OPERATION FREEDOM’S SENTINEL
JANUARY 1, 2018-MARCH 31, 2018

OFS IN BRIEF

The 12th 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 security forces.

Terrorist Attacks Strike Kabul pp. 26-27

“The Taliban is in the city.”
– General John Nicholson

JANUARY 4 ISIS-K suicide bomber killed 20.

JANUARY 20 Taliban siege of the Kabul International Hotel killed 40, including 4 U.S. citizens.

JANUARY 27 Taliban detonated an ambulance packed with explosives, which killed 100 and injured 150.

MARCH 21 ISIS-K suicide bomber killed 31 near Shia shrine.

Afghan Elections Delayed pp. 52-54

- Afghan parliamentary elections were postponed from July until October 2018.
- Challenges to holding successful elections include inadequate voter registration, lack of dedicated funding, and security risks at polling sites.
- The delay introduces the additional risk of winter weather.
- The U.S. supports Afghan efforts to plan elections, which are seen as critical to the government’s legitimacy.

Lead IG Oversight pp. 81, 88, 94-96

12 REPORTS COMPLETED, addressing:
- Significant challenges in the management and oversight of $3.1 billion in U.S. funding provided to the Afghan security ministries.
- Contractors supporting the Embassy Air program lacked information to identify and mitigate threats to aviation.

INVESTIGATIONS resulted in:
- $2,019,454 in fines or recoveries.
- 2 criminal convictions for contractor kickbacks and solicitation of bribes.

Talk of Peace but No Action Yet pp. 54-55

- President Ghani made a peace offer to the Taliban that included legitimization of the Taliban as a political party and release of prisoners.
- The Taliban called for removal of all U.S. forces and peaceful dialogue with the United States.

Conflict Continues to Displace Afghans pp. 61-62

- 54,063 additional Afghans were displaced by conflict during this quarter.
- 700,000 IDPs and returnees had no access to education; 2 million had no access to a doctor; and 1.5 million lacked access to markets to buy and sell goods, including food.
- Returnees from Pakistan to Afghanistan fell from 618,000 in 2016 to 157,000 in 2017.