

## AFGHANISTAN MISSION – MARCH 2008

# Canadians Disagree with Extending Mission in Afghanistan until 2011

*Most respondents still think the Harper government has failed to explain the mission properly*

[VANCOUVER – Mar. 26, 2008] – The majority of Canadians are not at ease with the recent resolution to prolong the country's military effort in Afghanistan until 2011, a new Angus Reid Strategies poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative national sample, 58 per cent of respondents disagree with Parliament's decision to extend Canada's mission in Afghanistan for another three years, with two-in-five respondents (42%) expressing strong disagreement.

Comparing to previous Angus Reid Strategies polls on this subject, the perceptions of Canadians on the Afghan commitment have remained practically unchanged. Over half of respondents (54%) still believe the military effort is more about war than peace, down three points since January. Also, the vast majority (75%) continues to think that Canadian troops are shouldering too much of the burden of the mission led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)—just one point down since last January.

Despite several discussions about Afghanistan inside and outside the House of Commons over the past two months, more than three-in-five (61%) respondents think the federal government headed by Prime Minister Stephen Harper has not effectively explained the mission to the Canadian public—a number that has not changed since January. In addition, 59 per cent of respondents remain convinced that Afghans are benefiting from the presence of Canadian troops in Afghanistan.

**KEY FINDINGS**

- » **58% oppose Ottawa's decision to extend the Afghan mission until 2011**
- » **54% see mission in Afghanistan as war, not peace effort**
- » **75% think Canada continues to shoulder too much of the burden of NATO's mission**
- » **61% say Harper government has failed to effectively explain the mission**
- » **59% believe Afghans benefit from Canadian presence in their country**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

*From March 17 to March 18, 2008, Angus Reid Strategies conducted an online survey among a randomly selected, representative sample of 1,045 adult Canadians. The margin of error for the total sample is +/- 3.0 %, 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.*

A political breakdown of the results shows that Conservative Party voters (72%) are the only ones who back prolonging Canada's mission in Afghanistan until the end of 2011. Conversely, the majority of Liberal (63%), New Democratic Party (74%), Bloc Québécois (78%) and Green (68%) supporters oppose the mission's extension.

In Alberta, a majority of respondents (57%) agrees with the extension, while the highest proportion of opponents is found in Quebec (67%), the Atlantic Provinces (63%) and Ontario (57%).

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### Mission in Afghanistan

As you may know, the House of Commons has authorized an extension of Canada's mission in Afghanistan until the end of 2011, which is conditional on Canada coming up with unmanned aerial vehicles and transport helicopters, and NATO providing an additional 1,000 troops in the south. Do you agree or disagree with the decision to extend Canada's mission in Afghanistan until the end of 2011?

	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ONT	PQ	ATL	Male	Female
<b>Strongly agree</b>	18%	24%	33%	13%	19%	10%	21%	26%	10%
<b>Moderately agree</b>	19%	22%	24%	21%	21%	17%	14%	23%	16%
<b>Moderately disagree</b>	16%	17%	9%	13%	17%	16%	15%	14%	17%
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	42%	32%	32%	42%	40%	50%	48%	35%	48%
<b>Not sure</b>	5%	5%	2%	11%	4%	7%	3%	3%	7%
<b>Net - Agree</b>	37%	46%	57%	34%	39%	26%	34%	48%	27%
<b>Net - Disagree</b>	58%	49%	41%	55%	57%	67%	63%	49%	66%

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	Will vote for or intends to vote for in next federal ballot						
	Total	Con	Lib	NDP	BQ	Grn	Other
<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Moderately agree</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>16%</b>
<b>Moderately disagree</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>68%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>16%</b>
<b>Net - Agree</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>16%</b>
<b>Net - Disagree</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>74%</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>68%</b>

<b>Mission in Afghanistan</b>									
In your view, is the Canadian mission in Afghanistan...									
		<b>Region</b>						<b>Gender</b>	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>BC</b>	<b>AB</b>	<b>MB/SK</b>	<b>ONT</b>	<b>PQ</b>	<b>ATL</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
<b>A peace mission</b>	29%	34%	36%	11%	27%	29%	37%	30%	28%
<b>A war mission</b>	54%	48%	47%	53%	55%	56%	55%	59%	49%
<b>Not sure</b>	18%	18%	17%	36%	18%	15%	8%	12%	23%

