

## WAR IN AFGHANISTAN

# Canadians Divided on Assuming Non-Combat Role in Afghanistan

*Support for the current military engagement remains below the 40 per cent mark across the country.*

[VANCOUVER – Dec. 13, 2010] – While just over a third of Canadians support the country's military mission in Afghanistan, the decision to keep 950 soldiers in a strictly non-combat role after 2011 has split views across the country, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative national sample of 2,023 Canadian adults, more than half of respondents (56%, +1) oppose the military operation involving Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan, while just over a third (36%, +1) support the mission. Strong opposition to the war remains highest in Quebec (48%) while Albertans (19%) and Atlantic Canadians (18%) are more likely to strongly support the mission.

### Non-Combat Role in 2011

Canada's combat mission in Afghanistan is scheduled to end in July 2011. The federal government has announced that Canada will keep 950 soldiers in Afghanistan until 2014 in a strictly non-combat role to help train the Afghan military.

Almost half of Canadians (48%) agree with the decision to keep Canadian soldiers in a non-combat role in Afghanistan, while 44 per cent disagree with this course of action. Majorities of Albertans (62%) and British Columbians (56%) support the decision, while Quebecers (55%) and Atlantic Canadians (51%) are more likely to oppose it.

### KEY FINDINGS

- **48% agree with the decision to keep 950 soldiers in Afghanistan until 2014 in a strictly non-combat role to help train the Afghan military; 44% disagree**
- **56% (+1 since October) oppose the military operation involving Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan; 36% (+1) support it**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

*From December 3 to December 6, 2010, Angus Reid Public Opinion conducted an online survey among 2,023 randomly selected Canadian adults who are Angus Reid Forum panelists. The margin of error—which measures sampling variability—is +/- 2.2%, 19 times out of 20. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current education, age, gender and region Census data to ensure a sample representative of the entire adult population of Canada. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.*

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Three-in-five respondents who voted for the Conservative Party in the 2008 federal election (62%) support the non-combat mission, along with half of Green Party voters (51%) and half of Liberal Party voters (50%). Conversely, respondents who voted for the Bloc Québécois (68%) or the New Democratic Party (NDP) in the 2008 federal ballot (55%) are more likely to oppose the troops taking on a non-combat role after July 2011.

### **The Mission**

One third of Canadians (32%, =) think Canada did the right thing in sending military forces to Afghanistan, while 45 per cent (-2) believe Canada made a mistake. Across the country, 53 per cent of respondents feel that they have a clear idea of what the war in Afghanistan is all about.

### **When the War is Over**

A large proportion of Canadians (35%) remain undecided on what the most likely outcome of the war in Afghanistan will be. About three-in-ten (29%, 2) foresee a negotiated settlement from a position of U.S. and NATO strength that gives the Taliban a small role in the Afghan government.

Eight per cent of Canadians (+2) expect a clear victory by U.S. and NATO forces over the Taliban, while 14 per cent (-1) think that the Taliban will play a significant role in Afghanistan after the war is over, and a similar proportion (13%, -2) believe that U.S. and NATO forces will ultimately be defeated.

### **Obama's Plan**

Just over a quarter of Canadians (27%, -4) continue to express confidence in the Obama Administration being able to "finish the job" in Afghanistan, while three-in-five (62%, +5) are not too confident or not confident at all in the U.S. federal government.

### **The Media and the Government**

Two-in-five Canadians (43%, -4) claim that the national media has provided the right amount of information about the Afghan mission. For a quarter of respondents (26%, +1), the media is paying too little attention to Afghanistan.

A majority of Canadians (56%, +1) state that the federal government has provided too little information about the conflict, while one-in-four (24%, -1) say the amount of information has been appropriate.

### **Casualties**

At the time this survey was conducted, 153 Canadian soldiers had died in Afghanistan. Respondents to this survey were asked to enter a numeric response to articulate how many Canadian troops they thought had perished in Afghanistan since 2002.

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More than a third of Canadians (36%) provided a response between 134 and 166 soldiers, while 32 per cent believe that fewer than 134 soldiers have died in Afghanistan, and an equal proportion (32%) estimated that more than 166 soldiers have died in the conflict.

*For all previous Afghanistan War polls and more, go to our [website](#) / Follow us on [Twitter](#)*

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### War in Afghanistan

Overall, do you support or oppose the military operation involving Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan?

