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**NATIONAL  
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# SECURITY SECTOR REFORM FOR PEACE



**A Roadmap to Economization, Fiscal Sustainability and  
Restructuring of the Afghan Security Forces  
Post Peace Settlement.**

**JULY 2021**

The Institute of War  
and Peace Studies

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## Abbreviation

<b>ALP</b>	Afghan Local Police
<b>ANA</b>	Afghan National Army
<b>ANBP</b>	Afghan New Beginning Program
<b>ANDSF</b>	Afghanistan National Defence and Security Forces
<b>ANP</b>	Afghan National Police
<b>APRP</b>	Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme
<b>DDR</b>	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
<b>DIAG</b>	Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups
<b>ETIM</b>	East Turkestan Islamic Movement
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>GIROA</b>	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
<b>IMF</b>	International Monetary Fund
<b>IMU</b>	Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan
<b>ISAF</b>	The International Security Assistance Force
<b>ISIS</b>	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
<b>IWPS</b>	Institute of War and Peace Studies
<b>LeT</b>	Lashkar-e-Taiba
<b>NATO</b>	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
<b>NDS</b>	National Directorate of Security
<b>PTS</b>	Program Tahkim-e Sulh
<b>RSM</b>	Resolute Support Mission
<b>SSR</b>	Security Sector Reform
<b>TAF</b>	The Asia Foundation
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNAMA</b>	United Nations Assistance Mission for Afghanistan
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Program
<b>USFORA</b>	United States Forces Afghanistan
<b>USIP</b>	United States Institute of Peace
<b>WB</b>	World Bank



## List of Terminologies

### Security Sector Reform

‘Security system reform’ is another term used to describe the transformation of the ‘security system’ – which includes all the actors, their roles, responsibilities and actions – working together to manage and operate the system in a manner that is more consistent with democratic norms and sound principles of good governance, and thus contributes to a well-functioning security framework.”<sup>1</sup>

### Military Power Sharing

“Military Power-Sharing describes the ways in which different armed groups can be brought within some form of common military framework, by peace negotiations. It involves sharing military decision-making and/or operational tasks between different armed contenders for power; or providing for proportionality of ethno-national groups or former combatants in ranks and file or command structures.”<sup>2</sup>

### Integration

“The arrangement of military forces and their actions to create a force that operates by engaging as a whole [within current or newly constructed security forces]”.<sup>3</sup>

### Economization

“The act or practice of using resources to the best effect”.<sup>4</sup>

### Fiscal Sustainability

“Fiscal sustainability is the ability of a government to maintain public finances at a credible and serviceable position over the long term. Ensuring long-term fiscal sustainability requires that governments engage in continual strategic forecasting of future revenues and liabilities, environmental factors and socio-economic trends in order to adapt financial planning accordingly”.<sup>5</sup>

1. “Security Sector Reform and Governance,” OECD, 2005, 20, <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/9789264007888-en.pdf?expires=1623041094&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=9949F6B94669036F5FC27DE7D1670D1A>.

2. “Military Power-Sharing,” Political Settlements Research Programme, accessed May 15, 2021, [https://www.politicalsettlements.org/infographics/military-power-sharing/#point\\_link\\_03](https://www.politicalsettlements.org/infographics/military-power-sharing/#point_link_03).

3. US Department of Defense Terminology, “Conversion Calculators,” accessed May 8, 2021, [https://www.militaryfactory.com/dictionary/militarytermsdefined.asp?term\\_id=2702#:-:text=CALCULATORS-,integration,by%20engaging%20as%20a%20whole](https://www.militaryfactory.com/dictionary/militarytermsdefined.asp?term_id=2702#:-:text=CALCULATORS-,integration,by%20engaging%20as%20a%20whole)

4. “Economization,” Wordnik, accessed April 29, 2021, <https://www.wordnik.com/words/economization>

5. “Government at a Glance 2013: Fiscal Sustainability,” OECD ilibrary, accessed May 10, 2021, [https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/gov\\_glance-2013-11-en.pdf?expires=1619844267&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=B8DFD225B796679988E90F842672A3E5](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/gov_glance-2013-11-en.pdf?expires=1619844267&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=B8DFD225B796679988E90F842672A3E5)

**Inclusive peace (inclusion in peace)**

“[A peace process that] gives all groups in a society the opportunity to be heard and to have their concerns addressed. This in turn ensures that those most affected—in terms both of fighting on the front lines and of bearing the brunt of the consequences—are actively involved and have a stake in their country’s transformation. An inclusive peace is likely to be a sustainable one”.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Colette Rauch and Tina Luu, “Inclusive Peace Processes are Key to Ending Violent Conflict,” USIP, May 2017, accessed May 9, 2021, <https://www.usip.org/publications/2017/05/inclusive-peace-processes-are-key-ending-violent-conflict>

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## Executive Summary

The complicated multidimensional Afghan peace process, although slow-moving with little productivity, has created a horizon for a possible political settlement for the decades-long bloody war in Afghanistan. Fears and hopes skyrocketed following the US-Taliban agreement in the absence of the Afghan government, which triggered the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan and some commitments from the Taliban i.e. not to target the US and its NATO allies and to start direct talks with the Afghan government, among others.

Generally, views inside Afghanistan regarding the future of the country and its security sector fall into two camps: pessimist and optimist. The pessimists about the process live in fear of the collapse of the Afghan security apparatus in the absence of US and NATO forces, arguing that the Taliban wait for a complete withdrawal to take power by force. The optimist camp, however, hopes that the troops' withdrawal and the peace talks likely to result in a political settlement because all internal and external players of the game have arrived at an understanding that the Afghan war cannot be won militarily.

In both scenarios, the Afghan security apparatus faces severe challenges to survive, if survive, to ensure its sustainability and credibility without external human and capital resources. The Afghan armed forces, on many occasions, very similar to the current situation, have become victims of peace processes. The Afghan armed forces formed and disintegrated with the formation and disintegration of governments, either via force or political settlement. Such scenarios of disintegration and cadre cleansing for ideological and ethnically motivated motives have happened at least three times in Afghanistan's modern history.

With the current Afghan peace talks in perspective, it is feared that the armed forces might not survive in a possible post-peace deal in Afghanistan with its existing structure, financial dependency, and organizational shortcomings. Hence, a comprehensive security sector reform program is a must for the armed forces to ensure its financial sustainability and restructuring of the forces for integration of the Taliban and other local militias with the Afghan Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF).

Afghanistan cannot finance its current army without external financial support, while it needs more than any time, a cost-effective professional armed forces that fill the gaps left after the pull-out of NATO forces. Given the poor economy of the country, developing, maintaining, and sustaining the current voluntary donor-dependent force is extremely difficult. The Afghan government, thus, has to bring fundamental changes in the structure, size, expenditures, training, and logistics to align the army with the country's political and economic realities, geographical features, and ethnic diversity. As such, NATO and Afghan military leaders are considering downsizing the armed forces beyond 2021 under a concept called "*Future Force*".

Therefore, this research which is Afghan-led and brings the views of Afghans from all walks of life, including retired military officers and former mujahideen, presents a roadmap for economization, fiscal sustainability, and restructuring of the Afghan security forces in a possible post peace settlement. It also presents different cost-effective modeling and a roadmap for integrating Taliban fighters within the Afghan armed forces. The research is aimed at helping the Afghan security policy-makers and military leaders to design a viable, durable, and self-reliant future force that could stand on its own feet and defend the country; a professional security sector politically and ideological impartial and capable enough to curb insurgencies.

Since the research focuses on both qualitative and quantitative aspects of security sector reform i.e. professionalism, impartiality, efficiency, size, and expenditures, a mixed-method was used for data collection and analysis. For qualitative data collection, a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was conducted in Kabul attended by eight high-ranking retired and in-office army and police personnel. Two Provincial Consultative Conferences (PCCs) were conducted in Mazar-e-Sharif and Herat with 50 to 60 participants. Each PCC included three thematic FGDs and three Key Informant Interviews (KIIs). The primary qualitative data were collected via eight FDGs and nine KIIs in Kabul, Mazar-e-Sharif, and Herat.

In terms of quantitative data, the expenditures, growth, and trend levels of the budget of security sectors were analyzed through desk research. Various reports

containing quantitative data about budget executions, resources management, and size of armed forces were scrutinized, and expenditures in the Ministry of Defense (MoD) and Ministry of Interior Affairs (MoI) were analyzed. The quantitative data were used to estimate the proportionate of resources with the size of the possible future army.

Additionally, an in-depth literature review was conducted on the history of Afghanistan armed forces, the turning points in the country's history, and the implications of political settlement attempts and government change on the security forces. The literature review has informed a comparative analysis of armed forces in different junctures, the success factors, shortcomings, and relevance to the current situation. The analysis provides lessons to be learned for reforming the security sector in the possible post-peace deal situation.

The insights from FGDs, PCCs and KIIs, and the analysis of the data highlight that ANDSF suffers from several shortcomings, including improper education, command structure, and structural corruption:

- The training of ANDSF by various donors avoided the development of a nationwide standardized training system. Additionally, the training courses are too short, and the soldiers leave the training centers without gaining the necessary skills and capabilities required for fulfilling their duties. Also, some criminals and drug addicts profit from the absence of a proper vetting process in recruitment centers and join ANDSF. All these have negatively affected the ANDSF capabilities.
- The command structure is too centralized, and every decision is taken by army officers in Kabul or provincial centers. Also, more personnel are assigned to administrative posts in provincial centers, while fewer soldiers are at corps and units.
- The armed forces are politicized. The command structure of the security sector is manipulated by politicians. Politicization has also sacrificed merit-based recruitment for personal preferences.
- Structural and endemic corruption has undermined the capabilities of armed forces and has led to a wastage of resources.

To reform the security sector for building professional, affordable, and



sustainable armed forces, the government of Afghanistan has to take some bold actions. The followings highlight some key steps necessary for reforming the security sector:

- Eradicating structural corruption within ANDSF without which economization is extremely difficult.
- Starting an organized and computerized system of budgeting, financial management, procurement, and logistics. This will help in fighting corruption as well as recording the expenditures and observing transparency and accountability.
- Assigning non-military experts in key administrative, policy, financial, and logistics departments. Currently, the army officers are not capable of doing these duties properly.
- Building a defense and military industry to produce the basic military items, repairing military vehicles and equipment.
- Reviving the conscription system – considering the economic growth of the country- and finance the armed forces via national revenues.
- Reducing the size of ANDSF, perhaps based on the security situation.
- Integrating the Taliban war machinery into the ANDSF.

Given the fragility of the security situation, it is difficult to maintain security by reducing the size of the current ANDSF. However, depending on the situation, three scenario models are at the prospect to economize the security sector:

- Reducing the ANDSF to 250.000. Based on estimates, the domestic revenues cannot finance both civilian and military expenditure for many years. It will take more than 16 years for the government to sustain this level of force.
- Reducing the ANDSF to 180.000. Cost estimates show that this size of armed forces is possible in a relatively stable situation, not for now. The government would be able to finance the armed forces via domestic revenues in the long run.
- Reducing the ANDSF to 100.000. This number of forces is possible when the country witnesses 30 percent of the current insecurities. However, this size is sustainable immediately without any external assistance.

Taking into account all the accounts, it is not possible to have sustainable and self-reliant armed forces soon because the political instabilities and insecurities do not allow for forces reduction, and economically the government cannot finance the armed forces in many years to come. However, it is time to start reform and work towards building a sustainable, affordable, professional, and impartial people-centered security sector.



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# CHAPTER ONE

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## *Introduction and Historical Context*

### **1.1. Background and Context**

For over a century since the reign of Amir Sher Ali Khan (1863-1868), Afghanistan has had an organized military force which had its periods of formation and disintegration due to political and economic reasons.

Historically, the Afghan armed forces has been the sacrificial lamb of any peace process, which ultimately resulted in the disintegration or collapse of the security force. In many instances of change in government either by force or through a political settlement, the Afghan forces have either been disintegrated or cleansed of its cadres for ideological and loyalty reasons. In modern history, this has at least happened three times i.e. *The Royal Armed Forces, The People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan Armed Forces and the Islamic Army of the Mujahideen*. With yet another peace process on the horizon with the Afghan Taliban, it is of utmost importance to ensure that such an episode is not repeated, given that the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) is not an ideological force but rather an apolitical, professional and inclusive force which serves the interest of the Afghan state. It is a national asset whose infrastructure and cadres serve the interests of the Afghan state and not any particular person or ideology.

Therefore, a comprehensive security sector reform program and the future of the Afghan security forces will be a big item on the agenda of the intra-Afghan negotiations in Doha, Istanbul and beyond. Moreover, with the withdrawal of US and NATO forces now certain – the question of economization, fiscal sustainability and restructuring of the Afghan forces for integration of Taliban fighting machinery and other militias is inevitable. Afghanistan needs a military

and security force that it can afford. For too many years – Afghan forces were heavily reliant on US and other NATO countries financial, logistical, technical and logistical support. This led to dependency issues whereas Afghan officers and cadres continually relied on their foreign counterparts for their day to day operations and it undermined their independence of action as well as kept the institutional capacity to carry basic function very low.

Hence, over the course of history due to weak economy and technological base the Afghan armed forces have always depended on foreign (*British, Turkish, Soviet and American*) technical and financial support for its backend support and front end doctrinal training and fighting style. This has led to dependency factors as well as vulnerabilities for infiltration and influence within its ranks for example, the toppling of the monarchy by pro-soviet officers within the armed forces in 1978. In addition, Afghanistan have always had a conscript army that has been dependent on training, equipment, technical and financial support on foreign sponsorship. Any breakaway from this addiction and tradition will require the Afghan statesmen and policy makers along with their foreign partners need to start thinking about the design and structure of a security force that Afghans can afford and is fiscally sustainable in the long term.

By various estimates, the average cost of an Afghan soldier i.e. *arms, ammunitions, uniform and wages* is estimated to be around US\$ 4K per annum. This number increases with the nature of deployment, injuries and units within the army. The cadre of Afghan officers which reaches thousands has a much higher cost in terms of budget and affordability. Many question the sustainability and affordability of such a staggering cost of maintaining an expensive army at this level given the deep prevailing poverty in the country and slow economic growth. Afghanistan has an army that it cannot afford. The Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) require US\$ 4.5 billion on annual cost and it is funded fully by the NATO member countries through the Chicago conference commitments. It lacks indigenous arms industry and even some of the most basic needs of this army from its boots to ammunitions, are furnished from outside the country, at times at highly unsustainable costs.

