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# The Afghan War: Creating An Afghan Capability to Win

AUTHOR

Anthony H. Cordesman

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Please note: This draft is being circulated for comments and suggestions.  
Please provide them to [acordesman@gmail.com](mailto:acordesman@gmail.com)

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## Executive Summary

The Trump Administration inherited an under-resourced mess in Afghanistan when it took office. Two previous Administrations failed to properly prepare Afghan forces for the withdrawal of most foreign forces that took place in 2014, or to shape an effective Afghan civil government. It is far from clear whether the Afghans risk losing the war in 2017, but it is more than possible that they will be locked into a war of attrition with no clear end, and that 2017 could be the beginning of major defeats.

### Coping with Eight Threats, Not Just One

The “enemy” is only part of the threat, and enabling Afghan forces to defeat the enemy is only part of any meaningful form of victory. Today, Afghanistan faces the following eight threats:

- *A mix of enemies that now includes the Taliban, Haqqani network, ISIS, other elements linked to Pakistan, and has little incentive to seek a real peace as distinguished from trying to exploit peace negotiations as a form of war by other means.*
- *A U.S. ally that failed to properly resource the development of Afghan forces until 2011, attempted to rush force development to meet an arbitrary withdrawal date of end-2014, and has since never properly sized its security or civil aid to meet the real world conditions on the ground, but rather slowed its withdrawal of an already inadequate military and train and assist effort.*
- *A U.S.-led military aid effort that focused on tactical victories rather than “hearts and minds” and the political realities of the insurgency. This effort consistently understated the reemergence of the Taliban and other enemy forces, lacked realism in reporting on the true pace of Afghan force development, never came firmly to grips with Afghan corruption, and accepted a withdrawal schedule that was clearly too quick.*
- *A U.S. led civil aid effort that was never properly linked to the security and stability needs of Afghanistan, and failed to create an effective integrated civil-military effort. The civil aid effort made even more exaggerated claims of progress, did not deal with Afghan and outside corruption, put far too many resources into to project aid and the use of Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) to buy temporary support, and did not realistically plan for the impact of post-2014 cuts in military and aid spending on the Afghan civil sector.*
- *Afghan national security forces that remain unready to fight and, divided on many levels, weakened by corruption at every level, lacking in air power and mobility, sharply affected by the number of missing or ghost soldiers, and focused on tactical victory.*
- *Afghan national security forces that remain divided into military, police, and local forces where the military forces are largely the only elements capable of directly fighting the Taliban, Haqqani network, ISIS and other factions. The police and local forces cannot “win,” but also lack the capability to hold and deal with the ability to enforce security and justice – in part because of the corruption and failures of the civil government from the center to the district level.*
- *A divided and deeply corrupt Afghan civil government whose limited reforms have not met its people’s needs or expectations, where rule is still largely by power brokers rather*

*than from “Kabulistan,” and which is steadily losing the confidence and support of its people.*

- *A de facto threat from Pakistan*—a supposed ally—from Iranian and Pakistani expulsion of refugees, and from Russian support of the Taliban.

War is not won through half-measures or through denial. Unless the Trump Administration takes a far more decisive approach to both the security and civil sectors in Afghanistan, its security and popular support for the Afghan government may collapse—either slowly and painfully over years or in some catalytic political struggle.

### **The Need for a “Conditions Based Strategy,” but One Based on Making Aid Conditional and Actual Afghan Progress**

The analysis indicates that Afghan forces need a much stronger U.S. and allied combat support and a stronger train and assist mission. Any chance of winning a decisive victory by 2020 requires a new U.S. approach to both military and civil aid. *The U.S. can only succeed if it shifts from a deadline and withdrawal-oriented strategy to one based on providing enough aid to achieve decisive results at levels of force and money that reflect the military and civil realities on the ground, and the real world conditions of Afghan forces and governance.*

At the same time, any analysis of the need for more effective U.S. aid must be prefaced with the statement that this does not mean the Trump Administration should simply increase United States military and economic support for Afghanistan without setting clear conditions for action by the Afghans as well.<sup>1</sup>

Many of Afghanistan’s problems are the result of self-inflicted wounds—ones that have been inflicted its political and military leaders. Unless Afghan leaders become more responsible and effective, more outside support will still fail.

The U.S. must weigh its choices carefully in deciding to provide anything approaching the properly levels of aid to Afghanistan for a period that may well have to last for another half decade or more. The U.S. has many other strategic priorities. Afghanistan is scarcely the current center of the terrorist threat to the U.S., and leaving the Afghan problem (and Pakistan) to Russia, China, Iran, India, and Central Asian states is one way to impose the burden on other countries.

The analysis of the Afghan security sector in this analysis show that U.S. has already identified a long list of military security problems that can only be addressed by the Afghan government, and where the U.S. needs to make military aid far more conditional on Afghan efforts to solves these problems.

The later sections of the analysis cover the Afghan civil sector, and show that the U.S. approach to this aspect of the war needs more radical change, and a focus on Afghanistan’s failed levels of governance and its growing post-transition economic crisis rather than the current types of aid. Such changes can only be effective, however, if Afghan politics and governance make serious reforms. The U.S. cannot help a government that will not help itself.

If the Afghan government can be persuaded to make the necessary reforms over the next few years, and take the most urgent steps during the coming 2017 campaign season, there is a case for stronger U.S. and other outside military and civil support, and the analysis indicates that the cost to the U.S. of doing what is needed may well be acceptable.

It must be stressed, however, that continued and expanded U.S. aid and support to Afghanistan should be conditional on actual Afghan performance, and not on further promises of reform. The costs and risks of U.S. involvement in the war are not acceptable if Afghanistan's leaders continue to fail their country. The U.S. cannot help a nation from the outside that will not help itself, and it has many other needs and obligations.

All aspects of military and civil should be clearly tied to full accountability, measures of effectiveness, and transparent reporting. The threat of cutting off aid should be rigidly enforced when Afghanistan does not actually execute necessary reforms, and when corruption, incompetence, and political favoritism make them ineffective. The U.S. should also target corrupt, incompetent, and self-seeking Afghan leaders and officials – making it clear that they must resign or be fired for given flows of aid to be resumed, denying them visas, and carefully examining measures to remove any dual nationality.

### **Planning an Effective U.S. and Allied Train and Assist, Counterterrorism, and Combat Air Support Effort**

No one can assess the detailed requirements for an adequate U.S. support effort from the outside. The detailed planning to both seek reform of the Afghan force development effort and provide the kind of U.S. train/assist and air support can only be done at the command level in Afghanistan, and it should be done in concert with the matching effort to tie aid to Afghan civil reform called for in the following parts of this analysis.

What is needed is a zero-based net assessment of both the current and probable threat and of the current and probable capabilities of Afghan forces, and a "zero-based" assessment of the need for train and assist personnel that accepts the fact the U.S. must be the major provider of such aid. "Zero-based" must mean assessing the need to have a good prospect of winning, not how to minimize the U.S. effort and reduce it as quickly as possible. It must include an honest risk assessment, including contingency studies.

The U.S. must not repeat the mistake of spinning the analysis to suit some policy goal and minimizing the requirement to make it politically acceptable. If adequate and decisive force is too costly -- which seems unlikely -- the study should honestly address this.

At the same time, the assessment must look beyond the tactical level and evaluate the impact of the political and civil dimensions of the conflict. Insurgencies are battles for control over populations and territory, not just fights between hostile forces. The assessment must address the level of government vs. insurgent influence and support, not just combat outcomes. It must look at the ability hold and build, and not simply to win.

This has been a consistent failure in far too much of the military planning in Afghanistan, and it risks repeating a lesson raised all too clearly by an incident described the late Col Harry Sommers. Sommers was talking with an officer who had served in the then North Vietnamese forces. Sommers pointed out that the U.S. had won virtually every tactical encounter. His Vietnamese counterpart smiled and responded that, "Yes, but it was irrelevant." The winner is the side that ends up controlling the state, whether by military means or political ones, and control of the population is critical.

### **Planning Effective U.S. and Allied Support to the Afghan Civil Sector**

Any effort to create an effective U.S. effort to strengthen the Afghan civil sector is going to require careful planning of a kind that needs to be done in country. In practice, such an effort



will almost certainly also have to limit any aid requirement to something very close to the \$15.2 billion for 2017-2018 aid to Afghanistan agreed to at the conference the EU hosted in Brussels in October 2016.

At the same time, a U.S.-led effort to help Afghanistan deal with its civil problems must look beyond fiscal measures and focus on how to use the money to best meet the needs and expectations of the Afghan people and win support for the government. What is needed is to expand the zero-based net assessment of Afghan military needs recommended earlier in this report to include Afghan civil needs as well.

This should include net assessment of Afghan popular perceptions of the government and threat that deals with key differences by region, sect, ethnicity, and key power brokers. It should also focus on stability and security and not development. There simply will not be enough time, money, and qualified personnel many to deal with every urgent need or grievance, much less pay for development in mid-conflict.

Job creation may prove to be the key priority – along with reducing corruption and creating effective leadership and governance -- but basic services like justice, education, and medical help will also be critical. Once again, aid must also be conditional and tied to effective plans, audits and fiscal controls, transparency, and measures of effectiveness.

U.S.-led efforts must also be tied to the same kind of measures to limit waste, incompetence, and corruption that exist in the civil sector. There are highly competent, patriotic, and honest Afghans, but no one can count on their presence or ability to act given the current structure of Afghan politics and governance. There are all too many reasons why past promises of reform have failed: Unstable careers, competing and corrupt power brokers, buying factional support, exploiting public office while the opportunity exists, links to narco-trafficking, and ethnic, sectarian, and tribal rivalries to name a few.

One of the fundamental absurdities of past aid to the Afghan civil sector has been setting goals for central government control and allocation of aid money as if the government was competent and not corrupt. Promises of reform also cannot be substituted for actual reform. Another has been setting up anti-corruption bodies within a corrupt system – an effort that has failed again and again in other parts of the world, and far too often sets impossible standards that collapse and/or produce scapegoats rather than reform.

U.S. and allied leverage consists largely of control of aid and aid funds, although some other measures like control of visas, public naming of the grossly corrupt, and strategic communications directed as much at the Afghan government as the enemy can help. As is the case with Afghan security forces, aid must be tied to its proper use and made conditional. This U.S. and its allies must also hammer home the fact that *conditional aid really means conditional*. It must be clear to Afghan leaders that they either take responsibility or the U.S. can and will leave. It is one of the ironies of a successful U.S. strategy in Afghanistan that the ability to stay with a serious prospect of success is dependent on the willingness to leave.

### **Taking a Transactional Approach to Afghanistan's Neighbors**

The changes in U.S. strategy must also reexamine the role of Pakistan, and the emerging roles of nations like Russia, Iran, India, and the Central Asian states. The most important such reexamination should be Pakistan. More than a decade of the facade of alliance has shown that

Almost since the start of the Afghan War, Pakistan has pursued its own interest in Afghanistan at a high cost to the United States -- sometimes in dollars and sometimes in lives. For all the rhetoric of alliance, its ISI and other elements of its military have consistently dealt with -- and offer sanctuary to -- elements of the Taliban, Al Qa'ida, Haqqani Network, and other insurgents. The U.S. has also had to pay for access to Pakistani air space and lines of communication with aid, and to some extent by endorsing the facade of an alliance that is only partly real.

It is possible the U.S. can have a successful strategy that is sufficiently Afghan-centric so that it can continue such relations indefinitely. This, however, requires an objective risk assessment, and the U.S. needs to consider what options it has to quietly or overtly pressure Pakistan -- particularly if Afghan-Pakistani relations continue to deteriorate and/or if the U.S. seeks to seriously try to convince the Taliban to come to the conference table in some way that can actually end the conflict.

Cutting aid, sanctions, tilting to India are all options, although scarcely good or easy ones. So is transparency. Leaking all of the details of given Pakistani actions, providing an official report to Congress, systematically rebutting the usual Pakistani claims of martyrdom, and outing Pakistani ties to the Taliban are all possibilities. This may or may not mean openly ceasing to keep up the facade that Pakistanis an ally, but the relationship should be seen as what it is: A transactional relationship where you get what you pay, pressure, or threaten for.

The same is true in a broader sense. Searches for regional cooperation, or based of some idealistic view of groups of rational bargainers do not fit the region or the individual nations involved. Leaders change, but at present, India seems to be the only case where there is enough common interest to go beyond pay, pressure, or threaten.

At the same time, the situation might ease if the U.S. actually withdrew. To some extent, all of the nations outside Afghanistan can to some extent exploit the U.S. position while the U.S. greatly reduces the risk of an unstable Afghanistan to them. The situation changes radically if the U.S. withdraws. Afghanistan's neighbors than have to become involved to some degree or live with the consequences. It also becomes far easier for the U.S. to play a spoiler role at little of no risk to itself.

**Note: This analysis draws heavily on a Burke Chair previous study, *The Trump Transition and the Afghan War*, and on research conducted by Max Markusen.**

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## I. Introduction

The Trump Administration inherited an under-resourced mess in Afghanistan when it took office. Two previous Administrations failed to properly prepare Afghan forces for the withdrawal of most foreign forces that took place in 2014, and to shape an effective Afghan civil government. It is far from clear that the Afghans risk losing the war in 2017, but it is more than possible that they will be locked into a war of attrition with no clear end and that 2017 could be the beginning of major defeats.

The “enemy” is only part of the threat, and enabling Afghan forces to defeat the enemy is only part of any meaningful form of victory. Today, Afghanistan faces the following eight threats:

- *A mix of enemies that now includes the Taliban, Haqqani network, ISIS, other elements linked to Pakistan, and has little incentive to seek a real peace as distinguished from try to exploit peace negotiations as a form of war by other means.*
- *A U.S. ally that failed to properly resource the development of Afghan forces until 2011, attempted to rush force development to meet an arbitrary withdrawal date of end-2014, and has since never properly sized its security or civil aid to meet the real world conditions on the ground, but rather slowed its withdrawals of an already inadequate military and train and assist effort.*
- *A U.S.-led military aid effort that focused on tactical victories rather than “hearts and minds” and the political realities of the insurgency.* This effort consistently understated the reemergence of the Taliban and other enemy forces, lacked realism in reporting on the true pace of Afghan force development, never came firmly to grips with Afghan corruption, and accepted a withdrawal schedule that was clearly too quick.
- *A U.S. led civil aid effort that was never properly linked to the security and stability needs of Afghanistan, and failed to create an effective integrated civil-military effort.* The civil aid effort made even more exaggerated claims of progress, did not deal with Afghan and outside corruption, put far too many resources into to project aid and the use of PRTs to buy temporary support, and did not realistically plan for the impact of post-2014 cuts in military and aid spending on the Afghan civil sector.
- *Afghan national security forces that remain unready to fight and, divided on many levels, weakened by corruption at every level, lacking in air power and mobility, sharply affected by the number of missing or ghost soldiers, and focused on tactical victory.*
- *Afghan national security forces that remain divided into military, police, and local forces where the military forces are largely the only elements capable of directly fighting the Taliban, Haqqani network, ISIS and other factions.* The police and local forces cannot “win,” but also lack the capability to hold and deal with the ability to enforce security and justice – in part because of the corruption and failures of the civil government from the center to the district level.
- *A divided and deeply corrupt Afghan civil government whose limited reforms have not met its people’s needs or expectations, where rule is still largely by power brokers rather than from “Kabulistan,” and which is steadily losing the confidence and support of its people.*

- *A de facto threat from Pakistan* – a supposed ally, form Iranian and Pakistani expulsion of refugees, and by Russian support of the Taliban.

### ***A Failed U.S. Approach to the War***

Virtually every major insurgency is the result of the fact that the central government created the conditions that led to its rise and success and is as much a threat as the enemy. Virtually every U.S. effort to fight a major insurgency has been limited by the U.S. failure to see the extent to which the host country is effectively part of the threat, and to face up to its own limitations and problems in providing an effective civil and military assistance effort.

The Bush Administration gave priority to the Iraq War after 2003. It failed to respond effectively to the recovery of the Taliban and the emergence of other threats, and resource the development of effective Afghan forces. It ignored the warnings of at least one Ambassador, and several senior U.S. military officers. It also ignored the limited progress in the civil side, and the corruption and failures of the central government – which often did more to dispute the control of “Kabulstan” than control the nation’s various factions and power brokers. Finally, it created a climate of official reports that exaggerated Afghan military civil progress that still exists.

The Obama Administration did resource the creation of more effective Afghan forces but these resources did not fully arrive until 2012, and it set a deadline for the withdrawal of most US and allied forces by the end of 2014 that was arbitrary and not based on conditions in the field. Its brief surges of U.S. forces had little real military impact and much of it was wasted by allocating U.S. Marine Corps forces to a secondary front in Helmand – as much because of interservice rivalry as ant strategic rationale.

The Obama Administration never reached an effective solution in dealing with a deeply divided and corrupt set of Presidential election in April and June 2014 that left the two major candidates – Ashraf Ghani and Abdullah Abdullah – as contending President and Chief Executive Office and a thug like Dostum as Vice President – making the central government even more of a de facto government of “Kabulstan” rather than an effective and unifying national government. It gradually abandoned its plans to phase out most of the small remaining U.S. military counterterrorism and train and assist effort by the end of 2016, but failed to provide effective combat air and counterterrorism support and to create an effective train and support mission.

Leaving patients half dead, and on life support, is scarcely the same thing as curing them. That, however, is what the Obama Administration accomplished in Afghanistan between 2014 and 2016. The country still survives, but it lacks the military capabilities to provide effective security, its government is corrupt and ineffective, and its economy is not capable of properly serving its people or winning their loyalty.

War is not won through half-measures or denial. Unless the incoming Trump Administration takes a far more decisive approach to both the security and civil sectors in Afghanistan, its security and popular support for its government may collapse -- either slowly and painfully over years or in some catalytic political struggle.

The following analysis indicates that Afghan forces do need more combat support and a stronger train and assist mission. Any chance of winning a decisive victory by 2020 requires a new U.S. approach to both military and civil aid. The U.S. can only succeed if it shifts from a deadline and withdrawal-oriented strategy to one based on providing enough aid to achieve decisive results



that reflect the military and civil realities on the ground, the real world condition of Afghan forces and governance.

***A Host Country Government that is Almost as Much of a Challenge as the Threat***

At the same time, any analysis of the need for more effective U.S. aid must be prefaced with the statement that this does not mean the Trump Administration should simply increase United States military and economic support for Afghanistan without setting clear conditions for action by the Afghans as well.<sup>2</sup>

Many of Afghanistan's problems are the result of self-inflicted wounds that have been inflicted its political leaders. Unless Afghan leaders become more responsible and effective, more outside support will still fail. The U.S. must also weigh its choices carefully. The U.S. has many other strategic priorities. Afghanistan is scarcely the current center of the terrorist threat to the U.S., and leaving the Afghan problem (and Pakistan) to Russia, China, Iran, India, and Central Asian states is one way to impose the burden on other countries.

The analysis of the Afghan security sector shows that U.S. has already identified a long list of military security problems – including gross levels of corruptions and major questions about the levels of real manning and ghost soldiers -- that can only be addressed by the Afghan government, and where the U.S. needs to make military aid far more conditional on Afghan efforts to solves these problems.

The later sections of the analysis cover the Afghan civil sector, and show that the U.S. approach to this aspect of the war needs more radical change, and a focus on Afghanistan's failed levels of governance and its growing post-transition economic crisis rather than the current types of aid. Such changes can only be effective, however, if Afghan politics and governance make serious reforms. The U.S. cannot help a government that will not help itself.

If the Afghan government can be persuaded to make the necessary reforms over the next few years, and take the most urgent steps during the coming 2017 campaign season, there is a case for stronger U.S. and other outside support, and the analysis indicates that the cost to the U.S. of doing what is needed may well be acceptable.

It must be stressed, however, that continued and expanded U.S. aid and support to Afghanistan should be conditional on actual Afghan performance, and not simply on further promises of reform. The costs and risks of U.S. involvement in the war are not acceptable if Afghanistan's leaders continue to fail their country. The U.S. cannot help a nation from the outside that will not help itself, and it has many other needs and obligations.

All aspects of military and civil should be clearly tied to full accountability, measures of effectiveness, and transparent reporting. The threat of cutting off aid should be rigidly enforced when Afghanistan does not actually execute necessary reforms, and when corruption, incompetence, and political favoritism make them ineffective. The U.S. should also target corrupt, incompetent, and self-seeking Afghan leaders and officials – making it clear that they must resign or be fired for given flows of aid to be resumed, denying them visas, and carefully examining measures to remove any dual nationality.

It is also important to stress that some aspects of this conditionality are already in place, although in limited form, and not in ways that have been broadly enforced. The Department of Defense (DoD) semi-annual reports on *Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan* notes that.<sup>3</sup>

In August 2016, RS, the MoD, and the MoI signed the Common Policy Agreement on Operational Conditions that placed conditionality on the implementation of reforms that support the 2016-2017 winter campaign plan. The agreement describes ANDSF operational goals and establishes a framework of responsibilities between the ANDSF and RS and includes 12 conditions for the MoD and 10 for the MoI that are focused on improving operational readiness, better utilizing the ASSF, personnel manning, reducing corruption within the ANDSF, and force optimization initiatives to help generate additional offensive maneuver capability. Through enforcing accountability mechanisms in the bilateral commitment process, RS has already withheld funding and assets from the MoD, the MoI, and the ANDSF when certain conditions have not been met. These actions have been effective at prompting adjustments to ANDSF strategy and the operational employment of forces to increase their effectiveness against the insurgency.

...The FY 1395 commitment letters are comprehensive and include more than 80 conditions that encourage transparency and accountability of equipment and resources. These letters establish expectations for the responsible management of direct contributions from ASFF, NATF, and LOTFA. If the criteria spelled out in the commitment letters are not met, funds can be decremented from total direct contributions or withheld until corrective steps are taken. These enforcement mechanisms underpin U.S. messaging to Afghan leadership that they must demonstrate accountability and transparency in the expenditure of donor funds.

Since the end of the first quarter of FY 1395 on March 19, 2016, the coalition has begun conducting quarterly reviews at the two-star general officer level to assess MoD and MoI progress on meeting conditions outlined in the commitment letters and determine responses as appropriate when the Afghans do not meet conditions. The first two quarters of SY 1395 have seen mixed success in meeting the conditions outlined in the commitment letters. The second quarter saw a slight improvement, with 66 percent of conditions demonstrating satisfactory progress compared to 60 percent demonstrating satisfactory progress in the first quarter. Recommended penalties decreased from 12 (seven for the MoI and five for the MoD) in the first quarter to only five (four for the MoI and one for the MoD) in the second quarter.

However, all second quarter penalties were a repeat from the first quarter. Additionally, the second quarter included five recommended incentives (four for the MoD and one for the MoI) for meeting conditions in the Commitment Letters. Penalties for non-compliance include reduced fuel allocations and withholding of equipment and are most often imposed as part of the MoD Executive Steering Committee and MoI Executive Oversight Council meetings.

A conditional aid effort may be unusual, but the precedents do exist, and the analysis of U.S. aid options that follows can only be successful if the U.S. sets such conditions and enforces them.

## **II. Provide the Mix of Train and Assist and Combat Air Support the Afghan Forces Need to Survive and Develop Effective Fighting Capability**

Afghan forces are making progress. Some units fight well and show great courage. The overall force seems to be making progress, and the potential for more rapid progress seems to be there. Nevertheless, current Afghan military and security efforts are inadequate. The Afghan government could lose the control of one or more provinces during the 2017 campaign season, anti-corruption efforts are having only limited and uncertain success, and John Sopko, the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, has warned that much of the reporting on Afghan force development is unrealistic:<sup>4</sup>

We've been raising this concern about ghosts going back a number of years. Actually I want to say we heard about it from Ashraf Ghani years ago, before he became president, he warned me about "ghosts," so we started looking three years ago.

Sharyl: John Sopko is the Inspector General watching over the U.S. taxpayer billions spent to rebuild Afghanistan.

Sharyl: When you say "ghosts," what are you referring to?

John Sopko: What we're talking about are policemen, Afghan policemen, Afghan military, Afghan civil servants who don't exist or they have multiple identity cards and we're paying their salaries. By "we" I mean the United States and the international community. And we started finding out that we had no capacity to measure the number of soldiers, teachers, doctors, military people who we are paying their salaries.

Sharyl: For years, multiple audits have shown there's no way to prove that the money we send for salaries is going to a real live body. And the payroll numbers just don't add up.

Sharyl: For example, Sopko says, in June 2016, the supposed number of Afghan military and police was 319,595. But an Afghan official told AP "the best internal estimate" of the real number was "around 120,000."

Sharyl: This implies fraud, obviously.

John Sopko: Oh, absolutely. Major fraud. And what's happening is the commanders or generals or other higher officials are actually pocketing the salaries of the ghosts. And I remember president Ghani again, at that time he wasn't president saying John, you the United States government are paying the salary of an Afghan who's a teacher, he's a civil servant, he's a doctor, he is a policeman, and he's a soldier. And it's the same Afghan. And he doesn't exist.

Sharyl: Paying for reconstruction in war-ravaged countries is an American tradition. After World War II, there was the Marshall Plan named after Secretary of State George Marshall.

Sharyl: The U.S. spent, in today's terms, \$103 billion over four years to rebuild 16 European countries.

Sharyl: Today, U.S. taxpayers have now far outspent the Marshall Plan on Afghanistan reconstruction: more than \$117 billion.

Sharyl: \$68 billion of that has gone for Afghan National Defense and Security Forces, the country's police and military.

Sharyl: Last year, the governor of Helmand, Afghanistan reported discovering at least 400 non-existent "ghost soldiers" on that province's payroll.

Sharyl: And Helmand's police chief was also quoted as saying that of 26,000 Afghan National Defense Security Forces assigned there, "40 to 50 percent...did not exist physically when we asked for help during operations."



John Sopko: So you're talking about instead of 300-some thousand, it may be only 150-thousand actually exist. Especially in Helmand province, the new provincial governors down there were raising serious concerns that most of the police and soldiers that they needed during the last fighting season weren't there.

Sharyl: In multiple letters and audits, Sopko has taken the Pentagon, which manages the money, to task stating, "Persistent reports...raise questions regarding whether the U.S. government is taking adequate steps to prevent taxpayer funds from being spent on so-called 'ghost' soldiers."

Sharyl: And he says the ghost phenomenon extends beyond Afghan defense and security paychecks...to other forms of aid.

John Sopko: It's not just the salaries. But we're funding schools based upon the number of students, so if you invent or inflate the number of students, you're going to be paying more money. On the soldiers and the police, we're paying for extra boots, for food, for everything else, logistics for numbers that don't exist.

Sharyl: Is there any way to tell who's taking the money?

John Sopko: It's difficult because of the security situation. We in the U.S oversight community can't get out. even the U.S. military can't get out anymore. So it's very difficult. It's really up to the Afghans or designing systems for the Afghans to implement.

Sharyl: Who would it be that could conceivably help fix this? Or who is responsible for the misspending?

John Sopko: Well the misspending is obviously the Afghans. They're the ones who are stealing the money. Who we are holding accountable is the US government for not considering this to be an issue when we raised it 3 or 4 years ago, but also not implementing some reforms to ensure that there actually is a soldier on the other end of that pay statement.

Sharyl: The Pentagon is implementing a new system of biometrics in Afghanistan using fingerprints, photos and blood type. It recently said up to 95% percent of Afghan police and 70-80% of soldiers are now enrolled. The idea is to dispense with old ghosts, and ensure proof of life among a faraway force funded by U.S. taxpayers.

Sharyl: What kind of money are we talking about?

John Sopko: Hundreds of millions of dollars, we're talking' about, that may be lost.

There are many different views of the risks involved in the recent fighting, but there is no question that the threat is growing. **Appendix A** *provides an overview of the grossly conflicting public trends in the fighting through December 2016. It reflects serious uncertainties, particularly as to the level of government and insurgent control, but it is clear that the fighting is uncertain, and groups like the Taliban can still make major gains.*

### ***Pushing the Afghan Government into Security Reform***

Once again, it is critical to preface any analysis of the need for more effective U.S. action by stressing that no U.S. effort in either the security or the civil dimension can succeed without major afghan reforms. Far too many of the problems in the Afghan military stem from the fact that the problems in the Afghan central government undermine Afghan security and ability prosecute the war. As later parts of this analysis show, the Afghan government desperately needs to provide real unity in its leadership, although this does include strong, competent, and honest Ministers of Defense and the Interior.

The Afghan government needs to make major cutbacks in the corruption that permeates the Army and Police, Provincial and District leaders that are honest and care about regional and local security, and better efforts to provide a meaningful rule of law. It also needs to focus on the needs of its people, rather than simply winning tactical encounters with the Taliban and other insurgents. As the most recent Asia Foundation survey -- *Afghanistan in 2016* -- shows, far too many Afghan's feel their government is failing them in every area.

At the same time, Afghan forces also the support they need from the U.S. and the other nations contributing to the Resolute Support Mission. Their order of battle has many weak units, leadership is mixed and sometimes corrupt, and the capability to rapidly deploy, reinforce, and resupply Afghan forces in the field is mixed to poor. The U.S. does not need to surge its own forces or provide major combat units, but it does need to reshape both its train and assist efforts, and provide limited increases in the support it provides in combat.

### ***Security Forces that Are Years Away from Being Truly Ready to Win***

Many key areas of improvement are needed in every aspect of the Afghan National Defense Security Forces (ANDSF). The fact is that neither the U.S. nor allied training levels were ever sized to provide the proper level of support to Afghan forces after most outside combat forces left at the end of 2014, and the situation has deteriorated ever since.

Some of these issues have been addressed in detail in the reports of the Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction (SIGAR),<sup>5</sup> and to a lesser extent in the Department of Defense (DoD) semi-annual reports on *Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan*.<sup>6</sup>

SIGAR has consistently provided more objective reporting on the shortcomings of Afghan forces in key areas like non-existent Afghan "ghost soldiers" and police than the Department of Defense, although SIGAR and other IG reporting on readiness and other key aspects of the military aid effort have been limited in the past by the overclassification of most of the useful data on Afghan readiness.

Moreover, the SIGAR reports have provided more realistic coverage of the governance and civil dimensions of the Afghan War as well. This makes SIGAR reports like *Corruption in Conflict: Lessons from the U.S. Experience in Afghanistan* essential reading in any effort to understand the challenges the U.S. faces in winning the Afghan War.<sup>7</sup>

DoD reporting often provides useful reports on areas of real progress in the ANDSF, but equally often DoD's failure to report on problems in the ANDSF reflects a strong element of public relations spin and one heavily influenced by the White House. DoD tends to sharply understate threat gains, particularly in terms of regional influence, the problems in Afghan governance at every level, and the problems in Afghan force development.

Even so, excerpts from the general and force wide comments in the December 2016 DoD report did highlight some of the serious challenges that Afghan forces face, the need for outside air support to help make up for their deficiencies, and the need for a strong enough train and assist mission to reach down to the combat unit level:<sup>8</sup>

- During the June 1 to November 30, 2016, reporting period, the ANDSF effectively executed their 2016 summer campaign plan, Operation Shafaq capability gaps in key areas such as intelligence, aviation, and logistics are improving but still hinder effectiveness.
- ...the ANDSF will require more time and assistance to develop into an effective, sustainable, and affordable force that can protect the Afghan people and contribute to regional and international security.
- ...Consistent with historical trends, overall levels of violence increased during the traditional 2016 spring and summer fighting season with a brief lull during Ramadan (June 5 to July 6, 2016). Reported casualties for both the ANDSF and the Taliban continued their upward trend from the previous two reporting periods. The increase in ANDSF casualties can be attributed, in part, to an increase in the number of insurgent attacks on fixed ANDSF positions including inadequately protected checkpoints. Insurgent fighting in

urban areas and continued use of high-profile attacks contributed to the trend of high civilian casualties seen in the last several reporting periods.

- At the same time, militant groups, including Taliban and Haqqani senior leadership, retained safe havens inside Pakistani territory. Sustained Pakistani efforts to disrupt active Haqqani Network threats were not observed during the reporting period. The United States continues to be clear with Pakistan about steps it should take to improve the security environment and deny safe havens to terrorist and extremist groups.
- Although the ANDSF denied the insurgency any strategic successes, the ANDSF have also demonstrated the need for continued U.S. and coalition support to address persistent capability gaps and deficiencies. Despite an increasingly offensive-oriented strategy, the Afghan National Army's (ANA) offensive maneuver capability is still limited. The ANDSF also lack a mature operational readiness cycle to ensure forces are well-rested and well-trained before returning to combat...
- During Operation Shafaq, corruption and the ANDSF's limited logistics and personnel management capabilities hindered their ability to make lasting gains in reducing insurgent influence in various parts of the country.
- ANDSF capabilities in aviation, logistics, combined arms operations and conducting offensive clearing operations continue to improve, but the ANDSF require further development before they can consistently pressure the insurgency.
- The Afghan National Police (ANP) are becoming more effective at exercising command and control over ANP pillars within their regions, but areas such as personnel accountability remain key deficiencies.
- ANP and ALP personnel continue to abandon static checkpoints more frequently than ANA personnel due to leadership deficiencies and threats of Taliban attacks on vulnerable checkpoints.
- The ASSF remain the most capable element of the Afghan forces and one of the best special operations forces in the region. Although U.S. forces often provide enabling support to the ASSF for counterterrorism operations, the ASSF are capable of conducting independent operations using their organic intelligence and aviation assets. Because of ASSF proficiency, the ANDSF frequently misuses ASSF elements for more conventional missions, which degrades the ASSF's operational readiness.
- Disparity among Afghan leadership at all levels continues to result in inconsistent progress among the ANA corps and ANP zones. When the MoD, MoI, and ANDSF leadership are actively involved, competent, and not corrupt, the Afghans have made solid progress in implementing and sustaining needed reforms to improve ANDSF capabilities. After leadership changes during this reporting period, several corps have conducted effective cross-pillar operations, commanders have increased operational effectiveness by integrating combat enablers into operations, and senior ministry officials have demonstrated foresight in strategic management and provision of support to the ANDSF. In contrast, in ANA corps where leadership is weak or corrupt on a consistent basis, and in many parts of the MoI and ANP, capabilities often lag or regress, hindering overall operational capability and impeding progress on instituting transparent and accountable systems and processes.
- Inefficient inventory management and supply distribution processes degrades the operational readiness of both ANA and ANP units.
- Despite modest progress, the MoD's use of systems and processes to prosecute allegations of gross violations of human rights (GVHR) and investigations and reporting processes for instances of corruption remains problematic and insufficient given the number of allegations.
- The Operations Coordination Centers at the regional (OCC-R) and provincial (OCC-P) level continue to be underutilized as cross-pillar coordination mechanisms. However, MoD-MoI and ANA-ANP coordination on intelligence has improved as the MoD, the MoI, and the ANDSF continue to capitalize on the growing capability of Afghan intelligence organizations including the Nasrat (a national-level intelligence fusion center). At the tactical level, ANA and ANP coordination continues to suffer due to poor communication among lower level commanders, mistrust between pillars, informal relationships based off of political patronage or local power dynamics, and insufficient ANA support to ANP checkpoints or positions that come under insurgent attack.



