

**WASHINGTON, DC – House Majority Leader Steny H. Hoyer (MD) released the following statement today after President Obama announced his strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan:**

“I applaud the Obama Administration for taking its time to develop a comprehensive strategy for the Afghanistan/Pakistan region. This plan was formed through a deliberative process, with many stakeholders consulted on the best path forward. This is a wise and realistic plan that represents a real change in strategy, and it has my support.

“As Democrats have long cited, Afghanistan is where the real war on terror must be fought. Yet for seven years, our efforts in Afghanistan have been hampered by a widely-acknowledged lack of focus and resources. What President Obama outlined today is a new, robust strategy for this crucial fight, which includes for the first time a more limited and well-defined end goal for our mission there. I especially appreciate that the President's strategy includes a new and more productive role for our allies, asking them to contribute civilians who are experts in fields critical to Afghanistan's rebuilding. Finally, I appreciate that the President's plan will ultimately include benchmarks, to ensure that our ongoing efforts are effective and that our funding is used for the purposes we intend.

“I look forward to working with the President as we move forward on this strategy and as we work together to meet the challenges we face in Afghanistan, Pakistan and throughout the rest of the region.”

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