SIGAR

Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction

Testimony

Before the Subcommittee on National Security

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

U.S. House of Representatives

Actions Needed to Improve U.S. Security-Sector Assistance Efforts in Afghanistan

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Chairman DeSantis, Ranking Member Lynch, Members of the Subcommittee:

Thank you for inviting me to testify. Today, I will be discussing the findings, lessons, and recommendations of SIGAR's new report on America's 15 years of security-sector assistance to rebuild the security forces of Afghanistan. Importantly, the lessons in our report have relevance to the scores of other countries in which the United States is conducting train, advise, assist (TAA) security assistance missions. These countries include hot spots like Iraq and Niger, but also others that could emerge in the near future.

Our report offers recommendations that, if implemented, might produce immediate benefits while other measures generate longer-term gains in policy, planning, and practice.

A brief introduction to SIGAR and its work

I have served as the inspector general in charge of SIGAR since July 2012, but the agency predates me. Congress created SIGAR in 2008,[1] with the mandate to investigate and report to Congress and the Administration on U.S. reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan, including making recommendations for improvements. We are uniquely independent—not housed within any one agency, and we are the only Inspector General authorized to report on *all* aspects of reconstruction in Afghanistan, regardless of federal departmental boundaries.

As of October 30, 2017, SIGAR has issued 37 quarterly reports to the Congress and the Secretaries of State and Defense. We have also issued 265 audit and inspection reports and 139 special projects reports. SIGAR's audits directorate has saved nearly $1 billion for taxpayers. And our investigations directorate has identified cases of wrongdoing that have led to 114 plea agreements or convictions, has helped secure fines and recoveries of more than $1.2 billion, and has referred 872 individuals or organizations for suspension or debarment from federal contracting. In total, our agency has recovered over $2 billion for American taxpayers.

Our attention is not, however, narrowly focused on finance or misconduct. We also invest a great deal of time and effort into assessing and reporting on the *effectiveness* of U.S. reconstruction programs in Afghanistan, and upon recommending *improvements*.

SIGAR products like our performance audits have long featured recommendations, but they tend to focus on specific programs, projects, and contracts. With regard to the ANDSF, we have documented and reported on cases such as:

- Unreliable and inconsistent assessments of ANDSF capabilities

[1] Pub. L. 110-181, §1229.

- Ineffective management of ANDSF fuel and equipment
- Inadequate literacy-training programs for ANDSF personnel
- Thousands of "ghost" soldiers and police on the rolls, distorting readiness assessments and allowing corrupt commanders to pocket the salaries paid from U.S. taxpayers' funds
- Nearly a half-billion dollars wasted on transport planes bought second-hand from Italy that could not operate in Afghanistan's harsh environment and that were scrapped for pennies on the dollar
- $3 million on patrol boats that were never used—a "navy" for a land-locked country
- Shoddily constructed, unsafe, and unwanted buildings
- Unnecessary spending of up to $28 million from purchasing proprietary camouflage uniforms that may also be inappropriate for most Afghan terrain
- An inordinately high number of Afghan military personnel training in the United States since 2005 going AWOL or being unaccounted for
- The Afghan Ministry of Defense being unable to account for small arms or account for lost weapons

But it was clear to us that our work also touched on longer-term and broader-reach issues that also deserved attention and reporting. Others in government felt the same way. So late in 2014, with the support of Ambassador Ryan Crocker, General John Allen, and others, I created the SIGAR Lessons Learned Program to make research-based findings, extract critical lessons, and devise actionable recommendations for improving the results of the U.S. effort to rebuild and develop Afghanistan. The program has issued two detailed studies, and has five more currently under way.

The program's aim is to pursue longer-range, broader-scope, and more whole-of-government analysis of issues than appear in our tightly focused audits, inspections, and investigations. The first Lessons Learned report was released last year. Titled *Corruption in Conflict*, it is a detailed look at the ways corruption in Afghanistan creates obstacles toward executing reconstruction programs—and the unfortunate truth that the massive influx of U.S. and other international aid into a small, poor country magnified the rewards of corrupt behavior, provided windfalls for patronage networks and insurgents, and created new opportunities for corruption. As numerous SIGAR reports have documented, those opportunities were often seized upon—not only by Afghans, but also by American contractors, military personnel, and federal civilian employees for personal gain and enrichment.

On September 21 of this year, *we issued Reconstructing the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces: Lessons from the U.S. Experience in Afghanistan.* Our latest report concerns the vital matter of security-sector assistance to Afghanistan, which has cost more than $70 billion since fiscal year 2002—fully 60 percent of all the money Congress has appropriated for reconstruction there.

Why did SIGAR study security-sector assistance to Afghanistan?

SIGAR's report is important and timely, coinciding as it does with the implementation of a new strategy for the U.S. train, advise, and assist (TAA) role there. Its lessons and findings also coincide with growing interest in U.S. security-assistance missions in conflict-ridden venues like Iraq, Somalia, and Niger which might benefit from the results of our study of 15 years of train, advise, and assist work in Afghanistan.

In December 2001, two months after the U.S. military intervention in Afghanistan, a UN-sponsored international conference in Bonn, Germany, resolved to rebuild the largely vanished national army and police forces of Afghanistan.[2] That work formally commenced in 2002, so has now been under way for 15 years.

By 2005, the United States had already committed $4.3 billion to develop the Afghan security forces, and one official estimate was that the rebuilding programs could take years and "could cost up to $7.2 billion to complete."[3] As we can see now, that cost estimate was off by a factor of ten, and the work is still not complete.

The Afghan National Defense and Security Forces—the ANDSF for short—are fighting hard, and have posted some success stories. As our report highlights, their successes include making good use of the A-29 Super Tucano aircraft to provide close air support for their ground troops, and creating an effective Special Forces branch within the Afghan National Army. However, the Afghan government struggles to provide security and governance, the ANDSF are suffering high casualties, insurgents have increased their control of districts, and large parts of the country are off limits for foreigners.

The Department of Defense summarized the current situation in its last semiannual report to Congress on the U.S. mission in Afghanistan:

> The ANDSF are at a critical point in the fight against the insurgency. The plan to modify the force structure and develop into a more agile and lethal force is under

[2] "Agreement on Provisional Arrangements in Afghanistan Pending the Re-Establishment of Permanent Government Institutions," conference text of 12/5/2001, published inter alia at https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/world/texts/bonnagreement.html.

[3] GAO, *Afghanistan Security: Efforts to Establish Army and Police Have Made Progress, but Future Plans Need to Be Better Defined*, June 2005, GAO-05-575, unnumbered 'Highlights' page.