	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
<b>Strongly support</b>	11%	7%	19%	5%	14%	4%	18%
<b>Moderately support</b>	25%	30%	30%	21%	28%	18%	26%
<b>Moderately oppose</b>	25%	28%	19%	43%	24%	23%	29%
<b>Strongly oppose</b>	31%	30%	29%	19%	26%	48%	17%
<b>Not sure</b>	7%	6%	2%	12%	7%	7%	10%

### War in Afghanistan - TREND

Overall, do you support or oppose the military operation involving Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan?

	Dec. 2010	Oct. 2010	Aug. 2010	Jun. 2010
<b>Strongly support</b>	11%	11%	15%	13%
<b>Moderately support</b>	25%	25%	25%	24%
<b>Moderately oppose</b>	25%	21%	23%	26%
<b>Strongly oppose</b>	31%	34%	30%	33%
<b>Not sure</b>	7%	10%	8%	4%

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**War in Afghanistan**

Do you think Canada made a mistake or did the right thing in sending military forces to Afghanistan?

	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
<b>Made a mistake</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>39%</b>
<b>Did the right thing</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>38%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>23%</b>

**War in Afghanistan - TREND**

Do you think Canada made a mistake or did the right thing in sending military forces to Afghanistan?

	Dec. 2010	Oct. 2010	Aug. 2010	Jun. 2010
<b>Made a mistake</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>48%</b>
<b>Did the right thing</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>34%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>17%</b>

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**War in Afghanistan**

Do you feel that you have a clear idea of what the war in Afghanistan is all about?

Region							
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
Yes	51%	48%	66%	33%	52%	51%	50%
No	49%	52%	34%	67%	48%	49%	50%

**War in Afghanistan - TREND**

Do you feel that you have a clear idea of what the war in Afghanistan is all about?

	Dec. 2010	Oct. 2010	Aug. 2010	Jun. 2010
Yes	51%	53%	56%	56%
No	49%	47%	44%	44%

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**War in Afghanistan**

Now, thinking about the war in Afghanistan, what do you think is the most likely outcome?

	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
<b>Clear military victory by U.S. and NATO forces over the Taliban</b>	8%	6%	13%	7%	9%	7%	8%
<b>A negotiated settlement from a position of U.S. and NATO strength that gives the Taliban a small role in the Afghan government</b>	29%	21%	34%	20%	37%	22%	24%
<b>A negotiated settlement from a position of U.S. and NATO weakness that gives the Taliban a significant role in the Afghan government</b>	14%	20%	19%	15%	13%	13%	11%
<b>Military defeat of U.S. and NATO forces by the Taliban</b>	13%	17%	6%	10%	9%	24%	9%
<b>Not sure</b>	35%	36%	28%	47%	33%	34%	48%

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### War in Afghanistan

How confident are you that the Obama Administration will be able to “finish the job” in Afghanistan?

	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
Very confident	4%	2%	3%	3%	4%	6%	7%
Moderately confident	23%	13%	30%	25%	21%	29%	15%
Not too confident	40%	45%	38%	34%	42%	35%	39%
Not confident at all	22%	32%	26%	15%	22%	18%	22%
Not sure	11%	8%	4%	23%	10%	11%	18%

### War in Afghanistan - TREND

How confident are you that the Obama Administration will be able to “finish the job” in Afghanistan?

	Dec. 2010	Oct. 2010	Aug. 2010	Jun. 2010
Very confident	4%	4%	4%	4%
Moderately confident	23%	27%	27%	27%
Not too confident	40%	35%	38%	38%
Not confident at all	22%	22%	21%	23%
Not sure	11%	13%	9%	9%

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### War in Afghanistan

Thinking about the media in Canada, do you think it has provided too much attention, too little attention, or the right amount of attention to Afghanistan?

	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
<b>Too much</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>12%</b>
<b>The right amount</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>41%</b>
<b>Too little</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>29%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>18%</b>

### War in Afghanistan - TREND

Thinking about the media in Canada, do you think it has provided too much attention, too little attention, or the right amount of attention to Afghanistan?

	Dec. 2010	Oct. 2010	Aug. 2010	Jun. 2010
<b>Too much</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>12%</b>
<b>The right amount</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>51%</b>
<b>Too little</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>12%</b>

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### War in Afghanistan

Thinking about the federal government, do you think it has provided too much information, too little information, or the right amount of information about the war in Afghanistan?

