

General Sir David Richards, Chief of the General Staff :

"This is a war that needs to be fought and can be won.....we haven't sold it very well and we need to do better."

"If the Afghan people asked us to go tomorrow, we would have to go. We are there under a United Nations mandate."

"If we give up Afghanistan tomorrow, I absolutely guarantee you that if you are an al Qaeda member or Taleban, they will pour back into southern Afghanistan and they will have the freedom to plan and train and conduct operations which now they don't have."

"General McChrystal talks about 2013 (for a pull out of troops). The Chief of the Defence Staff and I have said that's pretty challenging. Being cautious military men, we're talking about 2014."

Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope, First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff :

Afghanistan must not be "the template for a future UK defence structure that can do nothing but more Afghanists.....the range of threats to UK interests is greater than that."