> way, but 2017 is a year of setting conditions to build momentum. The ANDSF must weather the storm from the insurgency and deny the Taliban strategic victories on the battlefield, fight [ISIS], grow and train the Afghan Special Security Forces, conduct planning to realign forces within the Ministry of Defense [for the army] and Ministry of Interior [for the police], and posture itself to become a more offensive force in 2018.[4]

General John Nicholson, commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan, said in Congressional testimony earlier this year, "We assess the current security situation in Afghanistan as a stalemate where the equilibrium favors the government." He added, however, that "Leadership and countering corruption are two areas in which the ANDSF must improve to reduce casualties and increase military capability."[5] To tip the balance, the Administration has adopted a new strategic approach to the conflict in Afghanistan, and has ordered some 3,000 additional U.S. military personnel to deploy there in support of the train, advise, assist mission with the ANDSF.

Adding more trainers below the corps-level and adopting a conditions-based rather than time-based strategy for engagement are positive steps and recommended in our report. But they may not produce a decisive change if the underlying assumptions and structures of security-sector assistance remain unchanged. SIGAR's body of work, including the new Lessons Learned report, compellingly indicate that some fundamental changes in approach to security-sector assistance are still needed to produce decisive results.

SIGAR is not alone in that judgment. The new issue of *Foreign Affairs* contains an essay by Professor Mara Karlin of Johns Hopkins University and the Brookings Institution. In her essay, "Why Military Assistance Programs Disappoint: Minor Tools Can't Solve Major Problems," Professor Karlin notes that Afghanistan is only one of more than 100 countries where the United States is conducting military-assistance programs. Overall, she judges, "The returns have been paltry," for reasons including poor execution, inadequate conditionality and accountability, unclear objectives, and failure to deal with political complications.[6]

Nor is that view new. In 2005, the RAND Corporation released a study of efforts to improve internal security as part of nation-building missions. Of nine countries studied, only Timor-

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[4] DOD, *Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, report to Congress per Pub. L. 113-291, 6/2017, p. 5.

[5] General John W. Nicholson Jr, "The Situation in Afghanistan," statement for the record before the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee, 2/9/2017, p. 2. https://www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Nicholson_02-09-17.pdf

[6] Mara Karlin, "Why Military Assistance Programs Disappoint: Minor Tools Can't Solve Major Problems," *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 2017, pp. 111-120. The essay is adapted from her book, *Building Militaries in Fragile States: Challenges for the United States* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017).

Leste and Kosovo were deemed successful operations in terms of reducing violence and expanding the rule of law. The two worst cases were Iraq and Afghanistan; RAND tagged each as "unsuccessful."[7]

The literature on reconstruction in conflict zones reflects a consensus that internal security is the sine qua non of success. A government that cannot provide reasonable security against insurgents, terrorists, and criminals is a government unlikely to enjoy popular support—or to be able to deliver the basic services, economic development, and political stability that might build support and a perception of legitimacy. SIGAR staff, U.S. military members, federal agency employees, partner-nation personnel, and nongovernmental organizations working in Afghanistan know from day-to-day experience that Afghanistan above all needs to gain the upper hand on the security front if reconstructions are to be preserved and nurtured.

For these reasons, a fresh attempt to extract lessons learned from our 15 years of security-sector assistance in Afghanistan is a timely and important undertaking. Given the timeliness and importance of better security outcomes in Afghanistan, and the great number of previous attempts to identify problems and improvements, SIGAR's Lessons Learned team knew that a real contribution would require more than another survey of research and a desk-bound stint of drafting.

How did the Lessons Learned team proceed?

Our Lessons Learned staff, guided by Senior Analyst and Project Lead James Cunningham, consulted hundreds of public and nonpublic documents, within and outside of government agencies. They interviewed and held discussions with more than 100 people including U.S., European, Afghan, and other experts from academia, think tanks, NGOs, and government entities along with current and former U.S. civilian and military officials deployed to Afghanistan.

This report also relied upon the experience and advice of General Joseph Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; CENTCOM Commander General Joseph Votel; Resolute Support Mission Commander General John Nicholson; former Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan Commander Major General Richard Kaiser and other subject-matter experts. We are grateful for their help.

We are also encouraged by the positive responses to drafts of the report from many DOD officials, senior military officers and national-security policy officials. Their reactions do matter. Because, no matter how ironclad and compelling a report may be to its authors, it is

[7] RAND Corporation, "What Have We Learned About Establishing Internal Security in Nation-Building?" research brief, 2005, p. 1.

useless if decision makers don't accept the accuracy of its findings and the logic of its recommendations. The initial reactions to drafts of our report bode well for the value of the final product.

Our report contains a detailed array of findings, lessons, and recommendations. It comprises:

- Twelve researched and documented findings,
- Eleven lessons drawn from those findings, and
- Thirty-five recommendations for addressing those lessons: two for Congress to consider, seven that apply to executive agencies in general, seven that are DOD-specific, and nineteen that are Afghanistan-specific and applicable to either executive agencies at large or to DOD.

What did SIGAR find?

Full details of the findings of the SIGAR Lessons Learned report appear on our website. I will summarize a few of the most significant findings here:

1. The U.S. government was ill-prepared to conduct security-sector assistance programs of the size and scope required in Afghanistan, whose population is about 70 percent illiterate and largely unskilled in technology.

Secretary of Defense Robert Gates said in 2010 that "America's interagency toolkit" for building the security capacity of partner nations was a "hodgepodge of jerry-rigged arrangements constrained by a dated and complex patchwork of authorities, persistent shortfalls in resources, and unwieldy processes."[8]

Interagency coordination and planning is still a problem. And even today, the U.S. government lacks a deployable police-development capability for high-threat environments, so we have trained over 100,000 Afghan police using U.S. Army aviators, infantry officers, and civilian contractors. The only ministerial advisory training program is designed solely for civilians, but in Afghanistan mostly untrained military officers are conducting that mission. For example, we learned that one U.S. officer watched TV shows like *Cops* and *NCIS* to learn what he should teach. In eastern Afghanistan, we met a U.S. Army helicopter pilot assigned to teach policing. We found one U.S. police-training unit set up as a military unit, and another set up like a police unit. Afghan police training has suffered because of this misalignment of U.S. advisors.

[8] DOD, "Remarks as Delivered by Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates," delivered at The Nixon Center, Washington, DC, 2/24/2010.

2. U.S. military plans for ANDSF readiness were created under politically constrained timelines, rather than based upon realistic assessments of Afghan readiness. These plans consistently underestimated the resilience of the Afghan insurgency and overestimated ANDSF capabilities. Consequently, the ANDSF was ill-prepared to deal with deteriorating security after the drawdown of U.S. combat forces.