NATO commanders and Afghan military leaders are already looking at possible downsizing of the Afghan national security forces beyond 2021 under a concept called “*Future Force*”. Furthermore – the Afghan National Budget which is obliged under the terms of the Chicago conference to fund US\$ 500 million for the Afghan army and police is already under tremendous constraints and the Afghan government has called on the international community to fund its recurrent budget due to domestic revenue shortfall, decline in foreign aid, flight of capital and business and growing corruption and insecurity in the country.

The current strength of the Afghan national security forces i.e. army, police and airforce stands at around 345,000 and this number is expected to either decline or increase depending on the security and threat level plus the recruitment banks in the country. The sustainment and funding of this force is primarily the job of the Afghan treasury but the government is already struggling to fund its civilian budget, let alone the Afghan defense expenditures. There are huge challenges within the Afghan security forces budget and financial management, procurement, logistics and expenditure arrangements. Most of the financial management and procurement for Afghan security forces is done through Combined Security Transition Command for Afghanistan or famously known as CSTCA.<sup>1</sup> The Afghan military and police have a long way to go to overcome these challenges by building effective budget and financial management trained personnel and systems in place.

Afghans are famous and tough warriors but terrible military organizers and strategists, observed a soviet a former Soviet Union Red army General in his memoirs while he was in Afghanistan assisting the then Afghan National Army to fight off the Mujahiddin. He and his advisors had to remind Afghan officers of a task or ground battle tactic or strategy a dozen times half of which went into deaf ears. As a result – he and his own men had to take the affairs into their hands to avoid war casualties or show results that the war is making progress to their soviet politburo chiefs. Illiteracy, lack of commitment, tribal and family

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1. Tamim Asey, “The Fiscally Unsustainable Path of The Afghan Military and Security Services,” Global Security Review, 2019, <https://globalsecurityreview.com/fiscally-unsustainable-afghanistan-military-security-services/>.

ties, a culture of nepotism and corruption has made the task of building an army extremely difficult at this time.

Today – more than ever Afghanistan and its security forces are in dire need of a corp of highly professional, politically impartial and highly trained military officers who could fill the shoes of US/NATO officers and fend off the Taliban and drive them out of their strongholds in the country.

But maintaining such an army and security apparatus needs to be financially viable and sustainable in the medium to long run for Afghanistan. The current army and security apparatus in Afghanistan is completely sustainable given the economic and financial constraints of the Afghan government. Based on fiscal and revenue projection – the Afghan economy is years away from being able to fund an army at current levels of expenditure.

## **1.2. Recent History of Security Sector Reform in Afghanistan**

Historically, Afghanistan has had been funding its military through a mixture of traditional and non-traditional sources of domestic revenues and external financial aids, respectively. Although it has experienced many periods of instability and chaos that occasionally has led to its military disintegration, nevertheless, it has owned a military in the past hundred years.<sup>1</sup>

The traditional sources comprised of three layers: The ranks and file of the defense and security forces were filled via a quota-based national conscription system implemented in close collaboration with tribal elders and influential figures in provincial, district and village levels; the local people contributed to soldier's nutrition regime via food rations and also paid taxes for army's expenditures, and the local transport means were used for logistics and transporting army supplies.<sup>2</sup> The non-traditional sources included financial assistance, military equipment donations and training of the Afghan officers and scholarships by the British Raj, the Soviet Union and later Russia, Germany, Turkey, and a few other countries.<sup>3</sup>

1. Tamim Asey, "Economizing Defense: A Roadmap for Building Sustainable Afghan Security Forces," *Global Security Review*, June 2019, <https://globalsecurityreview.com/economizing-defense-roadmap-sustainable-afghan-security-forces/>.

2. Ibid.

3. Michael B. Bishku, "Turkey and Afghanistan: Culture, Security and Economics," *Contemporary Review of the Middle East* 7, no. 3 (2020).

Amir Sher Ali Khan established the first Afghan army using traditional and non-traditional sources and was backed by an auxiliary triable militia.<sup>1</sup> Although during the Communist government (1978-1992), the conscription mechanism became a controversial matter as many Afghan youth lost their lives in the fight against Mujahideen, the culture of conscription existed during the reign of many Afghan rulers.<sup>2</sup> However, the past decades' instabilities have made the Afghan army more dependent on external financial and material assistance, without which it faces severe challenges. The last Afghan army was disintegrated following the collapse of the last Communist government in 1992 as the erstwhile Soviet Union stopped its assistance to the regime in Kabul.<sup>3</sup>

The current Afghan army and security forces foundation was laid in 2004 by the Afghan and American generals. When sketching the new security apparatus map and laying its foundation, the most critical question in the minds of the Afghan and American generals sitting around the table was, "who will pay for it".<sup>4</sup> In those days, as Afghanistan economy was recovering from ashes, the Afghan government could not fund its new army and police.

As the US and her allies were increasingly involved in fighting against terrorism and their presence was gradually expanding in Afghanistan, it was believed that the United States and her allies would fund the Afghan security sector because they needed their cooperation in countering terrorism.<sup>5</sup> Notwithstanding that they have supported the Afghan army and police, the calculations for long-term financial sustainability of the security apparatus has led to a conclusion that the Afghans must fund their defense and security forces through domestic revenues from natural resources and transits fees bridging Central-Asia and South-Asia combined with a national conscription system.<sup>6</sup>

At the time laying the foundation of the Afghan defense and security forces,

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1. Tamim Asey, "Economizing Defense: A Roadmap for Building Sustainable Afghan Security Forces," *Global Security Review*, June 2019, <https://globalsecurityreview.com/economizing-defense-roadmap-sustainable-afghan-security-forces/>.

2. *Ibid.*

3. Barnett R. Rubin, "Post-Cold War State Disintegration: The Failure of International Conflict Resolution in Afghanistan," *Journal of International Affairs* 4, no. 2 (Winter 1993).

4. Tamim Asey, "Economizing Defense: A Roadmap for Building Sustainable Afghan Security Forces," *Global Security Review*, June 2019, <https://globalsecurityreview.com/economizing-defense-roadmap-sustainable-afghan-security-forces/>.

5. *Ibid.*

6. *Ibid.*



there were three schools of thought regarding the size and strength of the Afghan defense and security forces: those who were pushing the idea that Afghanistan does not need a full-fledged defense and security forces, instead, a small force is enough to defuse local revolts and secure the country's borders; those who advocated for establishing an army and police in the scale and size of pre-civil war era i.e. 250,000 strong supported with an air force; and those Afghan monarchists and former mujahideen who argued that the existing Mujahideen and militias should be mobilized and transformed into defense and security forces.<sup>1</sup>

However, the new Afghan defense and security forces were built based on none of these schools of thought. Instead, the Afghans, alongside their NATO allies trained, equipped, and deployed a completely new Afghan defense and security forces authorized to have up to 350.000 personnel to defend Afghanistan and maintain security.<sup>2</sup> As of January 2021, the Afghan National Army (ANA), Afghan Air Force (AFF) and Special Operation Forces (SOF) reach 185.478 and the Afghan National Police (ANP) to 103.224 personnel.<sup>3</sup> The new costly paid voluntary army and police are almost entirely dependent on financial supports from the United States and NATO allies.

The foreign forces' withdrawal will be completed by September 2021. The upsurge in insurgencies and the high cost of the day-to-day operations of defense and security forces make it inevitable to rethink the forces' sustainability. Back in 2014, during the withdrawal of the bulk of foreign forces and the transition of the security responsibilities to the Afghan forces, there was a golden opportunity for reconfiguring and redesigning the Afghan forces in line with the country's economic and security realities for making it financially sustainable, but the chance was lost.<sup>4</sup>

Although the United States and its NATO allies have committed to funding the Afghan forces until 2024, it is unknown what might happen beyond that

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1. Ibid.

2. Jonathan Schroden, "Afghanistan's Security Forces Versus the Taliban: A Net Assessment," CTC Sentinel 14, Issue 1 (2021)

3. Ibid.

4. Tamim Asey, "Economizing Defense: A Roadmap for Building Sustainable Afghan Security Forces," Global Security Review, June 2019, <https://globalsecurityreview.com/economizing-defense-roadmap-sustainable-afghan-security-forces/>.

timeframe. Afghanistan needs to take steps towards reforming the security sector to make it more sustainable and independent of external assistance. Considering Afghanistan's economic shortcomings, the government cannot fund the current defense and security forces without external financial and material support. Therefore, reviving the conscription mechanism becomes worth thinking about.

The main issue for the Afghan military and political leaders is to decide on the formation of the Afghan army and security forces as being either NATO or non-NATO standard based. Some military experts believe that the Afghan military and security forces based on NATO standards are only feasible if the Afghan government remains a long-term partner of NATO and western countries regarding security collaborations. However, there are also opinions supporting a hybrid standard i.e. a combination of NATO and non-NATO standard army and security forces based on the agility, mobility, and needs assessment of the different units of the Afghan military and security forces. In addition, another issue to be decided by the Afghan military leadership is the implementation of a national, local quota-based conscription system associated with effective force management and affordable finance and logistic mechanisms for countering corruption and drawing down the costs of the Afghan security sector.<sup>1</sup>

Concerning funding of the security forces, The Afghan military leaders and their international partners must decide how to financially sustain security forces in the long term. There is a need to rethink, reconfigure, and build a financially sustainable, operationally efficient, and high-powered military dependent on internal resources. A combination of a four-track financial sustainability strategy can be applied in this regard: *a. force management and national conscription. b. financial austerity and budgetary savings. c. building local defense industries and d. localized defense and militias.*<sup>2</sup>

Regardless of decisions on the size, format, and standards of the Afghan military and security forces, the Afghan government and its international partners, including the US and NATO, must fund the Afghan security sector until Afghanistan reaches an indigenous and self-reliant economy, which will

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1. Ibid.

2. Ibid.

ensure the sustainability of the Afghan security sector's funding from two sources: i. traditional sources– a national tax scheme, saving and austerity regime, and national conscription. ii. Non-traditional sources– a long-term trust fund to help the security sector with scholarships and training programs for its officers corp.<sup>1</sup>

### **1.3. Rationale and Objectives of Research Study**

One of the key agenda items of any peace talks would be the future – shape, size and composition – of the Afghan security forces. This research would be a timely intervention and could provide the material and content for the negotiating sides to discuss the military aspects of peace i.e. ANDSF.

#### **The key objectives are:**

- a. Propose a roadmap for the economization and restructuring of ANDSF post peace settlement in Afghanistan.
- b. Undertake economic modeling (basic) to find ways to make ANDSF cost effective and cost efficient.
- c. Suggest a roadmap on how to integrate Taliban fighters and commanders with Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF).

### **1.4. Importance and Relevance**

The Afghan security forces face an uncertain future in the context of Afghan peace talks and dependency on US-NATO financial and technical support. The Taliban have called for a thorough reform of the force i.e. Islamization, while the Afghan government and its international partners are insisting on ANDSF as a professional, apolitical and national force, which serves the interests of the Afghan state.

The Afghan Taliban have so far refrained from presenting their vision for the future of Afghan forces post peace settlement, except in some of the website articles they have called for an Islamic Army (IA). Moreover, the future Afghan statesmen and policy makers need to make urgent and drastic decisions on fiscal sustainability and long term financial viability of the force, curb corruption in the security forces and decide on policy options on how to integrate Taliban

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1. Ibid.

fighting machinery into the Afghan military and other services.

The unique relevant and vital importance of this study could be highlighted in the following points:

1. a timely in depth study, which could serve as a discussion paper and blue print to guide negotiations on the future of Afghan forces.
2. provide policy options to the conflict parties on future force restructuring, economization, and integration of Taliban within Afghan national security forces.
3. pinpoint corruption-prone areas and recommend remedial measures.
4. offer economic models for the fiscal sustainability of ANDSF.
5. provide policy guidance on structural and organization review of the Afghan forces and the potential integration of the Taliban into this force.



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## CHAPTER TWO

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### *Research Methodology*

#### **2.1. Research Methodology**

This research follows a mixed method of data collection and analysis; as required, both quantitative and qualitative techniques are utilized in the research process. The following paragraphs explain various components of the research methodology.

#### **2.2. Research Objectives**

The main goal of this research is to undertake a comprehensive study into the ways and means to economize and build a fiscally sustainable ANDSF and propose a roadmap to restructure it to integrate Taliban fighters and commanders within the newly re-organized ANDSF post peace deal. The specific objectives of the project are:

- i. Propose a roadmap for the economization and restructuring of ANDSF post peace settlement in Afghanistan.
- ii. Undertake economic modeling to find ways to make ANDSF cost-effective and cost-efficient.
- iii. Suggest a roadmap on how to integrate Taliban fighters and commanders with Afghan National Defense and Security Forces.

#### **2.3. Research Work Plan and Design**

The research work plan included four phases of scrutiny and analysis, including:

1. Conducting desk research on the historical development of Afghanistan's defense and security forces and the post-2001 SSR in the country.
2. Conducting in-depth interviews and stakeholders' consultation conferences

in Kabul and in two regional, provincial capitals (Mazar-e Sharif and Herat) on restructuring and economization of the ANDSF post peace settlement.

3. Systemic analysis of the data collected through desk review, stakeholders' consultation conferences, and in-depth interviews.
4. Developing and presenting a roadmap on restructuring and economization of the ANDSF and military integration of the Taliban within the ANDSF.

After an extensive literature review on the security sector reform in Afghanistan, the research team decided to investigate the SSR program as an instrument of peacebuilding and economization of Afghanistan's security forces in a post-conflict environment. The research team took the fundamental principles of SSR –defined by the mainstream international actors and stakeholders, as a guideline for criticizing the development of the security sector in Afghanistan. At the same time, through consultations and interviews with local beneficiaries of the SSR program, the SSR intervention itself was challenged and reassessed in terms of implementation and actual experience. A critical review of the history of the development of Afghanistan's defense and security forces further enriched the research. As suggested, the study was conducted through a mixed methodology using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods.

### **2.3.1. Quantitative Element**

To have a sectoral review in terms of economization and financial sustainability of Afghanistan's defense and security forces, an expenditure analysis was conducted through desk research. The expenditure review exercise involves examining the growth and trend levels of the budget and expenditure lines of security sectors. The review is supplemented by reading various reports to identify challenges in budget executions and financial and human resources management of the Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior Affairs.