	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
<b>Too much</b>	5%	3%	2%	2%	6%	8%	3%
<b>The right amount</b>	24%	19%	32%	26%	25%	19%	29%
<b>Too little</b>	56%	59%	52%	50%	53%	63%	51%
<b>Not sure</b>	15%	19%	14%	22%	16%	10%	17%

### War in Afghanistan - TREND

Thinking about the federal government, do you think it has provided too much information, too little information, or the right amount of information about the war in Afghanistan?

	Dec. 2010	Oct. 2010	Aug. 2010	Jun. 2010
<b>Too much</b>	5%	4%	5%	2%
<b>The right amount</b>	24%	25%	26%	29%
<b>Too little</b>	56%	55%	57%	57%
<b>Not sure</b>	15%	16%	13%	12%

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### War in Afghanistan

As you may know, Canada's combat mission in Afghanistan is scheduled to end in July 2011. The federal government has announced that Canada will keep 950 soldiers in Afghanistan until 2014 in a strictly non-combat role to help train the Afghan military. All things considered, do you agree or disagree with this decision?

	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
<b>Agree</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>37%</b>
<b>Disagree</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>51%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>12%</b>

### War in Afghanistan

As you may know, Canada's combat mission in Afghanistan is scheduled to end in July 2011. The federal government has announced that Canada will keep 950 soldiers in Afghanistan until 2014 in a strictly non-combat role to help train the Afghan military. All things considered, do you agree or disagree with this decision?

	Party support in 2008 federal election					
	Total	Con	Lib	NDP	BQ	Grn
<b>Agree</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>51%</b>
<b>Disagree</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>36%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>51%</b>

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**War in Afghanistan**

Canadian soldiers have active in Afghanistan since 2002. How many Canadian soldiers do you think have died in Afghanistan? Please enter your response.

	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
Less than 100	20%	20%	13%	28%	18%	23%	18%
From 100 to 133	12%	11%	8%	6%	13%	13%	11%
From 134 to 166 ✓	36%	35%	41%	30%	40%	29%	41%
From 167 to 200	12%	14%	11%	15%	10%	13%	13%
More than 200	20%	20%	26%	22%	19%	21%	16%

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*Angus Reid Public Opinion is a practice of Vision Critical—a global research and technology company specializing in custom online panels, private communities, and innovative online methods. Vision Critical is a leader in the use of the Internet and rich media technology to collect high-quality, in-depth insights for a wide array of clients. Dr. Angus Reid and the Angus Reid Public Opinion team are pioneers in online research methodologies, and have been conducting online surveys since 1995*

*Vision Critical is now one of the largest market research enterprises in the world. In addition to its five offices in Canada—located in Vancouver, Calgary, Regina, Toronto, and Montreal—the firm also has offices in San Francisco, Chicago, New York, London, Paris and Sydney. Its team of specialists provides solutions across every type and sector of research, and currently serves over 200 international clients.*

*Angus Reid Public Opinion polls are conducted using the Angus Reid Forum ([www.angusreidforum.com](http://www.angusreidforum.com)), Springboard America ([www.springboardamerica.com](http://www.springboardamerica.com)) and Springboard UK ([www.springboarduk.com](http://www.springboarduk.com)) online panels, which are carefully recruited to ensure representation across all demographic and psychographic segments of these populations. Panel members pass through rigorous screening and a double opt-in process ensuring highly motivated and responsive members. These premier online survey platforms present respondents with highly visual, interactive, and engaging surveys, ensuring that panel members provide thoughtful and reliable responses. Each survey is actively sampled and weighted to model that characteristics of the universe required and employs the latest in quality control techniques to ensure data validity.*

*Since 2006, Angus Reid has covered eight provincial elections in Canada—more than any other pollster in the country—and the results have accurately predicted the outcome of each of these democratic processes.*

*Angus Reid, the only public opinion firm to exclusively use online methods to follow the views of the electorate during the 2008 federal campaign, offered the most accurate prediction of the results of Canada's 40th election. More information on our electoral record can be found at:*  
<http://www.angus-reid.com/services/record-of-accuracy/>

*More information on the way Angus Reid conducts public opinion research can be found at*  
<http://www.angus-reid.com/about/>

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**For more information, please contact  
our spokesperson listed in the footnote.**

**Copies of this poll are available on our website:**  
<http://www.angus-reid.com>

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