3. The United States failed to optimize coalition nations' capabilities to support security-assistance missions in the context of international political realities. Partner nations' restrictions on the use of their troops, disparate rationales for joining the coalition, their own resource constraints, differing military capabilities, and NATO's force-generation processes led to an increasingly complex implementation of security sector assistance programs. For example, the NATO training mission for the ANDSF was chronically understaffed by more than 50 percent. Gaps existed even in positions identified as mission-critical.

4. The lag in Afghan ministerial and security-sector governing capacity hindered planning, oversight, and the long-term sustainability of the ANDSF. Insufficient attention to Afghan institutional capacity meant that the personnel, logistical, planning, administrative, and other functions vital to sustaining the fighting forces remained underdeveloped—as they do to this day. Creating inventory systems for equipment, fuel, and personnel began in earnest only in the past few years.

5. As security deteriorated, efforts to sustain and professionalize the ANDSF became secondary to meeting immediate combat needs.

Tough lessons based on solid findings

These and other findings provide the bones and connective tissue of the report. But the heart of any lessons-learned report consists of—naturally—*lessons*. SIGAR's Lessons Learned Program extracted 11 lessons from its research:[9]

Lesson 1. The U.S. government is not well organized to conduct Security-Sector Assistance (SSA) missions in post-conflict nations or in the developing world. Furthermore, U.S. doctrine, policies, personnel, and programs are insufficient to meet SSA mission requirements and expectations.

The United States does not lack the capability to conduct effective SSA programs; it lacks a comprehensive interagency approach to implement these programs. Most U.S. SSA programs focus on improving fighting capabilities of partner-nation security forces, with

[9] The lesson paragraphs are presented as they appear in the LLP report; the commentary paragraphs have been slightly edited for concision and clarity. Full texts of the lessons appear on pages 175–179 of SIGAR, *Reconstructing the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces: Lessons from the U.S. Experience in Afghanistan*, a Lessons Learned Program report, 9/2017.

limited efforts to improve the *institutions* necessary for security, governance, and sustainability.

Lesson 2. SSA cannot employ a one-size-fits-all approach; it must be tailored to a host nation's context and needs. Security-force structures and capabilities will not outlast U.S. assistance efforts if the host nation does not fully buy into such efforts and take ownership of SSA programs.

From 2002 to 2015, senior U.S. and NATO officials took ownership of ANDSF development, with little to no input from senior Afghan officials. Afghan buy-in largely occurred through the process of U.S. and NATO officials briefing Afghan leaders on military plans and training programs for the ANDSF. In just one example of "cut-and-paste" program applications from other settings that negatively impacted the overall effort, the U.S. military employed PowerPoint-based police training curricula previously used in the Balkans that were a mismatch given the high levels of illiteracy within the Afghan police force. Additionally, the lack of Afghan ownership of force development, operational planning, and security-sector governance prevented the Afghans from effectively overseeing and managing the ANDSF following the security transition at the end of 2014.

Lesson 3. Senior government and nongovernment leaders in post-conflict or developing-world countries are likely to scrimmage for control of security forces; SSA missions should avoid empowering factions.

U.S. officials should expect host-nation leaders to compete for control of the military and police, including attempts to manipulate U.S. efforts to advance their own personal and political agendas. In Afghanistan, the United States largely ignored the transitional security forces operating throughout the country, as well as the political imbalances throughout the rank-and-file that were eroding security, both of which were often supported by host-nation elites. As a result, major social and political imbalances remain within the ANDSF today.

Lesson 4. Western equipment and systems provided to developing-world militaries are likely to create chronic, high-cost dependencies.

Many developing-world security forces have military and police personnel with far lower rates of literacy than their Western counterparts. Advanced weapons systems and vehicles, demand-based supply systems, and high-tech personnel and command and control systems that work for Western militaries could be inappropriate for many developing-world forces. These systems have proven to be a mismatch because we did not provide the institutional backbone to professionalize the Afghan forces: expanding literacy, establishing adequate technical schools, providing manuals in native language, etc.

Afghan forces have not been developed to the point where they can meet the requirements of new systems, whether weapons, management techniques, logistics, or computerized recordkeeping. Even if some personnel at higher echelons can master these systems, such

capabilities might not be realistic in tactical units. Those with such skills are also more likely to seek higher-paying (and safer) employment in the private sector or senior civil service. Western advisors, therefore, are likely to step in to perform the jobs themselves rather than see the tasks done poorly or not at all. In Afghanistan, this reliance on U.S. support created a chronic dependency within the ANDSF on foreign partners. Greater attention to professionalizing the force would have lessened the impulse toward dependency.

Lesson 5. Security force assessment methodologies are often unable to evaluate the impact of intangible factors such as leadership, corruption, malign influence, and dependency, which can lead to an underappreciation of how such factors can undermine readiness and battlefield performance.

Assessment methodologies used to evaluate the ANDSF measured tangible outputs, such as staffing, equipping, and training status, but were less capable of evaluating the impact of intangible factors, such as battlefield performance, leadership, corruption, malign influence, and changes in systems and equipment. DOD forecasts and targets for force readiness were largely based on the U.S. military's capacity for recruitment and training, and not based on battlefield performance and other factors corroding the Afghan force. Issues such as ghost soldiers, corruption, and high levels of attrition were more critical than training capacity to measuring true ANDSF capabilities.

Lesson 6. Developing and training a national police force is best accomplished by law enforcement professionals in order to achieve a police capability focused on community policing and criminal justice.

In Afghanistan, two different U.S. government agencies led police-development activities. Each of these efforts alone was insufficient. State, mandated by legislation and supported by funding, is responsible for foreign police development. However, State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) is staffed by civilian program managers, not law-enforcement professionals. Therefore, State largely relied on contracting with DynCorp International to conduct police training and development programs in Afghanistan. U.S. civilian police trainers were largely restricted from operating in high-threat environments and therefore could not provide follow-on field training to new Afghan National Police (ANP) recruits. The mission was eventually transferred to DOD, which was largely inexperienced and improperly prepared to provide rule-of-law training to foreign police forces. As a result, training and development of the ANP was militarized and resulted in a police capability focused more on force protection and offensive operations than on community policing and criminal justice.

Lesson 7. To improve the effectiveness of SSA missions in coalition operations, the U.S. government must acknowledge and compensate for any coalition staffing shortfalls and national caveats that relate to trainers, advisors, and embedded training teams.