The estimates for cost-saving are based on the qualitative data indicators derived from the Department of Defense report "ENHANCING SECURITY AND STABILITY IN AFGHANISTAN, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE." The indicators are procurement, budget execution, contracts award, personnel management, training, logistics and maintenance, strategic and operation

planning, and facilities. The qualitative description is used to provide efficiency level ratings (quantified) based on the report's stated challenges and progresses. The ratings are used to estimate cost reduction in every expenditure line item on a disaggregate level if incremental (marginal) to moderate (substantial) efficiency are introduced in the security institutions. The weak control system in payments and procurement processes is also taken into consideration.

The ANDSF restructuring and fiscal sustainability scenarios use four aggregated categories. The 2019 ASFF estimated disbursement data, the Afghan government's contribution, and LOFTA's on-budget expenditure are used as the benchmarks for the outer years. The categories are:

- Personnel,
- Training,
- Equipment,
- Facilities and Infrastructure,

The projected costs are determined using the 2019 estimated expenditure levels (83 percent) as baseline data for the ASFF appropriations.<sup>1</sup> The assumption for outer years is 100 percent execution of the estimated costs. Initially, the cost for MoD and MoI are indexed separately, adjusting costs such as salaries and food with inflation (using MoF's projections). Each scenario provides cost estimates projections assuming no policy change to expenditure values of the baseline year. The government revenue growth is projected into outer years using the last five years' (2014 – 2019) average nominal growth rate of 16.5 percent.

The above methodology is used to provide the best estimates using the available on-budget and off-budget data for outer year costings. The estimates and approach could have considerably benefited from the availability of a more detailed breakdown of off-budget data.

### **2.3.2. Qualitative Element**

To acquire first-hand insights from the beneficiaries of the SSR program, using the available organizational resources, the research team reached out to

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1. "Quarterly Report to the United States Congress," SIGAR, April 2020, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/2020-04-30qr.pdf>.



stakeholders across three provinces, including Kabul, Balk, and Herat. Relative security, accessibility, availability of a large number of high ranking retired security personnel, next to military significance of these provinces (each province hosts a corps), informed the decision for selecting those provinces. Individual participants were selected through purposive and snowball sampling. Two categories of stakeholders were approached and consulted; including A) retired army and police personnel and B) members of civil society organizations. The former group included high-ranking personnel (Colonels and Generals) from both police and military organizations. The latter group included representatives of the local civil society organizations from peace and women's rights activists to journalists, academics, and students. The intention was to consult with representatives of both the defense and security forces and the civilians. To the extent possible, the research team tried to take gender balance into consideration.

One Focus Group Discussion (FGD) in Kabul city and two Provincial Consultative Conferences (PCCs) were held in capital cities of Mazar-e Sharif and Herat. Before conducting PCCs in Mazar-e Sharif and Herat, an FGD was conducted in Kabul city with eight high-ranking retired and incumbent army and police personnel. Two of the Kabul FGD participants were also interviewed as Key Informants. In addition, a Kabul-based civil society activist was interviewed. This helped the research team to set the agenda for provincial consultative conferences. 50 to 60 people participated in consultation conferences across Mazar-e Sharif and Herat. Each PCC included three thematic FGDs and three Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), respectively. A total of 8 FGDs<sup>1</sup> and 9 KIIs were conducted across Kabul, Mazar-e Sharif and Herat. Dari was the principle language in all FGDs and KIIs. PCC participants in groups of 15 individuals participated in FGDs voluntarily. FGDs were organized over thematic discussions including:

- Structural Review of the Defense and Security Forces
- Economization of the Defense and Security Forces

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1. In Herat consultative conference, due to high rate of participation, four FGDs were conducted including 1 FGD on structural review of the defense and security forces and 1 FGD on military integration of the Taliban. Due to centrality of "financial sustainability" of the security forces in our research, the research team decided to conduct rather 2 FGDs on economization of the defense and security forces.

- Military Integration of the Taliban

The first-hand data acquired through consultations and interviews helped the researchers back up and re-examine the secondary data and archive material.

### **2.3.3. Questionnaire Design**

Three sets of thematic questionnaires were developed and designed for the three thematic FGD sessions. A separate questionnaire was also developed for KIIs. The questionnaires and interview guides were designed and articulated around the following themes:

- History of the development of Afghanistan's defense and security forces
- Structure and performance of the current defense and security institutions
- SSR and economization of the ANDSF
- Military integration of the Taliban within the ANDSF

### **2.3.4. Data analysis and verification**

Content analysis was applied to properly interpret the data gathered through in-depth interviews and FGDs. The content analysis covers methods/ tools of qualitative analysis, specifically for identifying trends and themes appearing in a piece of qualitative content. In other words, content analysis is an approach to summarize any form of content/ details through the application of categorization, classification and interpretation of qualitative data. Categorizing the scattered and unclassified answers and expressions put forward by the respondents helps researchers interpret, understand and present the data in a logical, understandable and systemic way. The analysis is also informed by Narrative and Discourse analysis and Within-Case and Across-Case methods.

Other techniques and approaches put into practice include: transcript review (Letting Key Informants confirm a transcript of their words), peer review (colleagues cross-checking each other's work), concurrent data collecting and analyzing (iterative and simultaneous interaction between data and analysis), keeping methodological coherence in check (evaluating the coherence of research components as research work unfolds) and theoretical examination (matching the micro level data with macro conceptual framework). Since every research endeavor is susceptible to errors and biases, the above-mentioned data

verification methods helped the research team control and examine errors and biases along the way.

### **2.3.5. Research Structure**

The research structure follows the following logic: *Chapter 1.* Introduction, *Chapter 2.* Research Methodology, *Chapter 3.* Literature Review, *Chapter 4.* The Afghan Defence and Security Forces in Historical Perspective, *Chapter 5.* The Current Structure and Organization of the Afghan Defence and Security Forces, *Chapter 6.* Security Sector Financing – ANDSF Economization and Long-term Fiscal Sustainability, *Chapter 7.* A View from the Field – Provincial Consultations on ANDSF Economization and Restructuring, *Chapter 8.* Models for Future Afghan Defence and Security Forces – Restructuring and Fiscal Sustainability Options, *Chapter 9.* Military Power Sharing and Inclusion in Peace – Options for Integration of Taliban Fighters and Commanders within ANDSF, *Chapter 10.* A Roadmap to Security Sector Reform for Peace – ANDSF Restructuring, Economization and Military Power Sharing with the Taliban, and *Chapter 11.* Conclusion and Recommendations.

### **2.4. Research Limitations**

1. Provincial consultations took place only in a few relatively secure provincial capitals. As a result, rural people were not part of the provincial consultations. In addition, the purposive and snowball sampling increased the chance of bias.
2. In comparison to the size of participants with military and police backgrounds, a limited number of civil society members were approached and consulted (%80 to 20%). Also, less number of women were approached and consulted (only one retired police women participated in provincial consultative conferences). Such an approach increases the chance of bias.
3. Due to professional ethical protocol, which prohibits approaching incumbent Taliban members and difficulties in contacting Taliban affiliates, no Taliban ex-combatants participated in the FGDs and KIIs. Therefore, possible diversity in the views of Taliban affiliates toward post-conflict integration is not reflected in this research. For similar reasons, the file and rank soldiers of ANSDF either were not part of the consultations. Only retired officers were interviewed and consulted.

4. The ANDSF expenditure review is carried out through the analysis of available on-budget and off-budget data for outer year costings. The estimates and approach could have considerably benefited from the availability of a more detailed breakdown of off-budget data.

## **2.5. Research Ethical Protocol**

In accordance with standard research ethical considerations, including a risk mitigation plan, the research team conducted its work based on a clear code of conduct. Consent Forms were prepared and shared with all Key Informants and FGD participants to make sure that they fully understand the terms of their participation in the research project. The names that appear in the research report belong to those Key Informants and FGD participants who agreed to share their identities with the general audience. All records are kept in the IWPS research archive.

## **2.6. Risk Management**

To ensure that informants and researchers do not face harm as a result of their participation in the research activities, a number of precautionary measures were taken into consideration: Safety precautions with regard to the timing and location of the fieldwork, Covid-19 mitigation measures, as well as consideration of the local and national socio-cultural mores. Researchers were trained on those issues before visiting the field.

## **2.7. Methodology**

The expenditure review exercise involves examining the growth and trend levels of the budget and expenditure lines of security sectors. The review is supplemented by reading various reports to identify challenges in budget executions, and financial and human resources management of the Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior Affairs.

The estimates for cost-saving are based on the qualitative data indicators derived from the Department of Defense report “ENHANCING SECURITY AND STABILITY IN AFGHANISTAN, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.” The indicators are procurement, budget execution, contracts award, personnel management, training, logistics and maintenance, strategic and operation

planning, and facilities. The qualitative description is used to provide efficiency level ratings (quantified) based on the report's stated challenges and progresses. The ratings are used to estimate cost reduction in every expenditure line item on a disaggregated level if incremental (marginal) to moderate (substantial) efficiency are introduced in the security institutions. The cost reduction or savings also uses the weak control system in payments and procurement processes.

The ANDSF restructuring and fiscal sustainability scenarios use four aggregated categories. The 2019 ASFF estimated disbursement data, the Afghan government's contribution, and LOFTA's on-budget expenditure are used as the benchmarks for the outer years. The categories are:

1. Sustainment that includes
  - a. personnel,
  - b. ammunition,
  - c. communication and intelligence,
  - d. Petroleum, oil, and lubricants
  - e. All others
2. Infrastructure
3. Equipment
4. Training and Total Operations

The projected costs are determined using the 2019 estimated expenditure levels (83 percent) as baseline data for the ASFF appropriations.<sup>1</sup> The assumption for outer years is 100 percent execution of the estimated costs. Initially, the cost for MoD and MoI are indexed separately, adjusting costs such as salaries and food with inflation (using MoF's projections). Each scenario provides cost estimates projections assuming no policy change to expenditure values of the baseline year. The government revenue growth is projected into outer years using the last five years' (2014 – 2019) average nominal growth rate of 16.5 percent.

The above methodology is used to provide the best estimates using the

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1. "Quarterly Report to the United States Congress," SIGAR, April 2020, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/2020-04-30qr.pdf>.

available on-budget and off-budget data for outer year costings. The estimates and approach could have considerably benefited from the availability of a more detailed breakdown of off-budget data.



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## CHAPTER THREE

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### *Literature Review*

#### **3.1. Security Sector Reform for Peace – Concept, Context, Types and Importance**

Security Sector Reform (SSR), also known as security system reform and security sector governance, deals with the interlinkages of security and development assistance cooperation.<sup>1</sup> As a developmental approach to security cooperation, SSR suggests that the improvement of security in a given country or region depends on the improvement of governance across socio-economic and political institutions.<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, SSR requires that all stakeholders—including the armed forces and civilians, be able to participate in decision making processes pertinent to the security of state and safety of people. It is expected that both formal and informal institutions and actors be able to influence the outcomes of the security sector development i.e. security sector reform.<sup>3</sup> Security is considered as the public good; therefore, its development and reform need to be aligned with the development and reform of other public goods and services, such as the provision of justice and the rule of law.<sup>4</sup> From a different angle, SSR aims at dealing with the interlinkages between national security, regional security, and international security. Monopoly on the legitimate use of violence lies at the heart of security sector reform in post-

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1. Mark Sedra, ed, *The Future of Security Sector Reform* (Waterloo, Ont.: Centre for International Governance Innovation, 2010).

2. The OECD DAC Handbook on Security Sector Reform: Supporting Security and Justice, OECD, 2007. 21.

3. Mark Sedra, *Security Sector Reform in Conflict-Affected Countries, The Evolution of a Model*, (Routledge: New York, 2017), 290.

4. Bruce Baker, “The Future is Non-State” in *The Future of Security Sector Reform*, ed. Mark Sedra, (Waterloo, Ont.: Centre for International Governance Innovation, 2010), 217.



conflict and fragile states such as Afghanistan.<sup>1</sup> The following table highlights some of the SSR attached themes and processes in a post-conflict situation (Table-1).

SSR Related Themes and Processes
• Stabilization
• Reconstruction
• Transitional Justice
• Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) of Former Combatants
• Repatriation and Rehabilitation
• Small Arms and Light Weapons Control

(Table-1). SSR Attached Themes and Processes in Post- Conflict Situation

There is no universal consensus on understanding, implications and scope of SSR. SSR is not an academic discipline. The concept should rather be understood as *development in progress* emerging from policy discussions and decision makings across national, regional, and international platforms. SSR is meant to work for both the donor and the receiver communities. Normatively, SSR intends to boost *local ownership* of the reform process regardless of where it is being conducted.

### 3.2. Definitions

While the concept SSR suffers from a lack of universal understanding, definitions provided by various regional and international actors i.e. donors, underline certain shared principles and values that need to be taken into consideration.

#### The OECD DAC definition:

*‘Security system reform’ is another term used to describe the transformation of the ‘security system’ – which includes all the actors, their roles, responsibilities and actions – working together to manage and operate the system in a manner that is more consistent with democratic norms*

1. Lauren Hutton, “Following the Yellow Brick Road? Current and Future Challenges for Security Sector Reform in Africa,” in *The Future of Security Sector Reform*, ed. Mark Sedra, (Waterloo, Ont.: Centre for International Governance Innovation, 2010), 193.

*and sound principles of good governance, and thus contributes to a well-functioning security framework.”<sup>1</sup>*

### **The UK government definition:**

*“SSR addresses security-related policy, legislation, structural and oversight issues, all set within recognized democratic norms and principles. The UK recognizes security as a necessary and important function of the state and works from the premise that security should be provided in an appropriate, accountable and affordable way”.<sup>2</sup>*

### **The EC suggests that:**

*Security system reform processes should be: nationally/regionally owned reform processes designed to strengthen good governance, democratic norms, the rule of law and the respect for human rights, in line with internationally agreed norms”.<sup>3</sup>*

### **According to the UN:**

*“Security sector reform describes a process of assessment, review and implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation led by national authorities that has as its goal the enhancement of effective and accountable security for the State and its peoples without discrimination and with full respect for human rights and the rule of law”.<sup>4</sup>*

### **The US defines SSR:**

*“SSR refers to reform efforts directed at the institutions, processes, and forces that provide security and promote the rule of law.” It involves “Establishment of relevant legal and policy frameworks, Improvement of civilian management, leadership, oversight, planning, and budgeting capacities, Enhancement of coordination and cooperation among security-related and civil institutions; and, Management of the legacies and sources of past or present conflict or insecurity”.<sup>5</sup>*

1. “Security Sector Reform and Governance,” OECD, 2005, 20, <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/9789264007888-en.pdf?expires=1623041094&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=9949F6B94669036F5FC27DE7D1670D1A>.

