year old

¹³⁹ Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (September 1st 2008), *TK 2007-2008*, 27 925 no. 321, 15.

¹⁴⁰ Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (August 3rd 2007), *TK 2006-2007*, 27 925 no. 267, 13.

¹⁴¹ Vragen van het lid Peters (GroenLinks) aan de ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken en voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking over de papaverteelt in Afghanistan (July 23rd 2007), *AHTK 2007-2008*, no. 4, 12.

¹⁴² M. Sedra, 'Security sector reform in Afghanistan: The slide towards expediency', *International Peacekeeping* 13 (2006) no. 1, 94-110, here 104.

¹⁴³ W.A. Byrd, 'The Financial Dimension of Security Sector Reform', in: M. Sedra (ed.), *The Future of Security Sector Reform* (Waterloo 2010) 301-326, here 301.

journalist received the death sentence for blasphemy.¹⁴⁴ The political outrage in the Netherlands was significant: ‘this goes against every human right’, stated Voordewind (CU, coalition) for example.¹⁴⁵ Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Verhagen (CDA) agreed with this point of view, even calling the death penalty ‘barbaric’. However, he directly added that ‘there is a certain tension between our ways and those of other countries about the way people deal with religion’.¹⁴⁶ Therefore, there seems to have been a certain cultural and religious awareness from the Dutch government about conservative Islam’s role in Afghanistan and its effect on legislature. Nonetheless, the Dutch government still voiced its concerns to the Afghan Vice-Minister of Justice and Minister of Defense through the Dutch ambassador in Afghanistan and Minister of Defense Van Middelkoop (CDA) respectively.¹⁴⁷

The other main theme regarding human rights during the mission in Uruzgan was, again, women’s rights. In order to promote this, further inclusion of women in development programs and politics was supported by all Dutch politicians involved. Gender was not only maintained as a key element in Dutch liberal peacebuilding in Uruzgan, but also at the national level and at international donor conventions.¹⁴⁸ A final issue that sparked discussion in parliament was the adoption of the Shia Personal Status Law, which significantly limited the rights of Afghan women. Parliamentarians described this law as ‘terrible’ and ‘horrible’, but Chaudhary, Ashraf and Suhrke suggest that the condemnations from NATO members may have been primarily aimed at domestic audiences.¹⁴⁹ Further research is needed, however, whether this held true for the Netherlands as well.

¹⁴⁴ The Guardian, ‘Afghan sentenced to death 'being punished for brother's journalism'’ (version January 23rd 2008), <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2008/jan/23/humanrights.afghanistan> (October 30th 2016).

¹⁴⁵ Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (May 20th 2009), *TK* 2008-2009, 27 925 no. 333, 24.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibidem*, 24.

¹⁴⁷ Telegraaf, ‘Zorg om lot Afghaanse journalist overgebracht’ (version January 24th 2008), http://www.telegraaf.nl/binnenland/20871584/Zorg_om_lot_Afghaan_overgebracht_.html (October 30th 2016).; Volkskrant, Afghaanse student ontloopt toch executie (version October 21st 2008), <http://www.volkskrant.nl/buitenland/afghaanse-student-ontloopt-toch-executie~a912128/> (October 29th 2016).

¹⁴⁸ Lijst van vragen en antwoorden (January 31st 2006), *TK* 2005-2006, 27 925, no. 201, 2, 27.; Brief van de ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken en voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (February 4th 2010), *TK* 2009-2010, 27 925 no. 381, 2.

¹⁴⁹ Verslag van een Algemeen Overleg (May 20th 2009), *TK* 2008-2009, 27 925 no. 333, 6, 14.; Chaudhary, Ashraf and Suhrke, ‘Promoting Women’s Rights in Afghanistan’, in Campbell, Chandler and Sabaratnam (eds.), 116.

Conclusion

In this final chapter I have analyzed the Dutch parliamentary liberal peacebuilding debate about the mission in Uruzgan. With regards to SSR, three aspects became clear from the analysis. Firstly, the top-down approach was reaffirmed as the preferred approach in the first year of the mission in Uruzgan. Secondly, debate about the exit strategy started in this period. SSR was widely regarded as the main requirement for durable security in Afghanistan, and the efforts toward strengthening and reforming the Afghan security sector were increased accordingly. Lastly, hybridity became a suggested model for SSR as the successor to the top-down approach. This hybrid model proved to be a source of contradictory policy, despite the fact that it promotes cultural awareness and inclusiveness. The same held true for the new hybrid model to democratization. After an initial period in which the previous top-down approach was reaffirmed and strengthened, a hybrid model was introduced to improve Afghan ownership. This resulted in a significant dilemma between tolerating non-liberal legislature, customs and structures, and deploring these practices. This dilemma often appeared when non-liberal actors, such as warlords, received key political positions, and when high-profile court cases regarding the death penalty and women's rights abuses caused public outrage.