The ANDSF training mission suffered from chronic understaffing. Even during the surge from 2010 to 2011, required trainer billets at the NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan were staffed at less than 50%. Due to the operational restrictions imposed by some NATO countries, deployed trainers could not be appropriately assigned throughout Afghanistan. In late 2011, ANP trainers in Kabul were overstaffed by 215%, while police trainers in hostile and non-permissive areas of eastern Afghanistan were 64% understaffed. Chronic understaffing persists.

Lesson 8: Developing foreign military and police capabilities is a whole-of-government mission.

Successful SSA missions require whole-of-government support from the civilian and defense agencies with expertise in training and advising foreign countries in both security operations and the necessary institutional development of the security forces' governing institutions. Within DOD, SSA is a defense enterprise mission, not strictly one to be executed by the military chain of command. Deploying military combat commanders in this role results in over-prioritizing development of the fighting force at the expense of governing and sustainability missions. For police-related missions, the United States lacks a deployable rule-of-law training force that can operate in high-threat environments; in Afghanistan, this limited the U.S. ability to develop the ANP.

Lesson 9: In Afghanistan and other parts of the developing world, the creation of specialized security force units often siphons off the conventional force's most capable leaders and most educated recruits.

In post-conflict nations and the developing world, where human capital for a professional military and police force is limited, it may be necessary to create smaller, specialized forces. In that case, however, the U.S. military must analyze the impact that removing the potential cadre of promising leaders will have on the conventional forces. Creating the Afghan National Army (ANA) commandos and special forces entailed removing literate and proficient soldiers from the ranks of the conventional forces and assigning them to the elite units. Within the Afghan National Police, creation of the Afghan National Civil Order Police and special police units likewise removed the most literate and capable police recruits from the regular force. While the elite units have performed admirably, the conventional units have struggled.

Lesson 10: SSA missions must assess the needs of the entire spectrum of the security sector, including rule of law and corrections programs, in addition to developing the nation's police and armed forces. Synchronizing SSA efforts across all pillars of the security sector is critical.

Successful security-sector development is often achieved when all aspects of the security sector are developed in concert with one another. Developing a national police force without

also developing programs and reforms of the nation's judicial and corrections systems will create perverse incentives for the police to capture and release criminals for bribes or be involved in extra-judicial activities. In Afghanistan, the 2002 division of security-sector reform into the five independent "silos" of military reform (United States), police reform (Germany), judicial reform (Italy), counternarcotics (UK), and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (Japan) undermined each individual program's success, as the process lacked necessary coordination and synchronization.

Lesson 11: U.S. SSA training and advising positions are not currently career-enhancing for uniformed military personnel, regardless of the importance U.S. military leadership places on the mission. Therefore, experienced and capable military professionals with SSA experience often choose non-SSA assignments later in their careers, resulting in the continual deployment of new and inexperienced forces for SSA missions.

The career path of a U.S. Army officer, for example, relies on commanding U.S. soldiers. Outside of joint military exercises, experiences partnering with a foreign military have little positive impact on an officer's promotion-board review. Although U.S. military commanders publicly emphasized the importance of the train, advise, and assist missions in Iraq and Afghanistan, their statements did not improve the way the military rewarded members who volunteered for or were deployed in support of SSA missions.

SIGAR's report goes into detail on these lessons. They spring from our findings about security-sector assistance in Afghanistan to date, but are also prudent points to bear in mind for future efforts in Afghanistan and elsewhere.

The need for a whole-of-government approach

One critical lesson of our report has particular resonance for me based upon my agency's special mission. That lesson is that a whole-of-government approach is necessary to successfully develop foreign military and police capabilities.

I believe Afghanistan is the definitive case study for that judgment. As our report notes, "While the U.S. government has a number of individual department and agency initiatives to improve security sector assistance programs, it currently lacks a comprehensive, whole-of-government approach and coordinating body to manage implementation and provide oversight of these programs."[10] Secretary of Defense Mattis told Congress last spring that the new Administration had "entered a strategy-free environment, and we are scrambling to

[10] SIGAR, *Reconstructing the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces: Lessons from the U.S. Experience in Afghanistan*, a Lessons Learned Program report, 9/2017, p. 4.

put one together."[11] Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman General Joseph Dunford has said the new strategy will reflect "a whole of government approach requiring important contributions from other non-DOD departments and agencies, most notably the State Department."[12] We will watch with great interest to see how the strategic rethink plays out, for the long-standing failure to proceed under a strategy embedding a whole-of-government effort has been a serious impediment to success in Afghanistan, and if uncorrected could be the Achilles' heel of future contingency operations.

Even if the United States has a well-conceived whole-of-government approach, poor execution can undermine it. For example, embassy understaffing and tight restrictions on travel can add to the burden on our military, undermine the ability of civilian implementing agencies to perform their reconstruction tasks in Afghanistan, and hinder the work of SIGAR and other oversight entities.

For example, I was able to visit the coalition's southern training headquarters in Kandahar this spring. The senior military leadership there told me they had not met or seen anyone from our Embassy in Kabul since deployment, so our military had to deal with the local governor and other Afghan civilian officials on development and reconstruction matters that should have been conducted with Embassy expertise. Just last month, I visited our military team again in Kandahar and they confirmed they *still* had not seen anyone from our Kabul embassy, which is a mere one-hour flight away. Their comments do not bode well for Secretary Mattis and General Dunford's drive for a strategy based on a whole-of-government approach.

Similar troubling observations come from Major General Richard Kaiser, who until recently led the Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan (CSTC-A). He noted that, "A lack of embassy manning is a huge challenge for us. They are understaffed, because of a lack of funding and the lack of an ability to hire people." Consequently, some tasks for which State is supposed to have the lead, such as counternarcotics and ministry coordination, are performed by the U.S. military. General Kaiser also noted, "I often meet with the [Afghan] minister of finance, then I collaborate with the embassy and tell them what has occurred."

[11] Quoted by Federal News Radio, "Lawmakers critique Mattis for presenting Defense budget without a defense strategy," 6/14/2017. https://federalnewsradio.com/defense/2017/06/lawmakers-critique-mattis-for-presenting-defense-budget-without-a-defense-strategy/

[12] Quoted in transcript, Senate Committee on Armed Services Hearing, "U.S. Central Command and U.S. Africa Command," 3/9/2017, p. [4]. http://www.centcom.mil/Portals/6/Documents/Transcripts/9MAR%20GEN%20Votel%20SASC.pdf?ver=2017-03-31-093905-833

He adds, "This then is a real gap that can/will cause fractures along the lines of communications."[13]

As we noted in SIGAR's July 2017 quarterly report to Congress, Embassy Kabul's severe restrictions on travel have increased the difficulty of carrying out SIGAR's oversight mandate in Afghanistan. Other federal civilian agencies are similarly burdened. As far back as 2009, however, USFOR-A has agreed to provide security for SIGAR investigators and auditors traveling outside the Kabul Embassy. SIGAR renewed these agreements in 2013, 2015, and most recently in January 2017. This has been a workable, cost-effective, and cooperative relationship among SIGAR, USFOR-A, and the Embassy for years. It acknowledges the Chief of Mission's control and legal responsibility for the safety of nonmilitary U.S. nationals in country, while compensating for the fact that State security resources may not be adequate or available to protect all who have valid requirements to move about the country.

