



OFS IN BRIEF

The 16th 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).

“THERE IS NO FINAL AGREEMENT UNTIL EVERYTHING IS AGREED.”

—Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad

United States and Taliban Reach Draft Agreement on Peace Deal

pp. 12-19

- U.S. and Taliban representatives reached an “agreement in draft” on a **framework for peace** in Afghanistan.
- The Taliban agreed to **deny safe haven** to terrorist groups and the United States agreed to **withdraw troops** from Afghanistan.
- While the agreement is an important milestone, a final **peace accord** has **not been reached**.
- **Remaining challenges** include the Taliban's **refusal to meet** with the Afghan government and **disunity** among Afghan government leaders.

U.S. Forces Target Taliban Leaders in Support of Negotiations

pp. 22-23

- U.S. **airstrikes** targeted Taliban leaders to stem insurgent attacks and **pressure** the Taliban to stay at the **negotiating table**.
- U.S. forces said that the airstrike operations **likely caused the Taliban to shift tactics** throughout the country.
- It is **unclear** if U.S. military pressure is **influencing the Taliban's decision** to remain involved in the peace talks.

DoD Shifts Measures of Progress in Afghanistan

pp. 27-28

- The U.S. military recently **discontinued two measures of progress** under OFS: district control and the ANDSF's progress under the U.S.-Afghan Compact.
- This change reflects a recent **shift towards qualitative measures**, which makes it harder for the American public to track the progress of the OFS mission.

Taliban Continues Attacks, Despite Peace Talks

pp. 20-31

- As negotiations proceeded in Doha, the Taliban continued its **campaign of violence**.
- Despite continued violence, **civilian casualties declined** compared to one year ago.
- Almost half of the **ANDSF casualties** during the quarter occurred at checkpoints.
- USFOR-A assessed that the Taliban intends to **attack more provincial centers**, as it did in Farah and Ghazni provinces in 2018.

2nd SFAB Arrives to Support Train, Advise, and Assist Mission

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- Compared to the 1st Security Force Assistance Brigade (SFAB), which departed Afghanistan in fall 2018, the 2nd SFAB is **smaller** and will focus more on **corps-level advising**.
- To accelerate Afghan aviation maintenance training, the DoD will establish **new training centers** in Slovakia and the United Arab Emirates.

Presidential Election Rescheduled for September 2019

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- According to the Afghan government, the reason for the postponement was to address **security and logistical challenges** that occurred during the October 2018 elections.
- President Ghani dismissed election officials and made changes to the electoral law, but it is still **unclear** if the Afghan government will be able to hold a **secure and fair election**.

Oversight and Investigations

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- Lead IG agencies and partners completed **5 reports** related to OFS, including projects on OFS funding and aviation maintenance.
- Lead IG investigative branches **closed 7 cases**, **initiated 5 new ones**, and **coordinated on 57 cases** involving alleged crimes, including procurement fraud, corruption, grant fraud, theft, and trafficking-in-persons.