- The Taliban continue to contest district centers, threaten provincial capitals, and temporarily seize main lines of communication throughout the country, especially in high priority areas like Kunduz City and Helmand Province. As of late September 2016, RS assessed that the Taliban had control or influence over approximately 10 percent of the population and was contesting the Afghan Government for control of at least another 20 percent.
- ...the Taliban have proven capable of taking rural areas, returning to areas after the ANDSF have cleared but not maintained a holding presence, and conducting attacks that undermine public confidence in the Afghan government's ability to provide security.
- The Taliban had been able to demonstrate increasing capability to threaten district centers, but the ANDSF have also proven their ability to recover areas lost to the Taliban quickly. Seeking to exploit ANDSF weaknesses and the reduced international military presence, the Taliban are maintaining their control in some rural areas that lack effective Afghan Government representation, continuing a trend since the beginning of the RS mission and OFS
- Discord between various political, ethnic, and tribal factions within the Afghan Government, as well as delays in or fallouts from potential parliamentary elections, could be contributing factors to a degradation of the security situation. Collectively, terrorist and insurgent groups will present a formidable challenge to Afghan forces as these groups continue offensives into the traditional spring and summer fighting season, and rural areas may remain many challenges remain, such as coordinating cross-pillar responses to insurgent attacks, deterring high-profile attacks, and integrating various operational capabilities...
- Attrition levels vary widely between the different corps and zones; aggregate attrition within the ANDSF during this reporting period averaged 2.36 percent, consistent with the three-year historical average of 2.21 percent. The ANA averaged 2.62 percent attrition, as compared to the three-year historical average of 2.55 percent. ANP attrition averaged 2.11 percent, consistent with the three-year historical average of 1.88 percent. During the reporting period, overall ANDSF recruitment has generally kept pace with losses, resulting in a fairly constant end strength
- Although separations, retirements, and KIAs contribute to overall attrition, the number of ANDSF personnel dropped from the rolls dominates ANDSF attrition, representing more than 75 percent of all personnel losses. ANA soldiers and ANP police dropped from the rolls rarely return to duty, which increases the recruitment effort required to maintain the overall force size.
- Consistent with previous reporting periods, the ANA continues to have a higher rate of soldiers dropped from the rolls than the ANP. Several factors are known to contribute to the high number of ANDSF personnel dropped from rolls, including poor leadership and leader accountability, lack of casualty and martyr care, poor implementation and understanding of leave policies, lack of timely and accurate pay, and inadequate living and working conditions.
- In addition, units in high-threat areas are often not granted leave due to operational requirements and receive only limited rest and training between deployments due to the absence of an operational readiness cycle. Attrition remains a larger problem for the ANA than for the ANP in part because of the more widespread deployments across the country than the ANA faces compared to the ANP.
- Current ANA personnel management policies do not allow soldiers to serve in their home areas in order to decrease the potential for local influence. However, these policies have the second-order effect of increasing transportation costs and creating additional obstacles for soldiers attempting to take authorized leave, which contributes to the problem of soldiers going absent without leave.
- ANA and ANP both have policies to prevent personnel from going absent without leave, though enforcement is inconsistent.
- Coalition advisory efforts continue to focus on the ANDSF's ability to regenerate forces through recruitment and operational readiness programs. The coalition is no longer encouraging Afghans to use pay incentives and salary mechanisms to address retention, as there is lack of evidence on their effectiveness. A general lack of timely and accurate reporting discipline across the ANDSF has inhibited the effective allocation of resources. In spite of these challenges, the size of the ANDSF has remained relatively stable, although it is several thousand personnel below the authorized 352,000 level.

- The ANDSF are effective when conducting deliberate, offensive operations, yet persistent planning challenges contribute to inefficiencies in force employment. In remote areas, the ANP employs small units, often at checkpoints where they are more vulnerable to attacks. In many cases, small groups of ANP at checkpoints abandon their posts in the face of insurgent attacks.
- The force posture of the ANA is improving following strategy adjustments implemented during Operation Shafaq but continues to suffer from an overuse of static checkpoints. ANDSF progress on checkpoint consolidation and the appropriate allocation of forces across the country is still uneven. Implementation of various force consolidation initiatives remains a challenge due to political pressure from local officials and complaints from the local population over concerns that insurgents can exploit terrain where the ANDSF do not maintain a persistent presence.
- These posture challenges limit combat maneuver capabilities. In some instances during this reporting period, the ANDSF were not able to maneuver kandak-size formations from both conventional and ASSF elements sufficiently to support one another against an agile insurgency. In addition, some ANA corps were unable to maximize their offensive combat power against the enemy and instead maneuvered smaller portions of their forces. Broadly emplaced checkpoints spread the ANDSF too thin and create challenges for logistics, supply management, and the provision of reinforcements. Combined, these factors make fixed positions vulnerable to insurgent attacks and contributed to the high ANDSF casualty rate.
- At the corps level, the ANA struggles with conducting sufficiently detailed operational planning that incorporates key aspects of the national-level security strategy. Although the ANDSF are generally capable of conducting large-scale, offensive operations with coordination between corps, some challenges remain. For instance, coordination between the ANA 215<sup>th</sup> and ANA205th Corps for operations along the border between Helmand and Kandahar provinces was insufficient and hindered operational effectiveness. In addition, ANDSF employment of the ASSF is not in line with their capabilities; there is still an over reliance on ASSF for standard offensive actions.
- Challenges remain with maintenance and logistics support, which is generally unsynchronized or poorly executed, hindering operational effectiveness. ANDSF sustainment lacks timeliness, mission focus, and a sense of Afghan ownership of the deeply rooted challenges and obstructions to effective support. Poor prioritization of repair and maintenance operations by ANDSF leadership, as well as poor coordination throughout the supply chain, prevents ANDSF equipment readiness from reaching adequate levels.
- At the strategic level, Afghan leadership within the MoD, the MoI, and the ANDSF is uneven. At the ministerial level, delays in resource management and strategic planning due to leadership challenges hinder the MoD and the MoI's ability to support the ANDSF. Moreover, senior leaders often intervene in tactical and operational issues, diverting focus from strategic level issues, and undermining nascent command and control processes. The inability of ANDSF leaders across the force to effectively command and control operations, coupled with poor discipline of junior leaders in some units, hinders effectiveness in nearly every ministry functional and ANDSF capability area.
- Leadership at the ANP zone, ANA corps, brigade, and kandak level remains a key factor in ANDSF unit success, but is uneven across the force.
- At the strategic level, Afghan leadership within the MoD, the MoI, and the ANDSF is uneven. At the ministerial level, delays in resource management and strategic planning due to leadership challenges hinder the MoD and the MoI's ability to support the ANDSF. Moreover, senior leaders often intervene in tactical and operational issues, diverting focus from strategic level issues, and undermining nascent command and control processes. The inability of ANDSF leaders across the force to effectively command and control operations, coupled with poor discipline of junior leaders in some units, hinders effectiveness in nearly every ministry functional and ANDSF capability area.
- Leadership at the ANP zone, ANA corps, brigade, and kandak level remains a key factor in ANDSF unit success, but is uneven across the force.
- ***Commanders frequently report to whom they prefer rather than enforcing effective mission command, resulting in leaders not adequately empowered to perform their duties. Given these leadership challenges, the ANDSF continues to rely on U.S. and coalition advisors to ensure sufficient attention to***

***command relationships; however, the limited number of advisors, and their placement at the corps and higher levels, limits the ability to influence leadership throughout the chain of command.***

- Leadership appointments generally are not meritocratic. RS officials continue to emphasize that the selection, placement, and empowerment of the right military and civilian leadership within the security ministries are essential to ANDSF success. RS advisors and training efforts continue to focus on improving the ANDSF's technical and tactical capabilities, but more robust leader development is required to build and retain a professional force.
- ...varying degrees of trust between leaders of the various ANDSF institutions limits effectiveness. The lack of trust between GS G2, the NDS, MoI, and the Office of the Assistant Minister of Defense for Strategic Intelligence, continues to hamper open intelligence sharing.
- Reporting and cross-pillar coordination remains a problem across the ANDSF at the regional level and below. Units often bypass the OCCs and send reports to higher authorities within their own ministries, complicating planning and support during cross-pillar operations and crisis response. Although SOPs exist to correct these problems, many are not signed or are not being implemented below the ministerial level.
- Tactical coordination between ANA and ANP forces through the OCC-Ps is not as effective, leading to confusion at the district level as to the appropriate lead agency. The OCC-Ps are still developing their capability to manage information and suffer from insufficient manning, equipment, and ministerial-level guidance and from conflicts with existing local and informal command and control channels.
- Although there have been improvements in the MoD's ability to track resource management and procurement needs through the acquisition process, EF 1 advisors still assist the Afghans in this area.
- ...increased senior leadership support is necessary to address counter-corruption and anti-corruption efforts. MoD information sharing among GS G2, GS IG, and GS Legal regarding major corruption allegations is still sporadic, and senior leaders do not demonstrate the will to investigate cases fully and prepare investigations for appropriate prosecutions. Additionally, the GS G2 only investigates corruption seasonally as a result of the ANA prioritizing combat missions during the summer. ANA corps leadership support for pursuing corruption investigations varies by corps, and the MoD continues to display an uneven ability to order or influence corps commanders who choose not to pursue investigation into a particular allegation. Within the GS, the organization structure prevents effective prosecution of corruption. The ANA Criminal Investigation Division (CID) office is part of the GS Legal department; as a result, the GS Legal department prevents CID from investigating corrupt prosecutors.

### ***The Need to Establish Adequate Levels of Public Faith and Trust***

These final warnings about corruption are as critical as any other aspect of the problems in the ANDSF. Transparency International rated Afghanistan the fourth most corrupt country in the world in 2016, and the World Bank governance indicators show it is both extremely corrupt and has some of the lowest overall effectiveness in governance of any country it rates. Report after report has shown that the Afghan armed forces and security forces are as corrupt as its civil government.

Once again, Afghanistan must do more for more U.S. aid to succeed. The “battle for hearts and minds” may be a cliché in counterinsurgency, but it is also a reality. No outside effort to build effective forces can succeed if Afghan power powerbrokers make key security decisions, promotions and appointments are sold, pay is uncertain, officers take money for ghost soldiers, leave and recovery time is not provided, and the main incentive to serve and fight is the lack of any other jobs. No officer corps can properly succeed where effective leadership is not rewarded but political and ethnic ties are.

As **Appendix B** shows, *the Government also needs to do much to win popular confidence and support for the Afghan National Security forces*. Letting corruption remain a key part of the income of soldiers, police, and the civilians in the security services provides all the wrong forms of motivation. Asking police to be soldiers puts them in impossible roles and leaves no force to provide day-to-day security. Letting national local police exploit those they serve but fail to provide them with security alienates those around them and pushes them towards the insurgents.

Relying on anti-corruption bodies and task forces is a proven recipe for failure. As noted earlier, the U.S. and the entire Resolute Support Mission need to put real pressure on the Afghan government. Military aid money and support need to be tied to progress in actual reform. Shutting off aid and providing public exposure are key steps. (For a different view of such options see SIGAR *Corruption in Conflict: Lessons from the U.S. Experience in Afghanistan*.<sup>9</sup>)

The flow of outside aid needs to be halted when leaders and officers do not perform, are corrupt, or fail their troops. Permanently denying the worst cases both aid and any future access to contracts as well as visa for themselves and every member of their families is tangible action, and sends a clear message that the U.S. and other countries can and will leave if suitable reforms do not take place.

Similarly, providing public exposure of gross corruption and failure can be a powerful force, and using GAO Departmental Inspectors General and the Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction to report directly and publically can create a climate where such actions cease to be tolerated. This does not mean applying U.S. standards to Afghanistan, but it does mean that no serious case of failure or corruption should be ignored. A decade and half of uncertain and ineffective internal Afghan efforts have shown that Afghan anti-corruption efforts cannot effectively address such cases.

As for diplomatic sensitivities, they are not worth losing a war over, and a Congressional mandate requiring the public reporting of such data could be used to justify such action.

### ***Providing the Necessary U.S. and Allied Train and Assist Forces to Make Resolute Support Work***

It is equally clear from both the previous list of problems in the ANDSF and Appendix A that Afghan efforts cannot succeed without more U.S. aid in two critical areas: The train and assist mission and the combat support mission.

At the end of the Obama administration, the U.S. planned to keep some 8,448 train and assist personnel in country in 2017 -- instead of cutting them back to 5,500 as the Obama Administration had previously planned at the start of 2016. The U.S. also planned to provide some combat support on the ground to the Afghan elite counterterrorism force, and provide limited combat air support. It is also committed to providing military and economic aid over the next four years -- along with its key allies in Afghanistan.

**Appendix C** shows both the *total personnel authorized for the Resolute Support Mission in 2016, and the trends in combat air support*. It is not clear how real these totals are in terms of actual personnel. Some of the allied personnel may not be present while additional U.S. personnel may not be counted because they are technically seen as being on temporary duty (TDY) rather than assigned on the basis of a permanent change of station (PCS). In addition, the totals do not show what still seems to be a large number of civilian contractors.

The December 2016 Department of Defense semi-annual report on Afghanistan notes that,<sup>10</sup>

The United States currently maintains a force posture of up to 9,800 military personnel in Afghanistan. Based on an assessment of the security conditions and the strength of Afghan forces, President Obama announced on July 6, 2016, that the United States will draw down to approximately 8,400 military personnel by January 2017, rather than to 5,500 military personnel as he previously announced in October 2015. The force presence of 8,400 military personnel will allow United States Forces- Afghanistan (USFOR-A) to continue to conduct two well-defined and complementary missions: supporting counterterrorism operations against the remnants of al Qaeda, its associates, and other terrorist groups such as the self-proclaimed Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) affiliate in the Afghanistan and Pakistan region, ISIL –Khorasan (ISIL-K); and training, advising, and assisting the ANDSF through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)-led Resolute Support (RS) mission.

The RS mission remains focused on training, advising, and assisting the ANDSF, the MoD, and the MoI in all aspects of their ability to achieve and maintain a stable Afghanistan. At the July 2016 NATO Summit in Warsaw, RS Allies and operational partners agreed to sustain the RS mission beyond 2016. Although the United States will decrease the U.S. military presence by January 2017 from 9,800 forces to approximately 8,400 forces, the United States will continue to provide approximately the same number of forces to the RS mission in 2017 and consult with NATO Allies and operational partners about the requirements of the RS mission to ensure that the U.S. and NATO missions are mutually supportive.

The RS mission is based on a limited regional TAA approach and is currently executed through geographic and functional (e.g. aviation) “spokes” at coalition train, advise, and assist commands (TAAC) in the north, south, east, west, and the capital. In addition to the TAAC in Kabul, the central “hub” includes the RS headquarters and ministerial advisors. The United States, Germany, Italy, and Turkey serve as “framework nations,” each leading a regional TAAC and responsible for coordinating support and capabilities within its respective command region. In a change from the previous reporting period, TAA efforts to ANDSF pillars in the southeast and southwest that were previously overseen by two regional Advise and Assist Cells are now being conducted by two regional task forces, TF Anvil and TF Forge.

The regional TAACs persistently cover four of the six ANA corps as well as the associated regional ANP zone headquarters. The two task forces oversee expeditionary advising with the ANA 203<sup>rd</sup> and 215<sup>th</sup>

Corps and ANP Zone 303 and Zone 505. The TAACs and the task forces serve as the principal connections between the ministries and fielded forces. They play a central role in the coalition’s ability to assess the efficacy of its ministerial advising efforts, determine how well the ministries support ongoing ANDSF security operations, and provide an outer ring of security for the coalition. In support of this mission, and because the ANDSF will have key enabler gaps in the near term, coalition forces provide limited non-combat enabling support, primarily intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) and medical evacuation (MEDEVAC) to the ANDSF as the Afghans continue to field and develop their organic capabilities. In addition, the United States can provide aerial fires in support of the ANDSF in specific circumstances through OFS.

SIGAR reported in its January 30, 2017 report that,<sup>11</sup>

According to DOD, the RS train, advise, and assist mission consisted of 13,332 U.S. and Coalition personnel as of December 2016. Of that number, 6,941 were U.S. forces and 6,391 were from 26 NATO allies and 12 non-NATO partners. The number of U.S. forces conducting or supporting counterterrorism operations is reported in this report’s classified annex; however, the total number of U.S. forces in Afghanistan was reported to be “approximately 9,000,” decreasing more recently to no more than 8,448.

This is not a strong enough U.S. train and assist team to support Afghan forces that only seriously began to receive the funding and training personnel needed to act in an independent role in 2012.

More broadly, the total *authorized* strength of both the U.S. and allied personnel in the NATO/Resolute Support force shown in the Department of Defense semi-annual report on Afghanistan on June 30, 2016 was 15,055. The *authorized* strength shown in the Resolute Support web page

as of December 2016 had dropped to 13,332.<sup>12</sup> The *actual* strength of both the U.S. and allied personnel in the NATO/ Resolute Support force shown in the December 2016 version Department of Defense semi-annual report on Afghanistan was only 12,611 as of November 30, 2016.<sup>13</sup> There have also been other, less visible cuts in various aspects of intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (IS&R) support -- some driven by the priority given to Iraq. U.S. personnel are also scheduled to be cut by roughly 1,000 military personnel in 2017, making the problem worse.

A total shortfall of nearly 20% relative to the already low authorized strength of 15,055 might not be critical under some circumstances, but the 15,055 figure was an awkward compromise designed to avoid risking U.S. and allied "boots on the ground" in forward train and assist positions, while drawing on more than 30 countries with very mixed capability and expertise. It is almost certainly several thousand personnel short of the real need.<sup>14</sup>

Equally important, the U.S. and allied train and assist mission after most combat forces withdrew at the end of 2014 never was adequate to meet the need even at its highest initial level. The political desire to be able to claim that the U.S. combat presence had ended in 2014, and to minimize any "boots of the ground" and risk of casualties, led to the creation of a fundamentally inadequate approach to the train and assist mission.

Even if all the personnel the U.S. and its allies had pledged to provide had actually been present and properly qualified, the total authorized allied and U.S. forces had been cut back to the point where they could not provide personnel to assist at the Afghan Kandak level, for all Afghan corps, and aid in the critical chains of command and operations that allocate, supply, and reinforce Afghan combat operations.

The U.S. learned the hard way in Vietnam and Iraq that this kind of limited train and assist mission is a recipe for failure. Its experience in fighting ISIS is Iraq forces it to reinforce the forward assist mission step by step over more than a year in spite of the fact the White House had ignored military advice to the contrary. In fact, it only fully committed U.S. military position to full forward support of Iraq forces after the ballet for Mosul slowed down in December 2016.<sup>15</sup>

An effective train and assist effort must take place at the forward and major combat unit levels where assist personnel are most critical in developing effective combat capability and leadership, and in vetting combat performance. These are the levels where advisors can provide feedback as to the adequacy of unit manning and resources, as well as monitor how well combat units receive supplies and reinforcements. They are also the levels where reporting on corruption, incompetence, and "ghost soldiers" is most important.

There are no magic numbers here. It is not clear how many personnel would take to raise the number of U.S. military personnel to the proper level, but some press reports indicate that the U.S. command in Afghanistan has talked about figures roughly on the order of 3,000 more U.S. military for the train and assist mission and 6,000 for all mission needs. Reports on April 24, 2017 also indicated that Secretary of Defense Mattis has agreed that significant additions were necessary.

Only the commander in theater can really assess such needs, but it seems unlikely that an adequate U.S. military train and assist mission could require a figure higher than as 15,000 -- particularly given the high number of civilian contractors that are not publically reported but that



seem to be deployed in country. Skills and coverage down to the combat unit level are needed far more than sheer numbers, and so is a basic shift from a constant effort to draw down and avoid risks of combat to providing train and assist forces that are tailored to actual need and conditions on the ground. The key is to shift away from rigid deadlines, politically drive personnel goals, and a train and assist effort too hollow to work, and create a train and assist mission designed to win.

### ***Providing Adequate U.S. and Allied Counterterrorism Support***

There are even greater uncertainties regarding the levels of conditions-based effort the U.S. needs to deploy in terms of combat support. The U.S. has never clearly stated how large its counterterrorism force in Afghanistan is, and has tried to minimize the fact it is combat force for political reasons. The December DoD report provides as much detail as any given source, but it still hides more than it tells.<sup>16</sup>

In early 2016 the President authorized U.S. forces to target individuals based on their status as members of ISIL-K in order to disrupt and degrade the group's ability to threaten U.S., coalition, and Afghan Government interests. Previously, U.S. forces were only authorized to take direct action against members of ISIL-K if they posed an imminent threat to U.S. or coalition forces or took a direct part in hostilities against U.S. or coalition forces. Degrading ISIL-K is part of the U.S. global effort to counter ISIL. In addition to U.S. unilateral efforts, USFOR-A is enabling the ANDSF to conduct independent operations against ISIL-K and is encouraging more robust intelligence and operational cooperation between Afghanistan, Pakistan, and other regional partners to impede the spread of the organization.

As a matter of international law, the United States remains in an armed conflict against al Qaeda, the Taliban, and associated forces, and against ISIL. The United States continues to rely on the 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force and the President's constitutional authority as the Commander in Chief as its domestic legal basis for the use of force when required. Beyond operations in support of the counterterrorism mission and enabler support to the ANDSF in limited circumstances, U.S. forces no longer engage in offensive combat operations in Afghanistan; in particular, the United States does not conduct offensive operations against members of the Taliban or members of the Taliban-led insurgency. However, U.S. forces may take appropriate action against those groups or individuals that imminently threaten or directly participate in hostilities against U.S. or coalition forces regardless of their membership in a particular terrorist or extremist group.

The U.S. counterterrorism mission complements the TAA mission to build the capacity of the ANDSF. Limited U.S. direct counterterrorism action, coupled with a stronger and increasingly capable ANDSF, will help preserve the security gains to date and contribute to a robust, enduring counterterrorism partnership. The Special Operations Joint Task Force – Afghanistan (SOJTFA) supports U.S. counterterrorism efforts by training, advising, and assisting the ASSF and accompanying them on certain operations. The ASSF will continue to conduct operations throughout the country using their growing organic capabilities to address both insurgent and transnational threats. The focus of SOJTFA TAA efforts remains building the ASSF's capacity in logistics, command and control, intelligence analysis and sharing, aviation, and interoperability between the ASSF and conventional forces.

It is also clear from U.S. reporting that this force has sometimes been critical to the success of some of the most effective single elements of the Afghan Forces, the Special Forces or ASFF in the MoD and MoI. As the December DoD report also notes, they play a critical role in the overall capability of the ANDSF to deal with the Taliban and other threats:<sup>17</sup>

ASSF elements in both the MoD and the MoI are more proficient than conventional forces. The ASSF continue to be effective when utilized in deliberate operations where special operations forces are most appropriate, but the ANDSF continue to rely heavily on the ASSF for conventional operations where the

ANA or ANP would be more appropriate. Reducing ANA commanders' misuse of ASSF to conduct operations better suited to ANA units remains a challenge.

...The MoD oversees the ANA, which includes the AAF and several pillars within the ASSF: the Afghan National Army Special Operations Command (ANASOC), the Ktah Khas, and the SMW.

... The MoD ASSF components – the ANASOC, the Ktah Khas, and the SMW – continue to demonstrate that they are the most capable forces within the ANDSF and as a result have the highest operational tempo. Afghan special operations forces are widely considered to be some of the best in the region and continue to mature with further coalition assistance. They have proven their ability to conduct counterterrorism raids successfully and they are furthering their capability to analyze and exploit intelligence gained from these operations. SOJTF-A and NATO Special Operations Component Command – Afghanistan (NSOCC-A) tactical-level TAA efforts with Afghan special operations forces have resulted in an increase in the number of Afghan independent and enabled operations; the ASSF conducts more than 80 percent of its operations unilaterally. The ASSF maintains the lowest attrition rate amongst all ANDSF pillars except the AAF, with an attrition rate of 1.02 percent during this reporting period, and maintains an 88.5 percent reenlistment rate.

The ASSF are increasingly able to achieve tactical and operational level success, including deterring high-profile attacks, disrupting resource stream networks, and denying terrorist and insurgent freedom to maneuver. Due to their high levels of effectiveness, the confidence ANDSF leadership place in the ASSF, and the ability to conduct operations at night, the ASSF tend to be overused, leading to challenges with the implementation and adherence to an effective operational readiness cycle. Ministry and GS leadership understand the capabilities and intended purpose of the ASSF, yet still use them for tasks such as retaking district centers and manning static checkpoints.

MoD ASSF pillars rely primarily on MoD elements and typically the closest ANA corps headquarters and regional logistics node for sustainment support. ASSF units – primarily ANASOC – rely heavily on HMMWVs<sup>49</sup> and Mobile Strike Force Vehicles with heavy armor to provide a protected mobility capability and carry large caliber weapons such as the M2 .50caliber machine gun.

Enhanced cross-pillar coordination and resource allocation will better enable the ASSF to improve its mobility and maneuverability across Afghanistan. In addition, cross-pillar coordination will address gaps in the ASSF's logistic sustainment, intelligence fusion and development, and operational coordination capabilities.

... Afghan National Army Special Operations Command: The ANASOC's mission is to increase the Afghan Government's ability to conduct counterinsurgency, stability operations, and, as directed, execute special operations against terrorist and insurgent networks in coordination with other ANDSF pillars. ANASOC is a division-level headquarters responsible for command and control of all ANA special operations forces. The ANASOC is currently authorized 11,700 personnel and is organized into 10 battalion-sized ANA Commando SOKs. The SOKs are the primary tactical elements of the ANASOC and conduct elite, light-infantry operations against threat networks in support of the regional corps' counterinsurgency operations and provide a strategic response capability against strategic targets. Each SOK contains eight ANA Special Forces teams and several support elements. Nine of the 10 SOKs are aligned with specific ANA corps. The 6<sup>th</sup> SOK, located in the Kabul area, functions as the ANA's national mission unit as part of the National Mission Brigade. While the ANASOC comprises approximately six percent of the ANA manning, it conducts a majority of the ANA's offensive missions.

The ANASOC continues to be used for mission sets outside of its intended purpose, including checkpoint security, static defensive missions, and short notice ministerial-directed missions that lack proper operational planning. Aside from failing to make use of the unique capabilities and expertise ANASOC can provide, these misuses contribute to problems with operational readiness. Throughout the 2016 spring and summer campaign, the ANASOC's operational tempo remained high and, coupled with ineffective logistical support from ANA corps, resulted in lower ANASOC operational readiness rates. Despite these challenges, the ANASOC continued to achieve multiple operational successes such as the liberation of detainees held by the Taliban and the removal of hundreds of insurgent and terrorist group members from the battlefield.

...The Ktah Khas is a light infantry special operations kandak consisting of three operational companies, a training company, an engineer company, a military intelligence company, a support company, and a headquarters company. These additional companies support the Ktah Khas training cycle and support operations including transportation for the Ktah Khas strike forces, explosive ordnance disposal to conduct counter-IED operations, and supporting the female tactical platoon which enables interactions with women and children on missions. Ktah Khas platoons and companies are accomplished in independently conducting intelligence-driven counterterrorism raids, particularly against high-value individuals, and vehicle interdictions utilizing both ground and air mobility platforms. The Ktah Khas is authorized 1,280 personnel and at approximately 1,050 personnel, it remains close to full strength.

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...The ANCOP provides the primary offensive capability within the ANP. The ANCOP mission includes dealing with civil unrest and reacting to insurgent activities in remote and high-threat areas. The ANCOP also conducts civil order presence patrols and provides response capabilities to handle crisis or counterterrorism events in urban and metropolitan areas and to mitigate violent public incidents. ANCOP units support the ANA during clearing operations providing intelligence, tactical support, and manpower to hold and secure terrain as it is seized. With approximately 15,000 personnel, the ANCOP current end strength has remained close to its authorized Manning level.

The ANCOP consists of nine brigades, eight of which are largely aligned with the ANP zones, the ninth of which is deployed to Helmand. Because ANCOP units receive a higher level of training than typical AUP or other ANP pillars and have an often misunderstood mission set, local police commanders and political officials frequently misemploy ANCOP units for tasks outside their mission set.

... General Command of Police Special Units: The GCPSU is the MOI component of the ASSF, and provides the ANP with a capability to conduct rule-of-law operations based on evidence in accordance with Afghanistan's Criminal Procedure Code, execute high-risk arrests, and respond to high-profile attacks. The GCPSU also often provides rapid response to critical situations such as emergencies or hostage scenarios.

Due to its employment in these situations, the GCPSU incurs a higher rate of casualties than other specialized ANP units, which contributes to combat fatigue, higher attrition, and challenges with maintaining overall personnel and equipment readiness. The GCPSU authorized end strength is approximately 7,042 with a current end strength of approximately 5,881 personnel as of November 20, 2016.

The GCPSU is responsible for the command and control of all MoI special police units, including three National Mission Units, 33 PSUs that operate in direct support of the provincial chiefs of police, and 19 Investigative and Surveillance Units. In practice, because provincial chiefs of police and provincial governors oversee payroll systems and salaries for the PSUs, they are frequently more responsive to provincial officials' directives than to the GCPSU chain of command.

One key question in shaping a conditions-based U.S. effort in Afghanistan is whether the U.S. Counterterrorism force should be expanded and partially refocused to provide broader support to the elite Afghan units that are most critical to the fighting, or the extent to which U.S. train and assist personnel should be allocated in ways that give special support to such elite units. The U.S. cannot aid every combat element of the Afghan order of battle, but once fixed deadlines for cutting the number of U.S. military personnel are abolished, the U.S. may be able to accomplish a great deal with limited additional combat aid and train and assist personnel on the ground.as the October 2016 Quarterly Report by SIGAR warns,<sup>18</sup>

USFOR-A noted that the most capable elements of the ANDSF are the Afghan Special Security Forces (ASSF) and the Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP). They are reported the most successful in ground combat and often perform the role of the ANA. Last quarter USFOR-A reported the ANDSF relied heavily on the ASSF for conventional missions that the ANA or ANP should perform. One adviser expressed concern that the ANA's reliance on "commandos" risks burning out its elite forces.

### ***Providing Adequate U.S. and Allied Airpower***

While U.S. combat airpower has been made available to defend Afghan forces in urgent circumstances, it has not been made available to help them in normal and offensive operations. Yet, Even during the time NATO-ISAF had a major combat presence in Afghanistan, airpower was often the factor that gave NATO/ISAF forces a decisive edge and vital to combat success over a vast country with very difficult terrain.

The Afghan Air Force is making slow progress, but scarcely with the level of advanced airpower that seems need for at least the next few years. AFCENT reports that Afghan Air Force has been able to maintain a retention rate around 94% and has approximately 70 aircrews, which we expect to see continued growth. With the delivery of three new MD-530s, the AAF has more than 114 attack and airlift aircraft in theater. Additionally, they have 12 A-29s currently in use at Moody Air Force Base, Ga., as training assets for AAF pilots. These aircraft will gradually transition to Afghanistan throughout 2017 and 2018. The AAF will not, however, be capable of providing the level of air support that Afghan ground forces really need until at least the 2019 campaign season.<sup>19</sup>

It seems highly likely that a conditions-based U.S. effort will need to deploy more U.S. combat air power for several years. The actual level of U.S. and allied combat sorties in Afghanistan has dropped from 34,541 in 2011 to 12,978 in 2014, and only 4,500 in the first ten months of 2016. The number of munitions released has dropped from 5,411 in 2011 to 2,395 in 2014, and only 1,180 in the first ten months of 2016. The number of IS&R sorties has dropped from 38,918 in 2011 to 32,999 in 2014, and only 16,346 in the first ten months of 2016. Casualty evacuation sorties have dropped from nearly 3,000 in 2011 to zero.<sup>20</sup>

Raising the number of train and assist personnel will help, but providing adequate airpower will be at least as critical. There is no easy way to predict the needed numbers, but it is clear that a substantial increase will be needed in the number of attack sorties.

### ***Providing Adequate Afghan Police, Local Forces, and Support for the Justice System***

Perhaps the greatest unknown in assessing U.S. aid is trying to figure out what program is needed to ensure that the Afghan National Police and justice system can operate effectively in the more secure areas, and bring stability to the areas sharply affected by the threat. **Figure One** shows that current level of total Afghan forces and the importance of the police.

In addition, SIGAR reports that,<sup>21</sup>

As of November 9, 2016, according to the NATO Special Operations Component Command-Afghanistan (NSOCC-A), the ALP has 27,623 guardians, 23,865 of whom are trained; 3,557 remain untrained, and 201 are currently in training.

Afghan Local Police members, known as "guardians," are usually local citizens selected by village elders or local leaders to protect their communities against insurgent attack, guard facilities, and conduct local

counterinsurgency

missions. While the ANP is paid via the UN Development Programme's multilateral Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOTFA), the ALP is paid with U.S.-provided ASFF on-budget assistance to the Afghan government. Although the ALP is overseen by the MOI, it is not counted as part of the ANDSF's 352,000 authorized end strength. As of November 9, 2016, according to the NATO Special Operations Component Command-Afghanistan (NSOCC-A), the ALP has 27,623 guardians, 23,865 of whom are trained; 3,557 remain untrained, and 201 are currently in training. The ALP has incurred a 954-person force reduction since late August.

Consistent with advising the Afghan security forces at the ANA corps and ANP zone-headquarters level, NSOCC-A advises the ALP at the ALP staff-directorate level; it does not track ALP retention, attrition, or losses. However, the Afghan government reported that 192 ALP guardians were killed in action from September to October 2016, and 550 were wounded between June and October 2016.

NSOCC-A reported the estimated FY 2016 cost to support the ALP at its authorized end strength of 30,000 is \$97.5 million, the same as last quarter. The United States expects to fund approximately \$93 million, with the

Afghan government contributing the remaining \$4.5 million. This quarter, NSOCC-A reported efforts continue to enroll ALP personnel into the Afghan Human Resources Information Management System (AHRIMS), to transition ALP salary payments to an electronic-funds-transfer (EFT) process, and to inventory materiel. These processes are expected to help track and train ALP personnel.<sup>242</sup> According to NSOCC-A, 79.4% of ALP personnel are now enrolled with biometrically linked identification cards, 85% are registered to receive salary payments via EFT, and 57.9% are now "actively slotted" into AHRIMS, meaning that each ALP guardian has a biometric transaction control number, an ID card number, and an AHRIMS tashkil number. These reform requirements to identify and pay ALP personnel are intended to eliminate the existence of "ghost," or nonexistent, personnel within the ALP.

Unfortunately, the maps in **Appendix B** make it all too clear that there are no meaningful data on the effectiveness of the ANP or ALP in providing security, and stability, or on the real world effectiveness of given district governments and justice systems. It is clear that many are corrupt, that the ANP take high casualties but often cannot hold, and that the ALP are sometimes a source of abuses, rather than security. These problems may, however, be impossible for the U.S. to fix at any credible level of resources.

SIGAR does provide the data shown in **Figure Two**, but they raise far more issues than they resolve. It is not clear that the data on government control are accurate, how contested the contested areas are, and whether insurgent control states the true level of insurgent influence. SIGAR notes the following issues:

U.S. Forces Afghanistan (USFOR-A) reported that approximately 57.2% of the country's 407 districts are under Afghan government control or influence as of November 15, 2016, a 6.2% decrease from the 63.4% reported last quarter in late August, and a nearly 15% decrease since November 2015...of the 407 districts of Afghanistan's 34 provinces, 233 districts were under government control (83 districts) or influence (150), 41 districts (in 15 provinces) were under insurgent control (9) or influence (32), and 133 districts were "contested."

According to USFOR-A, the number of districts under insurgent control or influence rose 2% from August 30 to November 15, 2016, to 10.1% of the country's total districts, and the number of contested districts rose 4.2% over the same period to 32.7% of all districts.

Previously USFOR-A has described contested districts as having "negligible meaningful impact from insurgents," contending that neither the insurgency nor the Afghan government maintains significant control over these areas.<sup>138</sup>

USFOR-A identified the regions/provinces with the largest percentage of insurgent-controlled or -influenced districts as Uruzgan Province, with five out of six (83.3%) of its districts under insurgent control

or influence, and

Helmand with eight out of 14 (57.1%) of its districts under insurgent control or influence. The region with the most districts under insurgent control or influence is centered on northeast Helmand Province and northwestern Kandahar Province, and includes the Helmand/Kandahar border area, Uruzgan Province, and northwestern Zabul. This region alone accounts for 16 of the 41 districts (or 31.7%) under insurgent control or influence.

The NATO-led Resolute Support (RS) mission determines district status by assessing five indicators of stability: governance, security, infrastructure, economy, and communications.

USFOR-A attributes the loss of government control or influence over territory to the ANDSF's strategic approach to security prioritization, identifying the most important areas that the ANDSF must hold to prevent defeat, and focusing less on areas with less strategic importance. Under its new Sustainable Security Strategy, the ANDSF targets "disrupt" districts for clearance operations when the opportunity arises, but will give first priority to protecting "hold" and "fight" districts under its control.

USFOR-A determined that from August to November 2016, all the districts that moved under insurgent control or influence were located in "disrupt" areas and that the ANDSF actually increased the Afghan government's influence over the population in districts prioritized as "fight" and "hold" areas.

USFOR-A noted that the insurgents failed in their eight attempts to capture a provincial capital this year. Although the insurgents gained some ground, USFOR-A determined that "the amount of population that the insurgency influences or controls decreased from 2.9 million to 2.5 million (a decrease of 1.2%)" in the last three months...of the 32.1 million people living in Afghanistan, USFOR-A has assessed that the majority, 20.4 million (63.5%), live in areas controlled or influenced by the government, while another 9.2 million people (28.7%) live in areas that are contested

The most that may be possible is to provide better field assessments, again make funding conditional on integrity and performance, provide carefully focused Special Forces support in truly critical areas, and improve some aspects of equipment. In practical terms, however, these are problems that may well have to be solved almost solely by the Afghan government. A realistic analysis of such options can only be done in Afghanistan and by bring a ruthless level of realism to the analysis and planning that so far has been sadly lacking.