I was therefore greatly surprised when CENTCOM notified SIGAR on October 18 that USFOR-A was terminating that agreement in 90 days. We have since learned that USFOR-A took this action at the request of the State Department. We have been told that the State Department and Department of Defense are negotiating a new agreement. We are not privy to the negotiations or their draft proposals. But we have been told that State's demands include requiring that USFOR-A provide security guards, weapons, protective equipment, and vehicles similar to those that would otherwise be provided by the State Department. In short, the Embassy has evidently concluded that the security provided by the U.S. military to SIGAR and other U.S. civilian agencies for all these years is not adequate.

Frankly, Mr. Chairman, this smacks of old-fashioned, bureaucratic turf fighting. I wrote to Acting Ambassador Llorens on May 5, 2017, after the Embassy began to object to SIGAR travel under military protection. In that letter, I said we do not understand why he has decided to second-guess the U.S. military's assessment that they can provide adequate security—an assessment that I and my staff have repeatedly found to be accurate as we travel for our work in Afghanistan.

To be blunt, the U.S. whole-of-government approach in Afghanistan suffers from a gap, a *hole in* our government approach, and that is particularly obvious when discussing civilian advisors who fall under Chief of Mission protection protocols. The high-threat environment in Afghanistan and the embassy's risk-avoidance posture impedes U.S. advisors from engaging regularly with their Afghan counterparts. Their tasks include important work like training Afghan judicial and police staff, giving technical support to Afghan ministries and monitoring the progress of USAID projects. Their limited access hinders building working relationships,

[13] Center for Army Lessons Learned, "An Interview Summary with MG Richard Kaiser," *News from the Front*, 8/1/2017, p. 10.

trust, and follow-through on critical missions, with direct negative impact on our military and reconstruction efforts.

In a way, however, this disturbing situation is not surprising. With the civilian advisory mission mostly stuck behind embassy walls in Kabul, even with an expanded "Green Zone," there are limits on what can be achieved—unless Congress and the Administration quickly address the highly risk-averse posture that the State Department appears to have adopted in Afghanistan.

Accepting risk is a critical element in our work in the challenging environment of Afghanistan and my sense from nearly quarterly visits over the past five years is that our front line civilian personnel understand these risks and want to be untethered so that they can do more.

From lessons to recommendations

Offering lessons, no matter how carefully researched or compellingly presented, does little good if you can't provide practical solutions for improvement.

That takes us to our report's recommendations. Our report provides thirty-five recommendations, comprising thirty-three general and Afghanistan-specific recommendations for executive agencies and DOD, plus two for Congress to consider. We think they are timely, sensible, and actionable, especially as the Administration rolls out its new strategy.

If adopted, our recommendations for executive agencies would lead to outcomes including:

- Better matching of U.S. advisors to the needs of the ANDSF and the Afghan Ministries of Defense and the Interior
- A stateside entity providing persistent and comprehensive support to the U.S. military and to the train, advise, and assist commands in Afghanistan
- Stringent conditions attached to U.S. funding to eliminate the ANDSF's "culture of impunity"

Our DOD-specific recommendations would bring about:

- Improved training and equipping for the Afghan Air Force
- Extending the reach of the U.S. military's train, advise, and assist mission below the Afghan corps level to allow for better observation and mentoring of maneuver units
- Taking into account the need for more military "guardian angels" for trainers and advisors who need to travel in insecure areas

SIGAR also offers two recommendations for the U.S. Congress that could:

- Provide a systematic review of authorities, roles, and resource mechanisms of major U.S. government stakeholder in security sector assistance
- Identify a lead agency for foreign police training in high-threat and post-conflict environments, resolving the current misalignments among Justice, State, and DOD.

The recommendations for Congressional consideration

In this venue, SIGAR's two recommendations for Congressional consideration deserve a bit of additional comment.

The first of these is that we believe Congress should consider (1) establishing a commission to review the institutional authorities, roles, and resource mechanisms of each major U.S. government stakeholder in SSA missions, and (2) evaluating the capabilities of each department and military service to determine where SSA expertise should best be institutionalized.[14]

In the FY 2017 NDAA, Congress mandated the Secretary of Defense undertake a study of DOD security cooperation activities, to be led by an independent organization of experts. This is a step in the right direction; however, we recommend that the mandate be expanded to include State, Justice, and other key SSA stakeholders. Our recommended study should include an analysis and evaluation of the authorities-based relationships and coordination mechanisms of U.S. government departments and agencies, and suggest ways to improve their effectiveness. Additionally, because the reliance on contractors to meet the needs of the U.S. SSA program in Afghanistan was not effective, the U.S. government should formalize and institutionalize SSA expertise within its military and civilian elements.

Our second suggested recommendation for Congressional consideration is that Congress should consider mandating a full review of all U.S. foreign police development programs, identify a lead agency for all future police-development activities, and provide the identified agency with the necessary staff, authorities, and budget to accomplish its task.[15]

The Department of Justice's International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP) is staffed with law enforcement professionals experienced in the design, delivery, and management of foreign police development programs and security sector construction.

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[14] SIGAR, *Reconstructing the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces: Lessons from the U.S. Experience in Afghanistan*, a Lessons Learned Program report, 9/2017, p. 182.

[15] SIGAR, *Reconstructing the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces: Lessons from the U.S. Experience in Afghanistan*, a Lessons Learned Program report, 9/2017, p. 182.

While ICITAP uses federal and non-federal police advisors and trainers, it does not contract out the responsibility for program management and accountability. ICITAP has no independent budget and is fully dependent on State or DOD for funding and guidance. State does not have a staff of law enforcement professionals, but does have the required authorities and funding. In high-threat environments, DOD will by default assume a significant role in police development programs and, therefore, elements within DOD must be considered in the congressional review.

During this review, the U.S. government should identify the lead agency for training both foreign police units involved in civil policing and also paramilitary police forces similar to the European gendarmerie. The U.S. government would benefit from having deployable experts capable of conducting training in both facets of policing.

Opportunities for near-term improvements

The two recommendations SIGAR has offered for Congressional consideration, even if adopted tomorrow, would obviously take substantial time and effort to yield measurable results. That does not mean they are not worth considering, for our Afghan engagement will continue for years to come, and other contingencies already on the horizon could rapidly develop into new demands on already stretched U.S. military resources.