2. “Security Sector Reform Strategy 2004-2005,” GCPP, accessed May 15, 2021, <http://www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/con10.pdf>.

3. “A Concept of European Community Support for Security Sector Reform,” EC, 2006, accessed May 27, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2006:0253:FIN:EN:PDF>.

4. UN Secretary General, *Securing peace and development: the role of the United Nations in supporting security sector reform* (New York: UN, 2018), 6.

5. *Ibid.*

As highlighted in the above definitions, promotion of the rule of law and good governance according to democratic norms and human rights standards are fundamentals of SSR. SSR is defined as systematic reform processes encompassing various institutions, structures and forces involved in security governance in a given context.

### 3.3. SSR Stakeholders and Institutions

Central to the SSR concept is that the reform processes need to be locally owned and multilaterally oversighted. To that end, various institutions, structures and forces that were not typically known as security actors and institutions – such as the judiciary, legislative, non-government, and informal entities are recognized as such. The OECD handbook lists the SSR stakeholders as “core security actors”, “management and oversight bodies”, “justice and the rule of law”, “non-statutory security forces” (Table-2).<sup>1</sup>

<b>Components of Security System</b>	<b>Actors, bodies and forces</b>
Core security actors	Armed forces; police service; gendarmeries; paramilitary forces; presidential guards; intelligence and security services (both military and civilian); coast guards; border guards; customs authorities; and reserve or local security units (civil defiance forces, national guards, militias).
Management and oversight bodies	The executive, national security advisory bodies, legislative and legislative select committees; ministries of defence, internal affairs, foreign affairs; customary and traditional authorities; financial management bodies (finance ministries, budget officers, financial audit and planning units); and civil society organisations (civilian review boards and public complaints commissions).
Justice and the rule law	Judiciary and justice ministries; prisons; criminal investigation and prosecution services; human rights commissions and ombudsmen; and customary and traditional justice systems.
Non-statutory security forces	Liberation armies, guerrilla armies, private security companies, political party militias.

(Table-2). Security System Components According to OECD SSR Handbook

Given that this list might not be an exhaustive list and SSR stakeholders may

1. Ibid, 22.

vary in different contexts, the main challenge ahead of SSR implementation is how to bridge the gap between policy and practice.<sup>1</sup>

### **3.4. Contextualization of SSR**

SSR intervention involves both local and external actors. Various agencies across government institutions, non-government, developmental and aid agencies are involved in the making of SSR. As a normative agenda SSR impacts the relationship between various actors in a variety of ways. However, in line with the research question, the following paragraphs explore the relationship between «external security assistance- cooperation», “local ownership”, and “economization of the security sector”. It firstly explains how the concept of SSR transformed the donors’ discourse of security cooperation from “train and equip” approach to a “security system reform”. Secondly, it explains how SSR intervenes the provision of security and governance by national authorities. And thirdly, it looks at the economization of the security sector as prescribed by SSR programing. The purpose is to re-examine the availability of resources, narratives and institutions as well as the underlying challenges along the local-external security cooperation spectrum in post-conflict situation.

#### **3.4.1. Security Sector Cooperation: Train and Equip versus SSR**

Emerging at the end of the Cold War period, SSR is a relatively new concept. Traditionally, donor countries and world powers—such as the British government, the Soviet Union, and the US, carried out their security sector assistance operations through “Train and Equip” method. Providing friendly regimes i.e. agents- allies with military equipment and training, was the main component of the donors’ security cooperation overseas. It was aimed at securing the interest of the donor in the first place with little or no regard for the security of the people affected by such interventions. Political and ideological impositions were major characteristics of the traditional security sector assistance- cooperation. The Cold War period arming of friendly regimes by the communist Soviets and the liberal Americans provides a critical example of such an approach in recent history. Based on patron-client relationships, regimes and security agents prospered at the cost of their respective populations. Rightsizing of the armed

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1. Ibid, 17.

forces and controlling the military spending of the recipient regimes, were the main areas of policy making.<sup>1</sup>

By the end of the Cold War, however, “conflict prevention”, “conflict management”<sup>2</sup>, and “integration of security into political and economic development”, increasingly became important to policy makers across developmental departments, aid agencies and military institutions.<sup>3</sup> As donors engaged in various peace-building and post-conflict recovery missions, they started to realize that conflict prevention through the promotion of “good governance” is rather cost-effective.<sup>4</sup> The leading – mainly European, governments reached the consensus that in order to deal with the root causes of insecurity, the concept of security must be redefined through “system wide” approaches.<sup>5</sup> Debates on whether policing is part of the justice sector or security sector bridged the conceived separated realms of human-individual safety and government security.<sup>6</sup> The emerging definition of security sector covers both civilian and military, state and citizen, formal and informal, economical and political spectrum of governance and security.<sup>7</sup> Accordingly, the effectiveness of coordination and cooperation among all entities involved in the provision of security and for that matter, security sector assistance- cooperation became a priority. SSR planning and implementation are assessed through the “key principles of transparency, accountability and comprehensiveness”.<sup>8</sup>

Actors and platforms such as the UK Department for International Development (DFID)<sup>9</sup>, Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the

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1. Adedeji Ebo and Kristiana Powel, “Why Is SSR Important? A United Nations Perspective”, in *The Future of Security Sector Reform*, ed. Mark Sedra, (Waterloo, Ont.: Centre for International Governance Innovation, 2010), 47.

2. Currently the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), - among others, speaks of “conflict management” as one of its main security tasks. Please see [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_52060.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_52060.htm)

3. Nicole Ball, “The Evolution of the Security Sector Reform Agenda” in *The Future of Security Sector Reform*, ed. Mark Sedra, (Waterloo, Ont.: Centre for International Governance Innovation, 2010), 29-31.

4. *Ibid.*, 32-34.

5. Peer Albrecht, Finn Stepputat and Louise Andersen, “Security Sector Reform, The European War”, in *The Future of Security Sector Reform*, ed. Mark Sedra, (Waterloo, Ont.: Centre for International Governance Innovation, 2010), 77.

6. *Ibid.*

7. *Ibid.*, 76-77.

8. *Ibid.*

9. By 1999 the DFID released a policy note on relationship between poverty reduction and security sector reform. *Ibid.* 33. By 2005 the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and the Ministry of Defence (MOD), published the UK strategy toward SSR.

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)<sup>1</sup>, the European Union (EU),<sup>2</sup>the United Nations (UN)<sup>3</sup>, and the US<sup>4</sup>– among others, actively contributed to understanding and development of SSR concept. Post-soviet Eastern-European countries, post-conflict and fragile states across Africa, Middle East, and elsewhere are major geographic locations of SSR experiment. Both the EU and NATO promoted the principle of “democratic civil-military relations” as a precondition for membership.<sup>5</sup>

### **3.4.2. SSR Intervention; State- Centered versus People-Centered Security**

Though SSR intervention -in line with the UN charter, is state-centric and biased toward the European- liberal vision of security and governance, the relationship between governance and well-being of people lies at the heart of SSR agenda. For a variety of reasons, governments may welcome external security interventions and still do not care about meaningful reforms across state-society or civil-military institutions. They may welcome SSR or any sort of security assistance- cooperation, only to access funds and equipment, get training, survive internal rivalry, or simply to boost their international legitimacy.<sup>6</sup> While the debate about what works in a given context is a legitimate debate, in any context, it is important not to take the state-society relations and for that matter, local-foreign security assistance relations for granted. In fact, the state-society relations largely determine the government’s approach toward external security assistance and the foreign sponsors of security.

In different historical periods, Afghanistan has been counting and relying on donors’ funds and support to keep its security apparatus and government functioning. Through the traditional “train and equip” approach, foreign sponsors of security supported various ruling elites and local agents only to

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1. In 2004 OECD DAC produced a policy statement on SSR and governance followed by its 2007 Handbook on Security Sector Reform and Governance.

2. In 2006 the European Commission (EC), released its own guidelines for the EU’s engagement in SSR.

3. The 2008 UN secretary-general’s report on Security Peace and Development, highlights the role of UN in supporting SSR.

4. The 2009 joint paper on Security Sector Reform issued by the US Department of State, Department of Defense (DoD), and United States Agency for International Development (USAID), provides guidelines for planning and implementing SSR.

5. *Ibid.* 33.

6. Alice Hills, “Learning the Hard Way: Implementing SSR in Africa’s Post Authoritarian States”, in *The Future of Security Sector Reform*, ed. Mark Sedra, (Waterloo, Ont.: Centre for International Governance Innovation, 2010), 179

secure their own strategic interests. Consequently, groups change of allegiances under patron-client relationship trends across various military and political upheavals throughout Afghanistan's history. Even in the post- 2001 period, the patron-client relationship overshadowed SSR intervention in the country. Such interaction typically failed to enhance security; on the contrary, it resulted in protracted conflict. Therefore, when discussing SSR interventions, it is important to investigate the relationship between governance and foreign security assistance. Does the government's approach toward foreign security assistance- cooperation, help boost local ownership of security i.e. boosting the security of people? What are the characteristics of the government's security regime i.e. its security doctrine? What elements – and for what reasons, are recognized as components of the security system and what elements are excluded? What are the implications of the government's approach toward foreign security intervention on state-society relations? These are the sort of questions we need to consider when discussing SSR as an instrument of stabilization and peace-making.

SSR requires a genuine political commitment from the side of national authorities to work with all the stakeholders –especially the local constituency, and welcome their cooperation. While foreign sponsors of security may facilitate institutional reform, they cannot produce its associated constituency overnight. If local ownership is treated only as a technical issue, foreign security interventions would not result in improved state-society relations and sustainable security. On the contrary, such an approach leads to prolonged dependency on foreign security interventions and interferences. This is especially true for countries that are used to rely on foreign security interventions. The challenge of local ownership of SSR processes is not only about the imposition of foreign norms upon local settings. Although different countries differ in strength, wealth, institutional capability and culture, all governments equally face the challenge of accountability. Accountability lies at the center of SSR concept. Arguably since not all countries have similar governance and security institutions in place -as they typically do in liberal democracies, they do not need to follow the same SSR procedures. However, all governments interested in SSR engagement need to have a security doctrine in place capable of dealing

with the underlying challenges of accountability in terms of state-society relations and foreign security assistance.

In its lessons learned report, OECD emphasizes that articulation of an “in-country” national SSR vision, based on broad-based consultation, is a necessary precondition for successful implementation of SSR. While local ownership is usually defined in terms of local political support for SSR intervention, new generation of practitioners emphasize that SSR interventions rather need to be aligned with local initiatives. It suggests that local political support for foreign security intervention is not going to result in the promotion of people-centered security if the host government lacks an in-country SSR vision and strategy.<sup>1</sup>

### **3.4.3. Economization of the Security Sector: Affordable Security; Accountable Security Sector**

A people-centered approach to security requires an in-country assessment of available and accessible resources. Practitioners suggest that Afghanistan might be able to finance its security sector through the revival of conscription and proper allocation of local revenues.<sup>2</sup> However, a people-centered security sector ought to be an accountable security sector too. SSR emphasizes the role of public monitoring over the performance of the security sector. Improving the financial management of the security sector within the wider public financial management system paves the way for sustainable governance and for that matter, sustainable security.<sup>3</sup> From this perspective, the economization of the security sector is not only about the reduction of security expenditure or rightsizing of the security forces. It requires effective allocation of resources as well as accountability of the security forces before its beneficiaries and funders.<sup>4</sup>

SSR is deeply connected with sustainable development, democratization and peace, and as such, accountability is an indispensable component of the process. Governance-oriented affordable and accountable security is not possible unless the democratic principle of accountability is strictly followed. As such, strengthening the civilian management and oversight of the security

1. “Security Sector Reform: What Have We Learned?” OECD, 2009.

2. Tamim Asey, “Economizing Defense: A Roadmap for Building Sustainable Afghan Security Forces,” *Global Security Review*, 12 Jun, 2019, <https://globalsecurityreview.com/economizing-defense-roadmap-sustainable-afghan-security-forces/>.

3. “Understanding and Supporting Security Sector Reform,” DFID, 31.

4. *Ibid*, 32.



sector is a key feature of SSR for the development of a security sector capable of delivering people-centered cost-effective security services while accountable before the population it serves.<sup>1</sup> Resources for military expenditures acts as the backbone of armed forces and police in fragile states. The economization of SSR through the democratization of security apparatus, which is more likely to lead to proper resource allocations, merit-based recruitment and accountability, is a key driver for stabilization in post-conflict contexts.<sup>2</sup>

The engagement of many external actors and funders in SSR interventions in post-conflict societies is likely to end in the development of a security sector heavily dependent on external financing, as is the case with the Afghanistan security sector. External money injection and model imposition without contextualizing SSR programming leads to the lack of national and local ownership.<sup>3</sup> When lacking indigenous financing, it becomes extremely difficult to maintain security apparatus in the absence of external financing. This is true with the case of Afghanistan as President Ashraf Ghani has acknowledged the country's army would collapse in six months without US support.<sup>4</sup> Hence, affordable and accountable security requires leaning on domestic resources and proper administration of resources allocation, recruitment and expenditures under civilian oversight. Considering the realities on the ground, reviving the conscription and using domestic resources could be a viable option for Afghanistan in financing its security sector. However, so far the Afghan government has not voiced for revival of the conscription system.

The US and NATO will continue financing the Afghanistan security sector up until 2024, after which it is uncertain whether the Afghan government will be able to finance it using domestic resources or will continue relying on external money.<sup>5</sup> However, making the security sector independent of foreign aid is critical for the long-term stability of the country and the Afghan army. Without

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1. "United Nations Approaches to Security Sector Reform," DCAF, 2006, 5-10.

2. Andrzej Karkoszka, "The Concept of Security Sector Reform," 5.

3. Vincenza Scherrer and Alba Bescos Pou, ed, *Security Sector Reform and Sustaining Peace: Proceedings of the High-Level Roundtable* (New York: DCAF, 2018).

4. Anwar Iqbal, "Afghan Army to Collapse in Six Months Without US Help: Ghani," Dawn, accessed May 2021, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1383601>.