### Figure One: Afghan Forces in 11/2016 – Ignoring the Ghost” Problem

ANDSF ASSIGNED FORCE STRENGTH, NOVEMBER 2016						
ANDSF Component	Approved End-Strength Goal	Target Date	Assigned as of November 2016	% of Goal	Difference Between Current Assigned Strength and Goals	Difference (%)
ANA including AAF	195,000	December 2014	168,327	86.3%	(26,673)	(13.7%)
ANA Civilians including AAF Civilians	8,474	-	6,623	78.2%	(1,851)	(21.8%)
<b>ANA + AAF Total</b>	<b>203,474</b>		<b>174,950</b>	<b>86.0%</b>	<b>(28,524)</b>	<b>(14.0%)</b>
ANP*	157,000	February 2013	147,635	94.0%	(9,365)	(6.0%)
<b>ANDSF Total with Civilians</b>	<b>360,474</b>		<b>322,585</b>	<b>89.5%</b>	<b>(37,889)</b>	<b>(10.5%)</b>

Note: ANDSF = Afghan National Defense and Security Forces; ANA = Afghan National Army; AAF = Afghan Air Force.

\*NISTA (Not In Service for Training), generally students, and Standby personnel, generally reservists, are not included in the above "Total ANDSF" figures. The 11/2016 assigned strength does not include the 4,894 NISTA or 2,048 Standby personnel.

Source: DOD, Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan, 12/2012, p. 56; USFOR-A, response to SIGAR data call, 11/20/2016; USFOR-A, response to SIGAR vetting, 1/12/2017.



<b>ANDSF ASSIGNED FORCE STRENGTH, JANUARY 2016–NOVEMBER 2016</b>				
	<b>1/2016</b>	<b>5/2016<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>7/2016</b>	<b>11/2016</b>
ANA including AAF	179,511	171,428	176,058	174,950
ANP <sup>*</sup>	146,304	148,167	148,480	147,635
<b>Total ANDSF<sup>*</sup></b>	<b>325,815</b>	<b>319,595</b>	<b>324,538</b>	<b>322,585</b>

Note: ANA = Afghan National Army; AAF = Afghan Air Force; ANP = Afghan National Police; ANDSF = Afghan National Defense and Security Forces. ANA and AAF numbers include civilians except for the May 2016 numbers; available data for ANP do not indicate whether civilians are included.

<sup>a</sup>ANA data as of 5/20/2016; ANP data as of 4/19/2016.

<sup>\*</sup>NISTA (Not In Service for Training), generally students, and Standby personnel, generally reservists, are not included in the above "Total ANDSF" figures. The 11/2016 assigned strength does not include the 4,894 NISTA or 2,048 Standby personnel.

Source: CSTC-A response to SIGAR data calls, 3/31/2014, 7/1/2014, and 10/6/2014; RSM, response to SIGAR request for clarification, 3/14/2015; USFOR-A, response to SIGAR vetting, 4/10/2015, 7/12/2015, 1/29/2016, 4/12/2016, 10/9/2016, and 10/11/2016; USFOR-A, response to SIGAR data calls, 12/28/2014, 3/24/2015, 6/29/2015, 9/11/2015, 12/14/2015, 3/4/2016, 6/3/2016, 8/30/2016, and 11/20/2016.

Source: SIGAR Quarterly Report to Congress, 2017-01-30, p. 99.

**Figure Two: District Control With the 34 Afghan Provinces**  
AS OF NOVEMBER 26, 2016

<b>Control Status</b>	<b>Districts</b>		<b>Population</b>		<b>Area</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>In millions</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Sq Km</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>GIROA</b>			<b>20.4</b>	<b>63.6%</b>	<b>367,638</b>	<b>57.1%</b>
Control	83	20.4%				
Influence	150	36.9%				
<b>CONTESTED</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>32.7%</b>	<b>9.2</b>	<b>28.7%</b>	<b>172,088</b>	<b>26.7%</b>
<b>INSURGENT</b>			<b>2.5</b>	<b>7.8%</b>	<b>104,063</b>	<b>16.2%</b>
Control	9	2.2%				
Influence	32	7.9%				
<b>Total</b>	<b>407</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>32.1</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>643,789</b>	<b>100%</b>

Note: GIROA = Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, sq km = square kilometers.

Source: USFOR-A, response to SIGAR data call, 11/26/2016.

### *Carrying Out a Zero-based Net Assessment to Determine What a "Conditions-Based" U.S. Effort Needs to Be*

No one can assess the detailed requirements for an adequate U.S. support effort from the outside. The detailed planning to both seek reform of the Afghan force development effort and provide the kind of U.S. train/assist and air support can only be done at the command level in Afghanistan, and it should be done in concert with the matching effort to tie aid to Afghan civil reform called for in the following parts of this analysis.

What is needed is a zero-based net assessment of both the current and probable threat and of the current and probable capabilities of Afghan forces, and a "zero-based" assessment of the need for train and assist personnel that accepts the fact the U.S. must be the major provider of such aid. "Zero-based" must mean assessing the need to have a good prospect of winning, not how to minimize the U.S. effort and reduce it as quickly as possible. It must include an honest risk assessment, including contingency studies.

The U.S. must not repeat the mistake of spinning the analysis to suit some policy goal and minimizing the requirement to make it politically acceptable. If adequate and decisive force is too costly -- which seems unlikely -- the study should honestly address this.

At the same time, the assessment must look beyond the tactical level and evaluate the impact of the political and civil dimensions of the conflict. Insurgencies are battles for control over populations and territory, not just fights between hostile forces. The assessment must address the level of government vs. insurgent influence and support, not just combat outcomes. It must look at the ability hold and build, and not simply to win.

This has been a consistent failure in far too much of the military planning in Afghanistan, and it risks repeating a lesson raised all too clearly by an incident described the late Col Harry Sommers. Sommers was talking with an officer who had served in the then North Vietnamese forces. Sommers pointed out that the U.S. had won virtually every tactical encounter. His Vietnamese counterpart smiled and responded that, "Yes, but it was irrelevant." The winner is the side that ends up controlling the state, whether by military means or political ones, and control of the population is critical.

### **III. Placing as Much Emphasis on Afghanistan's Performance in the Civil Sector as On Security**

The problems in the Afghan government that affect security and the outcome of the war go far beyond the failure to adequately manage and support Afghan forces. No amount of public relations and spin can disguise the fact that the Afghan government's civil problems are at least as serious as its military ones. Moreover, you do not win a war by lying to yourself or by ignoring the weaknesses in an ally.

The issue is not to resume some massive effort in nation building, or to transform the Afghan government and economy by U.S. standards. The U.S. had already allocated some \$115.22 billion on military and civilian aid between FY2002 and FY2016, and still budgeted \$812.7 million for the Economic support Fund (EDF) in FY2016. The October 2016 SIGAR report notes that,<sup>22</sup>

The ESF was appropriated \$812.27 million for FY 2016, bringing cumulative funding to more than \$19.41 billion, including amounts transferred from AIF to the ESF for USAID's power transmission lines projects. Of this amount, nearly \$17.87 billion had been obligated, of which nearly \$14.56 billion had been disbursed...USAID reported that cumulative obligations as of September 30, 2016, increased nearly \$787.62 million and cumulative disbursements increased by more than \$78.49 million from the amounts reported last quarter.

The key to success is rather to push the Afghan government into enough reforms to meet the critical needs and expectations of its people, and to win their loyalty by meeting Afghan standards. Afghanistan needs effective help in providing hope and stability, not a massive the development effort. If more funding is needed, it is far more to help Afghanistan adjust to the massive cuts in economic aid and military spending that took place after 2014 than to try to rush development in mid-war.

The need for such basic reforms has been disguised by the tendency of State, USAID, the White House, and DoD to make exaggerated claims of political and civil success in one of the worst governed and least developed countries in the world has wasted a vast amount of aid and military effort, and meant that far too little has been done to win the support of the Afghan people.

#### ***A Government that Cannot Even Properly Govern "Kabulstan"***

The Afghan government is deeply divided, governs poorly, and is one of the most corrupt in the world. In spite of a decade and half of effort to improve its capabilities, World Bank and other outside estimates show remarkably little real world progress. Similarly, exaggerated claims about health, education, and the status of women cannot disguise the fact that aid-driven improvements in Afghan's macro-economic position have not led to needed improves in reducing poverty, malnutrition, and unemployment.

Polls like those of the Asia Foundation do show that the Afghan people do see progress in a number of areas. They also show, however, that the Afghan people recognize all too clearly that the government fails to properly manage and develop the economy. and that it today is almost as much as threat to Afghan security, and stability as the Taliban and its other enemies. They also show a deep popular pessimism on government-centered activities like security, corruption, employment, and electricity

The U.S. needs to make conditionality as real in pressuring the Afghan government to reform its civil operations as to improve its security operations. It needs to tie U.S. aid to Afghan performance, real world reform rather than new reform plans, and serious efforts to meet the needs and expectations of the Afghan people.

The good news is that **Appendix D** shows that the Asia Foundation public opinion survey for 2016 found the Taliban has little broad popular support. The bad news is that **Appendix D** shows the same survey found that popular confidence in Afghanistan's nation's current prospects and popular support for the government was dropping steadily and reaching critically low levels.

Defeating an insurgency requires governance that can win and deserves popular support. A democratic facade is not enough. Afghanistan can only succeed if it acquires an effective central government that can actually govern.

The present divided government cannot even present a unified face in Kabul. In 2014, the year that most U.S. and allied forces left Afghanistan, a presidential election resulted in include a runoff, which featured the top two vote-getters from the first round, Ashraf Ghani and Abdullah Abdullah. The election was a corrupt mess that paralyzed the Afghan government and led to a U.S. intervention that pushed the two men into forming a Government of National Unity in September 2014, with Ghani as President and Abdullah given a newly-created position of Chief Executive Officer.

This awkward arrangement left no one clearly in charge, and almost immediately led to active tension between the two men and their supporters. There also has been only very limited progress in achieving the electoral reforms and the new election schedule for 2016 has not been held. No one clearly in charge for more than two years, and this leadership crisis has been compounded by an ineffective legislature, and the strength of major power brokers and de facto power centers outside Kabul.

More broadly, Afghanistan faces the need to reform an extremely corrupt and inefficient government in the middle of a major internal conflict and an economic crisis created by both internal structural problems in the economy, and major cutbacks in foreign military spending and aid.

Afghanistan desperately needs effective civil leadership at the central, provincial, and district levels-- both to reform the government in ways that win popular support and to cope with a serious economic crisis. It also needs to do more than talk about corruption and hold a few show trials. Real world progress in resolving Afghanistan's need for unified political leadership, reducing corruption to real-world levels, and improved performance in meeting popular needs are critical to victory. the U.S. must establish clear lines of conditionality to every aspect of its presence and aid efforts in Afghan that make it clear that gross failure and corruption will have a clear personal cost and that a continued U.S presence and support are conditional on the overall efforts of the government.

### ***Making Government Effective***

Afghanistan has made progress in areas of training and central governance that largely benefit an education and more wealthy elite. It has failed far too many of its other citizens, however, and many of the benefits to its wealthiest and most powerful figures come from corruption, favoritism, poorly implemented contracts, and mismanagement of its financial system. They also take a form that can easily encourage emigration and foreign investment and bank accounts.

By any practical standard, there are good reasons why the Afghan people distrust their government at every level. **Appendix E** shows that:

- The World Bank ranks Afghanistan as one of the worst governments in the world in all six of the categories it uses: Voice and Accountability, Political Stability and Absence of Violence, Government Effectiveness, Regulatory Quality, Rule of Law, and Control of Corruption. These practical are measures of effectiveness that affect every Afghan, and the World Bank does not show any major upward trends in the most critical measures -- Political Stability and Absence of Violence, Government Effectiveness, Rule of Law, and Control of Corruption. -- over the period from 1996-2015.<sup>23</sup>
- This lack of progress has occurred in spite of the defeat of the Taliban in 2011, and in spite of major U.S. and other outside aid efforts and promise after Afghan promise to make major reforms.
- If anything, military spending and aid distorted the economy and created far higher levels of corruption. Transparency International -- the leading independent source of rankings on corruption ranked Afghanistan as 166th out of the 168 countries it ranked in 2015. This put it at the near bottom of the world after North Korea and Somalia.<sup>24</sup>
- The Asia Foundation Survey found that Afghan popular perceptions found provincial, district, and local government to be even worse in overall confidence than the central government --although this ranking reversed in the case of corruption.

### ***Pressing the Afghan Government to Reform Enough to Meet Afghan Standards and Expectations***

The U.S. cannot afford to let these conditions continue if it is too stay in Afghanistan long enough to have a high probability of serious lasting success. *This does not mean that the U.S. should seek anything approaching Western standard of governance, but there is no point in providing aid that is wasted, stolen, or that does not meet urgent Afghan needs. Moreover, the Afghan government must meet Afghan standards and expectations.* It cannot continue to do this badly and hope to see the popular support it needs, or create ability to bring lasting stability even when it can defeat the Taliban.

The real key, however, is to convince the Afghan people at every level possible that the government is actually serving them, is honest and effective by Afghan standards. This will require either new elections or some kind of public agreement (loya jirgha) on creating clear lines of leadership at one level. It will also require failed or corrupt officials to be forced out of key positions.

Once again, Anticorruption task forces, appointments, and laws can only have limited impact and finding the equivalent of a few scapegoats will not help --particularly if they are chosen either because they are not tied to power brokers or because they are seen as rivals and enemies. The same is true when token firings are followed by rotating the failed and corrupt back to new jobs, a few officials are made scapegoats for reasons of political maneuvering, and honest and effective Afghan officials are dismissed or rotated out of key positions. (For a different view of such options see SIGAR *Corruption in Conflict: Lessons from the U.S. Experience in Afghanistan*.<sup>25</sup>)

Once again, the proper focus is conditionality and outside transparency in U.S. official public reporting. It is to selectively shut off aid or reduce aid, provide outside transparency as to how the government uses or abuses aid and its own funds, and publically expose corrupt officials by name. Demanding credible government accounting, evidence of completion and activity, and credible measures of effectiveness is one set of steps. If there is any common lesson from

Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan, it is that war is no excuse for a failure to manage and supervise - particularly in an era of UAVs, satellite coverage, and instant audio-video communication.

Another key change will be to stop pressuring Afghans to meet an absurd and destructive measure of effectiveness like demanding quick contracting and payment to meet "urgent" needs. U.S. pressure should tie every aspect of aid to a requirement for rigorous Afghan accounting, detailed execution plans, meaningful proof of action, public reviews and meetings, and meaningful and verifiable measures of effectiveness.

It will take time to ensure that key civil appointments are held by those who can and will do the job, and longer to create suitable institutions. However, beginning by focusing on key leaders and officials is critical and public exposure and visa denial remain key levers. These are unusual tools for U.S. relations with a friendly country and they need to be used selectively and where they will achieve meaningful result, not enforced as some universal standard. At the same time, warfighting should not be tied to "normal" diplomacy, embassies, or diplomatic standards. (The State Department might benefit a great deal on a global basis by making even one use of the term "normal embassy" a criteria for instant selection out.)

Publically outing and banning corrupt officials and contractors permanently by name -- rather than by corporate shell -- should be used wherever key appointments affect key functions at the central, provincial, district and major urban level. Legislation should also be considered to require that the State Department issue an annual report that both publically identifies key Afghan individuals who serve their country well and individuals found to be incompetent and corrupt and depriving them of any dual nationality.

The risk is that the Afghan government may choose not to comply. The benefit is that such non-compliance would provide the perfect reason to cut U.S. losses in trying to win under conditions the Afghan government makes too expensive or impossible.

### ***Focusing on Instability, Poverty and the People***

There is a broader set of civil issues, however, that will equally critical to winning public support, to creating the conditions where Afghanistan can go from "win" to "hold and "build" on a national level, and to providing the incentives for unity among a nation of divided regions, sects, ethnicities, and tribes.

The sheer scale of Afghanistan's human problems, the impact of war and Transition, and the inability to use aid money to achieve real progress is often disguised by the favorable "spin" that public reporting by Afghan government sources, the White House the State Department, USAID, the Department of Defense have long given to Afghan "progress" -- often cherry picking grossly uncertain favorable reports and statistics on health, education, women's rights, and economic growth.

The reality, however, is very different and needs to be explored in depth to see what U.S. action can ease the strain on the afghan economy in affordable terms. Afghanistan has suffered badly from result of the transition in 2014 and the fighting that has followed.

### ***Meeting Fiscal Requirements***

In purely fiscal terms, needs to make enough progress in classic macroeconomic terms to meet international fiscal standards. Here, a November 2016 World Bank Overview of Afghanistan



notes that its post Transition performance has faced major problems, but its future may be mixed,<sup>26</sup>

Security and development challenges remain daunting, with poor security environment continuing to exert a binding constraint on confidence, investment, and growth. Economic growth reached only 0.8 percent in 2015. Adverse weather conditions reflected slow growth, which contributed to a decline in agricultural production of 5.7 percent in 2015. Available data for the first half of 2016 indicate low levels of investment into 2016, while agricultural production has been disrupted by crop diseases and pests. Growth in 2016 is therefore expected to reach only 1.2 percent, despite progress with a number of initiatives, including Afghanistan's accession to the World Trade Organization and the opening of the Chahbahar port in Iran, which has excellent potential as an alternative trade route.

Growth in 2016 is therefore expected to reach only 1.2 percent, despite progress with a number of initiatives, including Afghanistan's accession to the World Trade Organization and the opening of the Chahbahar port in Iran, which has excellent potential as an alternative trade route. Economic growth is expected to gradually pick up over coming years, from 1.8 percent in 2017 to 3.6 percent in 2019. Stronger growth in out-years is predicated on improvements in security, political stability, reform progress, and continued high levels of aid.

Consumer prices declined steadily throughout 2015, rebounding in the first half of 2016. The rebound was driven by recovery in global energy and cereal prices and by the depreciation of the Afghani against major trading currencies. The exchange rate depreciated in the first two quarters of the year by 3.8 percent and 0.3 percent respectively, followed by an appreciation of about 2 percent in the third quarter. Foreign exchange reserves declined throughout most of 2015, before increasing in the first half of 2016 to US\$7.4 billion (or around 9 months of imports). This increase was largely due to the decline in imports, resulting from weakening demand.

The fiscal situation remains stable. Revenue collection performance was strong in 2015, with domestic revenues reaching 10.2 percent of GDP. This strong performance has continued into 2016, with domestic revenues collected in the first 8 months of 2016 standing at 30 percent higher than the value for the same period in the previous year. This increase is largely the result of improvements in tax administration and the introduction and implementation of new policy measures in the second and third quarters of 2015. Public spending in the first half of 2016 was 5 percent higher than in the previous year. While security costs and civilian recurrent needs increased the operating budget spending by around 9 percent in the first half of 2016, development budget expenditures have fallen due to poorer budget execution performance across most of Government institutions. A small deficit of 1.3 percent of GDP was recorded in 2015, with a balanced budget expected in 2016.

Macroeconomic and national fiscal data, however, do not directly address the practical needs and perceptions of almost all of Afghanistan's population. If one looks at the trends in Afghanistan from the viewpoint of popular needs, and the forces that shape stability and reasons to support the government, World Bank, IMF, and UN reporting provides a long series of warning about steadily deteriorating conditions - even if one ignore the steadily rising plight of Afghans who are being pushed out of Iran and Pakistan.

### ***Dealing with Declining Human Services***

They show that better educated and more wealthy Afghans have lost jobs, income, and investments as aid and military spending have dropped since most outside force left in 2014, many Afghans have been forced into urban areas by the war and live in slums and either lack jobs or have dead end ones. Rural income has also dropped -- with the possible exception of narcotics -- and poverty has risen.

The same World Bank overview report warns that,<sup>27</sup>

- ...Only about half of the total registered schools have proper buildings, while the rest operate in tents, houses and under trees. Only 55 percent of the teachers meet the minimum requirements while the rest get

in-service training to upgrade their skills. National student learning assessments are yet to be mainstreamed and the quality of education and administration re-mains relatively weak.

- ... Despite significant improvements in the coverage and quality of health services, Afghan health indicators remain below average for low income countries, indicating the need to further lower barriers for women accessing services. Afghanistan has one of the highest levels of child malnutrition in the world, with about 40.9 percent of children under 5 suffering from chronic malnutrition while both women and children suffer from high levels of vitamin and mineral deficiencies.
- ... Despite significant progress in developing the electricity grid, Afghanistan retains one of the lowest rates of access and usage of electricity in the world. Per capita consumption averages 154 kWh per capita per year, which is significantly less than the South Asia average of 667 kWh per year and the average electricity usage per person world-wide of 3,100 kWh (based on 2012 data). Only about 30 percent of its population is connected to the grid, up from 6 percent in 2002.

The World Bank's *Afghanistan Country Snapshot*, issued in October 2016, is far franker about Afghan needs. It notes that,<sup>28</sup>

- *Afghanistan ranks 177 (out of 189 economies) in the 2016 Doing Business report with many of the indicators faring worse or having no change from the past year.*<sup>1</sup> The findings show Afghanistan particularly low on protecting investors (189); trading across borders (174); registering property (184); enforcing contracts (172); and dealing with construction permits (185). The 2014 Enterprise Survey said the biggest obstacles to firms in Afghanistan were political instability, lack of access to land, corruption, financing and electricity shortages.
- *During the pre-transition period, aid-led growth was not able to significantly accelerate poverty reduction in Afghanistan.* In 2007-08, 36 percent of the population in Afghanistan was poor, that is more than one in every three Afghans was living on levels of expenditure insufficient to satisfy basic food and non-food needs. Four years later, in 2011-12, the poverty rate in Afghanistan remained substantially unchanged despite a massive increase in international spending, both on military and civilian assistance, and an overall strong growth and labor market performance.
- *Afghanistan's urbanization rate is increasing faster than that of most South Asia region countries.* 27 percent of its population was living in urban areas in 2014. This is lower than the average in South Asia of 32.6 percent but in recent years the rate of change has been the highest in the region. Between 2000 and 2014, the urbanization rate has been 4.9 percent per annum, increasing from 1.2 percent per annum in the 1960s. 24 percent of Afghanistan's population of about 32 million people was estimated to live in urban areas in 2012 – these estimates are likely to be an under-estimate...
- *Rural areas accommodate a large majority of the Afghan population and the highest concentration of poverty:* four out of every five poor Afghans live in rural areas. More than half of the poor population was represented by children below the age of 15. Moreover, 75.6 percent of the poor above the age of 15 are illiterate (against 63.4 percent of the non-poor), and only 7 percent have completed primary education. The human capital disadvantage of the poor is reflected in their weak labor market outcomes, i.e. in their higher risk of unemployment, underemployment and vulnerability in employment or employment in agriculture.
- *In spite of rapid growth between 2007 and 2012, poverty levels remained stubbornly high at 36 percent of the population.* In 2014, after two years of falling growth, poverty levels had increased to nearly 40 percent. In 2012, about 9 million Afghans, 600,000 more than in 2008, had consumption levels below the minimum necessary to satisfy basic food and non-food needs. Female-headed households are disproportionately affected. Rural poverty rates are about 10 percentage points higher than urban, but the urban-rural poverty gap has remained stable. Rural areas accounted for 76 percent of the population and 81 percent of the poor in 2011-2012, but urbanization has led to an increase in the number of poor people living in urban areas.
- *Inequality has also increased.* The poorest 20 percent of the population saw a 2 percent decline in real per capita consumption, the bottom 40 percent little change, and the richest 20 percent a 9 percent increase. Had the country's economic growth been distributed evenly across the population, poverty would have declined by 4.4 percentage points.

- *Population displacement caused by conflict and poverty is a growing challenge.* Historically, Afghanistan has had a long history of displacement, with many Afghans fleeing the country after the Soviet invasion in 1979 and during the civil wars of the 1990s. Currently there are an estimated 3.5 million Afghans living in Pakistan and Iran as registered and unregistered refugees. There has also been a recent upsurge in the number of Afghans fleeing to Europe. According to The Economist,<sup>2</sup> nearly 200,000 Afghans applied for asylum in Europe in 2015, but only 69 percent of them were granted refugee status while the rest have been or are in the process of being repatriated. Internally as well, conflict is causing increasing numbers of Afghans to flee the countryside and move to urban areas, where they make up a large proportion of those who are poor. The number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) is estimated in excess of 1 million. Increasingly, with potentially large numbers of returning refugees or internally displaced who have lost their livelihoods, government and host community resources are stretched to breaking point.
- *A key factor behind stagnant poverty nationwide is regional disparities, with the highest poverty in the lagging Northeast, West Central, and East regions of the country.* According to the 2011-2012 National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (NRVA), poverty rates ranged from 27.7 percent in the Southwest to 49.7 percent in the Northeast. Poverty trends either remained flat or declined in most regions. Without the Northeast, nationwide poverty incidence would have fallen by 3 percentage points. The lagging regions were not those which experienced the most conflict. The conflict has had the perverse effect of increasing economic integration and employment in the better off but more conflict-affected regions, while the more remote Northeast, dependent on agriculture and vulnerable to natural disasters, received relatively less attention from government and donors.<sup>3</sup>
- *Labor market dynamics induced by aid-led growth also contributed to widening inequalities between the poorest and the richest segments of the population.* Between 2007-08 and 2011-12, labor market outcomes improved. The economy added approximately 490,000 new jobs for men in the 25 to 50 age group and unemployment and underemployment were successfully reduced, together with the share of informal employment. However, the improvement in labor market opportunities did not benefit Afghan workers equally. Employment growth was mostly led by the service sector – where 80 percent of the new jobs were in informal day labor arrangements – followed by the public sector and employment in health and education-related services – where most of the jobs were highly skilled and formal. Lacking the human capital necessary to take advantage of better quality jobs, the only change in labor market opportunities available for the poor was to substitute vulnerable employment in agriculture with vulnerable employment in the service sector.
- Over 40,000 km of rural roads and more than 5,000 km of highways have been rehabilitated or improved over the past 13 years. But much remains to be done to improve regional integration, national connectivity and access to local markets. *Around 85 percent of roads are in poor shape and the majority are not all-season roads. Action to improve operation and maintenance is urgently needed*
- *Agriculture still remains the main source of real GDP growth, employment and subsistence for the Afghan population.* Only 12 percent of Afghanistan's 65 million hectares of land area is arable, and the actual cultivated area is substantially less, due to a lack of irrigation. Between 2003/04 and 2011/12, real agricultural growth ranged from -22 percent to 45 percent, reflecting the continuing importance of rain-fed agriculture. The sector is also dominated by smallholder production. Average farm size ranges from 0.4 to 1.0 hectare for small-scale producers and one to two hectares for large-scale producers. Similarly, the average size for livestock farming is 1.3 cows and 10 sheep and goats.
- *Three decades of conflict have destroyed much of the agricultural infrastructure, and eroded institutional capacity to provide technical services, such as regulations or the teaching of new techniques.* Before the conflicts, Afghanistan was a top international supplier of horticultural products, supplying about 20 percent of the raisins in the world market in the 1970s. That share has fallen to two percent. It also was self-sufficient in meat and milk and was a significant exporter of wool, carpets, and leather goods. Afghanistan was also self-sufficient in cereals and, at times, was a small exporter. However, rapid population growth coupled with the destruction of much of the country's irrigation systems, storage facilities and rural roads network during the years of conflict, have turned Afghanistan into a net importer of wheat.

- *Afghanistan's urbanization rate is increasing faster than that of most South Asia region countries.* 27 percent of its population was living in urban areas in 2014. This is lower than the average in South Asia of 32.6 percent but in recent years the rate of change has been the highest in the region. Between 2000 and 2014, the urbanization rate has been 4.9 percent per annum, increasing from 1.2 percent per annum in the 1960s. 24 percent of Afghanistan's population of about 32 million people was estimated to live in urban areas in 2012 – these estimates are likely to be an under-estimate.
- *Eighty-eight percent of Afghanistan's urban population lived in unserved or underserved housing in 2005, and 98 percent in 2013, according to the 2013-2014 National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (NRVA).* The proportion of Afghanistan's overall population living in such settlements (estimated to be 90 percent in 2015) is estimated to be astronomically higher than the poverty rate (estimated to be 30 percent in 2015), the biggest such gap in the SAR (see Table 2). One third of all housing units in urban areas already accommodate two or more families. In 2015 the overall housing deficit in Afghanistan was estimated to be 1.5 million units, with an additional incremental annual demand of 200,000 to 230,000 units. By 2030, the cumulative housing deficit could be up to 4.95 million units, with 70 percent of this deficit being urban based

### ***Reacting to Structural Challenges: Declining Growth and Lower Living Standards***

**Appendix F** shows some of the key trends involved in quantitative terms, and other World Bank, IMF, and UN studies highlight other aspects of the problem. A UNHCR and World Bank study entitled *Fragility and Population Movement in Afghanistan* notes that:<sup>29</sup>

- *Fragility and conflict are Afghanistan's first structural challenge. If peace and stability are pre-requisite for development to take place, Afghanistan is (still) missing both.* According to the Global Peace Index, in 2016 the country ranks the fourth less peaceful after Syria, South Sudan and Iraq. Moreover, decades of conflict have had a destabilizing effect on the social cohesion of the country, exacerbating ethnic divisions and weakening government institutions and rule of law. Similarly, decades of conflict have depleted Afghanistan's physical and human capital which, despite the progress achieved since 2001, will constrain its growth prospects for decades to come.
- *Second among its structural challenges is Afghanistan's demographic profile.* With a total fertility rate of about 5.3 children per woman in 2014,<sup>5</sup> and a population growth rate of approximately 3 percent per year between 2010 and 2015, Afghanistan has the youngest population in South Asia: 48 percent of Afghans are below the age of 15. Equally, Afghanistan has the highest youth bulge of any country in the region, and the third highest youth bulge worldwide after Uganda and Chad: more than one fifth of the adult population in Afghanistan is aged between 15 and 24. A young and growing population can be both a challenge and an opportunity, depending on a country's ability to invest in human capital and productively employ its growing labor force.
- *In the case of Afghanistan, a young and growing population poses tremendous challenges to its public finances, already stretched by limited revenues potential and massive security spending needs.* Fiscal analysis shows that, with the current population growth, Afghanistan will need to increase human capital investments by 12 percent every year just to maintain current (inadequate) education outcomes. Similarly, a growing labor force requires the labor market to absorb approximately 400 thousands new entrants per year. Labor demand strong enough to be able to accommodate this many workers requires sustained economic growth, which, at the moment, is beyond the country's capacity given its fragility and security constraints<sup>7</sup>.
- *Afghanistan is currently facing a deteriorating conflict and a severe economic crisis which further limits the fiscal space for development spending and targeted social assistance.* Violence increased to a post-2001 high of 18,414 incidents and 6,791 civilian casualties in 2015, while an increasing proportion of Afghanistan's territory either fell under control of the anti-government elements or is currently affected by conflict. Decline in international spending due to the drawdown of international military forces, together with the deterioration of the security situation, led to severe contraction in growth. GDP growth rate was

1.3 percent in 2014 and 0.8 percent in 2015 compared to an average of 9.8 percent per year from 2003 to 2012.

- *A sharp increase in poverty has accompanied the slowdown in growth.* Lacking any safety net system able to help households manage the economic downturn, the poverty rate increased from 36 percent in 2011–12 to 39 percent in 2013–14. Similarly, labor market indicators deteriorated markedly, with a three-fold increase in the unemployment rate over the same period. In 2013–14, the national unemployment rate was 22.6 percent and youth unemployment was 28 percent, representing one-half million male youth unemployed, two-thirds of which were living in poor rural areas.
- *High male-youth unemployment is a concern because of its potential to increase poverty and conflict.* A growing body of literature recognizes the direct correlation between youth bulges, lack of socio-economic inclusion and conflict. An in-depth analysis of the effects of youth bulges on a variety of conflicts between 1950 and 2000 shows that youth bulges can cause conflict. Further, the risk of domestic armed conflict from a youth bulge becomes more severe when combined with economic stagnation and institutional fragility<sup>8</sup>.

Still another World Bank study noted in October 2016 that,<sup>30</sup>

- Until earlier in this decade Afghanistan experienced record economic growth, at an average rate of about 9 percent per year. Massive foreign inflows to fight the insurgency, ensure security, and finance development supported this remarkable performance. And yet poverty remained stubbornly high, with more than one third of the population having expenditures per capita below the poverty line. The poverty incidence nationwide was 35.8 percent in 2011, compared to 36.3 percent in 2007. *The decline was not only small in absolute terms: it was also statistically insignificant. Furthermore, during this period, consumption per capita was stagnant for the bottom 40 percent of the population, and it even declined for the poorest population quintile.*
- Living standards were lowest in the North, Northeast, and Central regions, where poverty rates ranged between 40 and 50 percent in 2011. About a third of Afghanistan's poor reside in these more remote parts of the country. By contrast, poverty rates were below 30 percent in the South and Southwest regions. The gap between the poorest and least poor regions even widened over time. In the period from 2007 to 2011, poverty incidence increased in the North, Northeast, and Central regions, while it remained stable or decreased in the South and Southwest...There is a paradox in poverty rates being lower in the South and Southwest, because those are the regions where conflict has been more prevalent...There is ample consensus that conflict is especially damaging for the poor (Blattman and Miguel 2010, World Bank 2011, Justino 2012), but Afghanistan seems to defy it.

The IMF's analyses track closely with those of the World Bank and UN. An IMF report in July 2016 stated that,<sup>31</sup>

Growth, having averaged 11.5 percent in 2007-12, collapsed to 1.5 percent in 2013–15 as the size of the International Security Assistance Force stationed in the country fell from 130,000 to 13,000. An estimated 500,000 jobs were lost in recent years following the troop withdrawal. Political uncertainty and rising insecurity compounded this drag on economic activity.

...Afghanistan is undergoing a challenging political, security, and economic transition. Continued insecurity, political uncertainty, weak institutions and corruption are salient factors preventing robust and inclusive economic growth.

Against this background and following the sizable reduction of the International Security Assistance Force stationed in the country, real GDP growth declined from 11.5 percent in 2007-12 to 1.5 percent in 2013-15 and was 0.8 percent in 2015. While an uptick of growth to 2 percent is projected for 2016, it remains far below the level needed to ensure increased employment and improved living standards. Large fiscal and external deficits continue to be financed by donor aid. Risks, related to uncertain security conditions and potential shortfalls in external support, are tilted to the downside.

### ***Key Food Issues***

Unclassified coverage by the CIA reflects similar trends and UN Humanitarian reporting raises many of the concerns in the World Bank analyses. For example, the World Food Organization notes that,<sup>32</sup>

Afghanistan's population of 30 million has been striving to re-establish political, economic and security frameworks conducive to development. A severe slowdown in economic growth between 2011 and 2014 contributed to the fact about 39 percent of Afghans live below the poverty line, with vast differences in living standards between city-dwellers and those in the countryside where two-thirds of the population resides. Unemployment increased to 22 percent between 2013 and 2014. Issues of gender-based violence, access to health care, education and food security persist.

About 33 percent of the total population – some 9.3 million people - are food insecure, according to the 2014 Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey (ALCS2014). Among them, an estimated 3.4 million (12 percent) are severely food insecure, and 5.9 million (21 percent) are moderately food insecure.

Physical insecurity is a major and growing concern. Insurgent activity and military operations have affected food security in some regions, especially in areas prone to natural disasters and high food insecurity. This has also undermined reconstruction efforts and restricted humanitarian interventions. Conflict, uncontrolled grazing, pastureland encroachment, illegal logging and the loss of forest and grass cover have worsened drought conditions and reduced agricultural productivity.

...Years of environmental degradation in the country combined with its natural landscape make Afghanistan highly vulnerable to intense and recurring natural hazards such as flooding, earthquakes, avalanches, landslides, and droughts. Disasters and climate shocks affect 250,000 Afghans annually. An estimated 235,000 people affected by natural disasters and nearly 750,000 conflict-affected people will require humanitarian food assistance in 2016.

Levels of food insecurity and undernutrition remain persistently high in Afghanistan. One of the ten countries in the world with the highest burden of undernourished children, it is affected by some of the highest infant, child and maternal mortality rates in the world. Many thousands of children die needlessly each year because they lack access to adequate food and nutrition. A 2013 National Nutrition Survey showed that 41 percent of the country's children aged under five years are chronically malnourished (stunted), 10 percent are acutely malnourished (a condition known as wasting) and 25 percent are underweight. Micronutrient deficiencies are widespread: approximately 45 percent of children 6-59 months old and 40 percent of reproductive-aged women (15 to 49 years) are anaemic. Average life expectancy at birth is 62 years; adult literacy stands at just 31.4 percent.