The Dutch parliamentary debate about economic liberalization was again focused on drug enforcement. Initially, the general stance towards this was cautious. Most of the politicians involved emphasized the importance of offering alternative livelihoods to poppy farmers that were the target of the Afghan poppy eradication forces. These politicians, including the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Defense and Development Cooperation, seemed to be aware of what the pitfalls of a crackdown on drugs were. When the Afghan government's drug enforcement operations proved to be lacking, some parliamentarians advocated a tougher approach to assist the Afghan government. The Dutch government chose to keep its small footprint in this area, but did attempt to avert conflicting policy sets between them and the Afghan government. The exclusion of Uruzgan in poppy eradication operations and the demand for tribal awareness compromised full Afghan ownership, but these conditions likely averted contradictory policy in Uruzgan. Finally, fiscal policy was still not a part of the debate, despite the seemingly apparent cross-cutting policy issues it could solve or exacerbate, especially in SSR. Without sufficient tax income the Afghan government would not have been able to

independently sustain its security forces, which would make the proposed exit strategy for the Netherlands impossible. Regarding human rights, there was some debate about Afghanistan's death penalty, and women's rights abuses. Despite parliament's outrage over several examples of these practices, the Dutch government's policy seemed to focus on Afghan sovereignty and ownership as well as a certain cultural awareness in these cases. Nonetheless, in Uruzgan itself many projects were set up to promote human rights, and the Dutch parliament encouraged such efforts.

In sum, Dutch parliamentarians and ministers had a fair degree of awareness of the dilemmas and tensions that liberal peacebuilding in Uruzgan generated. Some of these dilemmas and tensions were attempted to be resolved either by reinforcing the top-down approach that was taken in Baghlan or by introducing a new hybrid model. Afghan ownership and cultural and tribal awareness gained prominence as well. Together with an arguably nuanced and informed parliamentary debate, this suggests that there was real political will to identify, discuss and resolve tensions and dilemmas within and resulting from Dutch liberal peacebuilding policy. However, several seemingly apparent key tensions, subjects and cross-cutting dilemmas were not discussed enough or not at all, such as the political inclusion of warlords, and fiscal policy. The question remains whether this was due to a lack of information and insight, or a matter of prioritizing. Still, the contemporaneous scholarly liberal peacebuilding debate also kept struggling with liberal peacebuilding's complexities, which puts matters into perspective.

Conclusions

In this thesis I have aimed to identify and explain the dilemmas and contradictory policy that were part of the Dutch parliamentary debate about and policy for the liberal peacebuilding missions in Afghanistan from 2001 to 2010. First, I have explored the liberal peacebuilding debate, discussing its empirical and philosophical foundations, its broad range of critique, and related concepts. Next, I have analyzed the liberal peacebuilding elements of security sector reform (SSR), democratization, economic liberalization and human rights in Dutch policy and the parliamentary debate. This was separated into three periods in the Dutch liberal peacebuilding campaign in Afghanistan: the initial liberal peacebuilding operations since September 11th 2001, the provincial reconstruction mission in Baghlan province from June 28th 2004 to December 22nd 2005, and the Dutch contribution in Uruzgan province from December 22nd 2005 to February 20th 2010. The main research question I aimed to answer is:

How have dilemmas and contradictory policy inherent to and resulting from liberal peacebuilding affected Dutch political decision-making and policy for the peacebuilding missions in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2010?

In the initial period of Dutch liberal peacebuilding in Afghanistan there was not always sufficient debate about dealing with dilemmas and avoiding contradictory policy in the Dutch parliament. This held true for Dutch policy regarding liberal peacebuilding efforts in Afghanistan as well. Most significantly, ministers and parliamentarians alike advocated increased Afghan ownership through a process of ‘Afghanization’ in SSR and democratization. However, at the same time they also explicitly or implicitly promoted increased external assistance in these particular areas. This classic dilemma of liberal peacebuilding failed to be identified and critically discussed in Dutch parliament and for Dutch policy. On the other hand, dilemmas and contradictory policy in economic liberalization and human rights were discussed more. For instance, the pitfalls of a crackdown on drugs trafficking, and the possible consequences of cooperating with warlords were quite well discussed in the parliamentary debate. Policy documents show that the Ministers of Defense, Foreign Affairs, and Development Cooperation often took these issues into consideration as well.

As time progressed, parliamentarians and ministers seemed to better understand how dilemmas and contradictory policy could possibly complicate Dutch liberal peacebuilding. In most cases, these dilemmas and contradictions were indeed identified and discussed. However, parliamentarians and ministers often failed to take the following step of discussing possible implications for policy, and the PRT itself. Liberal peacebuilding dilemmas and contradictions that were identified by parliamentarians or ministers did often not result in any policy reconsiderations. Nonetheless, the increased Dutch involvement in Afghanistan possibly led these politicians to being better informed of the day-to-day reality in Afghanistan and the practice of liberal peacebuilding in general. This, in turn, resulted in more pragmatic and realistic approaches to SSR and democratization as the mission in Baghlan went on. Note that these approaches were exclusively top-down in nature, which corresponded to the dominant contemporaneous academic support for this type of approach.

