



# OFS IN BRIEF

The 22nd quarterly report submitted by the Lead Inspector General for Operation Freedom's Sentinel (OFS) summarizes the quarter's key events and oversight of the two complementary U.S. missions in Afghanistan: counterterrorism operations and building the capacity of the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF).

## Afghan Peace Negotiations Begin

pp. 2, 8, 10–13

- The **Afghan government and the Taliban released thousands of prisoners** in advance of negotiations.
- Former Chief Executive Abdullah led the peace process and **Masoum Stanekzai led the Afghan Islamic Republic negotiating team**.
- The **Afghan and Taliban negotiating teams met** on September 12 in Doha, Qatar, to begin the Afghan Peace Negotiations.
- The **talks quickly stalled over procedural disputes** such as which school of Islamic jurisprudence should undergird the talks.

## Taliban Attacks on Afghan Forces Threaten Ongoing Afghan Peace Negotiations

pp. 4, 13–14

- There were more enemy-initiated attacks this quarter than last quarter and **levels of violence stayed above seasonal norms**.
- Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad warned that “**distressingly high**” levels of violence could threaten the peace agreement.
- The **Taliban focused its attacks on Afghan forces** and Afghan government officials.

## U.S. Drawdown Continues, Depends on Taliban Upholding Its Commitments

pp. 3–4, 13–14, 36

- The United States continued to reduce its troop levels in Afghanistan, from 8,600 in July to **less than 5,000 troops in November**.
- The **U.S. military closed five bases** in Afghanistan, fulfilling a commitment from the U.S.-Taliban agreement.
- The United States will complete its withdrawal **if the Taliban meets its commitments**.
- The DoD said the **Taliban fired rockets at a coalition base**; the Taliban denied responsibility.
- There were **no insider attacks** against coalition personnel and **no U.S. combat-related deaths** this quarter.

## COVID-19 Disrupts Coalition Initiatives

pp. 4–5, 23–24, 26–27

- The NATO-led coalition conducted only limited **face-to-face train, advise, and assist efforts** to prevent COVID-19's spread.
- U.S. contractors were **unable to observe Afghan mechanics**, making data used to track contract performance unreliable.
- **USAID suspended some activities** to protect implementers, partly due to a **lack of available personal protective equipment**.

## Afghan Local Police Prepares to Disband

pp. 20–21

- U.S. support for the **Afghan Local Police ended** on September 30, 2020.
- The dissolution has the risk that **unemployed former members will join the Taliban** or militias.
- **Former members may transfer to other security forces**, but about 7,500 are not expected to meet vetting requirements.

## Afghanistan Struggles with Pandemic Response

pp. 5, 29–32

- There were more than 39,000 active COVID-19 cases in Afghanistan on October 1, and nearly **one-third of the population had been infected**.
- COVID-19 **testing never exceeded 1,200 tests per day**, despite USAID funding 2,000 tests per day.
- **USAID delivered 100 ventilators**, but none had been distributed to hospitals after 2 months.

## Oversight

pp. 42–67

- **Lead IG agencies completed 7 reports** related to OFS, including an audit that found the military services **did not safeguard pharmaceuticals** at facilities supporting OFS and an audit that found the **DoS spent \$8.4 million for meals neither needed nor provided** at U.S. Government dining facilities in Kabul.
- Lead IG and partner **agencies coordinated on 64 open investigations** involving fraud, corruption, theft, human trafficking, and other crimes.