OES IN BRIEF

This quarterly report submitted by the Lead Inspector General for Operation Enduring Sentinel (OES) summarizes this quarter’s key events related to the mission, including the status of terrorist organizations, such as ISIS-Khorasan (ISIS-K) and al-Qaeda, as well as U.S. diplomatic and humanitarian efforts related to Afghanistan.

ISIS-K Focused on Small-Scale Attacks Against the Taliban while Rebuilding  pp. 7–8

- The DoD did not provide any unclassified information on U.S. counterterrorism activity this quarter.
- ISIS-K worked to reorganize following the loss of senior leaders in Taliban raids in March and April.
- ISIS-K’s explosives remained the leading cause of civilian deaths in Afghanistan.
- ISIS-K lacks the capacity to attack the U.S. homeland directly but seeks to inspire individuals to commit acts of violence.

International Community Continued to Press the Taliban on Counterterrorism and Human Rights  pp. 10, 17–20

- No country has recognized the Taliban as the government of Afghanistan.
- Human rights abuses, especially against women and girls, remained a major barrier to international recognition.
- U.S. officials continued to meet with Taliban to promote U.S. national interests and call for the Taliban to respect expectations of the international community.
- The UN Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution condemning the Taliban’s restrictions on women.

The Taliban Demonstrated Improved Ability to Disrupt ISIS-K  pp. 10–11

- The Taliban’s counter-ISIS-K activity prevented major attacks and reduced the number of minor attacks.
- A Taliban raid killed the ISIS-K plotter responsible for the August 2021 Abbey Gate attack.
- The Taliban was unable to prevent attacks on low-security targets, including an attack that killed an acting Taliban governor.

Humanitarian Crisis Worsened with 28.8 Million in Need of Aid  pp. 21–24

- More than 15M Afghans were acutely food insecure with 2.8M experiencing emergency levels of hunger.
- Natural disasters, including drought and locusts, have reduced domestic food production.
- USAID provided more than $422M to WFP for food assistance in FY 2023, including $78.5M this quarter.

The Taliban Expanded its Ban on Women Working with NGOs to include the UN  pp. 24–26

- The enhanced restrictions will limit providers’ ability to reach 11.6M women and girls in need of aid.
- Restrictions on female staff caused several USAID implementers to continue to suspend operations.

U.S. Government Continues to Prioritize Afghan SIV, Asylum, and Refugee Applicants  pp. 15–16

- State and USCIS streamlined the document process for SIVs.
- State issued 6,384 SIVs this quarter; 12,253 total in 2023.
- 1,713 Afghan refugees arrived in the U.S. this quarter, bringing the total to 3,698 in FY 2023 as of June 8.
- 2,300 Afghan refugee applicants interviewed in 20 countries, bringing the total to 13,000 interviewed since October 2020.
- USCIS received 1,793 asylum applications and processed 1,276 this quarter as of June 8.

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Oversight and Investigations  pp. 29–33

The Lead IG agencies published 10 reports related to OES during the quarter, including reports on DoD screening of Afghan evacuees; DoD management of Afghan security funding; and State’s efforts to resettle Afghan SIVs. One individual was sentenced following a criminal fraud investigation.