With the Afghan conflict in "stalemate" and with a new strategy for U.S. security-sector assistance getting under way, the time is ripe for seeking every opportunity for improvement. As we briefed the report to senior government and military officials, we identified some opportunities that can augment the recommendations already in our report. In that spirit, I suggest for your consideration seven additional steps that could pluck some low-hanging fruit and process the harvests into near-term gains:

1. Establish a DOD-led interagency fact-finding mission (perhaps under the aegis of the Joint Staff) to examine the ANDSF's actual current and coming needs against U.S. and NATO capabilities. This examination could create a common operating picture of the U.S. advisory mission to better understand how each command and each unit is conducting its train, advise, and assist functions, and with what results. If DOD does not take the initiative in this matter, Congress could of course mandate the mission. The findings of the fact-finding mission would enable the United States to realign its advisory mission to ensure that the right advisor and unit is partnered correctly with the Afghans: police training police, governance specialists advising ministries, etc. As the SIGAR Lessons Learned report has documented, this basic alignment is often absent in our conduct of train, advise, and assist.
2. Create proponent leads for the ANA and ANP. Right now there is no central body responsible for overseeing the advisory mission for the entire force to ensure that the right advisors and units are partnered correctly with the Afghans—police training

police, governance specialists advising ministries, etc. We have ministerial advisors in Kabul and operational advisors at the regional commands, but no one is synchronizing the needs and requirements of the force and ensuring that the advisory mission supports those objectives. The Afghan Special Operations Forces and the Afghan Air Force have proponent leads that do this type of comprehensive analysis—one of many reasons that those forces are more successful than their peers.

3. With the introduction of more than 150 UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters for the Afghan security forces, the U.S. Army should reach out to the U.S. Air Force to capitalize on their best practices from training Afghan fixed-wing pilots. Helicopter crews operate highly complex flying machines—and the Blackhawks are also very different from the Russian helicopters that many Afghans are accustomed to— and can be simultaneously tasked with missions ranging from ammunition resupply and casualty evacuation, to VIP transport and air-to-ground rocket and machine-gun fire. The training mission for these crews requires careful attention to structuring the advisor mission, conducting pre-deployment training, and documenting operational and tactical lessons learned.
4. We recognize that rotational schedules of U.S. military and civilian personnel cannot change overnight. So to apply best practices—including persistent and comprehensive train, advise, and assist efforts—we recommend that DOD create an element in Washington, DC, staffed with representatives from all military services, departments, and other interagency partners involved in train, advise, and assist. Staff assigned to this element would serve for four-year tours with regular rotations in Afghanistan. Operating such an interagency element would do much to preserve institutional knowledge, align efforts, and detect gaps or cross-purposes in doctrine, planning, and operations. It is also important that these assignments be career-enhancing for the people involved, and not seen or treated as a sideshow or an interruption in their career path.
5. Optimize NATO's participation in Afghanistan. This requires a thorough analysis of the current advisory needs and of each NATO country's capabilities. We need to better understand the role of U.S. policy in NATO's decision-making process. For instance, this past spring, the forthcoming details of the new U.S. strategy were vague about how many additional U.S. soldiers might be deployed. This vagueness prevented NATO leadership from securing solid commitments from our alliance partners. Setting up the process for deploying NATO forces was delayed until October's force-generation conference. Even with commitments being made in October, additional forces are unlikely to deploy in Afghanistan for at least six months.
6. We must consider the increased security requirements for advisory missions. With our recommendation for an increase in civilian advising, there must be a parallel increase in security personnel to support the mission.

7. DOD and State should immediately finalize a memorandum of agreement which permits federal civilian agencies, including SIGAR, to travel outside the Kabul Embassy under USFOR-A protection, without second-guessing the U.S. military's well established capability for providing adequate security. This will help ensure that oversight agencies can continue to carry out their missions. Failure to fill the gap between the security needs of federal personnel under Chief of Mission authority and State's available security resources will prevent applying a whole-of-government approach to reconstruction and oversight, thus putting mission, lives, and money at unnecessary risk.

Conclusion

To put it plainly, as our report does, the United States failed to understand the complexities and scale of the mission required to stand up and mentor security forces in a country suffering from thirty years of war, misrule, corruption, and deep poverty. We still need to address the problems of defining mission requirements, and of executing these missions adequately.

The ANDSF is fighting hard, and improving in many ways. But we have to do a better job of assisting their growth. Smarter and more appropriate security assistance is vital, now in Afghanistan, and later in whatever new contingencies arise in the future.

"The future," Harvard University historians Richard Neustadt and Ernest May wrote 30 years ago, "has no place to come from but the past." Therefore, "what matters for the future … is departures from the past, alterations, changes, which prospectively or actually divert familiar flows from accustomed channels."[16]

As SIGAR's Lessons Learned Program report has found, the accustomed channels of U.S. security-sector assistance have been, until recently, meandering and clogged. They need more dredging and straightening. Resolving to do better in security-assistance missions, and absorbing even some of the lessons in SIGAR's new report will offer a better way forward for the Afghan people—and ultimately, a more successful way to hasten the end of America's longest war.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I look forward to answering your questions.

[16] Richard E. Neustadt and Ernest R. May (both of Harvard University), *Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision Makers* (New York, 1986), p. 251.

Data Classified or Restricted for SIGAR's October 2017 Quarterly Report to Congress

*Nearly all of this data was temporarily and briefly classified in January 2015. "Reported unclassified since" dates do not include this period and are approximations.
**"top-line": the overall figure for that force element, not broken down to the corps (ANA) or zone (ANP) level.

What	When	Classification Level	Classification Justification	Prior Classification	Reported Unclassified Since*	Notes
ANDSF Casualties (top-line,** annual, cumulative, 1-2 months old and not current)	Received Classified on 9/21/2017	NATO Restricted	GIROA classified, USFOR-A/RS/CENTCOM concurred and restricted it as Foreign Government Information (FGI).	U.S. Unclassified or NATO Non-Sensitive Information Releasable to the Public (NSIRP)	Reported from July 2009-July 2010. No reporting from October 2010-October 2014. Reporting again since January 2015	
Proportion of Assigned (actual) to Authorized (goal) Strength for the ANDSF (i.e. The ANDSF are at 90% of their authorized strength) (top-line, percentage, always 3 months old and not current)	Received: NATO Unclassified, 9/21/2017 Retroactively Classified: 10/15/2017	NATO Confidential	New interpretation based on RS Classification Guide	NATO Unclassified or NSIRP	January 2012	This means we cannot report on the ANDSF's progress toward achieving their goal strength.
Proportion of Assigned (actual) to Authorized (goal) Strength for the ANA (i.e. The ANA is at 90% of its authorized strength) (top-line, percentage, always 3 months old and not current)	Received: NATO Unclassified, 9/21/2017 Retroactively Classified: 10/15/2017	NATO Confidential	New interpretation based on RS Classification Guide	NATO Unclassified or NSIRP	January 2012	This means we cannot report on the ANA's progress toward achieving its goal strength.

