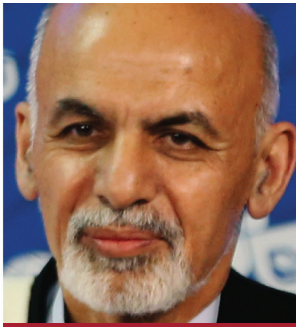


Candidates in Afghanistan's presidential election



Zalmay Rassoul

French-educated medical doctor, former foreign minister and national security adviser to Afghan government, seen as close to President **Hamid Karzai**. Could emerge as consensus candidate among many political factions



Ashraf Ghani

Former finance minister and World Bank official, ran in 2009 election but won only three percent of vote. Has expanded his political base, allying himself with former militia leader **Abdul Rashid Dostum**, who commands Uzbek vote



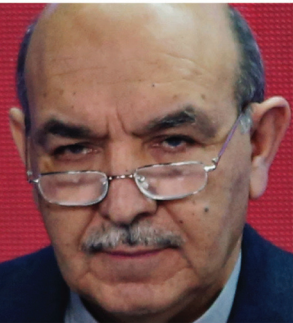
Abdul Rahim Wardak

Karzai's longtime defence minister until he was removed by Parliament in 2012. Wardak was among top Afghan officials most trusted by Washington. He earlier served as senior commander fighting against Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in 1980s



Abdullah Abdullah

Only serious challenger to Karzai in 2009 election, winning enough votes to force disputed run-off poll. Has strong ethnic Tajik following, but perceived weak support among Pashtuns could keep him from gaining majority of votes

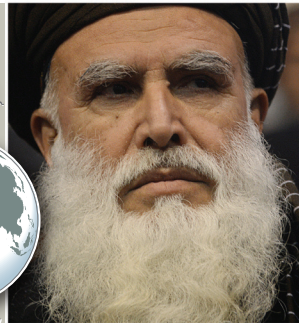


Qayyum Karzai

Businessman and elder brother of President Karzai. Previously served in Afghan National Assembly. Karzai name could be double-edged sword, since many Afghans feel frustrated with current government corruption



All candidates from Pashtun ethnic group – comprises 42 percent of Afghan population. Abdullah Abdullah half Pashtun, half Tajik



Abdul Rasul Sayyaf

Seen as controversial candidate due to his role as warlord during 1990s civil war and alleged links to al-Qaeda. Known as charismatic speaker, he may appeal to country's large number of religious conservatives



Outbuddin Hilal

Supporter of Hizb-i-Islami militant group led by **Gulbuddin Hekmatyar**. Twice served as first vice president during 1990s, and also served as deputy prime minister



Gul Agha Sherzai

Earned nickname of "the bulldozer" for serving as public works minister. Rose to power as mujahideen leader, served as governor of Kandahar and Nangarhar



Nadir Naeem

Grandson of former Afghan president **Sardar Daoud Khan**. Earned computer science degree in London and served as chief of staff to last Afghan King, **Zahir Shah**



Amin Arsala

Became first Afghan to join World Bank, in 1969, working there for 18 years before joining fight against Soviets. Later served for years as senior adviser to President Karzai



Daud Sultanzoy

Former pilot, settled in U.S. after Soviet invasion. Returned after fall of Taliban, serving as member of Parliament. Also known as political commentator and talk show host