

# The Daily Telegraph

## Letters to the Telegraph

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### Nato lets down Afghans

Sir - The internal strife within Nato over Afghanistan may very well spell disaster for the credibility and future of the alliance ("Canadians to quit Afghanistan", report, February 22), but that is not the greatest concern of the Afghan people.

The dispute between Nato members bearing the brunt of counter-insurgency operations and those focusing on development and reconstruction in the more stable areas of the country may jeopardize the prospects of organising presidential elections in 2009.

According to the Afghan constitution, President Karzai must call for elections by April 21 next year at the latest. However, Nato's inability to guarantee security in the southern parts of the country is likely to preclude these elections, rendering the once hopeful promise of democracy for the Afghan people empty and meaningless.

The importance of this matter cannot be understated. Ensuring that free and fair elections can be safely held would make significant strides in the battle for the "hearts and minds" of the Afghan people.

We must make sure that the citizens of Afghanistan are not abandoned once more by the international community.

If Nato cannot quickly come to grips with the situation in Afghanistan, the matter should be referred back to the UN Security Council.

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