5. IANS, "NATO decides to fund Afghan security forces until 2024," Financial Express, accessed May 2021, <https://www.financialexpress.com/world-news/nato-decides-to-fund-afghan-security-forces-until-2024/1242871/>.

proper reforming for financial independence, the Afghan security sector will remain as a rentier security apparatus that will likely face severe challenges and might collapse, in the absence or drastic decrease of external financing, the same way as it happened in the 1990s.<sup>1</sup>

Owing to its strategic location at the crossroad of Central Asia-South Asia, Afghanistan has a high potential for revenue generation, acting as a transit hub between Central-South Asia. Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India gas pipeline (TAPI) and Central Asia-South Asia power project (CASA-1000) are only two examples of big regional projects from which Afghanistan can benefit economically. Afghanistan will annually receive USD 400 million in transit fees.<sup>2</sup> Taxation is another source through which the Afghan security sector could be financed. At present, reportedly, around USD 8 million worth of revenue is being embezzled daily at Afghanistan customs which is a huge amount that can finance a part of the security sector expenditures if collected properly.<sup>3</sup>

#### **3.4.4. International versus National driven SSR**

There is no universally accepted SSR model applicable to every case, rather each context requires its own specific model based on the realities on the ground; the historical and cultural background, engagement of different actors and the nature of conflicts it has experienced.<sup>4</sup> The success of any SSR intervention heavily depends on the inclusivity, indigeneity and participatory approach of the process. Security sector reform not only focuses on restructuring the security institutions and structures in post-conflict societies but also pays attention to the causes of conflicts. As such, the SSR process has to be inclusive that reflects the views of the ordinary citizens, not only the security practitioners and elites.<sup>5</sup> Designing context-specific SSR strategies require grassroots consultations and reviews. The 2005 inclusive Internal Security Sector Review process (ISSR) in

1. Barnett R. Rubin, "State Collapse after the Cold War: Afghanistan without Foreign Aid," in *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan* (Yale University Press, 1995), 265–88, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt32bjh8.21>.

2. Larry Hanauer and Peter Chalk, *India's and Pakistan's Strategies in Afghanistan: Implications for the United States and the Region* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2012).

3. Massoud Ansar, "MPs: '\$8 Million Embezzled Daily' at Customs," *TOLONews*, accessed May 2021, <https://tolonews.com/business-172264>.

4. United Nations Approaches to Security Sector Reform, DECAF, 2006, 1-6.

5. Vincenza Scherrer and Alba Bescos Pou, ed, *Security Sector Reform and Sustaining Peace: Proceedings of the High-Level Roundtable* (New York: DCAF, 2018)

Kosovo found that, unlike earlier perceptions, neither external factors nor inter-ethnic tension was the cause of the conflict, rather it was economic instability and poor economy.<sup>1</sup>

Ignoring or downplaying the role of local people and national authorities likely to bear counter counterproductive results. Addressing the needs of the population in terms of providing safety and services delivery, including access to justice, is a core component of SSR. Achieving durable peace is not possible unless the reform properly addresses those needs. The fragility of the situation in Sierra Leone originates from the fact that the 2002 SSR was not as inclusive as it should be and did not fully consider the provision of services to the population.<sup>2</sup> Bringing in the population in the process extensively contributes to military-civilian trust, a key factor in the sustainability of the sector. SSR's had been successful in the Gambia, the Central African Republic and Mali not only due to the fact that the processes have been people-centered, inclusive and participatory but the nations' diversity also has been considered in the security sector composition.<sup>3</sup>

The role of external actors, however, cannot be undermined. In post-conflict contexts, the local capacity is usually low and the institutions suffer from a lack of credibility. Thus, a huge number of external actors take on broader roles who most probably apply short-sighted approaches and pay less attention to the root causes of instability due to the knowledge gap about the context.<sup>4</sup> The top-down international models and mechanisms is not an all-ever solution to peacebuilding, peacekeeping and SSR. Most often, taking a bottom-up locally-owned process is the better approach for choosing the right SSR for a specific context. In Timor-Leste, according to its former president Kaya Rala Zanana Gusmao, a nationally-led consultation process led to the peace accord while the UN peacekeeping mission earlier had failed in achieving any considerable progress towards maintaining security and finding solution for the political instability.<sup>5</sup>

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1. Ibid.

2. Ibid, 7.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid, 18-20.

### 3.5. Security Sector Reform After Peace – The International Experience

In a post-conflict environment, the successful implementation of SSR requires national ownership and national leadership. To foster national ownership in the SSR process, there is a significant need to promote the principle of inclusivity and strengthen the trust between the people and the security sector. National ownership depends on the capacity to build trust and confidence of people in the security system. As an example, the SSR process in the Gambia shows how it was instrumental in improving the public's trust in the security system and encouraging citizens to play their role in security sector assessment. As part of the SRR process in the Gambia, the public was consulted in all parts of the society resulting in the development of a people-oriented security system in the country.<sup>1</sup>

In another experience in Mali, the government of Mali and the armed groups signed an agreement of peace and reconciliation in 2015 to end the long years of violent conflicts. The agreement is known as the “Algiers process,” and it was reached with the assistance of international mediators. The agreement provided a commitment from the Government of Mali and two coalitions of armed groups: the Coordination of Azawad Movements (CMA) and the Platform of armed groups to end violent confrontations, consolidate peace and enhance local participatory governance in Mali. The peace agreement is mainly based on five pillars, including structures for regional and local peace and reconciliation, a Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) program, decentralization measures, and the implementation of community policing to improve trust between the local population and security system. One of the main pillars of this agreement is the establishment and implementation of Mixed Patrols, locally known as the “MOC” (Mécanisme Opérationnel de Coordination), which is a joint force composed of the Malian army and ex-combatants from the signatory parties. Although due to intensified tensions and insecurity, most of the population lost their trust in the peace agreement, specifically in the MOC, there have been some initiatives to rebuild trust between the public and MOC through participatory dialogue and joint and localized activities.<sup>2</sup>

1. Ibid.

2. Interpeace, “Building Trust in Mali: the Peace and Reconciliation Agreement five years on,” August 2010, <https://www.>

Northern Ireland is another country suffering from more than three decades of identity-related violent conflict between mostly Protestant unionists and Catholic republicans. Protestants wanted to remain a part of the United Kingdom, while nationalists wished to unite with the Republic of Ireland. To end the long-lasting violence, the British and Irish governments signed a peace agreement known as the Belfast (Good Friday) peace agreement on April 10, 1998, providing a framework for a political settlement based on a power-sharing approach between the unionists and nationalists. Having the support of the majority of political parties in Northern Ireland, the agreement paved the path for the establishment of the Human Rights and Equality Commission, which had the authority of releasing prisoners, decommissioning paramilitary weapons, and reforming police and criminal justice system. The agreement was validated through referenda in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.<sup>1</sup> The police force in Northern Ireland was mostly Protestant and had a long history of abusive policing in the country, which was making the republicans and nationalists view them as partisan and not approaching them for help. Therefore, in most areas, paramilitaries were involved in dealing with the crimes and anti-social practices, which resulted in indisposed informal justice practices. The peace agreement facilitated the establishment of a framework for an Independent Commission on Policing consists of local and international actors to reform the police sector and criminal justice sector. The commission consulted every police station and took the views of thousands of police officers. They also approached the public to have their views regarding policing and criminal justice. The commission delivered a report consisting of 175 recommendations for change in the aforementioned sector, mainly based on two pillars of respect for human rights and policing within the community. The main intention of many of these recommendations was to make the police sector more neutral. Therefore, the name, symbols, and uniforms of the police were changed. In addition, an equal recruitment protocol was put in place for both Catholics and Protestants and human rights training was instituted.<sup>2</sup>

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[interpeace.org/2020/08/rebuilding-reconciliation-agreement/](https://interpeace.org/2020/08/rebuilding-reconciliation-agreement/).

1. DCAF, "Security Sector Reform in Post-Conflict Peacebuilding," 2009, DCAF Backgrounder 4.

2. Mary O'Rawe, "Security System Reform and Identity in Divided Societies: Lessons from Northern Ireland," The International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) Research Brief (2009).

### 3.6. Security Sector Reform for Peace – The Afghan Experience

In December 2001 and after the removal of the Taliban from power, Afghan politicians attended the Bonn conference and signed an agreement, which provided a framework for an interim government to support state-building efforts and facilitate free and fair elections in the country.<sup>1</sup> In terms of the SSR, the Bonn agreement only contributed indirectly and not as part of the broader rule of law reforms in the country. The agreement emphasized on establishment of an international security force under the supervision of the United Nations until the development of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). It also required all Afghan armed forces and armed groups to come under the control and command of the interim government. The UN Security Council resolution 1386 established a military force known as the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to maintain security in the country.<sup>2</sup>

The Demobilization, Disarmament, and Reintegration (DDR) process was established later, focusing on Afghan Military Forces without a comprehensive assessment of the strength of these forces. There was a contradiction in the number of ANSF personnel presented by the Afghan Ministry of Defense and UNAMA. Despite disarming a huge number of military forces and armed groups, Afghanistan is still littered with illegal weapons and armed groups.<sup>3</sup>

The development of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) was one of the most important elements of the NATO counter-insurgency strategy in Afghanistan. Although billions of dollars contributed by the international community spent on the ANSF, there are no major achievements in terms of SSR as the process was mainly focused on training and equipping the Afghan security forces rather than considering the community safety, access to justice, and institutional sustainability.<sup>4</sup>

A peace agreement provides a unique opportunity for parties involved in the

1. Jarstad Anna K., "Unpacking the friction in local ownership of security sector reform in Afghanistan," *Peacebuilding* 1, no. 3 (2013).

2. Ayub, Fatima, Sari Kouvo, and Rachel Wareham, "Security Sector Reform in Afghanistan," *Initiative for Peacebuilding* (2009): 11-12.

3. *Ibid*, 13

4. Sedra, Mark. 2014. "An Uncertain Future for Afghanistan's Security Sector." *Stability: International Journal of Security & Development* 2-3.

conflict to directly discuss fundamental security issues and addresses substantial security-related challenges, including DDR, restructuring of security forces, and development of a democratic oversight body for the security sector.<sup>1</sup>

### 3.7. Challenges of Post -2001 SSR Attempts in Afghanistan

In 2002 at the Petersburg conference i.e. “Rebuilding Afghanistan: Peace and Stability”, the donor community and the Afghan interim government set the agenda for building a new Afghan National Army (ANA) and implementing the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) program.<sup>2</sup> The same year at a Geneva conference, five pillars of Security Sector Reform in Afghanistan were introduced, including “military reform”, “police reform”, “judiciary reform”, “counternarcotic,” and “DDR”. The United States, Germany, the UK, Italy and Japan took responsibility for implementing reforms across each SSR pillar, respectively.<sup>3</sup> The SSR intervention in Afghanistan meant to deal with the many problems of post-conflict “state-building”. However, despite the ambitious roadmap, the implementation of SSR program in Afghanistan lacked major requirements such as proper coordination and cooperation among the local and the international actors. With different donor countries taking responsibility for the implementation of various SSR pillars, the SSR intervention suffered from compartmentalization and fragmentation. Moreover, due to the focus of international actors on the War on Terror, the SSR intervention in Afghanistan was rather militarized. The police force was activated, though not as law enforcement; it was rather trained and put to work as “*little soldiers*” to fight the insurgency.<sup>4</sup> As a result, less attention was paid to the governance aspects of the SSR program. DDR was not implemented as planned; instead of promoting the rule of law and focusing on long-term recovery plans, the US-led coalition forces allied with the warlords to secure short term goals.<sup>5</sup> The counternarcotics operation too failed to bear results. A 2020 report by the United Kingdom Parliament, House of Lords International

1. Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF). 2009. “Security Sector Reform in Post-Conflict Peacebuilding.” DCAF Backgrounder.

2. Peter Dahl Thruelsen, From Soldier to Civilian: Disarmament, Demobilization Reintegration in Afghanistan, DIIS, 2006, <https://css.ethz.ch/en/services/digital-library/publications/publication.html/20984>

3. Caroline A. Hartzell, “Missed Opportunities, The Impact of DDR on SSR in Afghanistan”, USIP, 2011.

4. Robert M. Perito, Afghanistan’s Police, The Weak Link in Security Sector Reform, USIP, 2009

5. Caroline A. Hartzell, “Missed Opportunities, The Impact of DDR on SSR in Afghanistan”, USIP, 2011

Relations and Defense Committee on “drugs, security, and counternarcotics policies in Afghanistan”, highlights that the illicit drug economy is deeply entrenched into the country’s economy. Post-2001 counternarcotic measures undertaken in Afghanistan - such as alternative livelihood efforts, were largely ineffective and insufficient.<sup>1</sup> The report emphasizes that in order for counternarcotic measures to be successfully implemented, structural drivers of the illicit drug economy – including “*insecurity, political struggles, and a lack of economic alternatives*”, must be addressed and eliminated.<sup>2</sup>

*“In a political system underpinned by patronage, where the central government for over a decade paid off warlords and powerbrokers by tolerating corruption and not enforcing rule of law, the opium poppy economy has been a key mechanism of keeping such actors anchored in the political system. Such a political management approach contradicts the acute need to improve governance”.*<sup>3</sup>

With regard to judiciary reform, lacking expertise and resources, Italy too failed to improve the country’s judiciary system. Though subsequent multilateral efforts resulted in certain improvements in the judiciary, the court system is still known to be one of the most corrupt institutions in the Afghan government.<sup>4</sup>

The donor community initiated its SSR intervention in Afghanistan while lacking any substantive guidelines. Major SSR guidelines, including the OECD handbook, are published years after the SSR efforts started in the country.

### **3.8. SIGAR Reports**

#### **3.8.1. Lack of Oversight**

The principal donor i.e. the US government, largely ignored the system-wise approach of the SSR intervention. The US government and its allies supported the Afghan security sector, mainly through traditional Security Sector Assistance

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1. Vanda Felbab-Brown, “Drugs, Security, and Counternarcotics Policies in Afghanistan,” House of Lords International Relations and Defence Committee’s Inquiry into Afghanistan, October 29, 2020, <https://www.brookings.edu/testimonies/drugs-security-and-counternarcotics-policies-in-afghanistan/>.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid, 13

4. “Reforming Afghanistan’s Broken Judiciary,” International Crises Group, Asia Report N°195 – 17 November 2010, <https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/4ceb88c52.pdf>.