During the mission in Uruzgan, an attempt was made to decrease policy contradictions, and avoid dilemmas by introducing a hybrid model to SSR and democratization. In essence similar to Roger Mac Ginty's hybrid approach, this model was introduced to improve Afghan ownership while retaining a top-down approach and external assistance. However, this hybridity also resulted in significant dilemmas between tolerating non-liberal legislature, customs and structures on the one hand, and deploring these practices on the other. Moreover, cross-cutting dilemmas and opportunities were still not identified or discussed deeply enough during this mission. These mainly regarded cooperation with warlords, which caused dilemmas between all the elements discussed here, and fiscal policy, which could have likely solved issues within economic liberalization and SSR. Moreover, the dilemma between pragmatism and idealism regarding women's rights was especially strong, and it continued to be unresolved up to the end of the Uruzgan mission. Consequently, this left room for contradictory policy between promoting women's rights, and tolerating the presence of warlords. Regarding drug enforcement, Dutch parliamentarians and ministers seemed to now fully understand the possible pitfalls, and acted to avert conflicting policy between the Dutch and Afghan governments. This was arguably a sign that Dutch policymakers finally came to grips with liberal peacebuilding's possible dilemmas.

In sum, Dutch parliamentarians and ministers steadily gained a fair degree of awareness of the dilemmas and contradictions that were inherent to and the result of

liberal peacebuilding in Afghanistan. These parliamentarians and ministers initially had a limited awareness of dilemmas and contradictions in liberal peacebuilding. This state of awareness corresponded to the first generation of liberal peacebuilding scholarship and practice. Since around 2004, liberal peacebuilding's dilemmas and contradictions became more broadly identified and discussed. Some of these dilemmas and tensions were attempted to be resolved by reinforcing the top-down approach, thus increasing external assistance. Afghan ownership and cultural and tribal awareness also gained prominence in Dutch parliament as liberal peacebuilding in Afghanistan carried on. Such awareness, coupled with more realistic and pragmatic approaches, can be linked to the second generation of liberal peacebuilding scholarship. Eventually, Dutch policy embraced hybrid approaches in late 2007, combining the agency of local and state actors. This, in turn, corresponded to the third-generation of liberal peacebuilding scholarship. Together with an arguably nuanced and informed parliamentary debate, these policy changes suggest that there was real political will to identify, discuss and resolve tensions and dilemmas within and resulting from Dutch liberal peacebuilding policy. However, several seemingly apparent key tensions, subjects and cross-cutting dilemmas were not discussed enough or not at all, such as the political inclusion of warlords, and fiscal policy. The question remains whether this was due to a lack of information and insight, or a matter of prioritizing certain issues over others. To put matters into perspective, however, contemporaneous scholars also still struggled with liberal peacebuilding's complexities. The Dutch liberal peacebuilding debate, thus, seemed to progress alongside the dominant liberal peacebuilding scholarship.

Recommendations

As a result of these findings, I would like to make some recommendations for further research, and policy. As mentioned in the introduction, much research has already been conducted about liberal peacebuilding missions in general. The merit of such a case-specific approach is that an entire mission can be understood in its policy successes and shortcomings. However, this approach lacks the inclusion of the national political intricacies and shifts that can explain certain policy decisions and indecisions. This national decision-making process, in turn, can often explain the policy contradictions and dilemmas that are so characteristic of liberal peacebuilding. Further research is therefore needed of liberal peacebuilding policy of individual countries, such as the lead

peacebuilding nations in Afghanistan: the US, the UK, Italy, Japan and Germany. Also, research is needed about how these lead nations influenced policy for other peacebuilding actors, such as the Netherlands, Norway, and Hungary.

Moreover, some documents that may contain important empirical evidence for this thesis' purpose were still classified at the time of writing. I specifically refer to the minutes from cabinet meetings between 2001 and 2010, which will be made public twenty years after being archived. These will then of course also need to be analyzed in order to increase the understanding of the Dutch liberal peacebuilding debate between ministers. This can, for instance, shed light on which liberal peacebuilding elements the different ministers focused, and which approaches were suggested.

And finally, politicians and policy-makers should always critically ask whether there are dilemmas and contradictions inherent to or resulting from a particular liberal peacebuilding approach. My findings have shown that these dilemmas and contradictory policy have indeed been important and highly complex issues within the Dutch parliamentary debate and policy. These issues have most likely persisted after 2010, and will continue to do so in the near future unless mechanisms are put into place that minimize contradictory policy and resolve dilemmas. For instance, a devil's advocate that specifically identifies possible policy contradictions and dilemmas in the decision-making process could substantially ameliorate liberal peacebuilding policy.

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