What	When	Classification Level	Classification Justification	Prior Classification	Reported Unclassified Since*	Notes
Proportion of Assigned (actual) to Authorized (goal) Strength for the ANP (i.e. The ANP is at 90% of its authorized strength) (top-line, percentage, always 3 months old and not current)	Received: NATO Unclassified, 9/21/2017 Retroactively Classified: 10/15/2017	NATO Confidential	New interpretation based on RS Classification Guide	NATO Unclassified or NSIRP	January 2012	This means we cannot report on the ANP's progress toward achieving its goal strength.
Proportion of Assigned (actual) to Authorized (goal) Strength for the AAF (i.e. The AAF is at 90% of its authorized strength) (top-line, percentage, always 3 months old and not current)	Received: NATO Unclassified, 9/21/2017 Retroactively Classified: 10/15/2017	NATO Confidential	New interpretation based on RS Classification Guide	NATO Unclassified or NSIRP	January 2013	This means we cannot report on the AAF's progress toward achieving its goal strength.
Proportion of Assigned (actual) to Authorized (goal) Strength for the ALP (i.e. The ALP is at 90% of its authorized strength) (top-line, percentage, always 3 months old and not current)	Received: NATO Unclassified, 9/21/2017 Retroactively Classified: 10/15/2017	NATO Restricted	New interpretation based on RS Classification Guide	U.S. Unclassified or U//FOUO	October 2011	This means we cannot report on the ALP's progress toward achieving its goal strength.

What	When	Classification Level	Classification Justification	Prior Classification	Reported Unclassified Since*	Notes
Proportion of Assigned (actual) to Authorized (goal) Strength for ANDSF Civilian Personnel (i.e. ANDSF civilians are at 90% of their authorized strength) (top-line, percentage, always 3 months old and not current)	Received: NATO Unclassified, 9/21/2017 Retroactively Classified: 10/15/2017	NATO Confidential	New interpretation based on RS Classification Guide	NATO Unclassified or NSIRP	April 2014	This means we cannot report on the ANDSF's progress toward achieving its goal civilian strength.
Proportion of Assigned (actual) to Authorized (goal) Strength for Female ANDSF Personnel (i.e. Female ANDSF personnel are at 90% of their authorized strength) (top-line, percentage, always 3 months old and not current)	Received: NATO Unclassified, 9/21/2017 Retroactively Classified: 10/15/2017	NATO Confidential	New interpretation based on RS Classification Guide	NSIRP	October 2010	This means we cannot report on the ANDSF's progress toward achieving its goal female personnel strength.
Proportion of Assigned (actual) to Authorized (goal) Strength for ANDSF Medical Personnel (i.e. ANDSF medical personnel are at 90% of their authorized strength) (top-line, percentage, always 3 months old and not current)	Received: NATO Unclassified, 9/21/2017 Retroactively Classified: 10/15/2017	NATO Confidential	New interpretation based on RS Classification Guide	NATO Unclassified or NSIRP	January 2013	This means we cannot report on the ANDSF's progress toward achieving its goal medical personnel strength.

What	When	Classification Level	Classification Justification	Prior Classification	Reported Unclassified Since*	Notes
ANA Attrition Data (top-line, monthly percentages for the previous quarter)	Received Classified on 9/21/2017	NATO Secret	New interpretation based on RS Classification Guide	NATO Unclassified	October 2013	
ANP Attrition Data (top-line, monthly percentages for the previous quarter)	Received Classified on 9/21/2017	NATO Secret	New interpretation based on RS Classification Guide	NATO Unclassified	October 2013	
ANA Operational Readiness of Equipment at Corps Level and Higher (an operational readiness rate percentage for each corps, 1-2 months old and not current)	Received: NATO Unclassified, 9/21/2017 Retroactively Classified: 10/15/2017	NATO Secret	New interpretation based on RS Classification Guide	NSIRP	April 2016	USFOR-A said the same standard did not apply to the AAF. Operational readiness of airframes was unclassified.
ANP Operational Readiness of Equipment at Zone Level and Higher (an operational readiness rate percentage for each zone, 1-2 months old and not current)	Received: NATO Unclassified, 9/21/2017 Retroactively Classified: 10/15/2017	NATO Secret	New interpretation based on RS Classification Guide	NSIRP	April 2017	USFOR-A said the same standard did not apply to the AAF. Operational readiness of airframes was unclassified.

What	When	Classification Level	Classification Justification	Prior Classification	Reported Unclassified Since*	Notes
General ANA Performance Assessment at Corps Level and Higher (1-2 months old and not current)	Received Classified on 9/21/2017	NATO Secret	New interpretation based on RS Classification Guide	NSIRP	July 2009	The only assessment provided was classified. Usually a separate, unclassified assessment is provided but USFOR-A said it was unable to do so this quarter.
General ANP Performance Assessment at Zone Level and Higher (1-2 months old and not current)	Received Classified on 9/21/2017	NATO Secret	New interpretation based on RS Classification Guide	NSIRP	July 2009	The only assessment provided was classified. Usually a separate, unclassified assessment is provided but USFOR-A said it was unable to do so this quarter.
General MOD Performance Assessment at the Headquarters Level (1-2 months old and not current)	Received Classified on 9/21/2017	NATO Secret	New interpretation based on RS Classification Guide	U.S. Unclassified or NSIRP	April 2012	The only assessment provided was classified. Usually a separate, unclassified assessment is provided but USFOR-A said it was unable to do so this quarter.
General MOI Performance Assessment at the Headquarters Level (1-2 months old and not current)	Received Classified on 9/21/2017	NATO Secret	New interpretation based on RS Classification Guide	U.S. Unclassified or NSIRP	April 2012	The only assessment provided was classified. Usually a separate, unclassified assessment is provided but USFOR-A said it was unable to do so this quarter.

