

Nov 04, 2016 by [M. Ashraf Haidari](#)

## **Success in Afghanistan** <sup>[1]</sup>

*This blog post first appeared in the International Herald Tribune.*

Roger Cohen, in his column "Afghanistan at the tipping point" (Globalist, Nov. 1), clarifies a major point: "Afghanistan is not Iraq."

It's true: No peace operation is winnable without popular support. We have the Afghan public behind us, but we can lose that if we do not deliver peace.

According to recent polls, the Afghan people cite insecurity, weak governance, a poor economy and unemployment as the largest problems facing the country.

How should we overcome these and other obstacles? First, by ending regional interference as the main source of instability in Afghanistan; second, with long-term programs to rebuild Afghan state institutions and economy; and, finally, by ensuring international unity behind our efforts.

Achieving overnight victory isn't feasible. But neglecting Afghanistan again risks mutual assured destruction as 9/11 once demonstrated six years ago. Thus, success is the only option.

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