



# OFS IN BRIEF

The 11<sup>th</sup> quarterly report submitted by the Lead Inspector General for Operation Freedom's Sentinel (OFS) summarizes the quarter's key events and oversight of the two complementary U.S. missions in Afghanistan: counterterrorism operations and building capacity of the Afghan security forces.

## South Asia Strategy Update *pp. 19-23, 69*

- **3,500 additional U.S. troops** are deploying to Afghanistan. There were **14,000** in country as of December.
- Most of these new troops will **train, advise, and assist** the Afghan forces at the **tactical level**.
- Expanded U.S. combat authorities allow **offensive operations** against the **Taliban**.
- The President submitted a **budget amendment** requesting an additional **\$1.2 billion** for FY 2018 to support **increased deployments**.
- The Afghan government continued to focus on **expanding** its **air force** and **special forces**.
- The United States pressured **Pakistan** to cease support for insurgents by **suspending** almost all **security assistance** (up to **\$2 billion**).

## Oversight *pp. 74-77, 86, 88*

### 10 REPORTS COMPLETED, addressing:

- The handling of allegations of **child sexual abuse** by Afghan security forces.
- Poor accountability that jeopardized **\$100 million** in U.S.-supplied **equipment** to the Afghans.
- Oversight of **counter-narcotics** operations.

### 7 INVESTIGATIONS CLOSED, including:

- A U.S. contractor was sentenced to **21 months** in prison for accepting **\$250,000 in kickbacks** from an Afghan subcontractor.
- A former U.S. Government employee **pled guilty** to soliciting **\$320,000 in bribes** from contractors.

## Battle for Population Control Continues *pp. 27-28*

- The Afghan government aims to have **80%** of the population under its **control** by the **end of 2019**.
- **64%** of Afghans live under **government** control, **24%** in **contested** areas, and **12%** under **Taliban** control.
- **No change** in the percentage of the population under government control **this quarter**.
- A **map** of areas of control is in the full report (p. 27).

## Political Tensions Increase *pp. 8, 28, 58*

- Funding and logistical uncertainties and a vacant election commission chair put the **July 2018 elections at risk**.
- **Governor Atta Noor refused** to accept his controversial **dismissal** by President Ghani.
- **First Vice President Dostum** was in **exile** amid claims he ordered an opponent kidnapped and assaulted.
- **Tribal militias** controlled by major **powerbrokers** like Dostum and Noor complicate political disputes.

## Security Situation Remains Highly Volatile *pp. 2-3*

**OCTOBER 17:** Taliban militants **killed** more than **80 police personnel** in two attacks on Afghan police facilities.

**OCTOBER 19:** Taliban attack on an Afghan army base **killed 43 soldiers**.

**OCTOBER 20:** ISIS-K suicide attack **killed 50** worshippers at a **Shia mosque** in Kabul.

**DECEMBER 28:** ISIS-K suicide attack **killed 41** people at a **Shia cultural center** in Kabul.

## Record Opium Harvest *pp. 19-20, 24*

- Opium **cultivated land increased 63%** since 2016, totaling **1,266 sq mi** (slightly larger than Rhode Island).
- Opium production in 2017 could total **9,000 tons**, nearly **double** the 4,800 tons produced in 2016.
- The Taliban **exploit farmers** to cultivate opium poppy in the **rural areas** under their control.
- U.S. and Afghan forces carried out **airstrikes** on Taliban **drug processing facilities**, costing the Taliban **\$16.5 million** in lost revenue.

## Humanitarian Assistance *pp. 62-64*

- **1.9 million** Afghans were internally **displaced** in 2017, up from 1.5 million in 2016.
- **900,000** Afghans will need **shelter assistance** in 2018.
- **377 incidents** of violence were reported **against aid workers** in Afghanistan in 2017.