

Talking to Pakistan

6 October 2011

The capture of the senior Haqqani leader ('Senior Haqqani leader captured; Karzai for talks with Pakistan', KT/Oct 2) could be the starting point of a serious Af-Pak strategy that has so far only existed in theory.

We have known for years that Pakistan is part of Afghanistan's security problem but since 2001 there has been no solid international military strategy that embodied this complex reality. One of the few things we did learn in ten years of conflict in Afghanistan is that there can only be a political solution that is Afghan-driven and involves talking to crucial neighbours such as Pakistan and Iran.

As such, President Karzai is right to direct peace negotiations towards Pakistan to see whether it could eventually become a principle partner for peace in Afghanistan. However, the clock is ticking as foreign forces will have been pulled out by 2014.

Jorrit Kamminga, by email