### ***Living With a Narco-Economy***

There is little in the real world that anyone can do to affect Afghan dependence on narcotics as long as the fighting continues and the economy continues to deteriorate. It is still striking, however, that SIGAR reported in October 2016 that,<sup>33</sup>

...the United States has provided \$8.5 billion for counternarcotics efforts in Afghanistan since 2002. Nonetheless, Afghanistan remains the world's leading producer of opium, providing 80% of the world's output over the past decade, according to the United Nations. The country also has a growing domestic addiction problem... UNODC's latest survey showed that 201,000 hectares were cultivated in 2016 a 10% increase from 2015. The latest UN Secretary General's report states that areas under cultivation and production have increased after this summer's harvest...As noted in the UNODC's World Drug Report 2016, Afghanistan accounts for nearly two-thirds of the world's illicit opium cultivation

An UNDOC press release dated October 24, 2016 also noted that,<sup>34</sup>

Afghan opium production has risen 43% over last year's levels, to an estimated 4,800 metric tons, according to new Afghanistan Opium Survey figures released October 23 by the Afghan Ministry of Counter Narcotics and the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC)...The survey also said the

area under opium- poppy cultivation had increased 10% from last year, to 201,000 hectares (nearly half a million acres). The survey said the production increase reflected the larger area under cultivation, higher yields, and lower eradication results.

The full report of the UNDOC *Opium Survey 2016* estimated that production increased from a range of 2,700-3,900 tons to 4,000-5,000 tons. It found that the number of poppy free provinces had had a further decline from 14 to 13, and 21 other provinces now relied heavily on the crop. Eradication dropped by 91% from an already small 3,760 ha to 335 ha, and average cultivated opium yield increased from 18.3 kg/ha to 23.8 kg/ha.<sup>35</sup>

There is nothing wrong with continued anti-narcotics efforts, provided these are not used to blackmail farmers and given one set of power brokers and drug lords special privileges, but reality is reality. There is something wrong about throwing good aid money after bad.

### ***Reexamining the Civil Side of War Fighting and the Need for the Right Kinds of Aid***

It is important to note that negative as much of this reporting is, most of it only reflects the situation in late 2015 and early 2006, and not the negative impact of the fighting in 2016. It does not address the impact of Afghanistan's growing dependence on a narco-economy, and problems in coping with Afghans being forced out of Iran and Pakistan. It does not address the interactions between such problems and the competing interest of different powerbrokers, ethnicities, sects, and tribes. Far too many projections and estimates also assume effective reforms and limited future fighting -- assumptions that now seem unlikely to become the real world case.

There are no quick solutions to the human problems and trends that have just been outlined. Spin aside, Afghanistan remains one of the poorest and least developed countries in the world. It faces what has become a nation-wide war of attrition with a variety of insurgent enemies, large-scale reform will take years, and development of its resources and economy will largely have to wait on a peace that no one can now predict.

**Appendix F** summarizes the result of the Brussels conference in October 2016 that the EU held on aid to Afghanistan. It provides some of the key arguments and data the World Bank used in arguing for high levels of continuing aid, and that resulted in pledges of some \$15.2 billion through the end of 2019. What is striking about the presentations made at the conference, however, is the degree to which they tacitly assumed that contributing warfighting would either end or would not block effective civil development when they made specific recommendations or projections for the future.

Development and aid organizations may like to consider cases where combat becomes a minimal issue within the coming year, but fifteen years of past optimism has done far more to waste resources in the facing of continuing combat than use them productively. Any new U.S. strategy must focus on how to link military success with practical efforts to win popular support. One needs to be equally careful about assuming that nations will actually deliver on all of their current pledges of aid. Past cases warn that donor fatigue is all too real and increases steadily with time.

This is particularly true when there is so much resistance in the U.S. and other countries to anything that is labeled as "nation building." It should be clear, however, why this analysis has spent more time on human factors than warfighting, Afghan forces, and governance.



No probable amount of military success can offset the political impact of the steadily deteriorating conditions faced by most Afghans. Even elites will find ways to serve themselves and often to leave, and ordinary people will have no reasons to trust and support a government that does not serve their interests.

The Taliban first came to power because virtually every other element of Afghan politics had previously failed the Afghan people. Any form of U.S. success in Afghanistan requires a level of integrated civil-military effort attention to the risk this experience could be repeated. Insurgencies and counterterrorism efforts have to win the battle, but they also have to win the people. A successful U.S. strategy must do its best to get the Afghan government and donors to deal with the people's worst grievances and most urgent needs.

### ***Making a Zero-Based Net Assessment of Both Military and Civil Needs for U.S. Support and Aid***

Once again, any effort to create an effective U.S. civil effort is going to require very careful planning of a kind that needs to be done in country. In practice, such an effort will almost certainly also have to limit any aid requirement to something very close to the \$15.2 billion for 2017-2018 aid to Afghanistan agreed to at the conference the EU hosted in Brussels in October 2016.

At the same time, it must look beyond fiscal measures and focus on how to use the money to best meet the needs and expectations of the Afghan people and win support for the government. What is needed is to expand the zero-based net assessment of Afghan military needs recommended earlier in this report to include Afghan civil needs as well.

This should include net assessment of Afghan popular perceptions of the government and threat that deals with key differences by region, sect, ethnicity, and key power brokers. It should also focus on stability and security and not development. There simply will not be enough time, money, and qualified personnel many to deal with every urgent need or grievance, much less pay for development in mid-conflict.

Job creation may well prove to be the key priority -- along creating effective leadership and governance -- but basic services like justice, education, and medical help are also critical. Once again, aid must also be conditional and tied to effective plans, audits and fiscal controls, transparency, and measures of effectiveness.

It must also be tied to the same measures to limit waste, incompetence, and corruption. One of the fundamental absurdities of Afghan governance is setting goals for mire central government control and allocation of aid money as if the government was competent and not corrupt. Promise of reform should also never be substituted by actual reform. There are many highly competent, patriotic, and honest Afghans, but no one can count on their presence. Past promises of reform have also had about the same success as granting parole to a lifetime recidivist felon.

Once again, it will also have to be hammered home that *conditional means conditional*, and that Afghan leaders either take responsibility or the U.S. can and will leave. It is one of the ironies of a successful U.S. strategy in Afghanistan that the ability to stay is dependent on the willingness to leave.

## **IV. Taking a Transactional Approach to Afghanistan's Neighbors**

This analysis has focused on Afghanistan, but the changes in U.S. strategy also need to reexamine the role of Pakistan, and the emerging roles of nations like Russia, Iran, India, and the Central Asian states. The most important such reexamination should be Pakistan. More than a decade of the facade of alliance has shown that

Almost since the start of the Afghan War, Pakistan has pursued its own interests in Afghanistan at a high cost to the United States -- sometimes in dollars and sometimes in lives. For all the rhetoric of alliance, its ISI and other elements of its military have consistently dealt with -- and offer sanctuary to -- elements of the Taliban, Al Qa'ida, Haqqani Network, and other insurgents. The U.S. has also had to pay for access to Pakistani air space and lines of communication with aid, and to some extent by endorsing the facade of an alliance that is only partly real.

It is possible the U.S. can have a successful strategy that is sufficiently Afghan-centric so that it can continue such relations indefinitely. This, however, requires an objective risk assessment, and the U.S. needs to consider what options it has to quietly or overtly pressure Pakistan -- particularly if Afghan-Pakistani relations continue to deteriorate and/or if the U.S. seeks to seriously try to convince the Taliban to come to the conference table in some way that can actually end the conflict.

Cutting aid, sanctions, tilting to India are all options, although scarcely good or easy ones. So is transparency. Leaking all of the details of given Pakistani actions, providing an official report to Congress, systematically rebutting the usual Pakistani claims of martyrdom, and outing Pakistani ties to the Taliban are all possibilities. This may or may not mean openly ceasing to keep up the facade that Pakistanis an ally, but the relationship should be seen as what it is: A transactional relationship where you get what you pay, pressure, or threaten for.

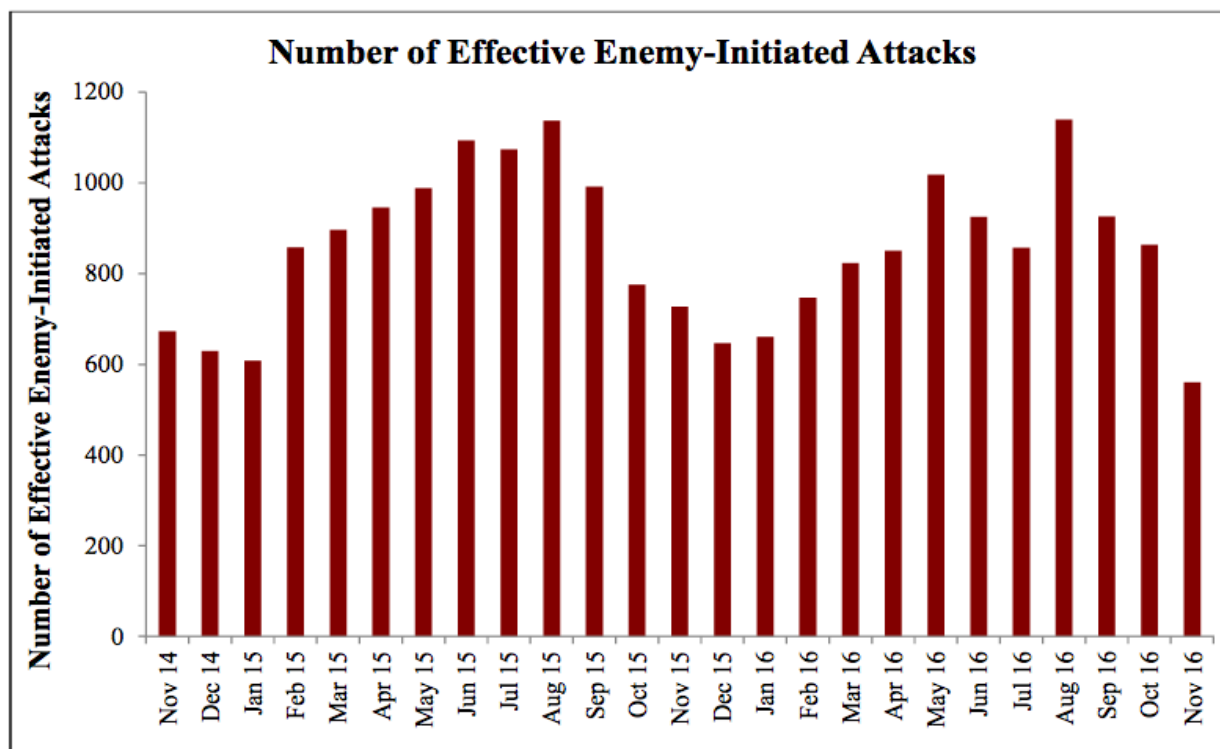
The same is true in a broader sense. Searches for regional cooperation, or based of some idealistic view of groups of rational bargainers, do not fit the region or the individual nations involved. Leaders change, but at present, India seems to be the only case where there is enough common interest to go beyond pay, pressure, or threaten.

At the same time, the U.S. does have one potential compensation. To some extent, all of the nations outside Afghanistan can to some extent exploit the U.S. position while the U.S. greatly reduces the risk of an unstable Afghanistan to them. The situation changes radically if the U.S. withdraws. Afghanistan's neighbors then have to become involved to some degree or live with the consequences. It also becomes far easier for the U.S. to play a spoiler role at little of no risk to itself.

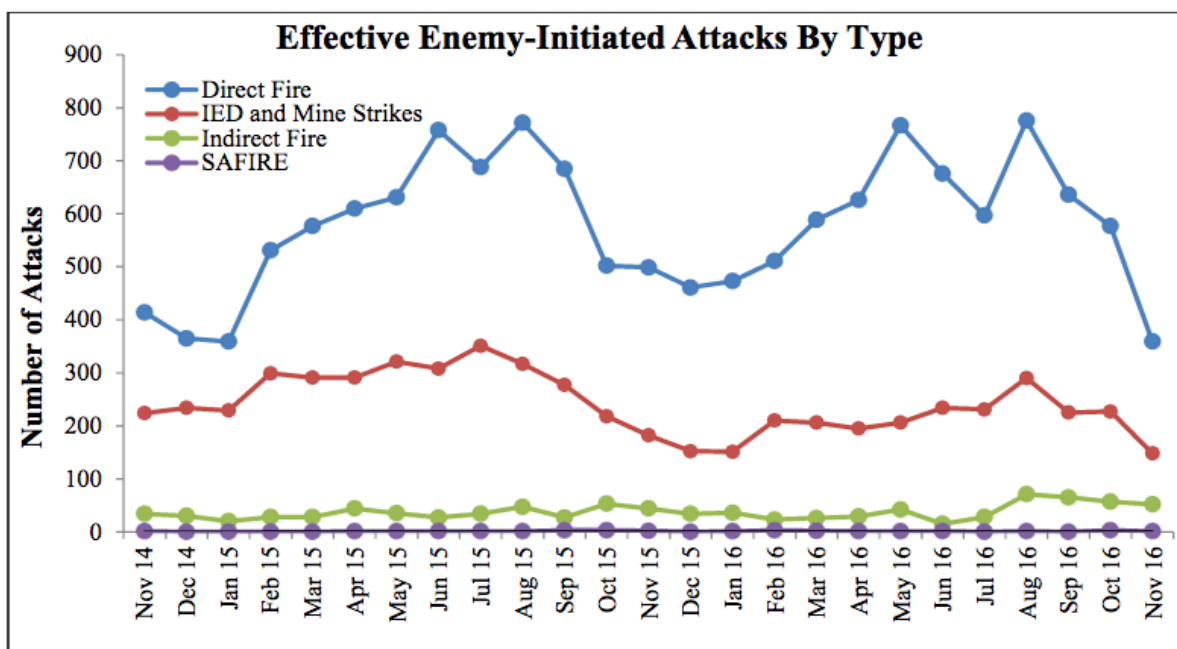
## Appendix A: The Uncertain Combat Situation in Afghanistan

There is a great deal of tactical data on the fighting in Afghanistan, but little trustworthy data on the actual trends in the fighting. The following figures provide a spectrum of graphics, maps, and narratives. The quotes of recent statements to the press by General Nicholson provide what may be the most realistic perspective.

- **Figure A1: DoD Estimates of Patterns in Effective Enemy Initiated Attacks.** This graphic is the only one provided in the most recent (June 2016) DoD semi-annual report to Congress. It only provides a very rough measure of one aspect of threat activity, and shows it is serious in broad terms. It does not weight the attacks, however, and says nothing about the struggle for political control or influence. It also is inherently misleading at a point when enemy attacks have escalated to the point where only a few major attacks on population centers are far more important than many attacks on smaller and less valuable targets.
- **Figure A2: The Growing Threat Presence: DoD Semi-Annual Report as of December 30, 2016.** This figure excerpts key narrative portions of the DoD report and provides a relatively balanced picture of the fighting and the threat.
- **Figure A3: The Growing Threat Presence: SIGAR Quarterly Reports as of October 30, 2016 and January 30, 2017.** These data updated a comparison of Afghan government and insurgent control of given provinces and districts to the end of October 2016. They do recognize the importance of Taliban and other hostile "influence," and list a large number of "contested" districts. The figures do, however, seem to call a number of districts as "contested" that are heavily under threat influence except for the district capital.
- **Figure A4: General John Nicholson, Commander of International Forces in Afghanistan, on Progress and Risks in Afghanistan December 2 and 9, 2016.** One of the best overall summaries of the fighting at the end of 2016. Deliberately positive, but balanced and with considerable useful detail. It is clear that the risks remain high.
- **Figure A5: Institute for the Study of War (ISW) Maps of Threat Presence.** Three maps showing the background assessment of threat areas of control and influence developed by ISW -- possible the best source of independent summary analysis of the fighting. The ISW web site has a wide range of additional maps and provides substantial narrative analysis. It is clear from the ISF's web site analyses that the Afghan forces still face a critical and growing challenge. The text from the ISF's March 2017 assessment is included and provides a sharp contrast with the DoD reporting.
- **Figure A6: UN OHCA Estimate of Areas of Risk in Afghanistan: 9/2015.** AUN maps clearly showing the high level of risk on Afghanistan in the fall of 2015 -- less than a year after most ISAF forces withdrew at the end of 2014.
- **Figure A8: Long War Journal Estimates of Afghan Taliban Controlled and Contested Districts: March 1, 2017**
- **Figure A9: Long War Journal maps Afghan Taliban's list of "Percent of Country Under Control of Mujahideen," March 28, 2017**
- **Figure A7: UN Estimates of Trends in Civilian Casualties:** Shows a serious rise in violence from 2014 onwards and a major expansion in the areas where fighting is taking place.
- **Figure A8: UN Estimate of Location of 530,407 Internally Displaced Civilians** by the Fighting Between 1 January 2016 and 29 November 2016. Shows the rising human impact on many areas in Afghanistan in 2016.

**Figure A1: DoD Estimates of Patterns in Effective Enemy Initiated Attacks**

<sup>19</sup> Effective enemy-initiated attacks are those enemy-initiated attacks that result in at least one non-insurgent casualty, either killed or wounded.



Department of Defense, *Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, December, 2016, p. 29-30, <https://www.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/Afghanistan-1225-Report-December-2016.pdf>.

**Figure A2: The Growing Threat Presence: DoD Semi-Annual Report as of June 30, 2016**

The security situation in Afghanistan continues to face a resilient insurgency. However, after their second year with full security responsibility for their country with limited U.S. and coalition support, Afghan forces have shown determination and continued capability growth in their fight against the Taliban-led insurgency. The Afghan Government retains control of Kabul, major population centers, transit routes, provincial capitals, and a vast majority of district centers.

Meanwhile, the Taliban continue to contest district centers, threaten provincial capitals, and temporarily seize main lines of communication throughout the country, especially in high priority areas like Kunduz City and Helmand Province. As of late September 2016, RS assessed that the Taliban had control or influence over approximately 10 percent of the population and was contesting the Afghan Government for control of at least another 20 percent.

The ANDSF are generally capable and effective at protecting major population centers, preventing the Taliban from maintaining prolonged control of specific areas, and at responding to Taliban attacks. This was most evident in late August and early October 2016 when the Taliban attempted to conduct several major attacks against major population centers including in Jani Khel, Tarin Kowt, Achin, Lashkar Gah, and Kunduz, and the ANDSF successfully repelled them or frequently retook any territory that was lost. At the same time, the Taliban have proven capable of taking rural areas, returning to areas after the ANDSF have cleared but not maintained a holding presence, and conducting attacks that undermine public confidence in the Afghan Government's ability to provide security. Both the ANDSF and the Taliban sustained higher reported casualties this reporting period.

The Taliban and other insurgent groups continue to perpetrate high-profile attacks, particularly in the capital region, to attract media attention, create the perception of insecurity, and undercut the legitimacy of the Afghan government. From June 1 to November 30, 2016, there were 10 high profile attacks in Kabul, a modest decrease from the same time period in 2015. The 10 high profile attacks in Kabul included an attack on the American University in Afghanistan on August 25, 2016, that killed 7 students, 3 ANP, and 2 security guards, as well as a set of twin bombings outside the Afghan MoD headquarters building on September 5, 2016, that resulted in 24 civilian and ANDSF fatalities and more than 90 wounded. Although the number of high-profile attacks decreased during this reporting period, the number of kidnappings for ransom increased, particularly of westerners and non-Afghans.

Both the ANDSF and Taliban operational tempo decreased during Ramadan this year (June 5 to July 6, 2016). The second half of July 2016, however, saw a return to historically normal levels of violence across the country for the summer. Following an elevated level of attacks in 2015, insurgent offensive operational tempo has generally increased, most notably with a 60 percent increase in effective attacks on ANDSF static checkpoints. Insurgents also continue to use social media and other means to portray greater effectiveness, influence, and territorial gains than are actually occurring.

In addition to Helmand Province, Nangarhar Province saw elevated levels of violence this reporting period when compared to other provinces, due primarily to ANA clearing operations

and ASSF counterterrorism operations against ISIL-K elements in southern Nangarhar between June and August 2016. Other major changes to security conditions included an increase in violence in both Ghazni and Wardak provinces west of Kabul when compared to the previous reporting period, but Taliban gains in these parts of the country were minimal and fleeting. Similarly, in August and September 2016, Taliban fighters challenged security forces in Uruzgan Province in an attempt to capture, or at least seriously threaten, the provincial capital of Tarin Kowt. Finally, despite Taliban attempts to isolate Kunduz City throughout July, August, and October 2016, the ANA 209<sup>th</sup> Corps and ASSF pillars maintained control of most district centers across the province and were able to quickly re-take all Taliban gains.

Since late 2015, private militias and other non-state actors have played a more public role in maintaining security in their respective regions – particularly in the north – as there is a tendency for local and provincial government officials and warlords to employ these groups to address local security challenges. In addition, over the last several months the Afghan Government has begun using Afghan Government funds to establish and support local security forces, also known as National Uprising Forces, in rural areas to provide additional security in remote parts of the country. The inclusion of these groups and other non-state entities remains a component of overall security and stability efforts, but raises policy and implementation questions as these groups have limited accountability, regard for human rights, and can exacerbate tribal and ethnic tensions if not properly monitored.

## **Threats from Insurgent and Terrorist Groups**

Collectively, terrorist and insurgent groups continue to present a formidable challenge to Afghan, U.S., and coalition forces. There is a high concentration of terrorist and extremist organizations operating in Afghanistan and Pakistan, with several known designated organizations operating in Afghanistan and Pakistan, creating a complex threat environment.

The Taliban had been able to demonstrate increasing capability to threaten district centers, but the ANSDF have also proven their ability to recover areas lost to the Taliban quickly. Seeking to exploit ANSDF weaknesses and the reduced international military presence, the Taliban are maintaining their control in some rural areas that lack effective Afghan Government representation, continuing a trend since the beginning of the RS mission and OFS. Although al Qaeda's capacity has been degraded, it still provides some limited support to insurgent groups targeting Afghan and coalition forces. Despite internal fractions within the Taliban and between the Taliban and ISIL-K, many groups continue to cooperate at the tactical level. These relationships are episodic and often shaped along ideological, religious, tribal, or ethnic lines.

Al Qaeda remains focused on survival, regeneration, and planning and facilitating future attacks, and it remains a threat to the United States and its interests. The organization has a sustained presence concentrated in the east and northeast with smaller elements in the southeast. Some lower- and mid-level Taliban leaders provide limited enabling and facilitation support to al Qaeda, but during this reporting period there have been no signs of a stronger relationship at the strategic level. In addition, al Qaeda's regional affiliate, AQIS, has built a presence in the south and southeast of Afghanistan and in Pakistan. Whereas al Qaeda continues to recruit from Arab populations, AQIS is composed primarily of militants from within the broader South and Central

Asia region.

Of the groups involved in the Taliban-led insurgency, the Haqqani Network remains the greatest threat to U.S., coalition, and Afghan forces and continues to be a critical enabler of al Qaeda. Haqqani Network leader Sirajuddin Haqqani's role as Taliban deputy has solidified Haqqani influence within the Taliban. Sirajuddin Haqqani's position has likely allowed the Haqqani Network to increase its area of operations within Afghanistan and provided the Taliban with additional operational and planning capabilities.

Despite a high operational tempo throughout the reporting period, threats to the Taliban's cohesion impacted the group's effectiveness and distracted from its focus on the ANDSF, although to a lesser degree than during the previous reporting period. The announcement of Mullah Akhundzada as leader of the movement on May 25, 2016, has not had a negative impact on tactical operations, and cohesiveness among senior leaders has improved compared to levels seen under the former leader Mullah Mansour.

During this reporting period, the Taliban operational tempo was similar to their previous summer campaigns, including a brief lull in June 2016 during Ramadan and an increase in violence after both Ramadan and Eid. Though its operations were largely confined to Helmand and Kunduz provinces, the Taliban conducted attacks nationwide. Several provinces, such as Baghlan Province, remain contested between ANDSF and Taliban control, and are under greater insurgent threat to infrastructure and ground lines of communication and transportation. The Taliban also gained territory in Uruzgan Province in early September 2016; however, the ANDSF quickly retook key areas such as territory surrounding the provincial capital of Tarin Kowt.

ISIL-K has regressed since its operational emergence and initial growth in 2015. Several factors have disrupted ISIL-K's growth strategy and diminished its operational capacity, including U.S. offensive counterterrorism operations against the group after receiving expanded targeting authorities, ANDSF operations, pressure from the Taliban, and difficulties gaining local community support. During the last reporting period, ISIL-K had a limited presence in six provinces; however, it is now largely confined to a handful of districts in southern Nangarhar. Nonetheless, ISIL-K remains a threat to Afghan and regional security, a threat to U.S. and coalition forces, and retains the ability to conduct high-profile attacks in urban centers such as a suicide attack on a mosque in Kabul that killed more than 30 Afghan civilians on November 20, 2016.

ISIL-K is still conducting low-level recruiting and distributing propaganda in various provinces across Afghanistan, but it does not have the ability to conduct multiple operations across the country. Moreover, command and control and funding from core ISIL elements in Iraq and Syria is limited. Rather than relying on external funding, ISIL-K is attempting to develop funding streams within Afghanistan, which has put it into conflict with the Taliban and other groups vying to raise revenue from illegal checkpoints and the trade of illicit goods. ISIL-K continues to draw its members from disaffected TTP fighters, former Afghan Taliban, and other militants who believe that associating with or pledging fealty to ISIL-K will further their interests. On August 12, 2016, the United States confirmed that ISIL-K leader Hafiz Safeed Khan had been killed in an airstrike in July 2016; despite his importance to the group, it is too

early to determine the ultimate effect on ISIL-K's operational capability.

## **Security Trends**

From June 1 to November 30, 2016, there were a total of 5,271 effective enemy-initiated attacks,<sup>19</sup> with a monthly average of 79 (see Figure 3). By comparison, the total number of effective enemy-initiated attacks during the same time period last year was 5,822, with a monthly average of 971.

Reflective of the historical increase in violence during the traditional spring and summer fighting season, the number of reported effective enemy-initiated attacks decreased as the Taliban and the ANDSF's summer campaigns drew to a close. The overall level of reported enemy-initiated attacks during this reporting period was approximately the same as the same time period the previous year. Consistent with the two previous reporting periods and the overall trend since the end of the U.S. and NATO combat missions and the transition to the RS mission, very few reported effective enemy-initiated attacks involved coalition or U.S. forces.

The coalition relies largely on ANDSF reporting for all metrics, including effective enemy-initiated attacks,<sup>20</sup> which are a subset of all security incidents.<sup>21</sup> Although the data collected and compiled by the ANDSF is still considered useful and is consistent with UN and other sources, coalition analysts continue to refine metrics to assess the security situation accurately.

Direct fire remains by far the largest source of effective enemy-initiated attacks, followed by IED explosions and mine strikes (see Figure 4). Consistent with trends over the last several years, indirect fire and surface-to-air fire (SAFIRE) remain the least frequent source of effective enemy-initiated attacks. The number of IED explosions and mine strikes has continued its downward trend over the last two years. This decrease in insurgent use of IEDs is due in part to insurgents facing challenges with financing their IED operations, which require more resources than direct fire attacks. The number of direct fire attacks has grown dramatically, as the Taliban increased attacks on vulnerable ANA and ANP fixed positions.

## **ANDSF Casualties<sup>22</sup>**

ANDSF casualties increased during this reporting period, and total figures increased over those reported during the same time periods in 2015 and 2016. The majority of ANDSF casualties continue to be the result of direct fire attacks, with IED explosions and mine strikes contributing at a much lower level. ANA casualties were higher than the same period one year ago, with the highest number of casualties occurring in the south and east. Compared to the same time period one year ago, ANP and ALP casualties are slightly lower. Consistent with recent trends, ANP and ALP casualties continue to be higher than ANA casualties.

ANDSF casualties during the traditional spring and summer fighting season have remained at elevated levels since 2014 when they became the lead for security of their country. In addition, ANDSF casualties during the winter season increased each of the last two years. The increase is due largely to very mild winters during the past two years, which have allowed the insurgents

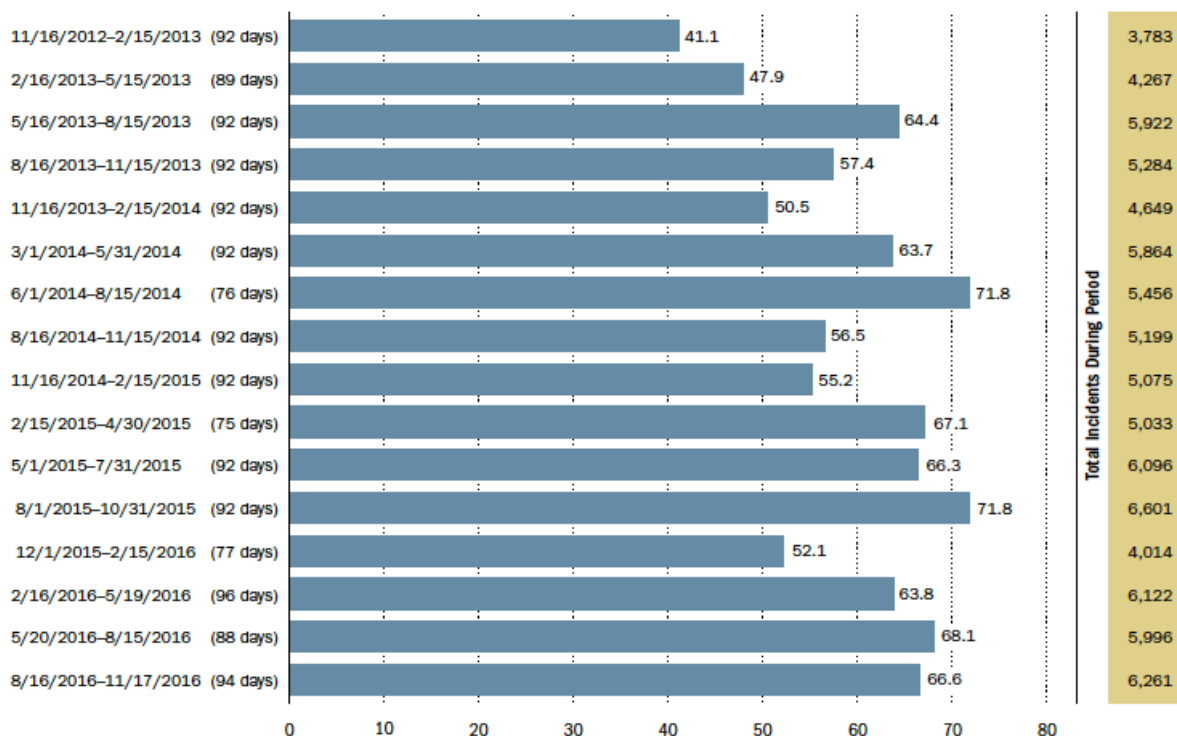


greater freedom of movement of personnel and supplies across the country, particularly in remote areas typically less accessible due to harsh winter conditions.

Source: Excerpted from Department of Defense, *Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, December 30, 2016, pp. 20-26.

**Figure A3: SIGAR Estimates of Patterns in Security Incidents: 11/16/2012 to 11/17/2016**

**AVERAGE NUMBER OF REPORTED SECURITY INCIDENTS PER DAY**



Note: Security incidents were not reported for the month of November 2015.

Source: UN, reports of the Secretary-General, *The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security*, 9/7/2016, p. 5; 6/10/2016, p. 4; 3/7/2016, p. 6; 12/10/2015, p. 5; 9/1/2015, p. 4; 6/10/2015, p. 4; 2/27/2015, p. 4; 12/9/2014, p. 5; 9/9/2014, p. 6; 6/18/2014, p. 5; 3/7/2014, p. 5; 12/6/2013, p. 6; 9/6/2013, p. 6; 6/13/2013, p. 5; 3/5/2013, p. 5; and 12/13/2016, p. 4.

The United Nations (UN) Secretary-General reported in December that Afghanistan's security situation further deteriorated between January and October 2016, with intensifying armed clashes between the Afghan security forces and the Taliban. Armed clashes reached their highest level since UN reporting began in 2007, and marked a 22% increase over the same period in 2015.<sup>109</sup> The Taliban continued to challenge government control in key districts and attempted to cut off strategically important highways and supply routes.<sup>110</sup>

The UN recorded 6,261 security incidents between August 16 and November 17, 2016, as reflected in Figure 3.26, representing a 9% increase from the same period in 2015, and an 18% decrease from the same period in 2014.<sup>111</sup> As in past UN reporting, armed clashes account for the majority of the security incidents (65%), followed by those involving improvised explosive devices (18%). During the period, the majority of the recorded security incidents (66%) continued to occur in the southern, southeastern, and eastern regions.<sup>112</sup>

According to DOD, there were 5,271 enemy-initiated attacks which resulted in at least one non-insurgent being killed or wounded between June 1 and November 30, 2016, less than the 5,822 during the same period in

2015, for monthly averages of 879 and 971 respectively.<sup>113</sup> Direct fire remains the most common form of effective enemy-initiated attacks, followed by improvised-explosive device (IED) explosions and mine strikes. DOD reported the number of direct-fire attacks has grown dramatically as the Taliban increased attacks on ANA and ANP.<sup>114</sup>

As the year ended, the ANDSF were fighting insurgents in areas such as Helmand, Uruzgan, Kandahar, Kunduz, Laghman, Zabul, Wardak, and Faryab Provinces.<sup>115</sup>

DOD reported that discord between various political, ethnic, and tribal factions within the Afghan government, as

well as delays in or fallouts from potential parliamentary elections, could contribute to a degradation of the security situation.<sup>116</sup> DOD predicted the insurgency will continue to exploit ANDSF vulnerabilities. As Afghan Air Force (AAF) capabilities grow, DOD predicted the Taliban are likely to use smaller groupings of fighters. They will likely use harassing attacks against lightly defended checkpoints, challenge the ANDSF in rural areas, and impede ground lines of communication to isolate district and provincial centers prior to attacking them.<sup>117</sup> DOD assessed Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) numbers will not present a security impact outside isolated provinces in eastern Afghanistan.<sup>118</sup> Nevertheless, General Nicholson reported a concern that any of the 20 terrorist groups in the Afghanistan-Pakistan region—13 in Afghanistan and seven in Pakistan—could morph into “a more virulent strain” wherein “the whole becomes greater than the sum of the parts.”<sup>119</sup>

Source: SIGAR, Quarterly Report, 30/1/2017, pp. 87-98

**Figure A4: The Growing Threat Presence: SIGAR Quarterly Report as of October 30, 2016 and January 30, 2017**

<b>DISTRICT CONTROL WITHIN THE 34 AFGHANISTAN PROVINCES AS OF AUGUST 28, 2016</b>						
<b>Control Status</b>	<b>Districts</b>		<b>Population</b>		<b>Area</b>	
	Number	%	In millions	%	Sq Km	%
<b>GIROA</b>			22.0	68.5%	394,586	61.3%
Control	88	21.6%				
Influence	170	41.8%				
<b>CONTESTED</b>	116	28.5%	7.3	22.7%	182,686	28.4%
<b>INSURGENT</b>			2.8	8.7%	66,517	10.3%
Control	8	2.0%				
Influence	25	6.1%				
<b>Total</b>	<b>407</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>32.1</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>643,789</b>	<b>100%</b>

Note: GIROA = Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan; sq km = square kilometers.

Source: USFOR-A, response to SIGAR data call, 8/30/2016.

The UN recorded 5,996 security incidents between May 20, and August 15, 2016, as reflected in Figure 3.26, representing a 4.7% increase as compared to the same period last year, and a 3.6% decrease against the same period in 2014.<sup>215</sup> As in past UN reporting, armed clashes account for the majority of the security incidents (62.6%), followed by those involving improvised-explosive devices (17.3%).<sup>216</sup> During the period, 68.1% of the recorded security incidents occurred in the southern, southeastern, and eastern regions.

...USFOR-A reported that approximately 63.4% of the country's districts are under Afghan government control or influence as of August 28, 2016, a decrease from the 65.6% reported as of May 28, 2016. During a press briefing on September 23, General Nicholson reported "68–70% of the population lived in those districts." As reflected in Table 3.6, of the 407 districts within the 34 provinces, 258 districts were under government control (88 districts) or influence (170), 33 districts (in 16 provinces) were under insurgent control (8) or influence (25), and 116 districts were "contested."<sup>245</sup>

USFOR-A described contested districts as having "negligible meaningful impact from insurgents."<sup>246</sup> According to USFOR-A, the RS mission determines district status by assessing five indicators of stability: governance, security, infrastructure, economy, and communications. USFOR-A identified the regions/provinces with the largest percentage of insurgent-controlled or -influenced districts as Helmand (21%) and the RS Train, Advise, Assist Command- North (TAAC) (15%) and TAAC-South (11.6%) regions. The nine provinces within the TAAC-North area of responsibility are Badakhshan, Baghlan, Balkh, Faryab, Jowzjan, Kunduz, Samangan, Sar-e Pul, and Takhar.<sup>249</sup> The TAAC-South area of responsibility includes Kandahar, Uruzgan, Zabul, and Daykundi. According to USFOR-A, the districts under insurgent control or influence from December 2015 to August 2016 were districts in "disrupt" areas. The ANDSF will target these districts for clearance operations when the opportunity arises, but will give first priority to protecting "hold" and "fight" districts under its control.<sup>251</sup> Although the ANDSF intentionally ceded ground in the "disrupt" areas, USFOR-A reported that the more populated parts of Helmand, one of the most historically contested provinces, remained under Afghan government control.

Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *QUARTERLY REPORT TO THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS*, OCT 30 2016, pp.103, 105-14.

### District Control With the 34 Afghan Provinces

AS OF NOVEMBER 26, 2016

Control Status	Districts		Population		Area	
	Number	%	In millions	%	Sq Km	%
GIROA			20.4	63.6%	367,638	57.1%
Control	83	20.4%				
Influence	150	36.9%				
CONTESTED	133	32.7%	9.2	28.7%	172,088	26.7%
INSURGENT			2.5	7.8%	104,063	16.2%
Control	9	2.2%				
Influence	32	7.9%				
<b>Total</b>	<b>407</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>32.1</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>643,789</b>	<b>100%</b>

Note: GIROA = Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, sq km = square kilometers.

Source: USFOR-A, response to SIGAR data call, 11/26/2016.

### **Figure A5: General John Nicholson, Commander of International Forces in Afghanistan, on Progress and Risks in Afghanistan December 2 and 9, 2016**

Now, there are 98 U.S.-designated terrorist groups globally. Twenty of them are in the Af-Pak region. This represents the highest concentration of terrorist groups anywhere in the world. Now, while some of these groups may have larger numbers in other countries, like ISIL in Syria for example, the number of groups in one region, again, is the highest concentration in the world.

The ... danger in that is that these groups mix and converge. So for example, Islamic State Khorasan today is formed of members of the Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and even some former members of the Afghan Taliban.

So this year, our U.S. CT forces conducted operations against the enemy across the country all year. They conducted over 350 operations against Al Qaeda and Islamic State in 2016. Nearly 50 Al Qaeda and -- and AQIS leaders, this is Al Qaeda Indian Subcontinent. So nearly 50 leaders from those two organizations, facilitators, key associates were killed or captured. And when they're captured, of course, they go to the Afghan judiciary and detention system. Additionally, about 200 other members of Al Qaeda, Al Qaeda Islamic State, were killed or captured as well. Our CT forces rescued the son of the former Pakistani Prime Minister Haider Gilani in a raid against Al Qaeda in eastern Afghanistan.

We have killed a total of five emirs of these terrorist groups -- of these 20 terrorist groups in Afghanistan. On October 23, U.S. forces killed Farouq al-Qatari, the emir of eastern Afghanistan. He was also their external operations director. These individuals were directly involved in planning threats against the United States in the last year.

There was also the strike in Pakistan against Mullah Mansour, the emir of the Taliban and a designated U.N. terrorist. We killed Hamidullah, the emir of the Islamic Jihad Union, and Omar Khalifa, who is the Tariq Gidar Group emir. The Tariq Gidar Group, you'll remember, is the group that perpetuated those horrendous attacks in Pakistan against a Peshawar army school in which they killed over 130 children, and the Bacha Kan University where they killed dozens of professors and students, as well as a Pakistani air force base.

With respect to ISK, we've conducted operations this year we call green sword series of operations. They specifically have targeted this ISIL affiliate in Afghanistan. These operations have been led by U.S. CT forces working with our Afghan allies. These operations so far this year have killed the top 12 leaders of Islamic State Khorasan, including their emir, Hafiz Saeed Khan, back in July.

They -- we reduced their force by roughly 25 to 30 percent, or roughly 500 Islamic State Khorasan casualties...About two dozen command and control facilities, training facilities were destroyed. Financial courier networks were disrupted. And the ISK sanctuary that once was nine districts in Afghanistan has been shrunk down to three.

...it's important to remember that five years ago, when we started building the Afghan security forces, we had about 140,000 U.S. and coalition troops in the country. We are now down to less than one-tenth of that. Today, it's the Afghan security forces who are responsible for securing their own country, with the assistance of our advisory and CT effort.

We have seen definitive growth and progress in a couple of areas, in the last year in particular.

First I would mention are the Afghan special forces. So, 17,000 special forces, arguably the best in the region. And they conduct about 70 percent of the Afghan Army's offensive operations.... They operate independently of the U.S. about 80 percent of the time. So, when I mention these CT

operations, many -- many of those are conducted with the Afghans but the majority are conducted on their own. These troops are specially selected and trained. This also includes a special mission wing, which is an Afghan air force wing, which is fully capable of night flying operations, goggle operations. And they provide all the day and night helicopter support for the Afghan special forces.

The Afghan air force is rapidly gaining capability as well. They've effectively incorporated the MD-530 helicopter into their daily ops this year. And they're now conducting most of their escort and resupply missions for the army across the country. And this was something that previously was exclusively done by U.S. or coalition forces.

So, before March of this year -- before March of 2016, the Afghan air force had no ground attack aircraft. So, beginning in April they've added eight aircraft for this and -- and have also, more importantly, added about 120 Afghan air -- tactical air controllers. So, not only are they adding the attack aircraft, they're adding the capability to control those aircraft on the ground....they ran their first A-29 strike combat mission in April, but nearly 20 air crews have been added since we began fueling this so this air force's going to continue to grow over the next years in the future.

If I were to characterize how the Afghan security forces performed last year, I would say they were tested and they prevailed. So, they were tested and they prevailed. This year, they went into the year with a campaign plan which last year was more of a reaction to enemy activity.

...I mentioned the eight attempts to seize the cities. This was three times in Kunduz, twice in Lashkar Gah, Helmand, twice in Tarin Kowt, and also in Farah City in Farah Province. On the 6th of October, the Afghans faced four simultaneous attacks on their cities and they defeated each one of these attacks.

This -- this ability to deal with simultaneous crises, as a military professional, I can tell you this is a sign of an army that's growing in capability, that's maturing in terms of its ability to handle simultaneity and complexity on the battlefield.

So, again, this is a -- when I say they were tested, it's obvious that they were and they prevailed in terms of defending their cities and continuing to secure the majority of the population of the country. So, shifting to that, when I look at my security assessment at the end of 2016 going forward, I believe that what we're seeing right now is what I would call an equilibrium, but one that's in favor of the government.

The Afghan security forces have a hold approximately 64 percent of the population. Now, this was down slightly from my 68 percent that I talked about in September. The decrease has not meant more control to the Taliban. We see them still holding less than 10 percent of the population. More of the country -- slightly more is now contested. So, we say they still hold roughly two-thirds of the population. The enemy holds less than 10 percent and the balance is contested.

Since the start of the Taliban's campaign in April, the Afghan security forces have prevented them from accomplishing their strategic objectives. They've been unable to mass because of airpower, both Afghan and coalition airpower, and therefore they resorted to small-scale attacks on checkpoints around cities in attempts to isolate the cities and create panic...This did not succeed in causing any cities to fall. They have also conducted high-profile attacks, as you're well aware, that have resulted in large numbers of civilian casualties, but the overall number of high-profile attacks is lower than last year.

So, inside Kabul, for example, we had 18 high-profile attacks at this time last year attributed to the Taliban in Kabul. This year only 12, so a reduction of about a third. Now, we have seen a new

element this year, which is Islamic State Khorasan Province conducting high-profile attacks, five or six that have occurred this year. But again, an overall reduction in Taliban attacks.

....despite Taliban promises to safeguard civilians, the vast majority of civilian casualties have been caused by the insurgency. Sixty-one to 72 percent, depending on which international organization you use, but the statistics are compiled by UNAMA as well as United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The Taliban have intentionally destroyed bridges and roadways, resulting in serious disruption of civilian trade routes and the country's economic development. The Taliban has destroyed Afghan's infrastructure while the government seeks to build it.

... while the enemy controls slightly more terrain than before, they do not control more of the population than they did in April. Additionally, the Afghan Security Forces have inflicted high casualties on the enemy during this year.

As I look forward to the next year, one of the things we're most concerned about in terms of risks.

Now, in addition to improving the corruption and leadership situation, we also obviously are concerned about...the stability of the Afghan government going forward. I know you all have been tracking closely with the ongoing political evolution. You know, my message to our Afghan partners and members of the political opposition is that we respect your political process, but please don't allow that process to undermine security gains, which have been made this year at such great cost.

And one possible risk of Afghan political instability is a fracture, but we have not seen this happen within the security forces... Second concern would be...the malign influence of external actors and particularly Pakistan, Russia, and Iran. And we're concerned about the external enablement of the insurgent or terrorist groups inside Afghanistan, in particular where they enjoy sanctuary or support from outside governments...Finally, we're concerned about the convergence of these terrorist groups. I mentioned the 20 groups, 13 in Afghanistan, seven in Pakistan. The... morphing of these groups into more virulent strains or the fact that sometimes they cooperate and then the hole becomes greater than the sum of the parts.

*Excerpted from Department of Defense, [Department of Defense Press Briefing by General Nicholson in the Pentagon Briefing Room](#), December 2, 2016*

... When you look at the amount of the population secured by the government, it equates to roughly two-thirds, about 64 percent. The Taliban are viewed with great disdain by the Afghan people; 87 percent would tell you that a return to Taliban rule would be bad for the country. There's also great confidence expressed in the Afghan security forces. And so -- and roughly three-quarters of the population say they have faith and confidence in the Afghan security forces.

...there were 20 terrorist groups in the region; seven of those are in Pakistan. Of these 20, our CT forces, operating with the Afghans, have killed five of the emirs of the 20 organizations.

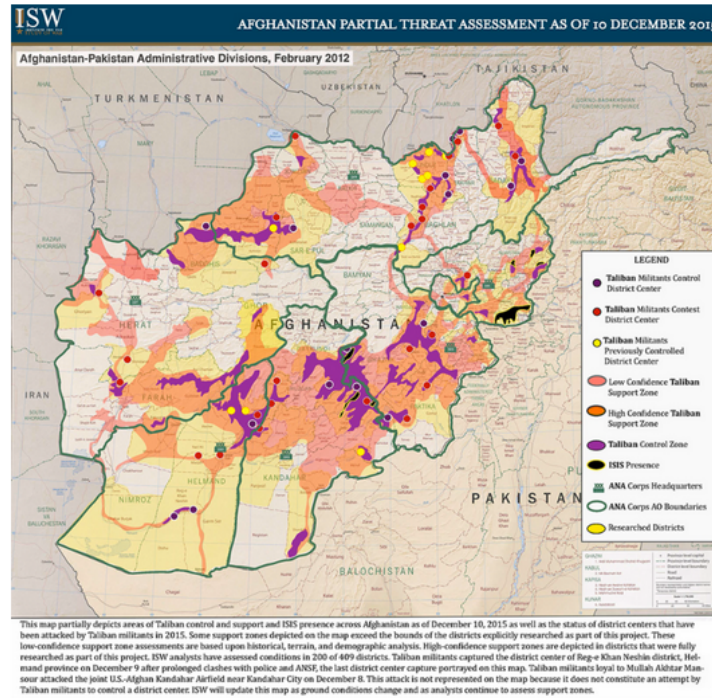
They have inflicted -- for example, take Islamic State. So Islamic State has lost a third of its fighters, two-thirds of the territory that they have seized and we have killed the top 12 leaders, including their emir, Hafiz Saeed Khan. So just one example. Against Al Qaida, Farouq al-Qatari, who was the external operations director for Al Qaida, was killed on October 23 along with a few of his associates. He was involved within the last year in active plotting against the West, against the United States and our allies. So by removing him, we have severely disrupted their ability to do that.

*Excerpted from Department of Defense, News Transcript, "Press Conference With General John Nicholson and Secretary of Defense Ash Carter;" General John Nicholson, Commander of International Forces in Afghanistan, Dec. 9, 2016, <http://www.defense.gov/News/Transcripts/Transcript-View/Article/1026539/press-conference-with-general-john-nicholson>.*



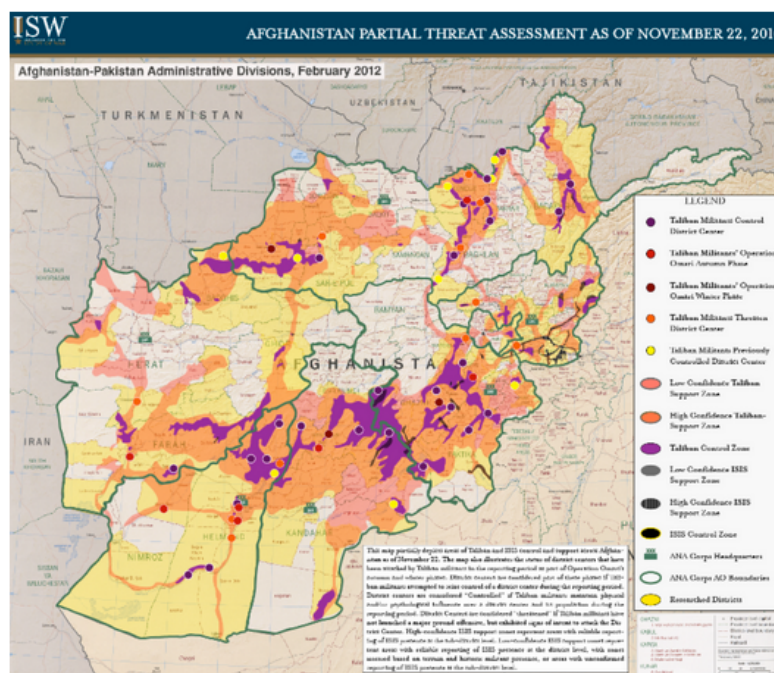
**Figure A6: Institute for the Study of War: Maps of Threat Presence and March 2017 Threat Assessment**

**December 10, 2015**

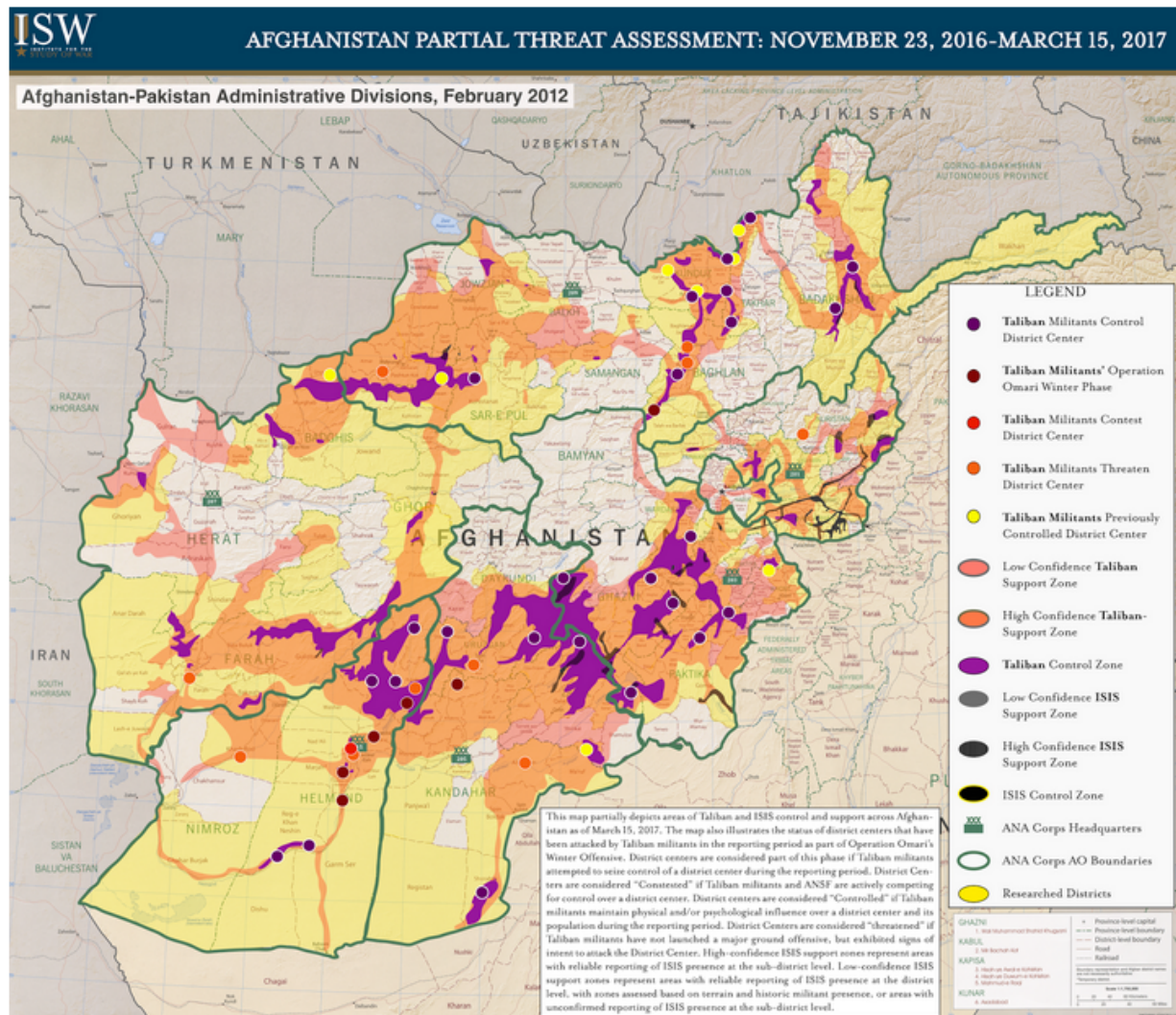


**Source:** *Caitlin Forrest*, Afghanistan Partial Threat Assessment: November 22, 2016, ISW, <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2016/11/afghanistan>

November 22, 2016

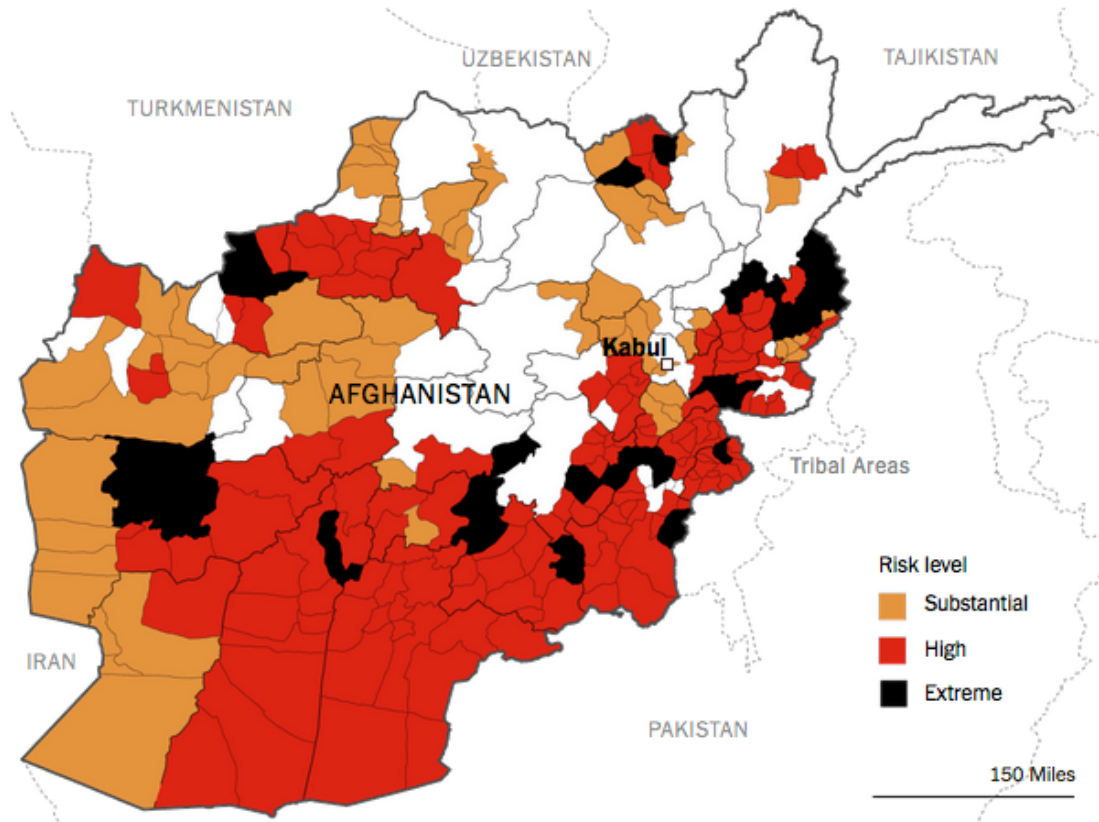


Source: <https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#search/map+/151a7e717269d3cb>



**Figure A7: UN OHCA Estimate of Areas of Risk in Afghanistan: 9/2015**

More than half of the districts in Afghanistan are rated by the United Nations as having either a substantial, high or extreme level of risk.



Source: United Nations

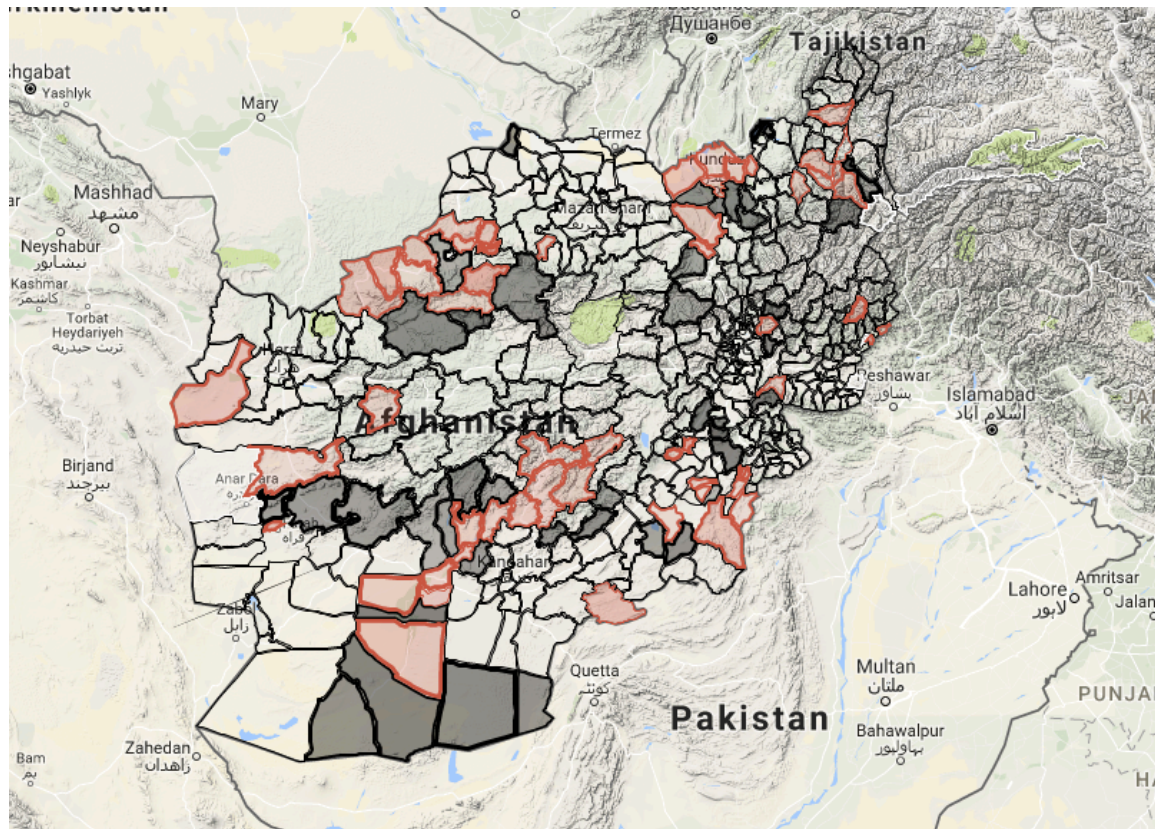
By The New York Times

- **Districts with extreme threat levels either have no government presence at all, or a government presence reduced to only the district capital; there were 38 such districts scattered through 14 of the country's 34 provinces.**
- **In all, 27 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces had some districts where the threat level was rated high or extreme.**

Source: Rod Norland and Joseph Goldstein, "Afghan Taliban's Reach Is Widest Since 2001, U.N. Says" New York Times,, <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/12/world/asia/afghanistan-taliban-united-nations.html?smprod=nytcore-ipad&smid=nytcore-ipad-share>

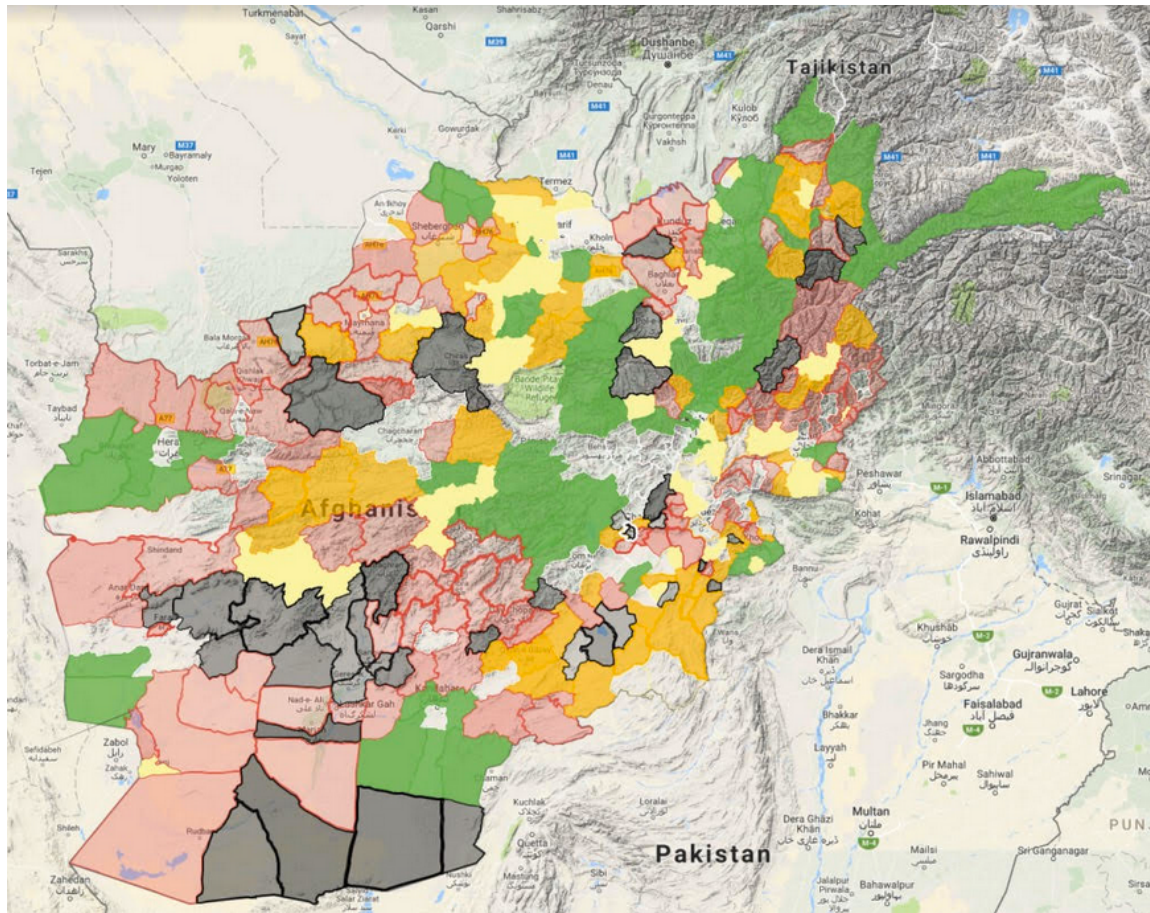


**Figure A8: Long War Journal Estimates of Afghan Taliban Controlled and Contested Districts: March 1, 2017**



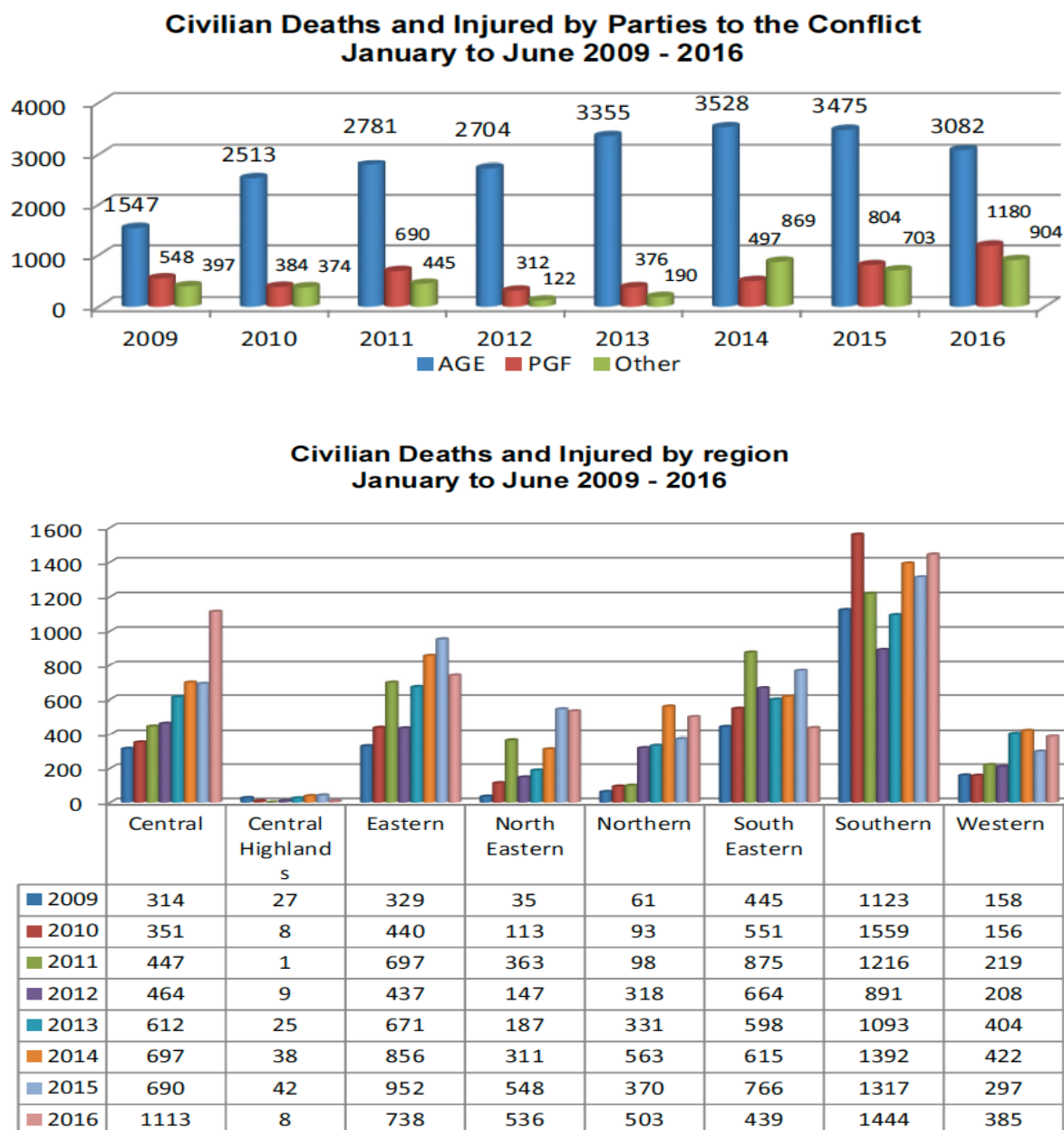
Bill Roggio, "Map of Taliban controlled and contested districts in Afghanistan," Google Maps, March 1, 2017. <https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=10Qz0dzwDWpj6bkfyWN6qoLIhaaU&ll=33.73028742596195%2C59.147801487657716&z=6>

### A9: Long War Journal maps Afghan Taliban's list of "Percent of Country Under Control of Mujahideen," March 28, 2017



% of Control	Color	Designation
100%	Black	Full Control
70-99%	Red	Heavily Contested
40-69%	Orange	Contested
10-39%	Yellow	Presence
0-9%	Green	Minimal Presence
Unknown	Grey	Unknown

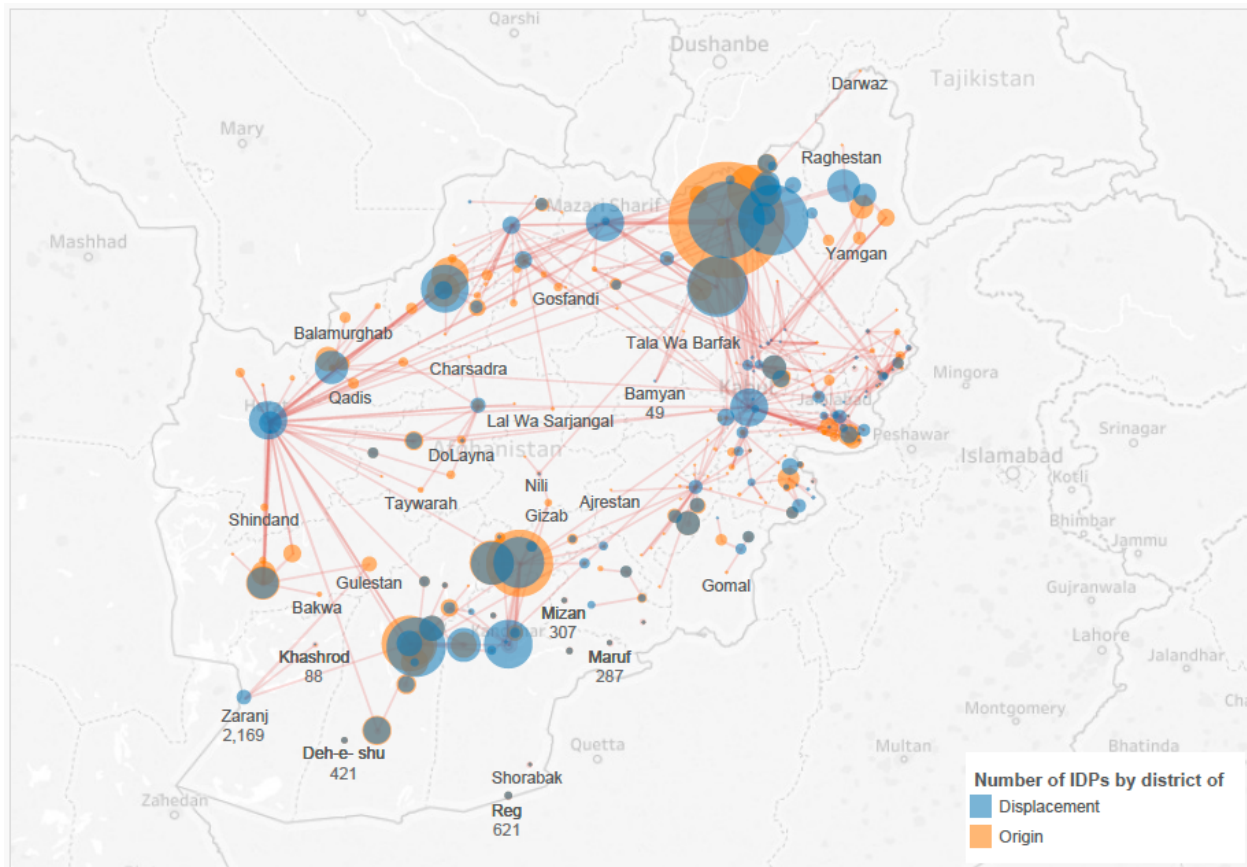
Bill Roggio, "Afghan Taliban lists 'Percent of Country under the control of Mujahideen'," Long War Journal. March 28, 2017. <http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2017/03/afghan-taliban-lists-percent-of-country-under-the-control-of-mujahideen.php>

**Figure A10: UN Estimates of Trends in Civilian Casualties**

Source: UNAMA/UNHCR, "AFGHANISTAN, MIDYEAR REPORT 2016, PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS IN ARMED CONFLICT, Kabul, Afghanistan, July 2016, p. 5, 11.



