

Afghans intensify Taliban contact



■ **Late 2006:**

Afghan President **Hamid Karzai's** older brother **Qayum Karzai** (above) proposes Saudi-mediated talks between Karzai's government and Taliban leadership council, **Quetta Shura**. **Saudi Arabia is one of just three nations – with Pakistan and United Arab Emirates – that recognized Taliban's 1996-2001 government**

■ **Sep 2008:** First meeting takes place in **Mecca** at end of Ramadan

■ **Nov:** **Al Qaeda's** second in command, **Ayman al-Zawahiri**, attacks Kabul-Taliban talks as **"sign of government's weakness"**

■ **Jan 14-16, 2009:**

Saudi intelligence chief **Prince Muqrin bin Abdul Aziz** (centre left) visits Islamabad, Kabul and New Delhi to brief officials on progress of talks



■ **Spring 2009:** UN Special Representative **Kai Eide** (centre right) begins secret contacts with senior members of Quetta Shura



■ **Summer 2009:** Lull in talks during presidential election campaign

■ **Nov:** President Hamid Karzai (above) begins second term, announcing **Supreme Peace Council** to gain consensus on talks with Taliban

■ **Late 2009:** Saudi Arabia hosts high-level dialogue between Taliban and Karzai representatives. UN's Kai Eide says he believes Taliban leader **Mullah Mohammad Omar** backs Saudi initiative

■ **Jan 8, 2010:** Talks held in transit lounge at Dubai Airport, UAE. Issues believed to include peace terms and exile for Mullah Omar to Saudi Arabia with status of former head of state



■ **Feb-Mar:** Five Afghan Taliban leaders arrested by Pakistan's ISI (Inter Services Intelligence) agency – talks stall

■ **Oct 13:** NATO confirms it has **"facilitated" contacts between senior Taliban members and "highest levels of Afghan government"**