(SSA) i.e. train and equip approach.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, security sector assistance efforts suffered from a lack of meaningful oversight i.e. systemic oversight. As Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) highlights, “no one person, agency, country, or military service” shouldered the oversight responsibility of security sector assistance programs.<sup>2</sup>

SIGAR suggests that the US government “*contributed to the growth of corruption by injecting tens of billions of dollars into the Afghan economy, using flawed oversight and contracting practices, and partnering with malign powerbrokers*”<sup>3</sup>. By 2013, the US recognized corruption as a major obstacle ahead of its reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan. However, in 2016, SIGAR pointed out that due to lack of Afghan and US political commitment- exemplified by lack of common direction and lack of prioritization of anti-corruption efforts, the US anti-corruption efforts failed to address the problem properly.<sup>4</sup>

### **3.8.2. Corruption within ANDSF**

Widespread corruption across the security and defense institutions significantly hindered the SSR efforts. According to SIGAR, lack of conditionality on US funds provided space for corrupt officials to engage in corruption without the fear of punishment and prosecution”.<sup>5</sup> In 2017, President Ghani acknowledged that the Interior Ministry is at the center of corruption in the security sector.<sup>6</sup> “*Pay-for-play schemes; the theft of fuel, supplies, and commodities; and narcotics collusion*”, are recognized as common criminal activities taking place within the security and defense institutions.<sup>7</sup> Besides that, the Afghan security sector has grown as a highly politicized institution; factionalism and tribalism penetrated all levels of decision makings. Recruitment and promotions are not merit-based, among other things.<sup>8</sup>

1. “Reconstructing the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces: Lessons from the U.S. Experience in Afghanistan”, SIGAR, 2017, [https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/lessonslearned/SIGAR-17-62-LL.pdf?mod=article\\_inline](https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/lessonslearned/SIGAR-17-62-LL.pdf?mod=article_inline).

2. “Divided Responsibility: Lessons from U.S. Security Sector Assistance Efforts in Afghanistan”, SIGAR, June 2019, <https://www.sigar.mil/interactive-reports/divided-responsibility/index.html>.

3. “Corruption in Conflict: Lessons from the U.S. Experience in Afghanistan”, SIGAR, 2016, <https://www.sigar.mil/interactive-reports/corruption-in-conflict/part1.html>.

4. *Ibid*, 137

5. *Ibid*.

6. *Ibid*.

7. *Ibid*, 85

8. *Ibid*, 137

SIGAR continuously highlighted the problem of so called “ghost soldiers” and the threat it poses on the development of the ANDSF. While using a biometric system of registration helped lessen the severity of the threat, lack of proper monitoring and lack of modern infrastructures- such as “internet access and reliable electricity”, still challenge any anti-corruption efforts in that regard.<sup>1</sup>

SIGAR findings, next to various other reports on the status of the Afghan security forces, suggest that any attempts for reforming Afghanistan’s security force need to tackle the many issues of corruption across the security sector institutions, not only corruption within ANDSF. The Afghan armed forces i.e. are part of the wider security sector encompassing various institutions of governance. Lately, President Ghani acknowledged that at least half of national revenues are stolen and misused.<sup>2</sup>In its latest report, SIGAR points out that “narcotics remains a primary source of Taliban income”.<sup>3</sup> The failure of the government to deal with the illicit drug economy by itself shows that corruption is rampant within law enforcement institutions.

### 3.9. SSR in on-going conflict contexts

Applying SSR activities is way more easier in countries that have been undergoing a long process of democratization and development than in immediate post-conflict or in-conflict states. Reforming the security sector for peace is difficult in an in-conflict country like Afghanistan due to the fact that in such contexts, the national actors usually resist reforms.<sup>4</sup> Reforms jeopardize the national non-state actors’ income from illegal activities as well as the corrupt officials’ income from the activities only possible in lack of the rule of law. Factionalism and ethnic-based competitions further complicate reforms. SSR is usually slowed down, especially in multi-ethnic societies, because in such settings, power is divided along ethnic lines and any reforms immediately

1. Ibid, 172

2. “Admitting Failure, At Least 50 Percent of National Income Is Stolen,” 8AM, March 29, 2021, <https://8am.af/admitting-failure-at-least-50-of-national-income-is-stolen/>.

3. “SIGAR: Narcotics Remains a Primary Source of Taliban Income,” TOLONNEWS, accessed April 6, 2021, <https://tolonews.com/afghanistan-171249#:~:text=SIGAR%20also%20quoted%20a%20UN,to%20be%20approximately%20%24400%20million.&text=The%20watchdog%20says%20that%20Afghanistan,percent%20of%20the%20world's%20heroin>.

4. United Nations Approaches to Security Sector Reform, DCAF, 2006.

impact the traditional power relations.<sup>1</sup> The case of Afghanistan, thus, is extremely complicated because it contains both SSR restrictive factors.

### **3.10. The Afghan Government Efforts and Perspective**

Security sector reform for peace in Afghanistan started in the first years after the overthrow of the Taliban regime in late 2001. The 2000 SSR program focused on five pillars and each pillar was led by a lead-donor country.<sup>2</sup> The program, however, failed in bringing fundamental reforms in the specified sectors. The division of reform activities among the leading sponsor nations complicated the situation. Hence, the program lacked coordinated SSR activities while initially the activities were designed as supplemental to each other.<sup>3</sup> At the time, Afghanistan also lacked certain preconditions, such as lack of personnel and institutional capacity and local ownership, for SSR implementation.<sup>4</sup>

While SSR is aimed in bringing and promoting of transparency, accountability, inclusivity, professionalism and justice, it has not been viewed by the Afghan officials as such. On the contrary, the security sector was politicized from the very first years and different ethnic groups had different ethnic-centered expectations from the security sector.<sup>5</sup> The officials at the security ministries favored their own ethnic members and thus violated merited-based professionalism and inclusivity, which are key aspects of SSR. In 2002, for instance, out of the 38 generals chosen by former Defense Minister Marshal Qasim Fahim, an ethnic Tajik, to constitute the general staff of the army, 37 were Tajiks, and of the 37 Tajiks, 35 were associated Fahim's front Shura-i-Nazar.<sup>6</sup> In a multi-ethnic country like Afghanistan, inclusion is very important for the success of SSR and it has to be both ethnically and geographically. However, ethnically motivated purposes continued to remain in the elite level and overshadowed impartial and effective reform.

SSR in Afghanistan has been mostly donor-driven while lacking national

1. Andrzej Karkoszka, "The Concept of Security Sector Reform."

2. "Afghanistan SSR Snapshot," DCAF, last update February 2015, <https://issat.dcaf.ch/Learn/Resource-Library/Country-Profiles/Afghanistan-SSR-Snapshot>.

3. Mark Sedra, "Diagnosing the Failings of Security Sector Reform in Afghanistan," *Security and Peace* 28, no. 4 (2010).

4. *Ibid.*

5. *Ibid.*

6. Carol J. Riphpenbur, "Ethnicity and Civil Society in Contemporary Afghanistan," *Middle East Journal* 59, no. 1 (winter 2005): 41.

ownership. The fragmented reform activities prevented a clearly defined, well-coordinated long-term strategic vision and practical commitment by the donors and the Afghan government has been the key obstacles in security sector reform in Afghanistan.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the Afghan government lacked political commitment and only implemented partial reforms for securing donors' aids. The gap in a strategic vision created the condition for bolstering ethnically motivated agendas.

### **3.11. The Taliban's Views**

The view of the Taliban regarding reforms in the Afghanistan security sector reform is not very clear. So far, the group has not seriously discussed the issue. However, it seems the group likely to demand radical changes in the security sector, something quite the opposite to SSR. The group repeatedly has said that they do not recognize the Afghan government and call it a western-imported system.<sup>2</sup> The group's position literary means they do not want the Afghan security and defense forces that have been trained and equipped by the US and its NATO allies.

Last year, Taliban's spokesperson in an interview with a local TV channel said that the hands of the Afghan security personnel were stained with the blood of the nation.<sup>3</sup> With such a radical view, it is difficult to be optimist about the future of the Afghan security sector. However, as part of the ongoing peace process, and based on SSR principle, former combatants and their families have to be reintegrated into military and civil life.

In 2010, the government of Afghanistan developed the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme (APRP), a framework for national peace to combine the political, security, and development dimensions of peacebuilding in the country. The program was fully supported by the international community and internally, a National Consultative Jirga issued a decree approving the APRP structure and detailed the directions for the implementation of this program.

1. Christian Dennys and Tom Hamilton-Baillie, "Strategic Support to Security Sector Reform in Afghanistan: 2001-2010," CIGI SSR Issue Papers, no. 6, 2012.

2. Tamim Hamid, "Taliban Doesn't Recognize Afghan Government: Statement," TOLONews, accessed May 2021, <https://tolonews.com/afghanistan/taliban-doesn%E2%80%99t-recognize-afghan-govt-statement>.

3. "Editorial: Polarity at Its Peak," Afghanistan Times, accessed May 2021, <http://www.afghanistantimes.af/editorial-polarity-at-its-peak/>.

However, since the National Unity Government (NUG), peacebuilding efforts have, largely, been focused on high-level reconciliation and negotiation to achieve an immediate and durable peace by reaching a political solution to the ongoing conflict and taking measures to reintegrate armed opposition groups into the security sector.<sup>1</sup>

On March 30, 2021, Afghan President, Ashraf Ghani, unveiled his plan for peace at the Heart of Asia Conference held in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. The proposal includes three phases. First, build consensus around a political settlement in the country and an internationally monitored ceasefire between the parties involved in the conflict. Second, hold a presidential election through which a government of peace will be established. Third, build a constitutional framework, and pave the way for the reintegration of armed forces and refugees. Based on Ashraf Ghani's peace proposal, the peace process would address the reintegration of combatants and refugees, new security forces would be defined, and development and governance priorities would be determined after an agreement is reached and a new, permanent government is established.<sup>2</sup>

However, there have been no formal statements from the Taliban side on the security sector reform and their position on various topics has been vague and ambiguous, including the SSR.

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1. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Afghanistan. n.d. Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme (APRP), accessed 05 29, 2021, <https://www.af.undp.org/content/afghanistan/en/home/projects/APRP.html>

2. Ruttig, Thomas. 2021. Conditions-based Interim Government: President Ghani presents a preview of his peace plan. 04 01. Accessed 05 29, 2021. <https://www.afghanistan-analysts.org/en/reports/war-and-peace/conditions-based-interim-government-president-ghani-presents-a-preview-of-his-peace-plan/>.

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## CHAPTER FOUR

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### *The Afghan Military and Security Forces in Historical Perspective*

#### **4.1. Historical Evolution of the Afghan Defense and Security Forces**

The Afghan defense and security forces under the reign of King Zahir, Dawood Khan and the leftist regime- especially under Najibullah's government are remembered as disciplined and professional. Participants from across various FGDs and KIIs point out that until coming to power of Mujahedeen, the defense and security personnel worked through professional disciplines characterized by functioning command structure, proper training and institutional support for the personnel. It is emphasized that in the previous era, the defense and security forces were committed to national solidarity and integrity; conscription made sure that every capable man would serve under the flag.

*"I liked Dawood Khan's rein in power; because at the time, through conscription people served under the flag. People voluntarily served their country without expecting any reward. During their time, they would receive basic education and then they would go back to their village as someone important. They learned some military skills and when necessary they were ready to defend their country's independence and freedom".<sup>1</sup>*

*"Under Najibullah, we had the best well-equipped defence and security forces and under Dawood Khan, we had the most disciplined and trained forces. During Dawood's rein in power, since there was no war, they focused on training, disciplining and equipping the forces. But during Najibullah's rein in power, we had better logistics and equipment, better planning and a functional intelligence service"<sup>2</sup>*

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1. FGD male participant, retired army officer, Mazar-e Sharif.

2. FGD male participant, retired police colonel, Herat.

Even participants with Jihadi background who fought the Soviet sponsored armed forces, think of the previous defence and security forces as capable and professional.

*“After our [Mujahedeen’s] victory, together with our Khalqi and Parchami<sup>1</sup> brothers, we managed to create a strong army. Foreigners feared that and started to instigate a civil war among us. Previous armies such as those under Zahir Khan and Dawood Khan and afterward cannot be compared with the current army; the current army is built through personal preferences”.*<sup>2</sup>

A critical review of the development of the ANDSF shows that institutional developments of the forces depend on two major intertwined problems, including a) how the governing elite approached external security assistance and b) how they viewed people as beneficiaries of the security system. Rulers approach towards the above mentioned problems determines the posture of the defense and security forces against the government’s perceived and actual enemies i.e. threats. From this perspective, the Afghan defense and security forces and, for that matter, the Afghan government, undergone several phases of development.

In contrast to various rulers who ruled within traditional arrangements, viewed people as mere subjects and financed their forces through plunder and dependency on external donors- exemplified by Ahmad Shah Baba and Abdurrahman Khan, the constitutional monarchy of King Amanullah, in the beginning of the 20th century, initiates the first systemic reform of the security apparatus in the country. By committing to certain constitutional legal constraints, the King makes the armed forces and for that matter, the government, conditioned within legal professional boundaries. Through the introduction of the rule of law and political independence, King Amanullah provides a basis for accountable governance. In fact, during King Amanullah,s reign in power “*security sector*” starts to develop across government institutions. He starts buying aircraft and founds Afghanistan’s first ever air force.

*“Shir Ali Khan founded the first armoury. But the first army equipped with*

1. Khalqi and Parchami were two factions within the leftist pro-Soviet regime in Afghanistan.

2. FGD male participant, former Jihadi, retired army officer, Herat.

*the air force was initiated under the founder of Afghanistan's independence Amanullah Khan. That force continued functioning during King Nader and King Zahir. However by 1965 the national security force undergone proper modernization. At this time, we possessed modern equipment and weaponry unparalleled in the region".<sup>1</sup>*

Despite consecutive periods of disruption – exemplified by Habibullah Kalakani's rebellion against the modernizing efforts of King Amanullah and Dawood Khan's bloodless coup against King Zahir, the Afghan defense and security forces continued modernizing and developing under various regimes. However, by each uprising and coup, the quality of accountability of the defense and security apparatus – and for that matter, the security sector, became more and more susceptible to politicization and ideological imposition.