**Figure A11: UN Estimate of Location of 530,407 Internally Displaced Civilians by the Fighting Between 1 January 2016 and 29 November 2016**



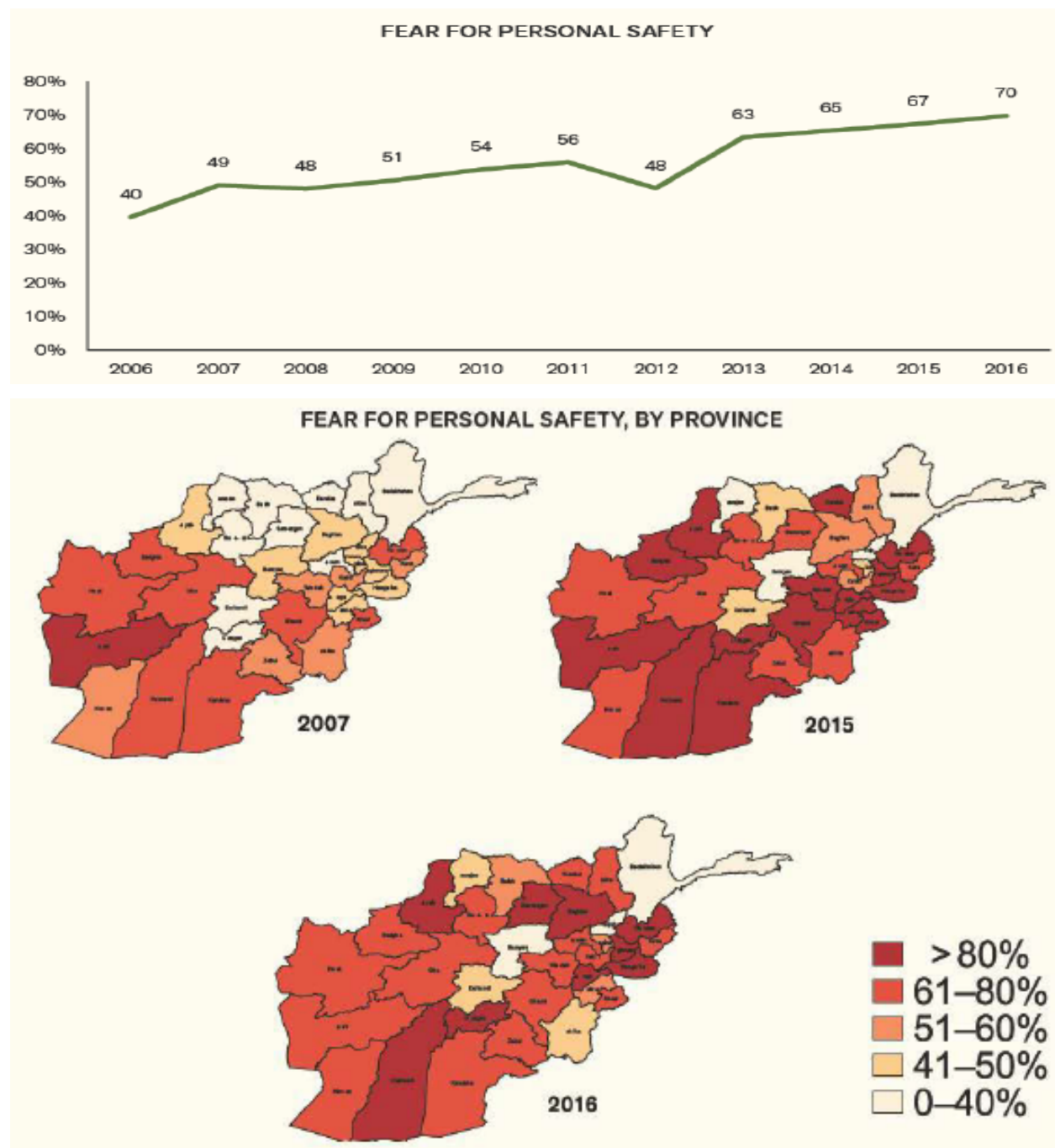
Source: UNOHCA, 11 december 2016, <http://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/afghanistan-conflict-induced-displacements-11-december-2016>.

## **Appendix B: Limited Popular Confidence and Support for the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF)**

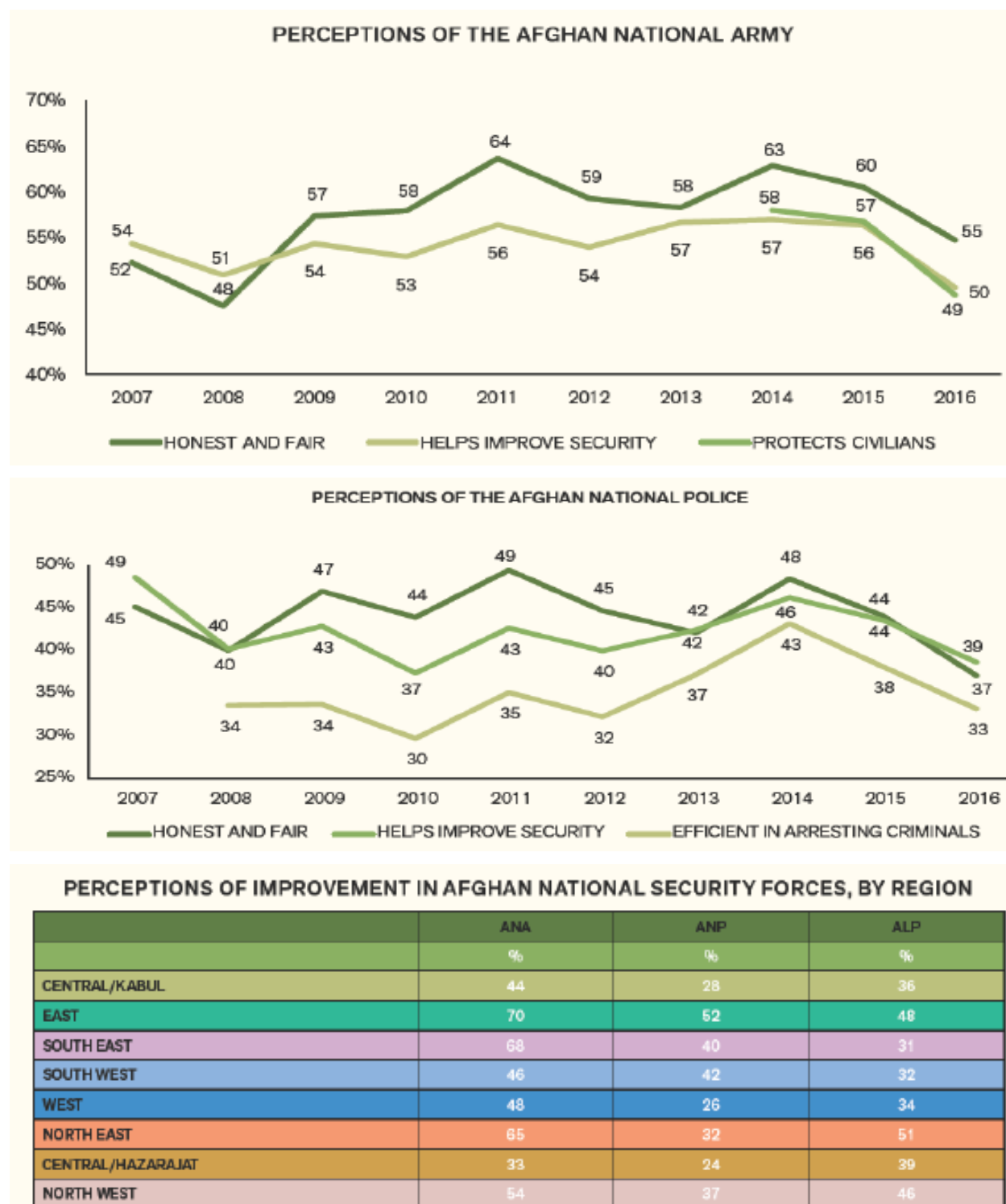
Insurgencies are as much battles of perception as battles for territory and control. Here, Afghan popular fears and concerns for personal safety have risen sharply. Confidence in the Afghan security forces has dropped sharply.

- **Figure B1: Growing Levels of Popular Fear** shows a steady rise in fears for personal safety since 2006, reaching 70% of those polled in 2016.
- **Figure B2: Declining Popular Support for Afghan Security Forces** shows a serious decline in popular support for Afghan Army and police forces since 2014, although this varies by region.



**Figure B1: Growing Levels of Popular Fear**

The Asia Foundation, *Afghanistan in 2016*, pp. 37, 38, <http://asiafoundation.org/where-we-work/afghanistan/survey/>.

**Figure B2: Declining Popular Support for Afghan Security Forces**

The Asia Foundation, *Afghanistan in 2016*, 51, 52, 53, <http://asiafoundation.org/where-we-work/afghanistan/survey/>.

## **Appendix C: Current U.S. and Allied Military Personnel and Air Activity Levels**

There is surprisingly little data on actual personnel levels, and how they are allocated by mission and function. There are no data on career civilians, national contractors, Afghan hires, and Afghan contractors. Intelligence personnel and special forces may or may not be reported. The U.S. does not report on significant the numbers not assigned to the Resolute Support Mission, and temporary duty (TDY) personnel, even if they are on extended missions.

As a result, the following data only provide rough indicators, and personnel cannot be tied to purpose.

- **Figure C1 provides the total authorized personnel numbers by country for the resolute Support Mission in May 2016. It provides and a rough indication of their actual strength and reflects significant shortfalls in the numbers required.**
- **Figure C2 shows the even sharper limits to Authorized U.S. and Allied Troops at End (December) 2016.**
- **Figure C3 shows the even sharper shortfall in Actual U.S. and Allied Troops**
- **Figure C4 shows just how large the size of the Afghan forces the Resolute Support Mission must advise actually is.**
- **Figure C5 shows the levels of U.S. and other allied air activity in Afghanistan for 2011-end November 2016. It tracks significant declines in air activity.**

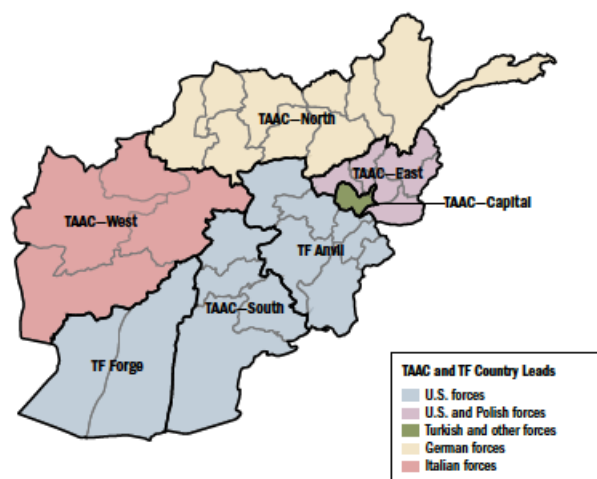
**Figure C1: The Sharp Limits to Authorized U.S. and Allied Troops in May and November 2016**

**: Resolute Support Mission Troop Contributing Nations, as of May 27, 2016<sup>a</sup>**

Nation <sup>10</sup>	Personnel	Nation	Personnel
Albania	43	Latvia	21
Armenia	65	Lithuania	21
Australia	239	Mongolia	120
Austria	4	Montenegro	18
Azerbaijan	94	Netherlands	106
Belgium	61	Norway	41
Bosnia & Herzegovina	54	Poland	283
Bulgaria	109	Portugal	10
Croatia	102	Romania	643
Czech Republic	288	Slovakia	83
Denmark	82	Slovenia	0
Estonia	5	Spain	25
Finland	22	Sweden	26
Georgia	867	FYR of Macedonia	39
Germany	884	Turkey	743
Greece	9	Ukraine	11
Hungary	161	United Kingdom	465
Iceland	2	United States	8,179
Italy	1,130	NATO	13,496
* Numbers of personnel are approximate as they change daily.		Non-NATO	1,599
		<b>Total</b>	<b>15,055</b>

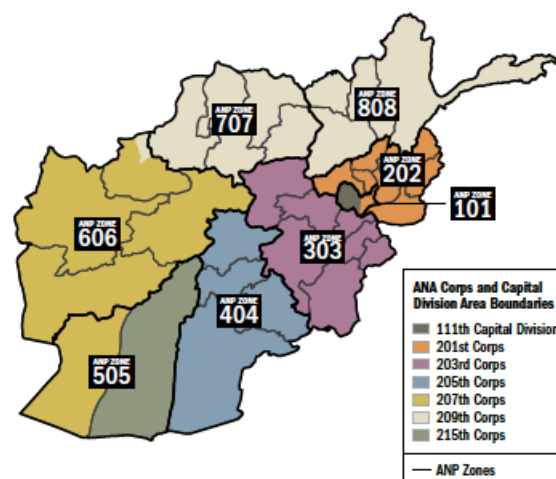
Source: *Enhancing Stability and security in Afghanistan*, Department of Defense, June 2016, p. 14

**RS TRAIN, ADVISE, AND ASSIST COMMANDS (TAAC) AND TASK FORCES (TF)**



Source: DOD, *Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, December 2016, pp. 15-17; Resolute Support website, "TAAC-East," September 3, 2016.

**ANP ZONES VS. ANA CORPS AREA BOUNDARIES**



Source: DOD, *Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, June 2016, pp. 63, 95.

Source: SIGAR, *Quarterly Report to Congress*, 30 January 2017, p. 95

***Resolute Support Mission Troop Contributing Nations, as of November 30, 2016***

<b>Nation</b>	<b>Personnel</b>	<b>Nation</b>	<b>Personnel</b>
Albania	43	Lithuania	19
Armenia	65	Luxemburg	1
Australia	175	Mongolia	233
Austria	9	Montenegro	14
Azerbaijan	94	Netherlands	84
Belgium	41	New Zealand	8
Bosnia & Herzegovina	55	Norway	35
Bulgaria	86	Poland	120
Croatia	76	Portugal	10
Czech Republic	216	Romania	582
Denmark	58	Slovakia	42
Estonia	5	Slovenia	7
Finland	46	Spain	8
FYR of Macedonia	39	Sweden	23
Georgia	861	Turkey	532
Germany	722	Ukraine	8
Greece	4	United Kingdom	357
Hungary	87	United States	6,941
Iceland	1	<b>NATO</b>	<b>10,981</b>
Italy	886	<b>Non-NATO</b>	<b>1,630</b>
Latvia	18	<b>Total</b>	<b>12,611</b>
* Numbers of personnel are approximate as they change daily.			

Source: *Enhancing Stability and security in Afghanistan*, Department of Defense, December 2016, p. 11

...According to DOD, the NATO-led Resolute Support (RS) train, advise, and assist mission consists of 13,453 U.S. and Coalition personnel as of September 17, 2016. Of that number, 6,939 are U.S. forces, 4,934 are from the 26 NATO allied partners, and 1,580 are from the 12 non-NATO partner nations.... The number of U.S. forces conducting or supporting counterterrorism operations was not provided....

... A decision was made by the president to retain in 2017 8,448 troop level here in Afghanistan rather than the 5,500 that has been planned earlier. And the third was the make a continued financial commitment to the support of the Afghan security forces.

Source: Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *QUARTERLY REPORT TO THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS*, OCT 30 2016, p. 105, and Department of Defense, News Transcript, "Press Conference With General John Nicholson and Secretary of Defense Ash Carter; ", Commander of International Forces in Afghanistan, Dec. 9, 2016, <http://www.defense.gov/News/Transcripts/Transcript-View/Article/1026539/press-conference-with-general-john-nicholson>.

...As of November 30, 2016, RS was composed of military personnel from 39 nations (26 NATO Allies and 13 operational partner nations), consisting of 10,981 NATO and 1,630

**partner personnel, totaling 12,611 personnel (see Figure 1). The United States remains the largest force contributor in Afghanistan.**

*Enhancing Stability and security in Afghanistan*, Department of Defense, December 2016, p. 11

**Figure C2: The Sharp Limits to Authorized U.S. and Allied Troops at End (December) 2016**



**Resolute Support Mission**

**Troop Contributing Nations**

 Albania	43	 Germany	980	 Portugal	10
 Armenia	121	 Greece	4	 Romania	588
 Australia	270	 Hungary	90	 Slovakia	40
 Austria	12	 Iceland	2	 Slovenia	7
 Azerbaijan	94	 Italy	1,037	 Spain	8
 Belgium	62	 Latvia	22	 Sweden	25
 Bosnia-Herzegovina	55	 Lithuania	21	 the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia <sup>1</sup>	39
 Bulgaria	86	 Luxembourg	1	 Turkey	532
 Croatia	96	 Mongolia	120	 Ukraine	10
 Czech Republic	214	 Montenegro	18	 United Kingdom	450
 Denmark	97	 Netherlands	100	 United States	6,941
 Estonia	4	 New Zealand	10		
 Finland	29	 Norway	42		
 Georgia	870	 Poland	182	<b>Total</b>	<b>13,332</b>

Source: Resolute Support Mission (RSM): Key Facts and Figures, <https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#inbox/15956c2bab9030c0?projector=1>.

**Figure C3: The Shortfall in Actual U.S. and Allied Troops**  
***Resolute Support Mission Troop Contributing Nations, as of November 30, 2016***

<b>Nation</b>	<b>Personnel</b>	<b>Nation</b>	<b>Personnel</b>
Albania	43	Lithuania	19
Armenia	65	Luxemburg	1
Australia	175	Mongolia	233
Austria	9	Montenegro	14
Azerbaijan	94	Netherlands	84
Belgium	41	New Zealand	8
Bosnia & Herzegovina	55	Norway	35
Bulgaria	86	Poland	120
Croatia	76	Portugal	10
Czech Republic	216	Romania	582
Denmark	58	Slovakia	42
Estonia	5	Slovenia	7
Finland	46	Spain	8
FYR of Macedonia	39	Sweden	23
Georgia	861	Turkey	532
Germany	722	Ukraine	8
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Italy	886	<b>Non-NATO</b>	<b>1,630</b>
Latvia	18	<b>Total</b>	<b>12,611</b>
* Numbers of personnel are approximate as they change daily.			

...As of November 30, 2016, RS was composed of military personnel from 39 nations (26 NATO Allies and 13 operational partner nations), consisting of 10,981 NATO and 1,630 partner personnel, totaling 12,611 personnel). The United States remains the largest force contributor in Afghanistan.

Source: Department of Defense (DoD), Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan, December 2016, <https://www.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/Afghanistan-1225-Report-December-2016.pdf>, p. 11.



## Figure C4: The Size of the afghan forces the resolute Support Mission Must Advise

### Ministry of Defense Authorization

MoD Echelons	Solar Year 1393	Solar Year 1394	Solar Year 1395
Ministry of Defense Headquarters	2,875	2,765	2,722
General Staff	6,481	6,243	6,730
Intermediate Commands	27,104	25,365	31,422
Combat Commands	117,715	119,252	121,224
Special Operations Forces	10,740	11,651	11,730
Air Force and SMW	7,947	7,981	8,877
TTHS Accounts <sup>34</sup>	13,359	13,359	13,359
Unassigned Resources	8,779	8,384	6,940
<b>Total Authorized</b>	<b>195,000 military</b> (includes R coded positions) <sup>35</sup>	<b>195,000 military</b> (includes R coded positions)	<b>195,000 military</b> <b>and 8,004 civilian</b>

### Summary of AAF and SMW Airframes, Pilots, and Aircrews (30 November 2016)

	Type of Aircraft	Authorized	Inventory	Qualified Aircrews
Fixed Wing	C-130	4	4	4
	C-208	24	24	15
	A-29	20	8 <sup>47</sup>	9
Rotary Wing	Mi-17	56	47 <sup>48</sup>	36
	MD-530	28	27	14
	Mi-35	N/A	3	5
	Cheetah	N/A	3	No data
<b>Total</b>		<b>136</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>83</b>

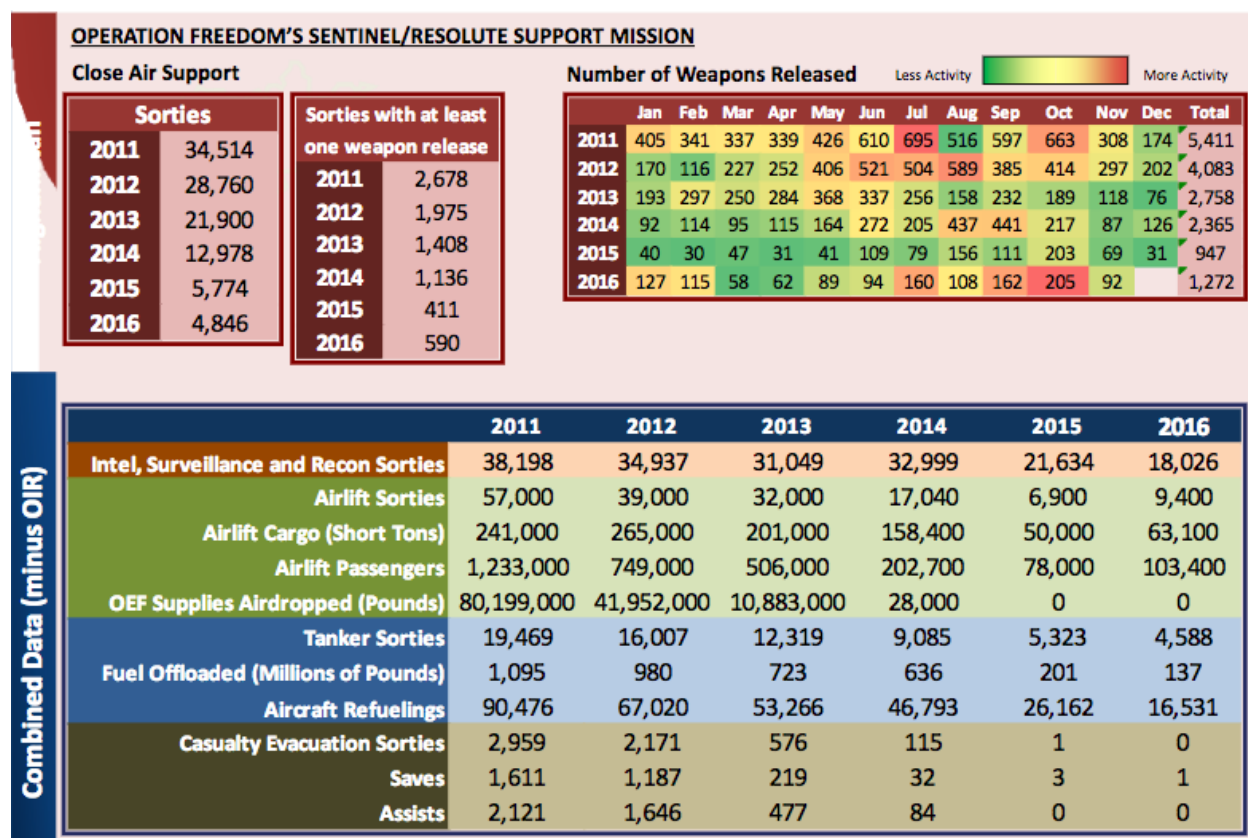
Type of Aircraft	Inventory	Authorized	Fully Trained Pilots	Qualified Aircrews
Mi-17 <sup>50</sup>	28	36	49	15
PC-12	17	18	29	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>29</b>

### Ministry of Interior Authorization

Police by Pillar	Solar Year 1393	Police by Pillar	Solar Year 1394	Solar Year 1395
Afghan Border Police	22,955	Afghan Border Police	23,315	23,599
Afghan National Civil Order Police	15,223	Afghan National Civil Order Police	16,203	17,202
Afghan Anti-Crime Police & General Command of Police Special Units	10,864	General Command of Police Special Units	1,934	2,097
Afghan Uniform Police	90,299	Afghan Uniform Police (includes Afghan Anti-Crime Police) <sup>51</sup>	100,402	103,681
Ministry of Interior HQ & Institutional Support	14,659	Ministry of Interior HQ & Institutional Support	15,144	10,121
TTHS Accounts	3,000	TTHS Accounts <sup>52</sup>	0	300
Unallocated Resources	0	Unallocated Resources	2	0
<b>Total Police Authorized</b>	<b>157,000</b>	<b>Total Police Authorized</b>	<b>157,000</b>	<b>157,000</b>

Source: Department of Defense (DoD), *Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, December 2016, <https://www.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/Afghanistan-1225-Report-December-2016.pdf>, pp. 41, 54, 66, 71.

**Figure C-5: U.S. and Coalition Airpower in Afghanistan (as of 30 November 2016)**



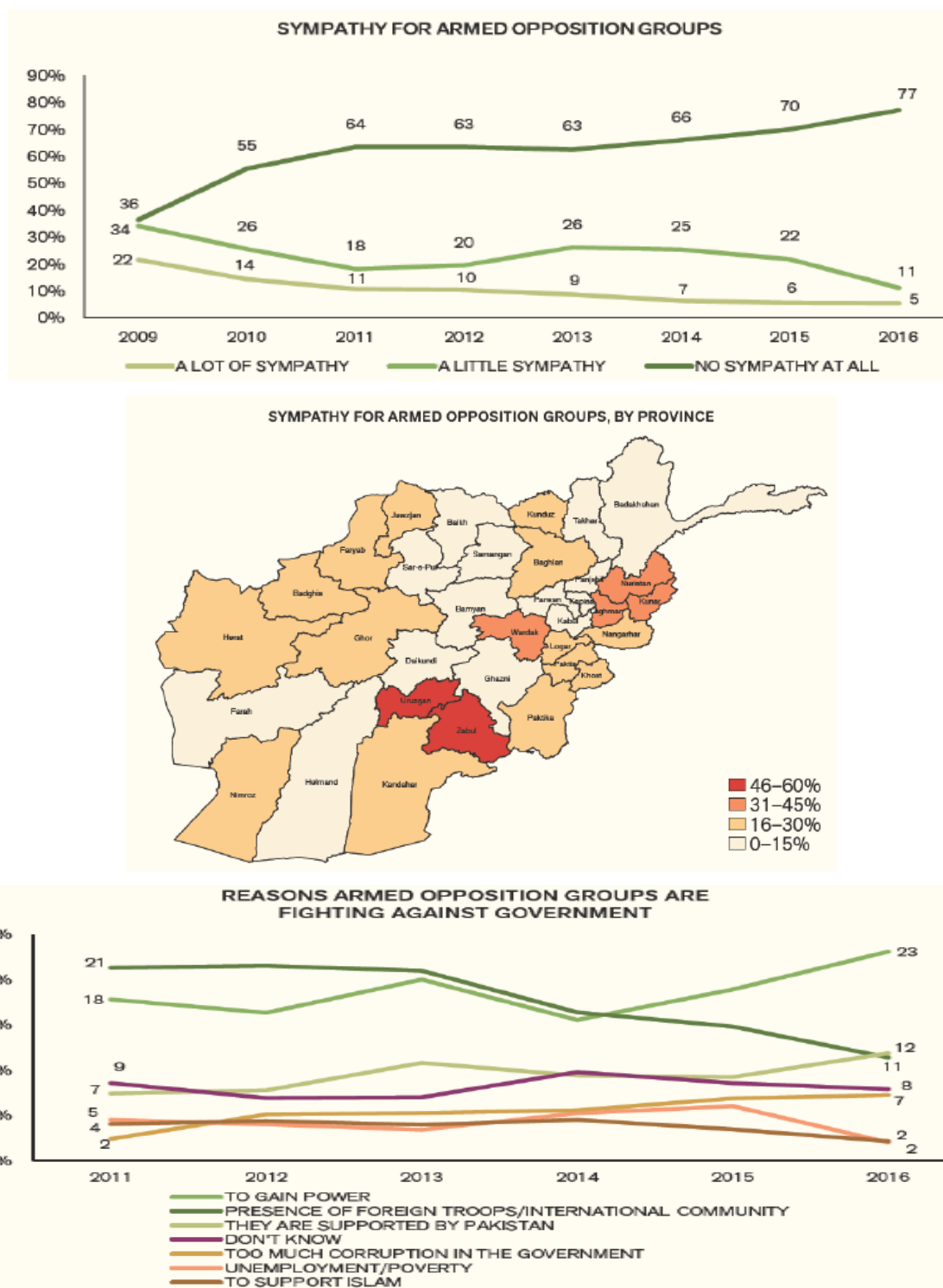
In Operation Freedom's Sentinel, the Afghan Air Force continues to bolster its capabilities. Nine Afghan Air Force officers completed a course focused on synchronizing the efforts of the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Defense and the Afghan Air Force. Additionally, Afghan Air Force members participated in a 6-week long training course for tactical air coordinators. During their training, the Afghan Tactical Air Coordinators participated in a live field exercise involving interaction with Afghan Air Force A-29 aircraft. The Afghan Air Force currently has eight A-29s with 12 more scheduled to arrive by the end of 2018. Those 12 are in service at Moody Air Force Base, Ga., where they are used to train more pilots.

Source: AFCENT (CAOC) Public Affairs – [afcent.pa@afcent.af.mil](mailto:afcent.pa@afcent.af.mil), and <http://www.afcent.af.mil/Portals/82/Airpower%20Summary%20-%20November%202016.pdf?ver=2016-12-07-034624-573> accessed 1/1/17

## **Appendix D: Popularity of Taliban and Other Arms Opposition Groups vs. Afghan Popular Concerns Over Government**

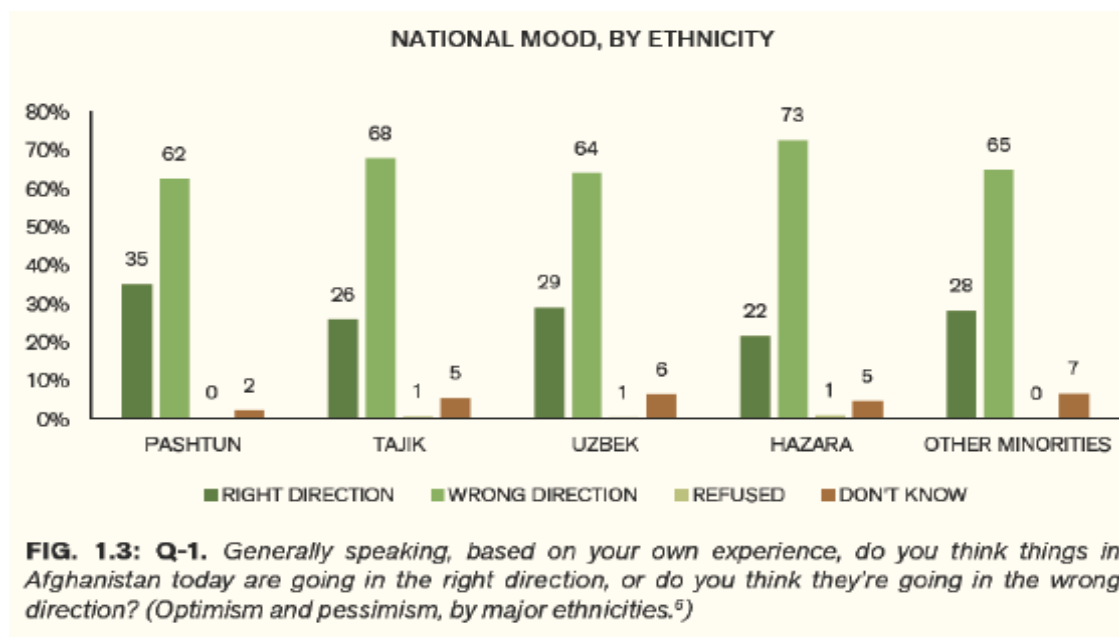
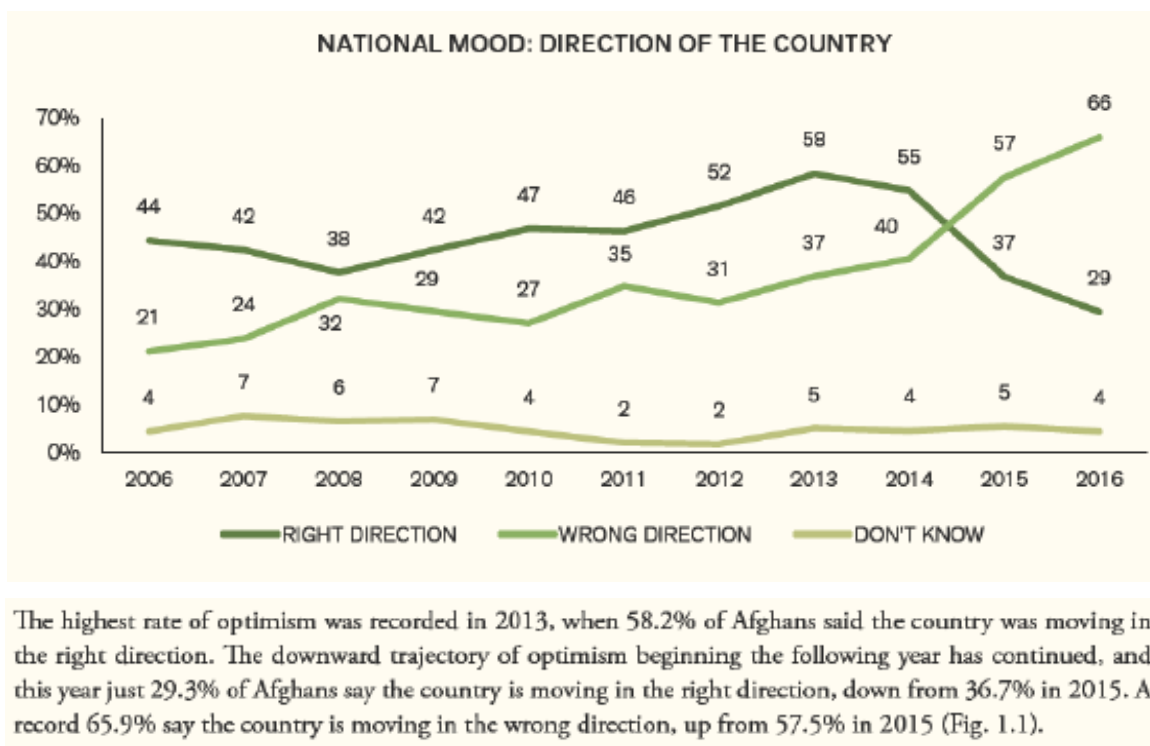
The Asia Foundation conducts an annual poll of Afghan public perceptions that provides great insight into how Afghans view the war. It shows that the Taliban and other insurgents are losing support, but that the same is true of the Afghan government.

- **Figure D1: Decline in Popular Support for Armed Opposition Groups** shows a steady decline in the support for the Taliban and other insurgents since 2009. 77% of those polled have no support at all for the Taliban. Only 7% believe they fight for Islam.
- **Figure D2: Popular Attitudes: Is Afghanistan Going in the Right Direction?** These data show that popular feeling that the country is going in the wrong direction rose from 40% to 66% between 20 and 2016.
- **Figure D3: Afghanistan: Popular Attitudes - Biggest Problems and Reasons for Pessimism:** Employment, security, electricity are all key factors shaping the broad pessimism Afghans towards the government and the future.

**Figure D1: Decline in Popular Support for Armed Opposition Groups**

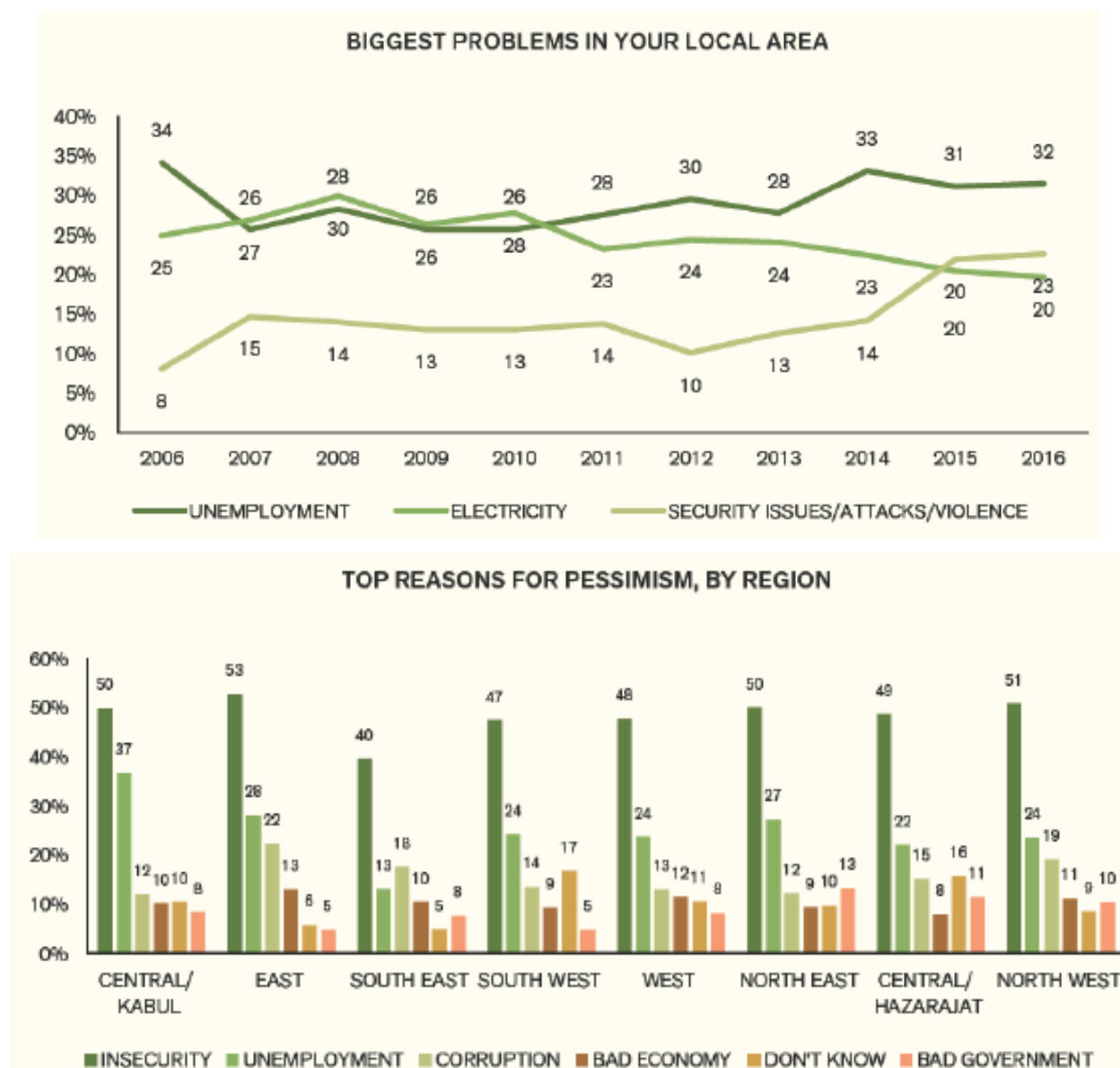
The Asia Foundation, *Afghanistan in 2016*, 51, 52, 53, <http://asiafoundation.org/where-we-work/afghanistan/survey/>.

