



OFS IN BRIEF

The 25th 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).

“Civil war is certainly a path that can be visualized if [Afghanistan] continues on the trajectory it’s on.”

–General Austin Miller, Commander, USFOR-A

President Biden Announces Complete Withdrawal by September 11, 2021 *pp. 8–12*

- U.S. troops, contractors, and equipment began their **final withdrawal** in May.
- A small troop contingent will **stay behind to guard** the U.S. Embassy in Kabul.
- Additional **special operations forces**, heavy bombers, and an aircraft carrier group deployed to the region to provide cover for the withdrawal.
- The February 2020 U.S.-Taliban agreement stipulated for the **removal of all military** forces, non-diplomatic civilian personnel, private security contractors, and support personnel.

U.S. Support to the ANDSF Transitions to “Over-the-Horizon” Model *pp. 19–22*

- Future financial support to the ANDSF will primarily consist of contracted **aviation maintenance** and training, supplies such as **fuel** and **ammunition**, and **soldier salaries**.
- Advisors will continue to work with Afghan partners via **video and teleconference**.
- DoD plans to conduct **airstrikes** against serious **terrorist** threats in Afghanistan but **not the Taliban** after withdrawal.

Taliban Intensifies Attacks as Coalition Forces Withdraw *pp. 12–17*

- The Taliban more than **doubled** the number of **district centers** it controlled, from **73** to **157**.
- The Taliban is preparing for **large-scale offensives** against provincial centers and complex attacks against ANDSF installations.
- DIA assessed that the **ANDSF “will very likely struggle”** to stop or reverse **Taliban gains**.

Afghans Who Worked for the U.S. Wait for Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) Approvals *pp. 31–32*

- Afghans who face **ongoing, serious threats** due to their work for the U.S. in Afghanistan may be eligible for SIVs.
- As of June, there was a **backlog of 18,000** applications, some of which have been **pending for years**.
- A 2020 DoS OIG review found several problems with the program, including **insufficient staffing** and a lack of a central **database**.
- DoS said it was **surging resources** and attempting to **streamline the process** to reduce the backlog.
- After the quarter, DoS said **eligible** applicants would be **relocated** to the U.S. or third countries.

Taliban Demonstrates Intransigence in Peace Talks *pp. 27–28*

- The Taliban **refused to participate** in a planned peace conference in Turkey, causing organizers to postpone the conference indefinitely.
- Ongoing peace talks in Doha, Qatar, produced **no significant progress**.
- Despite the **halting** progress of the talks, the Taliban nominally engaged in the peace process because it seeks **legitimacy**.

Increased Taliban Violence Limits Access for Humanitarian Workers *pp. 36–37*

- Taliban violence specifically **targeted female** government, aid, and **healthcare** workers.
- Taliban **blockades** threatened to **seize** humanitarian cargo en route to target populations.
- USAID expects constraints on **access** for humanitarian workers to **worsen** as violence increases.

Oversight and Investigations *pp. 56–66*

- A USAID OIG audit highlighted actions taken to prevent and respond to the **sexual exploitation of beneficiaries**.
- Lead IG investigations related to OFS resulted in **6 criminal charges** and **2 convictions** related to **theft** and **fraud**.