*"Before Amanullah Khan we did not have a professional army. The first professional army started to develop under King Amanullah, but it could not survive the rebellion. The army was developed further under the royal family and King Nadir. After 1964 we proceeded with proper institutional reforms. However when we analyse [these developments] we see that as a result of coupes, ideological tendencies overshadow national integrity".<sup>2</sup>*

Both the Communists and the Jihadists - through their ideological inclination, significantly contributed to the politicization of the defense and security forces. Reconstruction of the ANDSF in the post- 2001 period heralds a new area in the development of the national defense and security forces. Rhetorically, the ANDSF is supposed to function as apolitical professional forces under a civilian government. However, given that post-2021 ANDSF experienced a flawed SSR programming, the forces still struggle to embody the desired professional criterion. Any future SSR programming needs to take historical lessons into consideration. Improving the relationship between the people and the government and addressing the prolonged dependency on foreign funding seems to be the primary challenges ahead of the development of the defense and security forces.

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1. FGD male participant, retired police colonel, Mazar-e Sharif.

2. FGD male participant, civil society activist, Herat





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## CHAPTER FIVE

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### *The Current Structure and Organization of the Afghan Security Forces*

#### **5.1. Afghan National Army**

The ANA's quantity after 2002 until now developed from 75,000 to 195,000. ANA was established on the strategy of counterinsurgency forces and based more on human resources than on combat techniques. These forces are not capable of defending Afghanistan, s territory due to lack of basic air transport, hunting and bombard classes, air defenses (rockets and radars), air defense rockets and gunners, armor, and maintenance.

The current organization of the Ministry of Defence (MoD) is copied from NATO and the US Ministry of Defence. Although this organization makes sense for the large army such as the United States, Britain, France and Germany, however, it is not applicable to a country like Afghanistan. In fact, it has created hidden unemployment across the ANDSF headquarters. For example, in the early days of the ANA reform, the MoD procurement department had more than 400 staff, while it was possible for the department to accomplish its tasks with 50 personnel. Similarly, Deputies for policy and strategy, intelligence, education and personnel, recruited a large number of staff which was not necessary. In addition, the ANDSF is suffering from parallel institutions. Currently, two law directorates, two financial directorates, two logistics directorates work alongside each other. Their tasks could be fulfilled by a single directorate with the addition of policy management. The Resources Directorate, the Directorate of Technology and the Directorate of Operation for AT&L, face similar problems. The research participants across provincial FGDs and KIIs provided similar accounts.

*“The organization of our defence and security forces is partial; its basic classes are not complete. Recently, the Americans have stated the fact that if the US forces withdraw, Afghan air force will not be able to carry out air attacks.”<sup>1</sup>*

Due to political interventions of domestic actors in the development of the ANA i.e. politicization of the force, since its establishment, the ANA lacks professionalism. Recruitment, appointment and promotion across the ANA organizations and structures often take place based on one’s political, ethnic and kinship affiliations. The institution is overwhelmed by endemic corruption; as a result, financial resources – among other things, are manipulated and wasted.

*“Political interventions weakened the defense and security forces. Politicians and parliamentarians should not play a role in determining personnel’s position within the force, especially the leadership of the force. They should always be monitored through formal mechanisms”.<sup>2</sup>*

Moreover, roles and responsibilities of various departments and individual actors inside the Ministry of Defence are not professionally defined and preserved. For example, the finance directorate of the ministry has an executive role while the finance directorate of Chief of Staff, which should have had an executive role, plays a policy-making role.<sup>3</sup>

Training in the ANA, especially for soldiers and sergeants, is better than the former army, but it is not the case for the officers. Until 2014, high quality military training were provided by coalition forces. However, when the responsibility was handed over to Afghans, due to the endemic corruption and lack of proper resources, the quality of education for all soldiers, sergeants and officers, deteriorated. According to a retired General, officers at Marshal Fahim University have been training in civilian fields for four years, and only in the last few months, they become familiar with military principles which do not match Afghanistan’s conditions.<sup>4</sup> The focus of education has been mostly on English and computer skills rather than military skills.<sup>5</sup> This is why graduates

1. FGD male participant, retired conolel, Mazar-e-Sharif.

2. Ibid.

3. FGD male participant, retired conolel, Kabul.

4. FGD male participant, retired General, Herat.

5. Ibid.

of the university and other military schools suffer a high number of casualties.

*“The training offered to the defense and security forces are very poor. In the past, soldiers proceeded a daily regular schedule, starting from breakfast to going to training field. But now these trainings do not exist.”<sup>1</sup>*

On the other hand, different countries, such as Italians, Germans, Spanish and Americans, each carried out education in different parts of the country with different educational methods, both in the case of the police and the army.<sup>2</sup> The research participants suggested that *“if there was good quality education in place, we would not have been in this situation.”<sup>3</sup>* In the meanwhile, in comparison to the quality of the army force training, the police force is provided with low quality education.

*“The quality of education for the army is comparatively good. The recruited soldier is directed to training centres, and afterwards dispatched. But it’s not the case fo the police. In Herat province, the police personnel in Enjil district weren’t willing to serve in Gozara district and vice versa. It is supposed to be a National Police, but it has not been developed from a local force to a national force.”<sup>4</sup>*

Planning of military operations follows a bottom up process. This system could be improved if officers across battalions and brigades had more professional abilities, better military equipment i.e. gunners, tanks, engineering, air support and, more importantly, better intelligence. Although the process of making decisions is properly taught to officers, but the poor literacy ratio of the officers in educational centers on the one hand, and on the other hand, the poor ability of the commanders of brigades and battalions in discipline and administration, hinder good planning.

*“In my opinion, the coordination, administration and planning of the operations of the defense and security forces are very weak. This coordination should be much tighter and closer.”<sup>5</sup>*

*“If they have strong professional relationships, then why so many accidents*

1. FGD male participant, retired conolel, Mazar-e-Sharif.

2. FGD male participant, Religious Scholar, Herat.

3. FGD male participant, retired conolel, Mazar-e-Sharif.

4. FGD male participant, retired General, Mazar-e-Sharif.

5. FGD male participant, retired conolel, Mazar-e-Sharif.

*happen. They don't have strong professional coordination; they don't listen to each other. In the past, while working in radar department of the air force, once I lost the track of the president's aircraft for eight seconds; as a consequence my promotion postponed for one year; I was investigated and suspended. Today such radar system does not exist anymore and there is no coordination within departments".<sup>1</sup>*

Due to lack of good governance and corruption, the ANA has lost most of its capabilities. The appointment of officers is not merit-based; it is rather based on relationships and bribery.

*"Good governance plays an essential role in keeping moral and motivation of the personnel. Now the personnel is not taken care of, our martyrs remain on the battlefield, even their bodies are eaten by wild animals".<sup>2</sup>*

*"When tope positions across the police and the army are bought and sold for USD 300,000, or USD 20,000, when at Herat customs, which should fund half of the army, every month millions of dollars is lost, when expensive goods such as computers in the customs are taxed as toilet paper, who do you go to? Do you go the Ministry of Defence to investigate it? It is itself corrupt. Corrupt entities, cannot prevent corruption"<sup>3</sup>*

*"The difference between the former army and the current one is the existence of corruption within the current defence and security forces; we lost our national spirit and integrity. Today, the sickness of ethnocentrism overwhelms national integrity".<sup>4</sup>*

The militia force and militia making is another problem that has severely damaged the reputation of the defense and security forces. Even it is being argued that the militia force caused the collapse of the previous system.

*"Wherever militias are promoted, injustice, genocide and theft became commonplace; the previous government collapsed by militia forces".<sup>5</sup>*  
*The creation of local [regional] armies weakened the formal army. If we have a well-equipped army in place, then we would not need the militias. The*

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1. FGD male participant, retired air force office, Mazar-e-Sharif.

2. FGD male participant, retired conolel, Mazar-e-Sharif.

3. FGD male participant, retired conolel, Herat.

4. FGD male participant, retired General, Mazar-e-Sharif.

5. FGD male participant, retired conolel, Herat.

*militia force destroys the system. Resources must be spent on the army itself.<sup>1</sup>*

Poor education, lack of basic classes and deployment of the forces in the form of small checkpoints significantly hindered the successful performance of the forces.<sup>2</sup> After 2014, most well-trained officers, sergeants and soldiers either were discharged from the ranks or got killed and wounded or abandoned the ranks. It is widely believed that by eliminating corruption, education will be improved and merit-based appointment and professionalism will replace the existing corrupt and unprofessional practices.<sup>3</sup>

## **5.2. Afghanistan's Army and Police Organizational Structure after 2001**

It was initially agreed at the Bonn conference that Afghanistan would have 75,000 troops and about 60,000 police force. But later on, with the rise and intensification of insurgency, it was decided that the size of the defense and security forces shall be increased to 195,000 troops and 157,000 police force.

### **Composition of the ANA**

The army includes Ground Forces/ Troops, Air Force and Special Forces. The status of each component is as follows:

- a. Ground Troops are responsible for securing Afghanistan and its borders; most of the army's forces are ground units
- b. Air Force provides air support for ground forces.
- c. Special Forces are responsible for launching special operations to capture and arrest armed opposition commanders; they carry out strike operations.

### **Composition of the ANP**

The police force includes Public Order Police, Border Police and Special Forces. The status of each component is as follows:

- a. Public Order Police operates as a law enforcement force among the citizens.
- b. Border police is tasked with protecting the country's borders.<sup>4</sup>

1. FGD male participant, retired conolel, Mazar-e-Sharif.

2. Ibid.

3. FGD male participant, retired conolel, Herat.

4. Based Afghanistan's president order, the public protection and border police joined the defense ministry from interior ministry, [https://sacs.gov.af/dtr/get\\_pillar\\_activity/131](https://sacs.gov.af/dtr/get_pillar_activity/131)

### **5.3. The ANDSF Organizational Structure**

#### **5.3.1 Minister of Defense**

- First Deputy Minister of Defense
- Deputy Minister of Defense for Education and Personnel
- Deputy Minister of Defense for Material and Technical Supplies
- Deputy Minister of Defense for Policy and Strategy
- Deputy Minister of Defense for Policy of Intelligence

#### **Chief of Staff**

- Deputy Chief of Staff
- Deputy Chief of Staff
- Air Deputy
- Education Command (KMTC, Marshal Fahim University and schools and etc.)
- Recruitment Command

Chief of Staff has two independent brigades and two independent Divisions in Kabul, 8 regionals, Air and spec. corps and border forces:

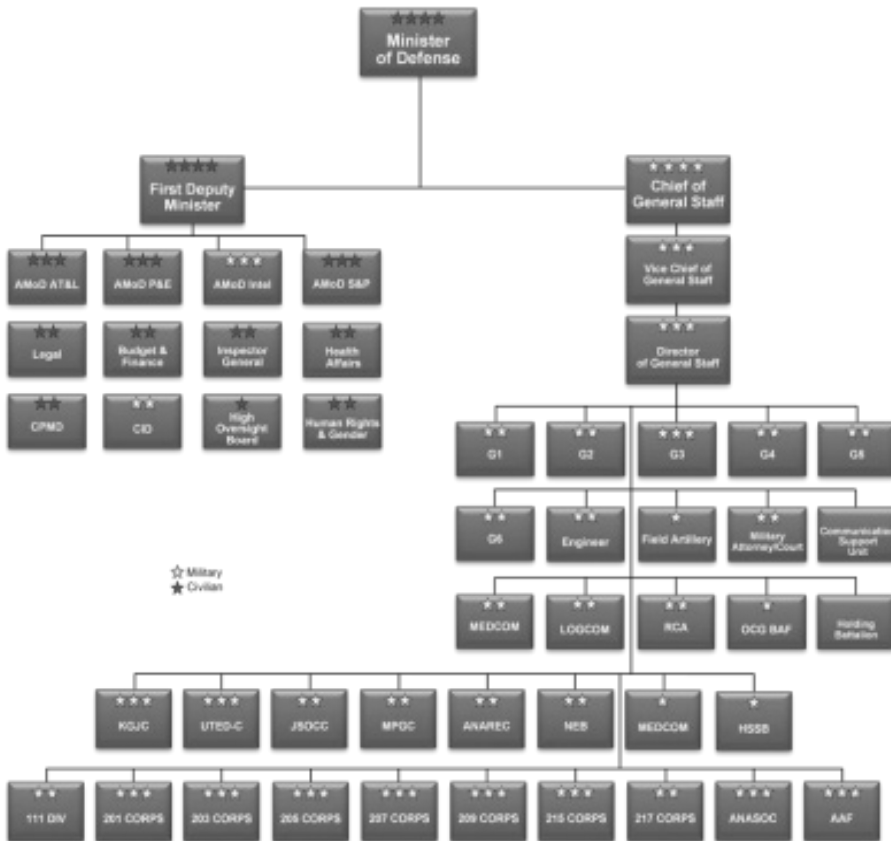
- Supporting Brigade,
- Enginer Brigade,
- Military Police Division,
- 111 Military Division,
- 201 Corps in Nangarhar,
- 203 Corps in Paktia,
- 205 Corps in Kandahar,
- 207 Corps in Herat,
- 209 Corps in Balkh,
- 215 Corps in Helmand,
- Air Corps (with 174 aircrafts and helicopters)<sup>1</sup>
- Spec. Corps and,
- Border forces.

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1. Department of Defense, "Enhancing Security and Stabilization in Afghanistan," June 2020, [https://media.defense.gov/2020/Jul/01/2002348001/-1/-1/1/ENHANCING\\_SECURITY\\_AND\\_STABILITY\\_IN\\_AFGHANISTAN.PDF](https://media.defense.gov/2020/Jul/01/2002348001/-1/-1/1/ENHANCING_SECURITY_AND_STABILITY_IN_AFGHANISTAN.PDF).

The Ministry of Defense lacks armored, reactive rockets, air defense and anti-tank classes. The gunner class is equipped with Russian D-30 guns which is not enough.

The MoD Organizational Chart (Figure 1)



Source: *Enhancing Security and Stability, In Afghanistan, June 2020 Report to Congress*

In Accordance With Section 1225 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2015, as amended; Section 1521(c) of the NDAA for FY 2017; Section 602(b)(14) of the Afghan Allies Protection Act of 2009 (8 U.S.C. 1101 note); and Section 1520 of the NDAA for FY 2020.



