



# OFS IN BRIEF

The 24th 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 the capacity of the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF).

## President Biden Announces Withdrawal Plans

pp. 8–9

- Upon taking office, the Biden Administration announced a **review of U.S. policy** in Afghanistan.
- In April, the President announced that the **final withdrawal** would begin in May and be completed by **September 11, 2021**.
- President Biden said diplomatic and humanitarian work and **support** for the ANDSF and Afghan government will **continue after the withdrawal**.
- The February 2020 U.S.-Taliban agreement committed to the **removal** of all U.S. and coalition **military** forces, non-diplomatic **civilian** personnel, security **contractors**, and support personnel by **May 2021**.

## Taliban Intensifies Attacks, Maintains Ties to al-Qaeda

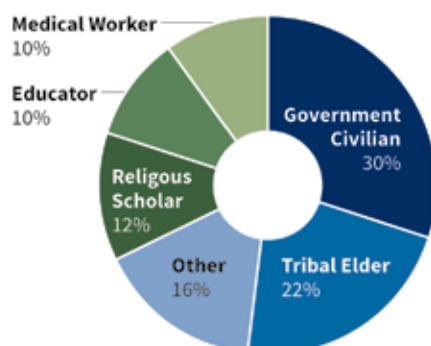
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- Insurgents initiated **37% more attacks** this quarter than during the same period last year.
- The Taliban **avoided targeting** U.S. and coalition forces and have not killed any U.S. troops in **more than a year**.
- The Taliban is likely preparing for **large-scale offensives** against provincial centers and ANDSF installations.
- Increased **Taliban control of highways** isolated ANDSF troops and limited their ability to resupply.
- The Taliban continued to maintain **strong ties** with **al-Qaeda**.

## Dozens of Afghan Civil Society Leaders Killed by Unidentified Attackers

pp. 16–19

In at least **40 shooting and bombing** incidents, prominent **Afghan civilians** were targeted and killed. U.S. and Afghan officials accused the Taliban of using these attacks to **destabilize Afghan communities**.



**“It is clear that the Taliban have not upheld what they said they would do and reduce the violence.”**

–General Richard Clarke, Commander, USSOCOM

## Afghan Peace Talks Make No Substantial Progress

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- Peace talks between the Afghan Islamic Republic negotiating team and Taliban **resumed** following a pause in January.
- **Increased violence** across the country made the Afghan government **suspicious** of the Taliban's willingness to negotiate for peace.
- The Taliban continued to demand **prisoner releases** and **sanctions relief** before moving forward.
- The two sides have **not agreed to an agenda** for the peace talks **more than 8 months** after the talks began.
- President Ghani **rejected** proposals for a **power-sharing** transitional government with the Taliban.

## Increased Violence Limits Access for Aid Workers

pp. 40–41

- **Access impediments** in January increased nearly **300%** over the same period in 2020.
- The Taliban ordered its local leaders to prohibit community development councils and **block COVID-19 relief** efforts.
- Taliban **threats of violence** and imposition of **bribes** resulted in USAID implementers suspending or restricting operations.

## Oversight and Investigations

pp. 53, 56

- A DoD OIG audit found the DoD did not seek full **reimbursement for air transportation** provided to coalition partners in Afghanistan.
- A USAID performance audit found that USAID needed to implement a **risk management** process as it **reduces staff and programs** in Afghanistan.