What	When	Classification Level	Classification Justification	Prior Classification	Reported Unclassified Since*	Notes
Exact figures for ANDSF assigned (actual) strength (top-line, always 3 months old and not current)	Received: NATO Unclassified, 9/21/2017 Retroactively Classified: 10/15/2017	NATO Confidential (in EXACT form)	New interpretation based on RS Classification Guide	NATO Unclassified or NSIRP	July 2009	We CAN report approximate figures in our unclassified report.
Exact figures for ANA assigned (actual) strength (top-line, always 3 months old and not current)	Received: NATO Unclassified, 9/21/2017 Retroactively Classified: 10/15/2017	NATO Confidential (in EXACT form)	New interpretation based on RS Classification Guide	NATO Unclassified or NSIRP	July 2009	We CAN report approximate figures in our unclassified report.
Exact figures for ANP assigned (actual) strength (top-line, always 3 months old and not current)	Received: NATO Unclassified, 9/21/2017 Retroactively Classified: 10/15/2017	NATO Confidential (in EXACT form)	New interpretation based on RS Classification Guide	NATO Unclassified or NSIRP	July 2009	We CAN report approximate figures in our unclassified report.
Exact figures for AAF assigned (actual) strength (top-line, always 3 months old and not current)	Received: NATO Unclassified, 9/21/2017 Retroactively Classified: 10/15/2017	NATO Confidential (in EXACT form)	New interpretation based on RS Classification Guide	NATO Unclassified or NSIRP	April 2012	We CAN report approximate figures in our unclassified report.

What	When	Classification Level	Classification Justification	Prior Classification	Reported Unclassified Since*	Notes
Exact figures for ALP assigned (actual) strength (top-line, always 3 months old and not current)	Received: NATO Unclassified, 9/21/2017 Retroactively Classified: 10/15/2017	NATO Restricted (in EXACT form)	New interpretation based on RS Classification Guide	U.S. Unclassified or U//FOUO	July 2011	We CAN report approximate figures in our unclassified report.
Exact figures for assigned (actual) strength of ANDSF Civilian Personnel (top-line, always 3 months old and not current)	Received: NATO Unclassified, 9/21/2017 Retroactively Classified: 10/15/2017	NATO Confidential (in EXACT form)	New interpretation based on RS Classification Guide	NATO Unclassified or NSIRP	July 2013	We CAN report approximate figures in our unclassified report.
Exact figures for assigned (actual) strength of Female ANDSF Personnel (top-line, always 3 months old and not current)	Received: NATO Unclassified, 9/21/2017 Retroactively Classified: 10/15/2017	NATO Confidential (in EXACT form)	New interpretation based on RS Classification Guide	NSIRP	July 2010	We CAN report approximate figures in our unclassified report.
Exact figures for assigned (actual) strength of ANDSF Medical Personnel (top-line, always 3 months old and not current)	Received: NATO Unclassified, 9/21/2017 Retroactively Classified: 10/15/2017	NATO Confidential (in EXACT form)	New interpretation based on RS Classification Guide	NATO Unclassified or NSIRP	October 2012	We CAN report approximate figures in our unclassified report.

What	When	Classification Level	Classification Justification	Prior Classification	Reported Unclassified Since*	Notes
Exact figures for ANDSF authorized (goal) strength (top-line, always 3 months old and not current)	Received: NATO Unclassified, 9/21/2017 Retroactively Classified: 10/15/2017	NATO Confidential (in EXACT form)	New interpretation based on RS Classification Guide	NATO Unclassified or NSIRP	July 2009	This information is unclassified on its own but classified when reported with assigned personnel strength figures. This means we cannot report on the ANDSF's progress toward achieving their goal strength.
Exact figures for ANA authorized (goal) strength (top-line, always 3 months old and not current)	Received: NATO Unclassified, 9/21/2017 Retroactively Classified: 10/15/2017	NATO Confidential (in EXACT form)	New interpretation based on RS Classification Guide	NATO Unclassified or NSIRP	July 2009	This information is unclassified on its own but classified when reported with assigned personnel strength figures. This means we cannot report on the ANA's progress toward achieving its goal strength.
Exact figures for ANP authorized (goal) strength (top-line, always 3 months old and not current)	Received: NATO Unclassified, 9/21/2017 Retroactively Classified: 10/15/2017	NATO Confidential (in EXACT form)	New interpretation based on RS Classification Guide	NATO Unclassified or NSIRP	July 2009	This information is unclassified on its own but classified when reported with assigned personnel strength figures. This means we cannot report on the ANP's progress toward achieving its goal strength.
Exact figures for AAF authorized (goal) strength (top-line, always 3 months old and not current)	Received: NATO Unclassified, 9/21/2017 Retroactively Classified: 10/15/2017	NATO Confidential (in EXACT form)	New interpretation based on RS Classification Guide	NATO Unclassified or NSIRP	July 2012	This information is unclassified on its own but classified when reported with assigned personnel strength figures. This means we cannot report on the AAF's progress toward achieving its goal strength.

What	When	Classification Level	Classification Justification	Prior Classification	Reported Unclassified Since*	Notes
Exact figures for ALP authorized (goal) strength (top-line, always 3 months old and not current)	Received: NATO Unclassified, 9/21/2017 Retroactively Classified: 10/15/2017	NATO Restricted (in EXACT form)	New interpretation based on RS Classification Guide	U.S. Unclassified or U.S. For Official Use Only (U//FOUO)	October 2011	This information is unclassified on its own but classified when reported with assigned personnel strength figures. This means we cannot report on the ALP's progress toward achieving its goal strength.
Exact figures for authorized (goal) strength of ANDSF Civilian Personnel (top-line, always 3 months old and not current)	Received: NATO Unclassified, 9/21/2017 Retroactively Classified: 10/15/2017	NATO Confidential (in EXACT form)	New interpretation based on RS Classification Guide	NATO Unclassified or NSIRP	April 2014	This information is unclassified on its own but classified when reported with assigned personnel strength figures. This means we cannot report on the ANDSF's progress toward achieving their goal civilian strength.
Exact figures for authorized (goal) strength of Female ANDSF Personnel (top-line, always 3 months old and not current)	Received: NATO Unclassified, 9/21/2017 Retroactively Classified: 10/15/2017	NATO Confidential (in EXACT form)	New interpretation based on RS Classification Guide	NSIRP	October 2010	This information is unclassified on its own but classified when reported with assigned personnel strength figures. This means we cannot report on the ANDSF's progress toward achieving their goal female personnel strength.
Exact figures for authorized (goal) strength of ANDSF Medical Personnel (top-line, always 3 months old and not current)	Received: NATO Unclassified, 9/21/2017 Retroactively Classified: 10/15/2017	NATO Confidential (in EXACT form)	New interpretation based on RS Classification Guide	NATO Unclassified or NSIRP	January 2013	This information is unclassified on its own but classified when reported with assigned personnel strength figures. This means we cannot report on the ANDSF's progress toward achieving their goal medical strength.