**Figure D2: Popular Attitudes  
Is Afghanistan Going in the Right Direction?**



The Asia Foundation, *Afghanistan in 2016*, pp. 18, 20, <http://asiafoundation.org/where-we-work/afghanistan/survey/>.

**Figure D3: Afghanistan: Popular Attitudes  
Biggest Problems and Reasons for Pessimism**



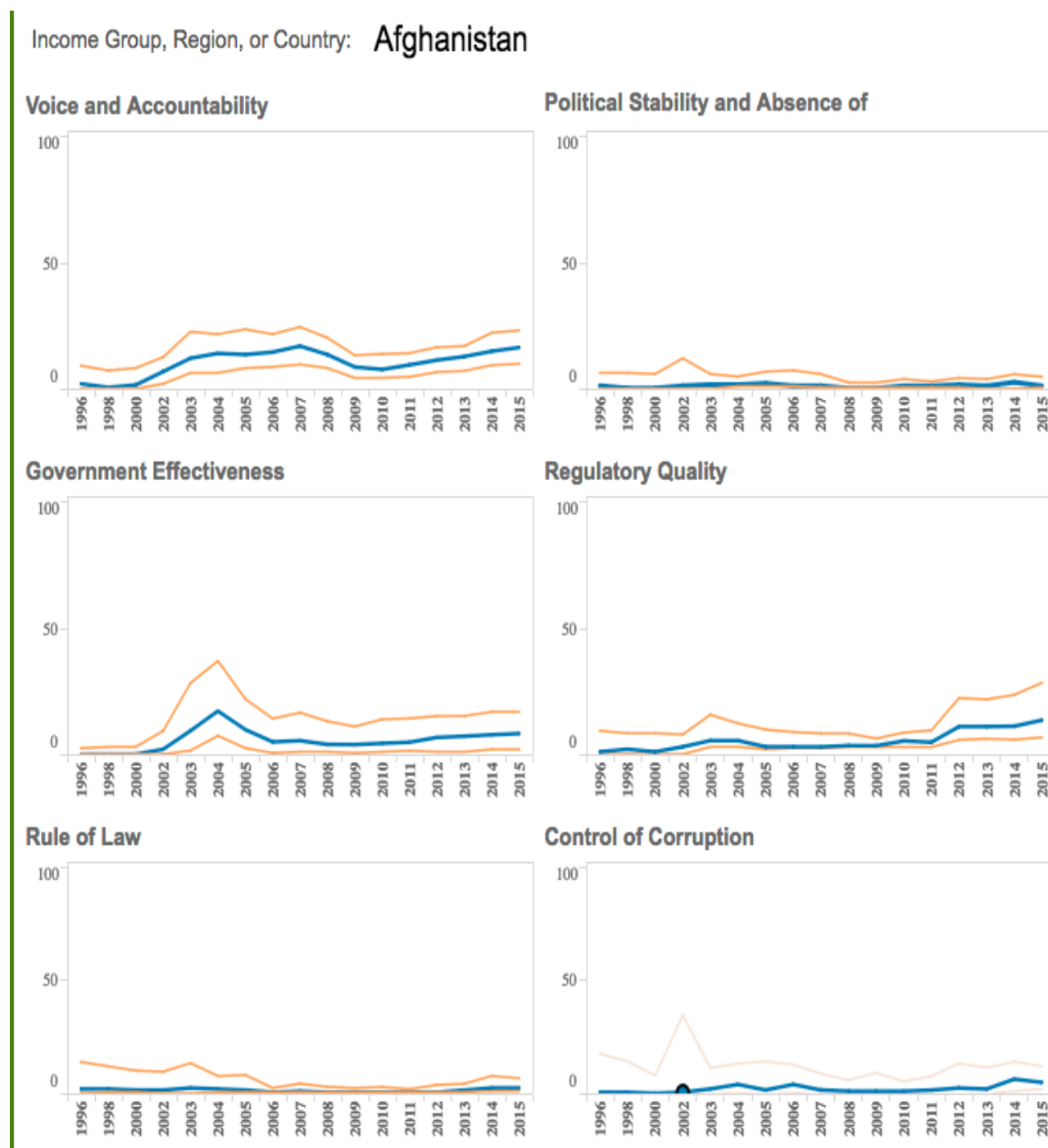
As in all years since 2007, insecurity is the most commonly given reason for why the country is moving in the wrong direction (48.8%), followed by unemployment (27.5%), corruption (14.6%), bad economy (10.4%), and bad government (8.7%). The proportion of Afghans citing insecurity, unemployment, and corruption has increased from last year by 4.2, 2.1, and 1.6 percentage points, respectively. The proportion citing bad government has decreased by 2.7 points. Overwhelmingly, insecurity remains the predominant reason for pessimism across regions (Fig. 1.6). Year-over-year and quantitative analysis using this question is limited because the question is open-ended and yielded 114 different responses this year.<sup>7</sup> However, a detailed breakdown of responses can be found online using the data visualization tool, at [asiafoundation.org](http://asiafoundation.org).

Source: The Asia Foundation, *Afghanistan in 2016*, pp. 23, 26, <http://asiafoundation.org/where-we-work/afghanistan/survey/>.

## **Appendix E: The Dire State of Afghan Governance and Declining Popular Faith in Government**

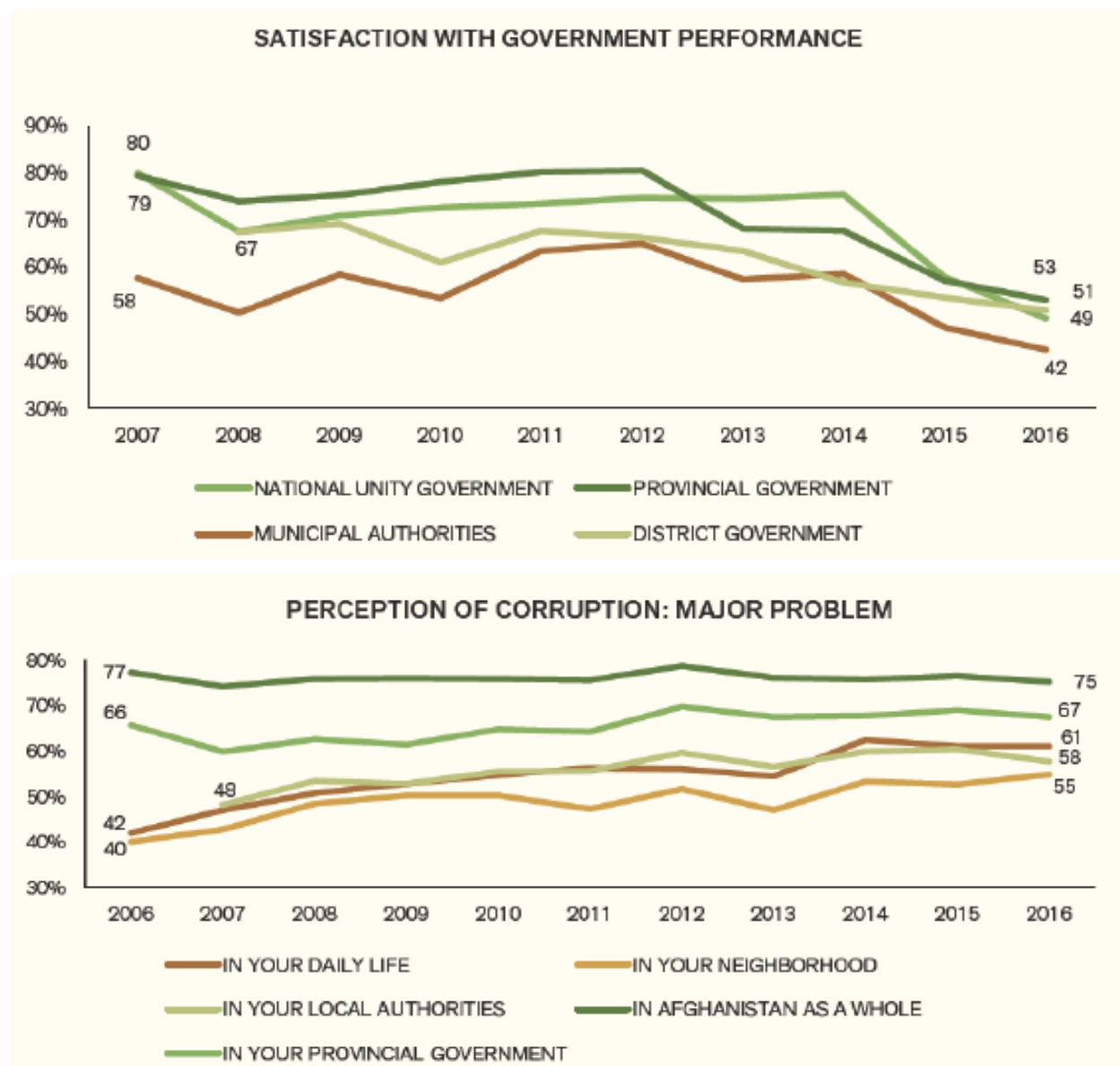
Popular support for the government, or anger and fear of it, are key dividing lines between victory and defeat in insurgencies.

- **Figure E-1 shows the World Bank ranks Afghanistan as one of the worst governments in the world in all six of the categories it uses to measure governance:** Voice and Accountability, Political Stability and Absence of Violence, Government Effectiveness, Regulatory Quality, Rule of Law, and Control of Corruption. These practical are measures of effectiveness that affect every Afghan, and the World Bank does not show any major upward trends in the most critical measures -- Political Stability and Absence of Violence, Government Effectiveness, Rule of Law, and Control of Corruption. -- over the period from 1996-2015.<sup>36</sup>
- **Figure E1 also shows this lack of progress has continued in spite of the defeat of the Taliban in 2011,** and in spite of major U.S. and other outside aid efforts and promise after Afghan promise to make major reforms.
- **Figure E-1 indicates that, if anything, high levels of military spending and aid distorted the economy and created far higher levels of corruption.** Transparency International -- the leading independent source of rankings on corruption ranked Afghanistan as 166th out of the 168 countries it ranked in 2015. This put it at the near bottom of the world after North Korea and Somalia.<sup>37</sup>
- **Figure E2 shows that the Asia Foundation Survey found that Afghan popular perceptions found provincial, district, and local government to be even worse in overall confidence than the central government --** although this ranking reversed in the case of corruption.

**Figure E1: World Bank Governance Indicators**

Source: World Bank, <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.aspx#reports>.

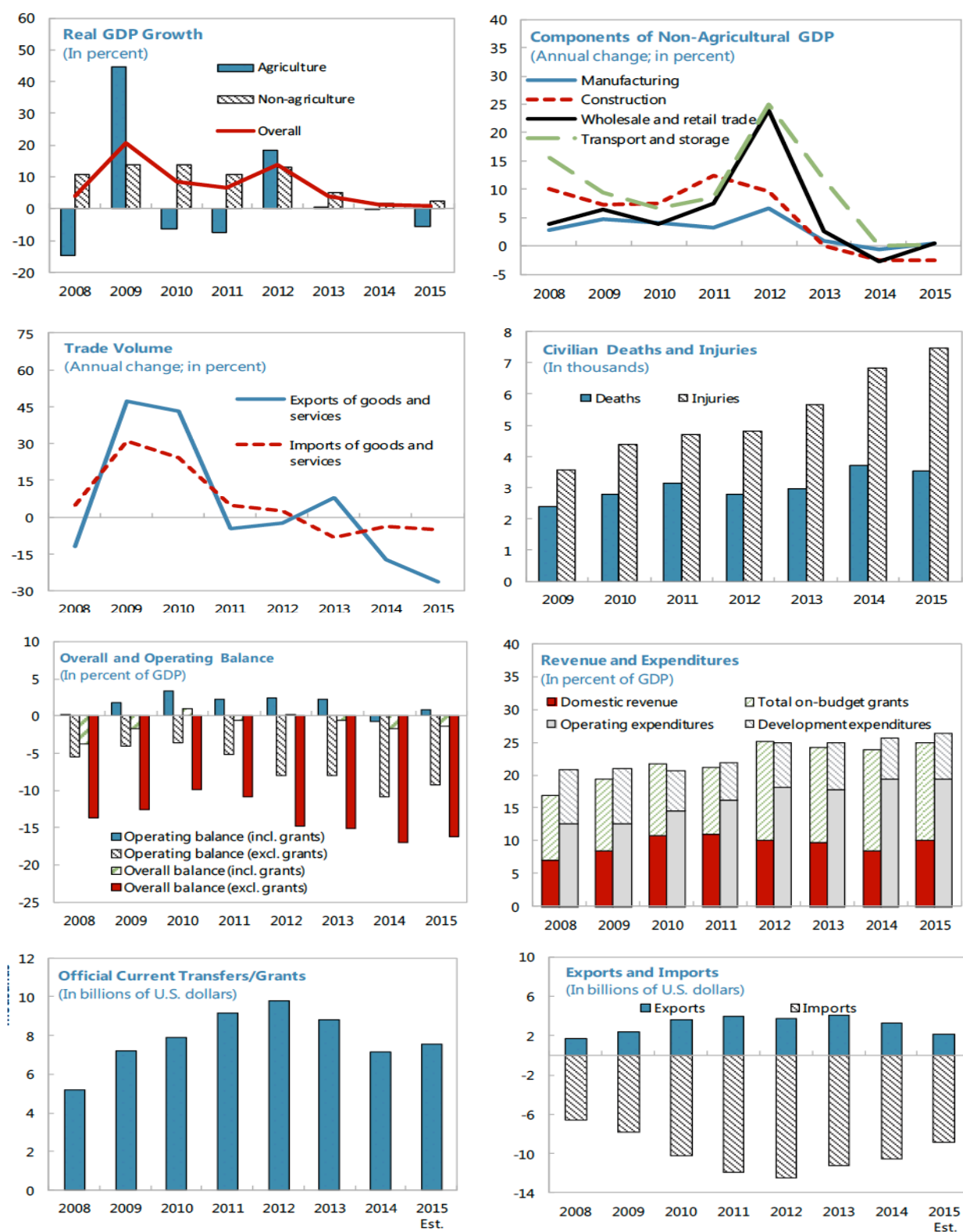


**Figure E2: Declining Faith in Government and Perceptions of Corruption**

Afghan perceptions of the Afghan National Police (ANP) in 2016 are of particular interest, as the force transitions from a military role to that of community protection. Professionalization of the ANP has become a top priority for the Afghan government and international donors, but progress towards this goal has been slow and uneven.<sup>7</sup> Reports of encounters with ANP corruption are highest in Helmand (86.6%), Laghman (81.3%), and Uruzgan (71.3%). ANP corruption is lowest in Badakhshan (1.8%), Panjshir (9.2%), and Bamyan (15.5%) (Fig. 5.5).

## **Appendix F: The Economic Challenge in Meeting Popular Needs**

- **Figure F1: IMF Estimate of Broad Economic Trends** highlights the growing macro-economic stress on the afghan economy after 2014.
- **Figure F2: World Bank Poverty Estimates** highlights the critical level of poverty.
- **Figure F3: The "Youth Bulge" and Conflict: Key Indices of Instability** shows the deep level of structural instability
- **Figure F4 : Growth of Urban Share of Population: 2000-2010** shows the tress caused by growing urbanization.
- **Figure F5: Problems in Foreign Investment** shows the decline in FDI from 2015 onwards.
- **Figure F6: Barriers to Doing Business** reflects the continuing lack of effective economic reform.

**Figure F1: IMF Estimate of Broad Economic Trends**

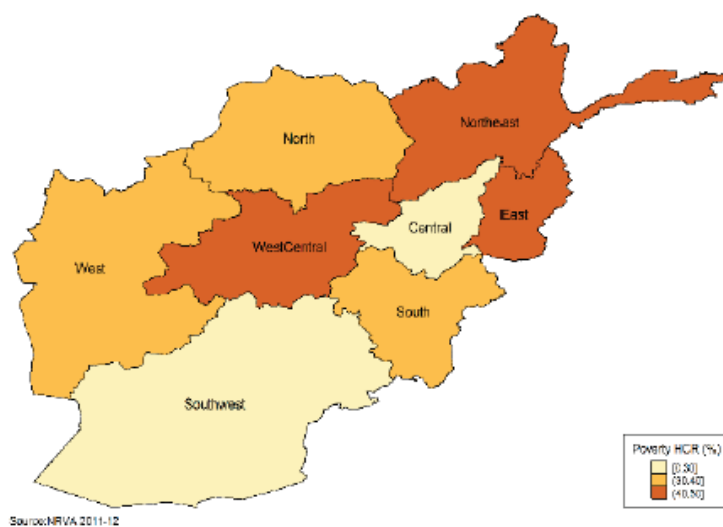
## Figure F2: World Bank Poverty Estimates

### Poverty Trends by Survey Year

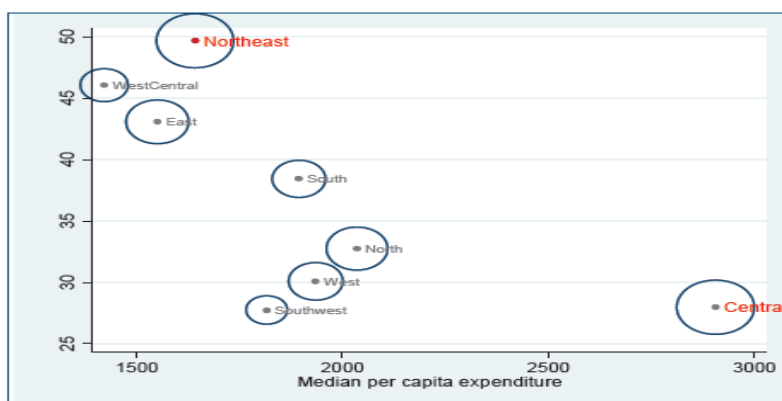
Poverty indicators	Survey year	
	2007-08	2011-12
Poverty Headcount	36.3	35.8
Poverty Gap	7.9	8.4
Squared Poverty Gap	2.5	2.9

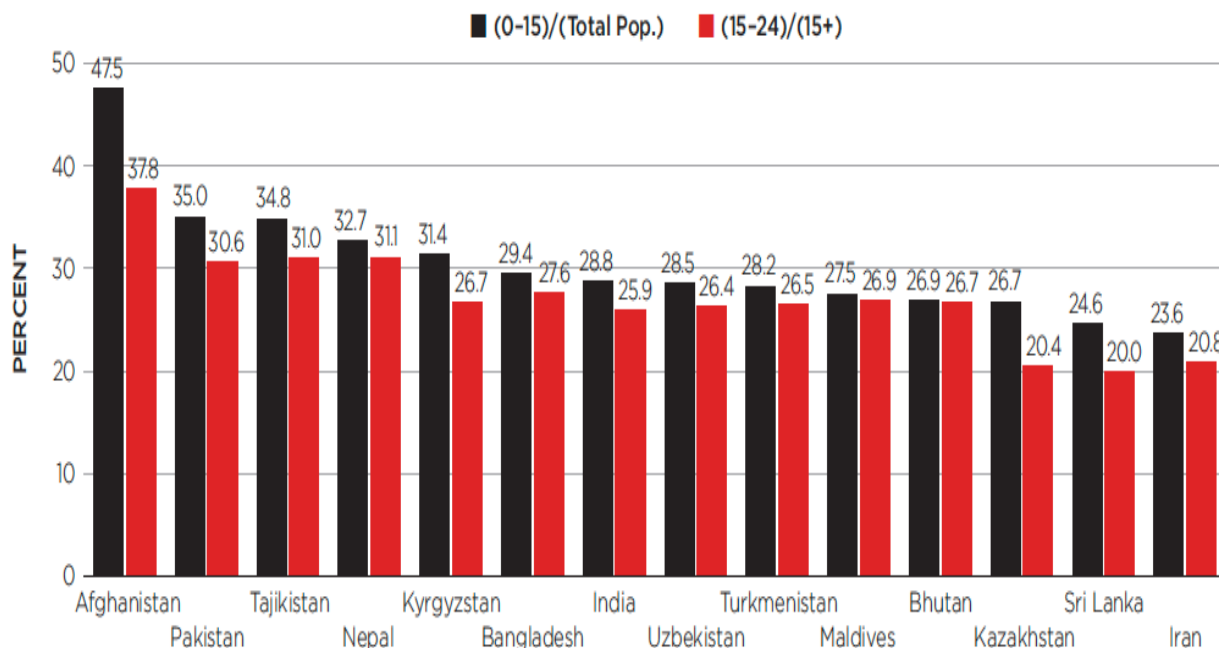
Notes: Provinces of Helmand and Khost were excluded from the original sample in both survey years.  
Source: Authors' calculation using NRVA 2007-08 and 2011-12.

### Poverty Headcount as Percent of Total Population

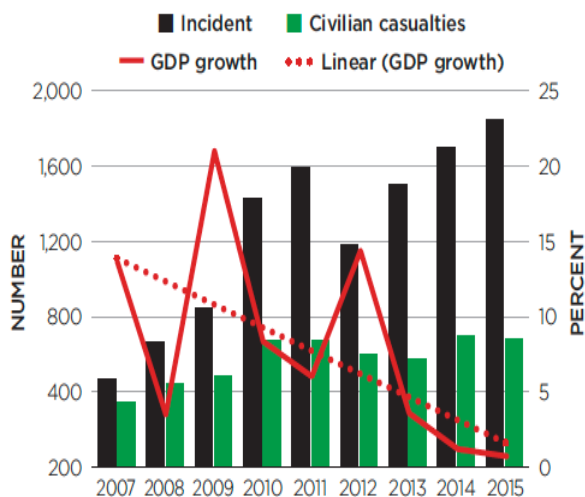


### Poverty Headcount vs. GDP Per Expenditure by Region

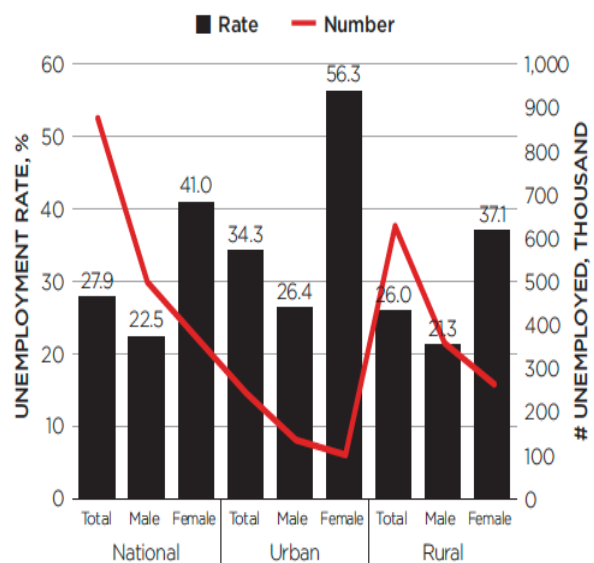


**Figure F3: The "Youth Bulge" and Conflict: Key Indices of Instability****Youth Dependency ratio and youth bulge in Central and South Asian Countries**

Sources: ALCS 2013-14 and UNDESA (2015)

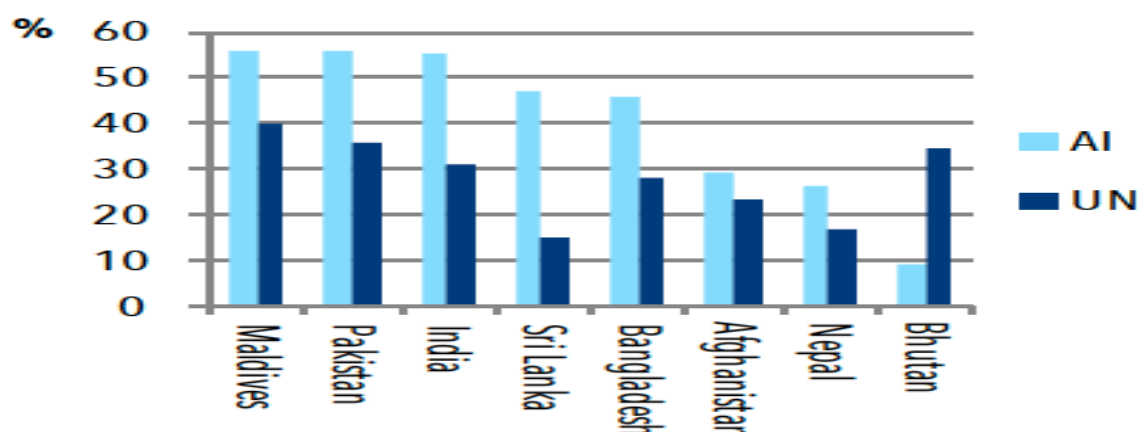
**Evolution of conflict and real per capita GDP growth**

Source: Authors' calculation based on UNHCR and SIOCC-UNDSS data

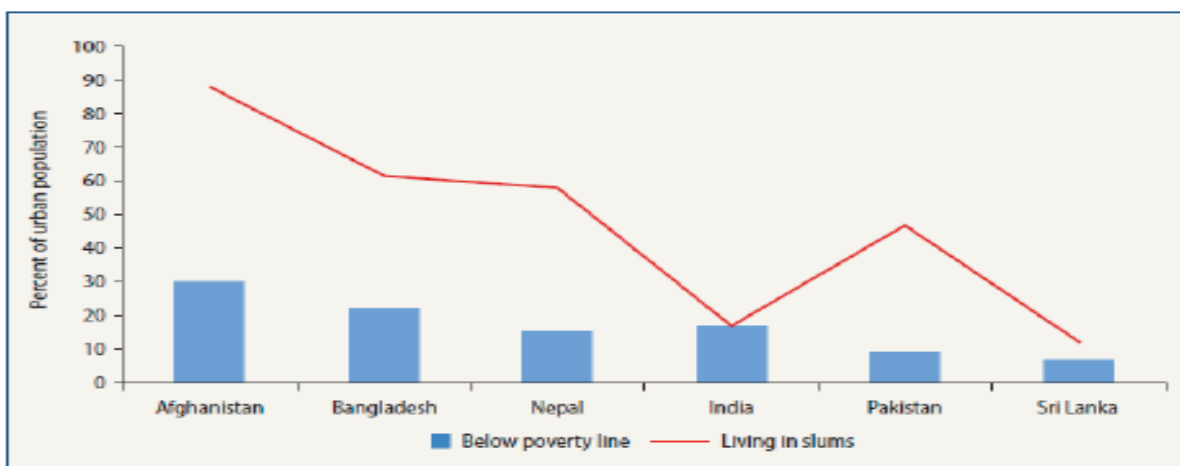
**Youth unemployment**

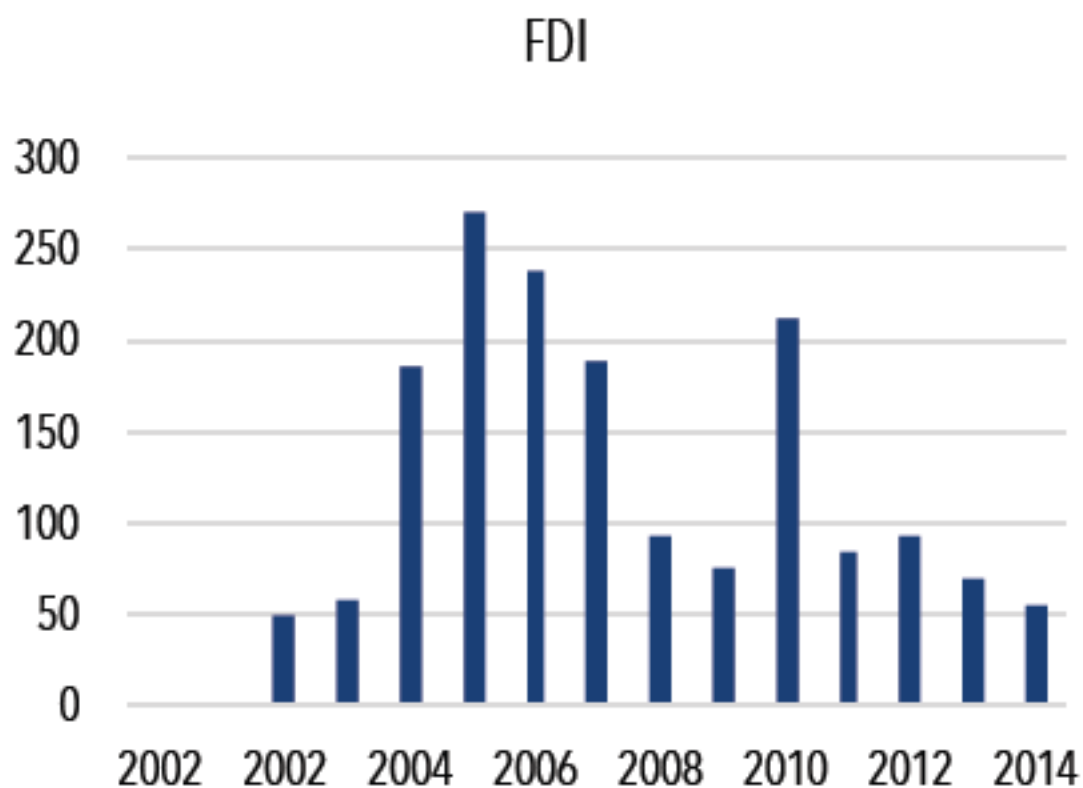
Sources: Authors' calculation based on ALCS 2013-14

Source: World Bank, *Fragility and Population Movement in Afghanistan*, October 3, 2016, <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/315481475557449283/Fragility-and-population-movement-in-Afghanistan>, pp. 3, 4

**Figure F4 : Growth of Urban Share of Population: 2000-2010****Expansion of Afghan Cities: 2001-2012 (Km<sup>2</sup>)**

City	2001	2012	Change (%)
Mazar-e-Sharif	207.3	855.0	312
Kunduz	24.8	346.3	1297
Pul-i-Khumri	73.0	279.2	283
Kabul	429.9	2920.7	579
Jalalabad	132.1	446.5	238
Subtotal	867.0	4847.7	459

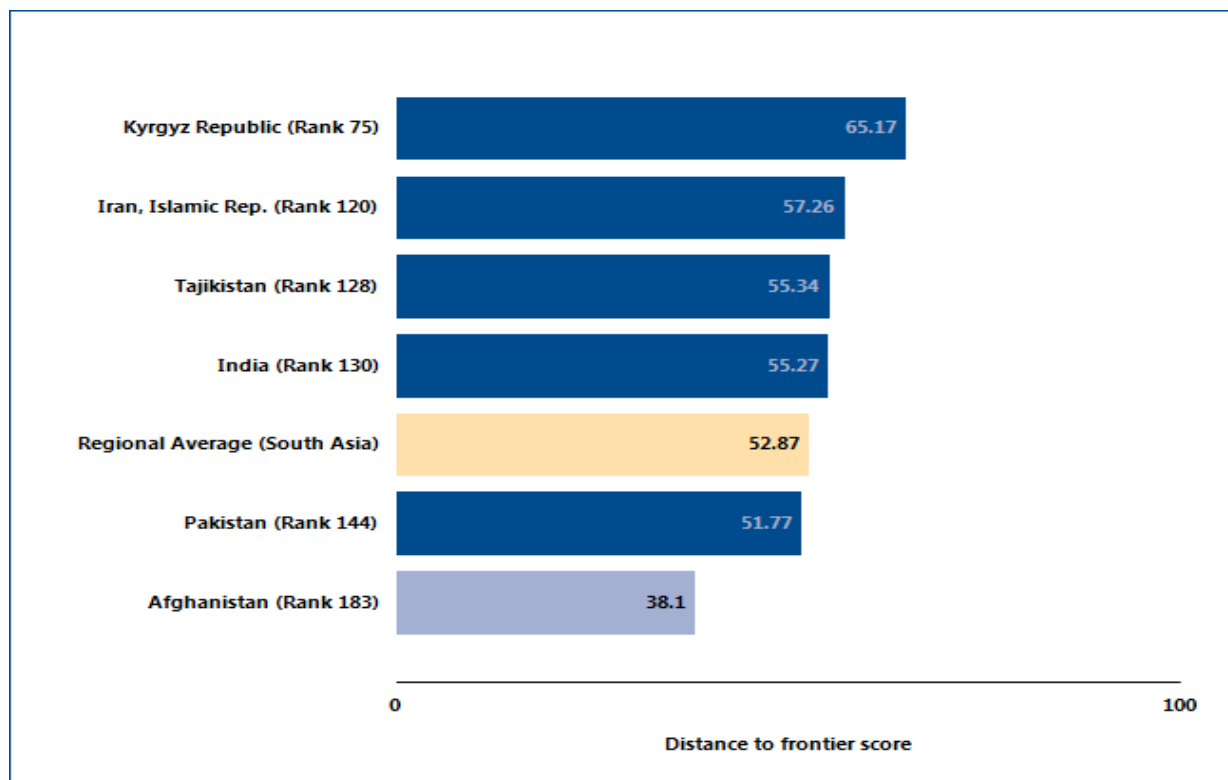
**Percent of Urban Afghans Living in Slums that Live Below the Poverty Line**

**Figure F5: Problems in Foreign Investment**

**Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) continues to remain low.** Inflows steadily increased between 2001 and 2005, reaching \$271 million. With the deterioration in national security, FDI inflows have decreased and been more erratic since 2006, standing at \$69 million in 2013 and \$54 million in 2014, according to the U.N. Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). Gross domestic private investment as a percentage of GDP has remained at low levels, declining from 6.6 in 2013 to 5.9 in 2014, according to the IMF.

**Figure F6: Barriers to Doing Business**

Afghanistan ranks last overall, and its ranking is dropping, in a region where most countries also present serious barriers to doing business.