<b>Trend - Mission in Afghanistan</b>				
In your view, is the Canadian mission in Afghanistan...				
	<b>March 2008</b>	<b>January 2008</b>	<b>December 2007</b>	<b>July 2007</b>
<b>A peace mission</b>	29%	29%	28%	28%
<b>A war mission</b>	54%	57%	47%	52%
<b>Not sure</b>	18%	14%	24%	20%

<b>Mission in Afghanistan</b>									
Do you agree or disagree with this statement? – The Harper government has effectively explained the mission in Afghanistan									
		<b>Region</b>						<b>Gender</b>	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>BC</b>	<b>AB</b>	<b>MB/SK</b>	<b>ONT</b>	<b>PQ</b>	<b>ATL</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
<b>Agree</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>23%</b>
<b>Disagree</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>67%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>10%</b>

<b>Trend - Mission in Afghanistan</b>				
The Harper government has effectively explained the mission in Afghanistan				
	<b>March 2008</b>	<b>January 2008</b>	<b>December 2007</b>	<b>July 2007</b>
<b>Agree</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>19%</b>
<b>Disagree</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>60%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>21%</b>

<b>Mission in Afghanistan</b>									
Do you agree or disagree with this statement? – Canada is shouldering too much of the burden of NATO's mission in Afghanistan									
		<b>Region</b>						<b>Gender</b>	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>BC</b>	<b>AB</b>	<b>MB/SK</b>	<b>ONT</b>	<b>PQ</b>	<b>ATL</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
<b>Agree</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>74%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>73%</b>
<b>Disagree</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>12%</b>

<b>Trend - Mission in Afghanistan</b>				
Canada is shouldering too much of the burden of NATO's mission in Afghanistan				
	<b>March 2008</b>	<b>January 2008</b>	<b>December 2007</b>	<b>July 2007</b>
<b>Agree</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>58%</b>
<b>Disagree</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>18%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>24%</b>

<b>Trend - Mission in Afghanistan</b>									
Do you agree or disagree with this statement? – The Afghan people are clearly benefiting from Canadian efforts in their country									
	Total	Region						Gender	
		BC	AB	MB/SK	ONT	PQ	ATL	Male	Female
<b>Agree</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>54%</b>
<b>Disagree</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>16%</b>

<b>Trend - Mission in Afghanistan</b>				
The Afghan people are clearly benefiting from Canadian efforts in their country				
	March 2008	January 2008	December 2007	July 2007
<b>Agree</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>39%</b>
<b>Disagree</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>39%</b>

*Angus Reid Strategies is a North American full-service polling and market research firm which 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 Strategies team are pioneers in online research methodologies, and have been conducting online surveys since 1995. Located in Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, and Montreal, our team of specialists provides solutions across every type and sector of research.*

*Angus Reid Strategies polls are conducted using the Angus Reid Forum online panel ([www.angusreidforum.com](http://www.angusreidforum.com)), which is recruited via an industry-leading process that incorporates a randomized, widespread invitation approach and a triple opt-in screening procedure. The panel is maintained through state-of-the-art sampling techniques and frequent verifications of personal identity, contact information, and demographic characteristics. This premier online survey platform presents respondents with highly visual, interactive, and engaging surveys, ensuring that panel members provide thoughtful and reliable responses.*

*Angus Reid Strategies has been successful in predicting the outcome of last year's provincial elections in:*

*Quebec: <http://www.angusreidstrategies.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=news&newsid=37>*

*Manitoba: <http://www.angusreidstrategies.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=news&newsid=56>*

*Ontario: <http://www.angusreidstrategies.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=news&newsid=129>*

*Saskatchewan: <http://www.angusreidstrategies.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=news&newsid=138>*

*More information on the way Angus Reid Strategies conducts public opinion research can be found at <http://angusreidstrategies.com/uploads/pages/pdfs/ARS.ARF%20WHITE%20PAPER.pdf>*

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

**Copies of this poll are available on our website:  
[www.angusreidstrategies.com](http://www.angusreidstrategies.com)**