## ECONOMY OVERVIEW

- **Region:** South Asia
- **Income category:** Low income
- **Population:** 32,526,562
- **GNI per capita (US\$):** 630
- **DB2017 rank:** 183
- **DB2016 rank:** 182\*
- **Change in rank:** -1
- **DB 2017 DTF:** 38.1
- **DB 2016 DTF:** 38.4
- **Change in DTF:** -0.32

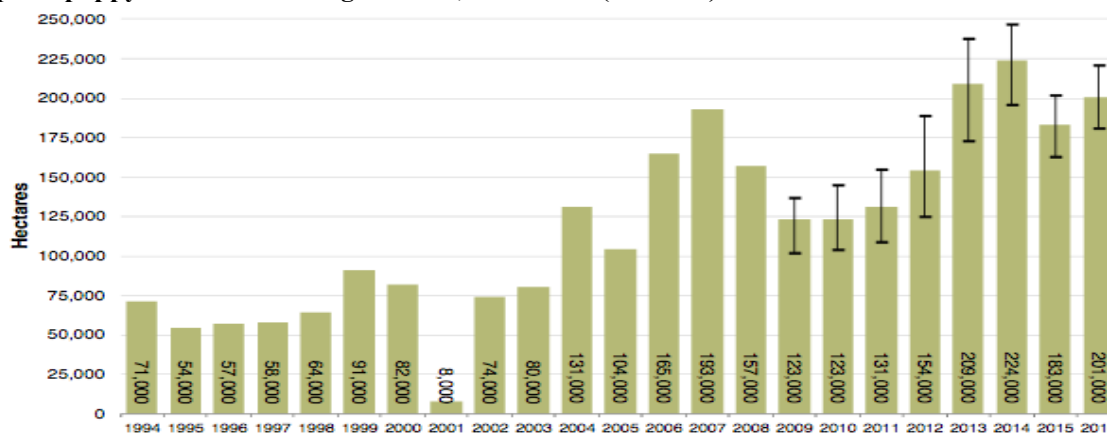
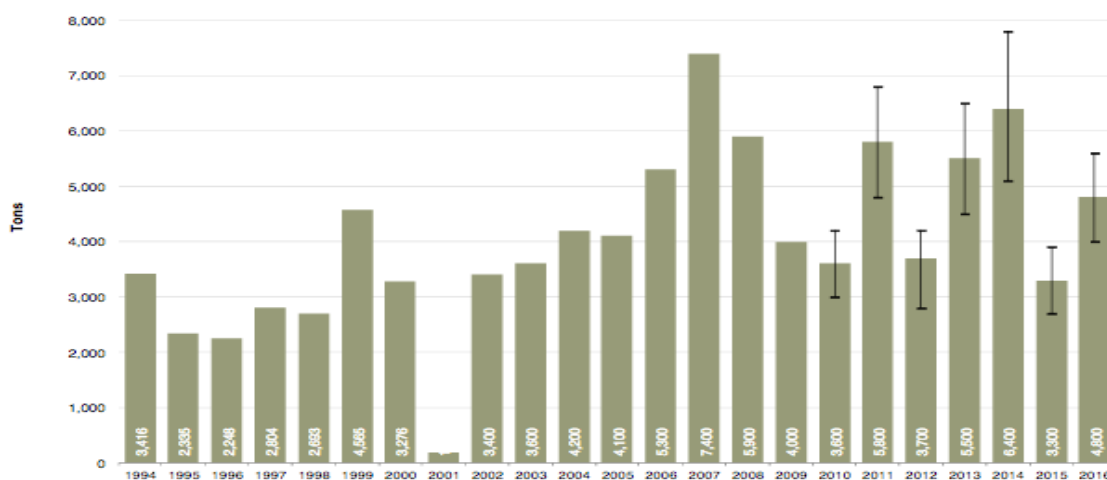
\* DB2016 ranking shown is not last year's published ranking but a comparable ranking for DB2017 captures the effects of such factors as data revisions and the changes in methodology. See the data notes starting on page 114 of the *Doing Business 2017* report for sources and definitions.

Source: World Bank Group, *Doing Business 2017*, <http://www.doingbusiness.org/reports/global-reports/doing-business-2017>, pp. 6&8.



**Figure F7: The Challenge of a Narco-Economy****Fact Sheet, Afghanistan Opium Survey 2016<sup>1</sup>**

	2015	Change from 2015	2016
Net opium poppy cultivation (after eradication)	183,000 ha (163,000 - 202,000)	+10%	201,000 ha (182,000 - 221,000)
Number of poppy-free provinces <sup>2</sup>	14	-1	13
Number of provinces affected by poppy cultivation	20	+1	21
Eradication	3,760 ha	-91%	355 ha
Average opium yield (weighted by cultivation)	18.3 kg/ha	+30%	23.8 kg/ha
Potential production of opium	3,300 tons (2,700 - 3,900)	+43% <sup>3</sup>	4,800 tons (4,000 - 5,600)

**Opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan, 1994-2016 (hectares)****Potential opium production in Afghanistan, 1994-2016 (tons)**

Source: UNDOC, Afghan Government, Afghanistan Opium Survey 2016, October 2016, [http://www.unodc.org/documents/crop-monitoring/Afghanistan/AfghanistanOpiumSurvey2016\\_ExSum.pdf#yuiHis=1%7C/uploads%7Cdocuments%7C/crop-monitoring%7C/crop-monitoring/Afghanistan%7C/cropmonitoring/Afghanistan/AfghanistanOpiumSurvey2016\\_ExSum.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/crop-monitoring/Afghanistan/AfghanistanOpiumSurvey2016_ExSum.pdf#yuiHis=1%7C/uploads%7Cdocuments%7C/crop-monitoring%7C/crop-monitoring/Afghanistan%7C/cropmonitoring/Afghanistan/AfghanistanOpiumSurvey2016_ExSum.pdf)

## **Appendix G: Summary Data on Recommendations Made to the Brussels Conference on Afghanistan, October 5, 2016**

The EU hosted a conference with more than 70 nations attending. They pledged some \$15.2 billion to help Afghanistan until 2020 -close to \$ billion a year. This was higher than the \$3 billion a year projected before the conference, and close to the \$4 billion a year pledged at the Tokyo Conference in 2012.

- **Figure G1: Key Points of the Final Communiqué**
- **Figure G2: Brussels Conference Estimates of Impact of Conflict and Transition on the Afghan People and GDP.**
- **Figure G-2: Brussels Conference Estimates of Constraints to Development and Needed Spending on Security and Civil Needs**
- **Figure G3: Brussels Conference Estimates Impact of the Continued Need for Aid**

### **Figure G1: Key Points of the Final Communiqué**

The key points of the final communiqué included:

#### **The Reform Agenda**

(4) The International Community welcomes the new Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF) setting out Afghanistan's strategic policy priorities towards achieving self-reliance and the presentation of five new National Priority Programs (Citizens' Charter, Women's Economic Empowerment; Urban Development; Comprehensive Agriculture and National Infrastructure) to improve the conditions for advancing sustainable development and stability.

(5) We note the successful completion of the International Monetary Fund's Staff Monitored Program (SMP) and take note of the recent agreement between the Afghan government and the International Monetary Fund on the Extended Credit Facility supported arrangement that aims to preserve macro-financial stability and sets out a structural reform agenda with a focus on institution building, fiscal and financial reforms, and measures to combat corruption. We acknowledge the significant progress being made by the Afghan government to increase domestic revenue collection and implement the public financial management roadmap, which coupled with economic growth, are key to realizing self-reliance over the longer term. We welcome the government's commitments to undertake additional reforms to promote higher and more inclusive growth and maintain financial stability.

(6) Credible, inclusive and transparent elections will lead to greater political stability, and strengthen sustainable democracy in Afghanistan. While some progress has been made, concrete steps will be taken by the government to implement in 2017 the essential electoral reforms and prepare for elections to further restore trust and confidence in the electoral process and its institutions. Effective democratic and inclusive governance in accordance with the Constitution remains essential for our partnership.

(7) The International Community welcomes the priority the Afghan government has placed on fighting corruption, which remains a major obstacle to development and stability. The International Community welcomes steps taken so far. The government will effectively implement its anti-corruption measures to ensure that core government functions such as procurement, appointments, financial management and policy making are transparent, accountable and consistent, and that violations are met with legal, timely and consistently applied sanctions. The International Community welcomes the establishment of the High Council on Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption and the Anti-Corruption Justice Centre and looks forward to their effective operation.

(8) We underscore the urgency of reducing poverty in Afghanistan by creating employment and addressing particularly widespread problems such as child malnutrition, food insecurity, poor sanitation, and conflict related impoverishment. This requires specific actions and inclusive reform approaches in sectors such as agriculture, infrastructure, and rural and urban development as envisioned in the new National Priority Programs. The International Community recognizes the Afghan leadership in community based development and endorses the proposed investments for improved delivery of essential public services to poor rural and urban communities, in particular for women and girls.

(9) We stress the importance of strengthening the rule of law and pursuing important judicial reforms to strengthen state legitimacy, while protecting the safety and security of judges, prosecutors and defense attorneys. Of particular importance is ensuring all Afghan citizens have access to a formal justice system that is fair and respected in its application of the law. Institution building remains central, including police and civilian policing, the Attorney General's Office, the court system, and the provision of legal aid.

(10) The protection and implementation of the constitutional rights and international human rights in Afghanistan remains essential. Special consideration needs to be given to the rights of women and children, including measures to prevent violence against women and children and forced marriage, and to combat torture or ill treatment as well as discrimination. The International Community welcomes the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on the Ombudsman of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC).

(11) We stress the key role of women in development, justice and peace and the continued commitment to protecting and promoting the rights of women and girls, increasing their access to health and education

services, improving their capacity for self-reliance, and expanding their opportunities and participation to achieve economic prosperity. This includes tangible support for the new National Priority Program on Women's Economic Empowerment and our funding for the National Action Plan to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, as well as the Afghan government's commitment to ensure participation of women in all peace processes. Of particular importance is empowering rural women as key agents for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

## Section 2: Development Partnership

(12) The alignment of international support with Afghanistan's national priorities as outlined in the ANPDF is essential. As set out in the Tokyo Declaration (2012) and reaffirmed at the London Conference on Afghanistan (2014), international partners remain committed to providing significant but gradually declining financial support towards Afghanistan's social and economic development priorities throughout the Transformation Decade, as the Afghan government continues to deliver on its commitments as part of this renewed partnership under the mutual accountability framework.

(13) We note the exceptional development support, which Afghanistan has received and continues to receive from international partners. We reaffirm that the renewed partnership depends upon the principle of mutual accountability and on both sides delivering on their commitments. Donors are committed to build on the gains that have been made by the Afghan people with international support since 2002 and to provide effective assistance including through close alignment with the ANPDF.

(14) Building on the donor community's achievement of Tokyo commitments to increase the level of development assistance channeled through the National Budget of the Afghan Government, we are committed to further increase aid effectiveness. We recognize the need to promote a high degree of Afghan ownership through use of country systems and joint programming, and in line with the commitments under the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation. In addition to bilateral agreements and based, amongst others, on implementation of the agreed reforms, in particular progress on the Public Financial Management (PFM) roadmap, we will explore possibilities for different forms of flexible on-budget assistance, including State Building Contracts and expanding programs in support of Afghan development priorities, notably through the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) and related incentives or reimbursement schemes. On-budget support will continue to be contingent on improvements to accountability and audit mechanisms.

(15) We strongly welcome and equally value all other development assistance and project support that Afghanistan receives from its international partners to support Afghan National Development Priorities.

(16) We recognize the progress made under the SMAF and endorse the new set of SMART SMAF indicators for implementation in 2017/18.

(17) For the period 2017-2020, international partners commit and confirm their intention to provide \$15.2 billion in support of Afghanistan's development priorities. We particularly welcome the contributions from new donors to Afghanistan as well as other announcements of bilateral assistance.

(18) We recognize the role of civil society and media in Afghanistan's development and the need to include civil society in the political processes. We welcome the Afghan civil society's contributions to the Conference and recognize also the contributions of international NGOs, both for Afghanistan's development and in partnership with Afghan civil society, including in the provision of humanitarian assistance.

(19) We recall the critical role that the private sector will play in Afghanistan's path to sustainability. We welcome the first steps being taken and intend to make greater efforts to facilitate private sector development and an enabling business and investment climate. As set out in London (2014), there is urgent need to prioritize a stronger, more consistent regulatory framework enabling a stronger and more competitive business environment, as well as investment in energy and infrastructure, agriculture and the extractive industries to help encourage private sector investment and more sustainable economic growth. This includes effective measures to counter the threat of conflict and corruption around the extractive industries. The International Community welcomes the Afghan government's commitment to encourage and provide incentives for public-private partnerships.

(20) Afghanistan's potentially large extractive industry reserves should build the economy and benefit national development. The Afghan government will take further steps to implement its commitment to the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative and supports the efforts to improve mining governance and transparency that are presented in the ANPDF. The Afghan government highlighted plans to combat illegal mineral extraction and to ensure fully transparent tendering for mine development so that the Afghan people benefit in full from natural resource development.

### Section 3: Peace, Security and Regional Cooperation

(21) A secure, stable, and prosperous Afghanistan is vital to peace and stability in the region as a whole.

(22) Development and security are interconnected challenges for Afghanistan's state-building process, and need to be underpinned by genuine political support at the regional level.

(23) We remain determined to counter all forms of terrorism and violent extremism as fundamental threats to international peace and stability.

(24) Stability and security in the region are not divisible. They can only be achieved and maintained with an approach that promotes security for all states in the region.

(25) The International Community welcomes the undeterred willingness of the Afghan Government to engage with all armed groups in a political process without preconditions. The only way to a durable end to the conflict in Afghanistan is through a lasting political settlement. In order to reach a peace settlement, we remain fully committed to supporting an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process representing all Afghan citizens and their legitimate interests that preserves Afghanistan's unity, sovereignty, territorial integrity and equal rights of all Afghans under the Constitution of Afghanistan. We reaffirm that such a process must lead to the renunciation of violence and breaking of all ties to international terrorism and the respect for the Afghan Constitution including its human rights provisions, notably the rights of women and children. We welcome all initiatives to create a conducive environment for such a process, particularly the efforts undertaken by the Afghan government, and call on all parties to engage in such a process.

(26) Stressing that the stability of Afghanistan affects the stability of the entire region, we are committed to preserving the independence of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan as a democracy, bound to the rule of law and the respect of human rights as enshrined in the Afghan Constitution.

(27) We welcome the commitment of the regional and key international stakeholders to respect, support and promote a political process and its outcome in order to ensure peace, security and prosperity in Afghanistan and the wider region.

(28) Noting the increasing number of civilian casualties, we condemn all attacks targeting civilians or civilian facilities, which must be protected. We recall the responsibility of all parties to protect civilians in accordance with their obligations pursuant to International Humanitarian Law and International Human Rights Law.

(29) We recognize the sacrifices and achievements of the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces (ANDSF) as well as the sacrifices made by the international partners. We welcome the commitments in support of the ANDSF expressed by the international partners of Afghanistan.

(30) We underline the importance of close and effective cooperation in the field of irregular migration and of the multilateral, regional and bilateral processes and political agreements in this regard, including the Joint Way Forward on Migration Issues between Afghanistan and the European Union. We are committed to effectively addressing the growing pressure of irregular migration in accordance with international commitments and obligations, including the human rights and legal rights of all migrants as recognized in international laws.

(31) We recognize the challenge to Afghanistan and the region in meeting the protracted needs of displaced people and refugees. We commend regional countries, in particular Iran and Pakistan, for their efforts in hosting millions of Afghans, in the spirit of good neighborly relations, over several decades. In this regard, we call on the International Community to further support and assist the refugees and the countries and communities hosting and receiving them. We reaffirm our common objective to their voluntary, safe and orderly repatriation and resettlement in a timely and dignified manner. We recognize the need to provide

support and assistance, including enhancing the capacities of Afghan communities and local authorities to help returnees and internally displaced persons. Root causes of displacement must be addressed.

(32) We reaffirm our joint commitment and the need for a sustained and integrated approach in effectively reducing the illicit production and trafficking of narcotics and precursor products, and fighting organized crime, including money laundering, corruption and the financing of terrorism. We also note the importance of continuing our important work in treating and rehabilitating those with substance abuse disorders. We underline the need for renewed efforts to support countries concerned in addressing these challenges within relevant regional frameworks including through the implementation of the Afghan National Drug Action Plan.

(33) We welcome the important initiatives for regional connectivity, notably in the frameworks of the Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan (RECCA) and the Heart of Asia Confidence Building Measures to further improve transit, transport and energy corridors and facilitate increased trade throughout the region. We welcome continued efforts on implementing the Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement and welcome the progress on projects such as CASA-1000, TAPI gas pipeline, and important regional railway infrastructure projects. We welcome the signing of the Chabahar Agreement by Afghanistan, Iran and India and welcome the agreement on the Lapis Lazuli Transit Trade & Transport Route.

(34) Following the ministerial meeting of the Heart of Asia/Istanbul Process in Pakistan in 2015, which allowed for an important advance in the regional political and security dialogue, the International Community looks forward to maintaining and deepening this cooperation at the upcoming meeting in Amritsar, India on 4th December 2016. We appreciate the Turkish government for the organization of the RECCA Business Forum in Istanbul in November 2016 and Turkmen government for convening the 7th RECCA in Ashgabat in 2017.

#### Section 4: The Way Forward

(35) We look forward to the Senior Officials Meeting in 2017 and the next Ministerial Meeting on Afghanistan in 2018.

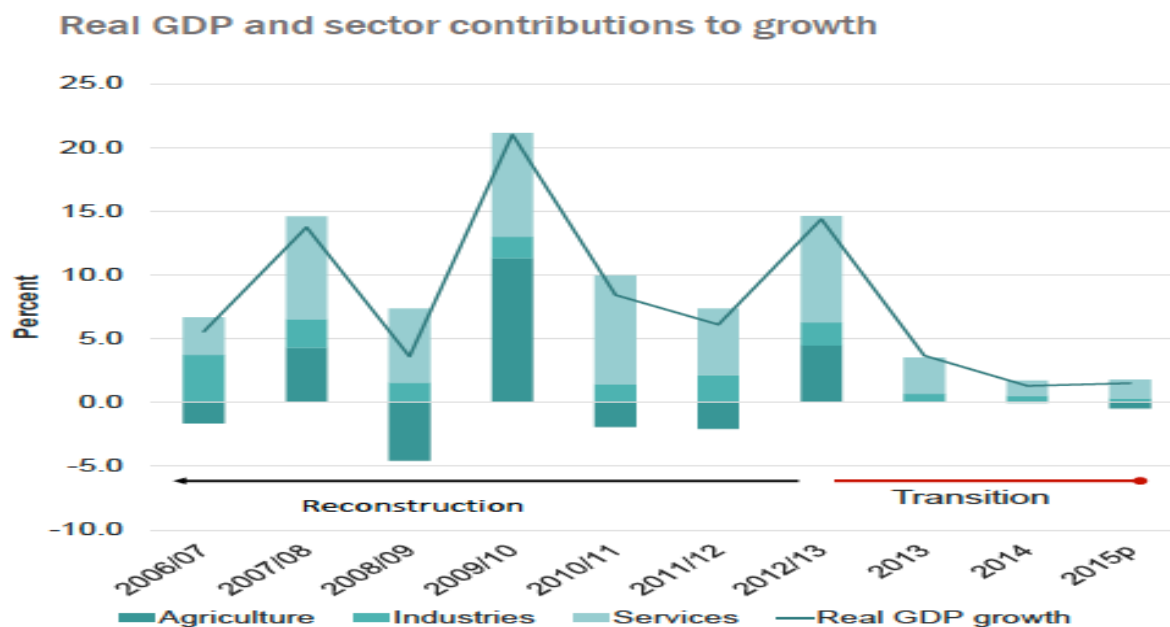
(36) The Afghan Government expressed its appreciation to the European Union for co-hosting the Brussels Conference and the Participants for their continued extraordinary support for the security and development of Afghanistan.

(37) Participants affirm the central role played by the United Nations in Afghanistan, including their role in coordinating international support.

**Figure G1: Brussels Conference Estimates of Impact of Conflict and Transition on the Afghan People and GDP**

Past gains are being eroded

Poverty	Poverty increased from 36% in 2008 to 39% in 2014.	Services	Primary attendance rates declined by 1.2% overall and by 2.2% for girls between 2012 and 2014.
Employment	Unemployment and underemployment increased from 25% in 2008 to 39% in 2014.	Gender	The gender gap in school attendance increased. For every 2 boys, less than 1 girl attends secondary education.
Violence	Annual civilian casualties increased from 6025 in 2012 to 6791 in 2014.	Private Investment	The number of new investment activities declined by almost 50% between 2012 and 2015.
Migration	Afghans seeking asylum in the EU increased from 38,000 in 2014 to 180,000 in 2015.	Displacement	Flows of returning refugees increased, exacerbating population pressures. The number of internally displaced reached 1.2 million.



Source: *Navigating Risk and Uncertainty in Afghanistan*, Brussels Conference on Afghanistan, October 4th-5th, 2016, pp. 4, 5.

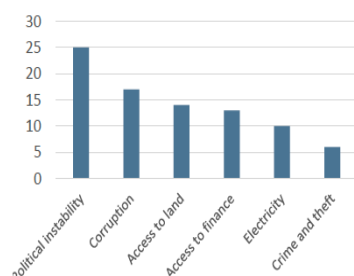
## Figure G-2: Brussels Conference Estimates of Constraints to Development and Needed Spending on Security and Civil Needs

### Institutions, demography, and limited productive capacity constrain the development path

Weak institutions undermine service delivery, deter private investment, and drive conflict.

- High levels of crime and corruption deter investment.
- Perceptions that state institutions are corrupt, partisan, and predatory undermine support for government in the context of insurgency.
- Institutional strengthening is a long-term process: any growth strategy must be robust to fragility.

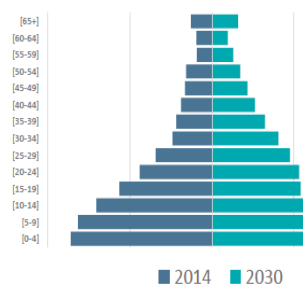
Main obstacles to doing business cited by firms (%)



High fertility rates (5.3) will continue to drive rapid population growth (3% per annum).

- A growing and already under-served population places pressure on the budget.
- High dependency ratios mean households are unable to save, constraining savings available to finance private sector investment.
- Afghanistan's youth bulge is the third-largest in the world and the labor force will need to absorb 400,000 new workers every year.

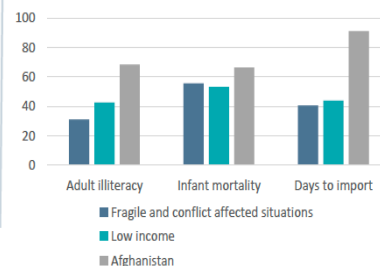
Population pyramids, 2014 & 2030



Limited human and physical capital limit options for structural change and leapfrogging.

- Low literacy and numeracy and a lack of physical infrastructure will constrain transformation to services or manufacturing.
- Natural resources will therefore continue to play a key role in Afghanistan's economy.
- New production will be geographically concentrated around natural resources rather than in cities.

Human and physical capital indicators

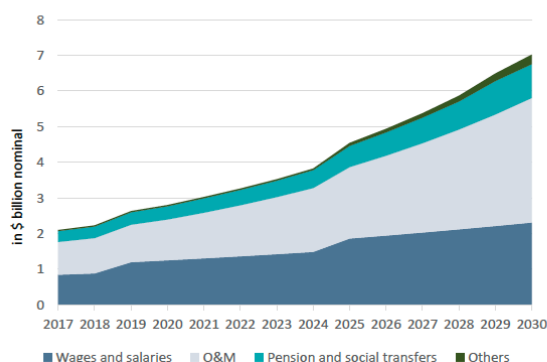


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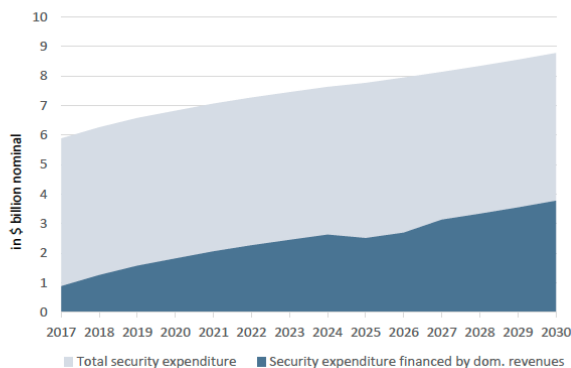
### Security and basic service delivery needs will drive public spending

- Security expenditures will expand rapidly with government security commitments consuming a growing share of revenues.
- Civilian spending will need to grow rapidly just to sustain current service levels, driven by population growth, O&M requirements on existing assets, and changing civil service salary structure. This level of spending will still leave a large population underserved i.e. 3 million children out of school.

Public spending needs to maintain current level of service delivery



Projected evolution of security expenditures



Source: *Navigating Risk and Uncertainty in Afghanistan*, Brussels Conference on Afghanistan, October 4th-5th, 2016, pp. 6, 11.

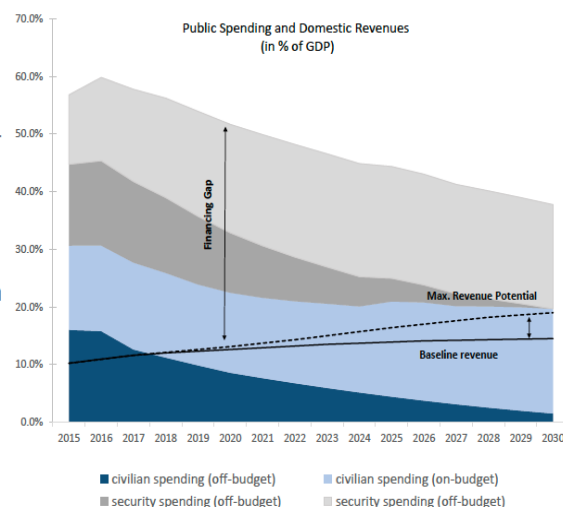


## Figure G3: Brussels Conference Estimates Impact of the Continued Need for Aid

### Afghanistan will continue to require extraordinary levels of aid

- Public spending will continue to be critical for development, even if private sector investment picks up.
- High costs of security will limit resources available to meet the needs of a growing population.
- Revenue potential remains limited - revenues are expected to increase from 10.2% of GDP in 2015 to 14.5% of GDP by 2030. Achieving revenue of up to 19% of GDP by 2030 will only be possible with mining development.
- The annual financing gap – the external resources that Afghanistan will require to finance all on and off-budget civilian and security expenditures – will average 34.5% of GDP through 2030 under the baseline.

Even in the best case, domestic revenues will not suffice to finance basic development needs

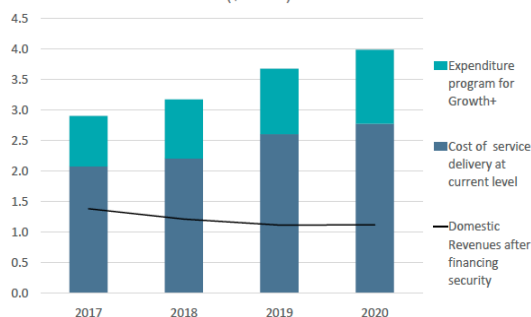


### Better outcomes will require higher levels of aid

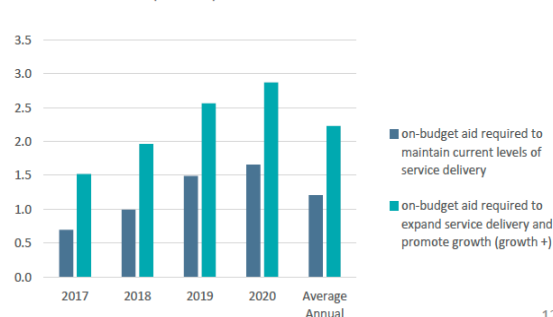
Substantial on-budget civilian aid is required over the next four years to improve development outcomes.

- Security commitments will absorb more than half of revenue over 2017-2020.
- Remaining domestic revenues will be insufficient to meet basic operational costs of Government.
- US\$1.2 billion of on-budget civilian aid will be required per year just to cover recurrent expenditure pressures.
- US\$2.2 billion of on-budget civilian aid will be required per year for investment to support growth and development progress (Growth+).

Government Budget: Revenues and civilian expenditure needs (\$ billion)



Government Budget: Aid financing (\$ billion)



12

Source: *Navigating Risk and Uncertainty in Afghanistan*, Brussels Conference on Afghanistan, October 4th-5th, 2016, pp. 6, 11

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Defense (DoD), *Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, December 2016,

<sup>2</sup> Department of Defense (DoD), *Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, December 2016, <https://www.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/Afghanistan-1225-Report-December-2016.pdf>, pp. 5 & 31.

<sup>3</sup> Department of Defense (DoD), *Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, December 2016, <https://www.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/Afghanistan-1225-Report-December-2016.pdf>, pp. 32, 87-88

<sup>4</sup> Feature story on Sharyl Attkisson's Full Measure, April 23, 2017, about ghost soldiers and SIGAR's work on the issue. Link to the video clip here: <http://fullmeasure.news/news/cover-story/ghost-soldiers>.

<sup>5</sup> *Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction: SIGAR*, <https://www.sigar.mil/>

<sup>6</sup> Department of Defense (DoD), *Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, December 2016, <https://www.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/Afghanistan-1225-Report-December-2016.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction SIGAR, *Corruption in Conflict: Lessons from the U.S. Experience in Afghanistan*, September 2016.

<sup>8</sup> Department of Defense (DoD), *Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, December 2016, <https://www.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/Afghanistan-1225-Report-December-2016.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup> Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction SIGAR, *Corruption in Conflict: Lessons from the U.S. Experience in Afghanistan*, September 2016.

<sup>10</sup> Department of Defense (DoD), *Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, December 2016, , <https://www.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/Afghanistan-1225-Report-December-2016.pdf>.

<sup>11</sup> SIGAR, Quarterly Report to Congress, January 30, 2017, p. 91.

<sup>12</sup> Resolute Support Mission, Key Facts and Figures, [http://www.nato.int/nato\\_static\\_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf\\_2016\\_12/2016-12-RSM-Placemat.pdf](http://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2016_12/2016-12-RSM-Placemat.pdf). The text notes that,

*The following document is intended to provide basic information, releasable to the public, about the nature, mandate, and scope of the NATO-led Resolute Support mission (RSM). The troop numbers reported in the second page reflect the overall presence in Afghanistan of each of individual contributing nations. They are based on information provided directly from individual contributing nations and may include forces deployed in a support role for RSM. They should be taken as indicative as they change regularly, in accordance with the deployment procedures of the individual troop contributing nations.*

**Mission:** The Resolute Support mission (RSM) is a new NATO-led mission to train, advise and assist the Afghan security forces and institutions. The mission was launched on 1 January 2015, immediately following the stand-down of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF).

The legal framework for the Resolute Support mission is provided by a Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), signed in Kabul on 30 September 2014 and ratified by the Afghan Parliament on 27 November 2014. The SOFA defines the terms and conditions under which NATO forces are deployed, as well as the activities they are authorized to carry out. The mission is also supported by the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2189, unanimously adopted on 12 December 2014.

The Resolute Support mission will provide training, advice and assistance in eight key areas: multi-year budgeting; transparency, accountability and oversight; civilian oversight of the Afghan Security Institutions; force generation; force sustainment; strategy and policy planning, resourcing and execution; intelligence; and strategic communications.

Those countries not contributing troops to the Resolute Support Mission are supporting this mission in different ways, as well as the broad effort to strengthen the sustainment of the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces (ANDSF) in the long term.

Beyond this training, advice and assistance mission, Allies and partner countries will also contribute to the financing of the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces, and will enhance the Enduring Partnership with Afghanistan,

by strengthening political consultations with the country and by strengthening practical cooperation in areas of specific interest for Afghanistan.

These efforts are part of the broader engagement of the international community in Afghanistan to ensure that Afghanistan is never again a safe haven for terrorism.

<sup>13</sup> Source: Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *QUARTERLY REPORT TO THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS*, OCT 30 2016, p. 105, and Department of Defense, News Transcript, "Press Conference With General John Nicholson and Secretary of Defense Ash Carter; ", Commander of International Forces in Afghanistan, Dec. 9, 2016, <http://www.defense.gov/News/Transcripts/Transcript-View/Article/1026539/press-conference-with-general-john-nicholson>.

<sup>14</sup> Source: Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *QUARTERLY REPORT TO THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS*, OCT 30 2016, p. 105, and Department of Defense, News Transcript, "Press Conference With General John Nicholson and Secretary of Defense Ash Carter; ", Commander of International Forces in Afghanistan, Dec. 9, 2016, <http://www.defense.gov/News/Transcripts/Transcript-View/Article/1026539/press-conference-with-general-john-nicholson>.

<sup>15</sup> See Reuters, "U.S. forces embedding more to help Iraqis retake Mosul: commander," <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-mosul-idUSKBN14C1RW>, December 24, 2016; ABC, "Mosul: US embeds more extensively to help Iraqis retake northern city from Islamic State," <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-12-24/mosul-us-embeds-more-extensively-to-help-iraqis-retake-city/8147030>, December 24, 2016; New York News, "US forces Have Been Embed Deeper With Iraqi Forces To Retake Mosul," <https://newsnyork.com/us-forces-have-been-embed-deeper-with-iraqi-forces-to-retake-mosul/>, December 24, 2016.

<sup>16</sup> Department of Defense (DoD), *Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, December 2016, <https://www.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/Afghanistan-1225-Report-December-2016.pdf>, p. 9.

<sup>17</sup> Department of Defense (DoD), *Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, December 2016, <https://www.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/Afghanistan-1225-Report-December-2016.pdf>, pp. 39, 40, 63-65, 83, 85-86.

<sup>18</sup> SIGAR, Quarterly Report to Congress, October 30, 2016, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/2016-10-30qr-section3-security.pdf>, p. 111

<sup>19</sup> AFCENT, "Airpower Effects," accessed December 14, 2016, <http://www.defense.gov/>, and <https://www.google.com/search?q=AFCENT+%28CAOC%29+Public+Affairs+%E2%80%93+afcent.pa%40afcent.af.mil&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8>.

<sup>20</sup> AFCENT, "Airpower Effects," accessed December 14, 2016, <http://www.defense.gov/>, and <https://www.google.com/search?q=AFCENT+%28CAOC%29+Public+Affairs+%E2%80%93+afcent.pa%40afcent.af.mil&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8>.

<sup>21</sup> SIGAR Quarterly Report to Congress, 2017-01-30, pp. 101-102.

<sup>22</sup> SIGAR, Quarterly Report to Congress, October 30, 2016, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/2016-10-30qr-section3-security.pdf>, p. 96.

<sup>23</sup> World Bank, Worldwide Governance Indicators, <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.aspx#reports>

<sup>24</sup> Transparency International, <http://www.transparency.org/cpi2015>.

<sup>25</sup> Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction SIGAR, *Corruption in Conflict: Lessons from the U.S. Experience in Afghanistan*, September 2016.

<sup>26</sup> World Bank, Afghanistan, World Bank Overview. Nov 02, 2016, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/afghanistan/overview>.

<sup>27</sup> World Bank, Afghanistan, World Bank Overview. Nov 02, 2016, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/afghanistan/overview>.

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- <sup>28</sup> World Bank, *Afghanistan Country Snapshot*, October 2016, <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/584381476781571691/Afghanistan-Country-snapshot>, pp. 2-3
- <sup>29</sup> World Bank, *Fragility and Population Movement in Afghanistan*, October 3, 2016, <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/315481475557449283/Fragility-and-population-movement-in-Afghanistan>, p. 4.
- <sup>30</sup> Vincent A. Floreani, Gladys López-Acevedo, Martín Rama, *Conflict and Poverty in Afghanistan's Transition*, World Bank, Policy Research Working Paper 7864, October 2016.
- <sup>31</sup> IMF, IMF Country Report No. 16/252: THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF AFGHANISTAN: REQUEST FOR A THREE-YEAR ARRANGEMENT UNDER THE EXTENDED CREDIT FACILITY—PRESS RELEASE; STAFF REPORT; AND STATEMENT BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF AFGHANISTAN, July, 2016, <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/cat/longres.aspx?sk=44130.0>, pp. 1-3.
- <sup>32</sup> World Food Programme, "The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan: Current issues and what the World Food Programme is doing," <https://www.wfp.org/countries/afghanistan>, accessed 16 December 2016.
- <sup>33</sup> SIGAR, Quarterly Report to Congress, October 30, 2016, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/2016-10-30qr-section3-security.pdf>, pp. 131-132.
- <sup>34</sup> US News Centre, <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=55378#.WGoZDcs8Kf0>.
- <sup>35</sup> UNDOC, Afghan Government, Afghanistan Opium Survey 2016, October 2016, [http://www.unodc.org/documents/crop-monitoring/Afghanistan/AfghanistanOpiumSurvey2016\\_ExSum.pdf#yuiHis=1%7Cuploads%7Cdocuments%7C/crop-monitoring%7C/crop-monitoring/Afghanistan%7C/cropmonitoring/Afghanistan/AfghanistanOpiumSurvey2016\\_ExSum.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/crop-monitoring/Afghanistan/AfghanistanOpiumSurvey2016_ExSum.pdf#yuiHis=1%7Cuploads%7Cdocuments%7C/crop-monitoring%7C/crop-monitoring/Afghanistan%7C/cropmonitoring/Afghanistan/AfghanistanOpiumSurvey2016_ExSum.pdf), p. 4
- <sup>36</sup> World Bank, Worldwide Governance Indicators, <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.aspx#reports>
- <sup>37</sup> Transparency International, <http://www.transparency.org/cpi2015>.