Currently, in the ANA, the following classes are active:

1. Mechanized and special forces

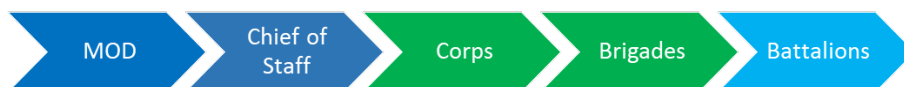
1. Logistics
2. Radio
3. Engineering
4. Gunner
5. Aerial
6. Intelligence

The following classes need to be created:

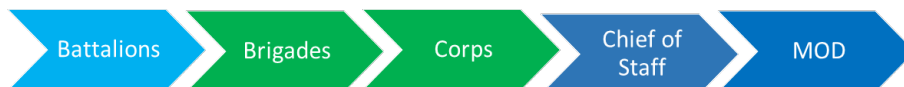
1. Armored
2. Air Defence
3. Reactive Rockets
4. Aerial defense (rockets and radar)
5. Frontier

### Management and Planning in the Ministry of Defense

Management in the Ministry of Defense follows a top to bottom approach. Planning follows a bottom up approach. At the beginning of the year, threats are determined by the Chief of Staff of the MOD and the corps, brigades and battalions act accordingly.



*Management within MoD (Figure 2)*



*Planning within MoD (Figure 3)*

### Mode of Warfare

Although the ANA was created on the basis of a counterinsurgency strategy, but it carries out the conventional method of warfare.

## Weapons

1. Light weapons – M4, M16, 9mm pistol
2. Heavy weapons – RPG, SPG-9, MK-19, M249, M203
3. Guns – 60mm Mortar, 81 and 82mm Mortar, 120mm Mortar and 120mm D-30 Gun

## Vehicles

1. Light Transportation – Ford Ranger
2. Heavy Transportation – International
3. Armor Transportation – HUMWWY
4. MSFV
5. And support engineer Vehicles.

## Military Ranks

Military Ranks in Afghanistan (Figure 4)

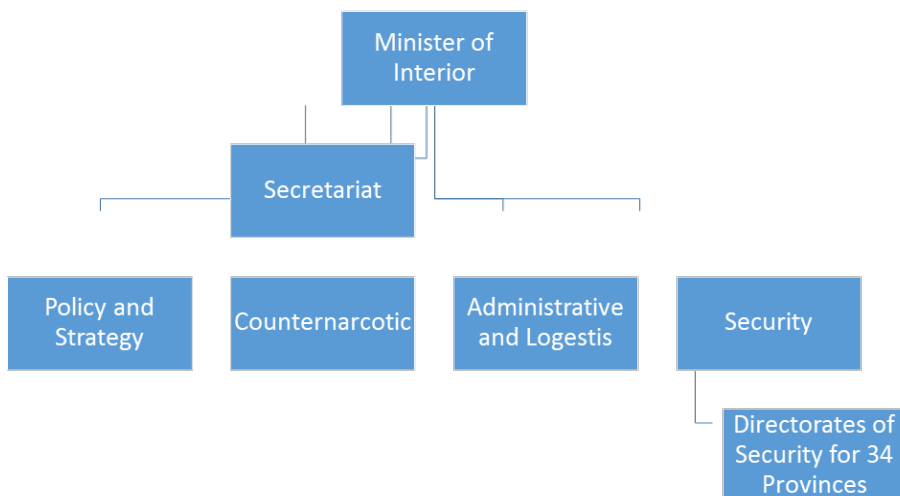


### 5.3.2. Ministry of Interior

By 2009, the Ministry of Interior (MoI) developed four deputies, including 1. security, administrative and logistics, counter narcotics and deputy policy and strategy, each of which performs its separate and professional duties with multiple directorates.<sup>1</sup>

1. "History of Afghan Police," Ministry of Interior, <https://www.moi.gov.af/dr/%DA%AF%D8%B0%D8%B4%D8%AA%D9%87-%D9%88-%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%B1%DB%8C%D8%AE%DA%86%D9%87-%D9%BE%D9%88%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%B3>

The MoI Organizational Chart (Figure 5)



The ANP is divided into the following six sections in terms of structure:

1. Security Police: Responsible for law enforcement and ensuring security and public order.
2. Anti-Crime Police: The main responsibility of this section is to prevent murder, robbery, kidnapping, organized crime and the fight against criminal gangs.
3. Anti-Narcotics Police: Responsible for combating drug trafficking, traffic and cultivation.
4. Traffic Police: Responsible for regulating urban traffic.
5. Fire Police: Responsible for dealing with accidents and fire.
6. Special Police Forces: Special Operations To Counter Terrorist Attacks, Number of Troops Reaches 10,000.<sup>1</sup>

The Ministry of Interior (MoI), like the Ministry of Defense (MoD) suffers from overstaffing and inappropriate displacement of the force. For example, about 100 personnel are employed in first-class districts, about 70 personnel in second-class districts, and 50 personnel in third-class districts, while there exist

1. Zainab Mohammadi, "Afghanistan Security Forces: Size and Equipment," BBC, June 2013, [https://www.bbc.com/persian/afghanistan/2013/06/130618\\_k04\\_afghan\\_security\\_force\\_info](https://www.bbc.com/persian/afghanistan/2013/06/130618_k04_afghan_security_force_info).

dozens of unnecessary positions at the ministry's headquarters and deputies. For example, the Deputy for Policy and Strategy consists of various unnecessary departments, including:

- Directorate of International Cooperation
- Directorate of Aid Coordination
- Directorate of Needs Analysis
- General Directorate of Monitoring and Evaluation
- Provincial Coordination Directorate
- Head of the Office
- General Directorate of Strategy
- Directorate of Analysis and Evaluation Plan
- Directorate of Planning and Research Policy
- Supply Policy Directorate
- Directorate of Planning and Financial Plans<sup>1</sup>

As one can observe, most of these directorates have similar duties, such as directorates of international cooperation and aid coordination, directorates of needs analysis, analysis and evaluation, security policy and directorates of financial programs.<sup>2</sup> The ministry's deputy, excluding the senior security deputy, are not capable of performing their duties properly; in fact, the duties of these deputies can be implemented by a small directorate. Therefore, it is very urgent to revise the structure of MoI according to a proper needs assessment. The ministry also lacks proper personal management, institutional training, logistics and maintenance.<sup>3</sup>

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1. "History of Afghan Police," Ministry of Interior, <https://www.moi.gov.af/dtr/%DA%AF%D8%B0%D8%B4%D8%AA%D9%87-%D9%88-%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%B1%DB%8C%D8%AE%DA%86%D9%87-%D9%BE%D9%88%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%B3>.

2. According to the author's experience, in previous years, the most important task of this deputy was making general report of the Ministry of Interior.

3. Department of Defense, "Enhancing Security and Stabilization in Afghanistan," June 2019, <https://media.defense.gov/2019/Jul/12/2002156816/-1/-1/1/ENHANCING-SECURITY-AND-STABILITY-IN-AFGHANISTAN.PDF>.



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## CHAPTER SIX

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### *Security Sector Financing*

#### **6.1. Security Sector Financing – An Overview**

The Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) came into existence in 2002 as a result of a security donors conference in Geneva which set the primary targets of building an Afghan National Army (ANA) consisting of 70,000 men and an Afghan National Police comprised of 62,000 personnel.<sup>1</sup> From the beginning, as Afghanistan's institutions were destroyed and its economy was broken during the civil wars, the ANDSF has been fully dependent on donor countries' financial and material support. The size of ANDSF, however, enlarged - so did its expenses - in the following years as the international community's engagements continued in Afghanistan and the country saw insurgencies upsurges. Following the ANDSF expansion from 2010 onward, the ANDSF expenses also increased, reaching USD 5 billion to USD 6 billion annually, an amount the Afghan government unable to pay.<sup>2</sup>

The United States and other international donors finance the ANDSF, with the former acting as the biggest financier providing around 70 percent of the total expenditures.<sup>3</sup> The United States administers its financial support to the Afghan forces through the Afghanistan Security Forces Fund (ASFF),<sup>4</sup> while other international donors provide funds to the ANDSF either on a bilateral basis or via the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) managed Law

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1. Ali A. Jalali, "Afghanistan National Defense and Security Forces: Mission, Challenges, and Sustainability," USIP, *Peacework* 2016, no. 115.

2. Jonathan Schroden, "Afghanistan's Security Forces Versus the Taliban: A Net Assessment," CTC Sentinel 14, Issue 1 (2021)

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

and Order Trust Fund (LOTFA)<sup>1</sup> established in 2002, or through 2007 created NATO ANA Trust Fund (NATF).<sup>2</sup> The United States manages NATF on behalf of NATO and the funds provided through this channel are mostly for the ANA expenses and building its operational capacity.<sup>3</sup> The funds provided through LOTFA are paid for salaries of police forces and building the capacity of the Ministry of Interior (MoI).<sup>4</sup>

From its inception in 2007, 33 donor countries have funded ANDSF via NATF and the amounts administered via this channel have totaled over USD 3 billion as of June 2020.<sup>5</sup> From the fiscal year 2005 to 2018, the total amount that the United States Congress appropriated for ANDSF via ASFF has reached more than USD 77 billion,<sup>6</sup> while the total money the United States has spent on the Afghanistan security sector from 2002 to March 2021 amounts at USD 88.32 billion.<sup>7</sup> The funds assisted to the ANDSF through UNDP managed LOTFA between 2002 and 2020 have reached nearly USD 6.24 billion that has been spent on paying ANP salaries and building the capacity of the Ministry of Interior and its related departments.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, the money administered through these channels for Afghanistan's security sector in the past 20 years reaches nearly USD 100 billion.

## 6.2. Sources of Security Sector Financing

The day-to-day operations of the ANDSF from its establishment to the present have become possible because of the external financial supports. Without the funds provided by the donor nations, the Afghan security apparatus ought to stop functioning within a limited period of time. As such, external sources of

1. Department of Defense, "Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan," December 2018, <https://media.defense.gov/2018/Dec/20/2002075158/-1/-1/1/1225-REPORT-DECEMBER-2018.PDF>.

2. Ibid.

3. Department of Defense, "Justification for FY 2021 Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO): Afghanistan Security Forces Fund," February 2020.

4. NATO, "Afghan National Army (ANA) Trust Fund," Media Backgrounder, July 2018, [https://www.nato.int/nato\\_static\\_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf\\_2018\\_07/20180706\\_1807-backgrounder-ana-trust-fund.pdf](https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2018_07/20180706_1807-backgrounder-ana-trust-fund.pdf).

5. NATO, "Afghan National Army (ANA) Trust Fund," Media Backgrounder, June 2020, file:///C:/Users/IWPS/Desktop/RT/draft%20papers/SSR/Readings/2006-backgrounder-ana-trust-fund1.pdf.

6. Department of Defense, "Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan," December 2018.

7. "Quarterly Report to the United States Congress," SIGAR, April 2021, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/2021-04-30qr.pdf>.

8. "Quarterly Report to the United States Congress," SIGAR, January 2021, <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/January%2030%2C%202021%20Quarterly%20Report%20to%20Congress.pdf>.

security sector financing have been acting as the fuel for Afghanistan's security machine. The Afghan government, due to corruption, low economic growth, and weak institutions, has not been able to finance its security sector in the first decade of its formation. However, it committed and has been providing funds to the ANDSF for the last few years. Hence, Afghanistan security sector financing becomes less diversified, only coming from two sources: donor contributions (the United States plus other NATO members) and a lesser amount from the Afghan government.

As the strategic partner of Afghanistan and the leading actor in the “Global War on Terrorism,” the United States has been providing most of the necessary funding required for training, equipping, and sustaining the Afghan forces through ASFF. As of 2016, for instance, the United States had spent USD 23 billion providing equipment to the ANDSF and building military infrastructures around the country.<sup>1</sup> However, the United States assistance has been mostly in the off-budget form directly spent by the US forces and contractors. The majority of United States funding to ANDSF has been administered via “pseudo Foreign Military Sales-FMS” cases and other Department of Defense (DoD) contracts for providing equipment, training, maintenance, and other necessary items.<sup>2</sup> On average, around USD 2 to USD 3 billion per year have been spent on DoD contracts, making the majority of the United States funds as off-budget assistance to the ANDSF.<sup>3</sup> Only a lesser amount of the funding has been provided directly (on-budget) to the Afghan government to pay ANA and ANP salaries and maintain their facilities.<sup>4</sup> Since 2002, the United States has provided nearly USD 17 billion on-budget assistance to the Afghan government for both military and civilian expenses which is way less than the off-budget it has spent in Afghanistan.<sup>5</sup>

In addition to the United States, NATO member countries and partners have also been providing financial support to the ANDSF. They, however,

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1. Jalali, “Afghanistan National Defense and Security Forces.”

2. Department of Defense, “Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan,” December 2018.

3. *Ibid.*

4. Department of Defense, “Justification for FY 2021 Overseas Contingency Operations.”

5. “Quarterly Report to the United States Congress,” SIGAR, January 2021, <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/January%2030%2C%202021%20Quarterly%20Report%20to%20Congress.pdf>



have been providing support based on commitments made in NATO summits and other conferences. The international donors agreed at the 2012 NATO Summit in Chicago to yearly fund USD 4.1 billion for a force level of 228,500 personnel till the end of 2017, while later in the 2014 Summit in Wales, the international donors pledged to provide USD 1 billion per year to supplement the United States funding up until the end of 2020.<sup>1</sup> Although the international donors' funding amounts have been fluctuating, nonetheless, it has been vital for the ANDSF sustainment and supplementing the United States' financial support. Although NATO and the United States troops are leaving Afghanistan by December 2021, NATO allies and partners at the 2018 NATO Summit in Brussels reaffirmed that they would support ANDSF up until 2024.<sup>2</sup> The international donors' funding is executed through LOTFA or ANATF, which makes it a mix of on-budget and off-budget financing because a part of the money goes to the Afghan finance ministry and the rest is spent by UNDP administered LOTFA paying ANP expenses and by the United States-managed ANATF paying ANA expenditures.

Despite the external funding, the donor countries and the government of Afghanistan at the 2012 NATO Summit in Chicago agreed that the Afghan government starts funding its forces, gradually increase its contributions, and finally takes full financial responsibility for the ANDSF. The summit participants agreed that the Afghan government should start funding ANDSF from USD 500 million in 2015 (25 billion AFN at the 2012 exchange rate) and assume the full financial responsibility by 2024, a timeline which the Afghan government seems to be unable to meet in the next three years not only because of the continued insurgencies and violence but also due to slow growth of the economy and the impacts of the Covid-19 global pandemic which has hit the country's economy.<sup>3</sup> So far, the Afghan government has been able to fulfill its promises made at the Chicago summit. It has allocated USD 387 million (24.7 billion AFN) in FY 2016, USD 392 million (26.9 billion AFN) in 2017, and USD 445 million (30.3 billion AFN) in 2018.<sup>4</sup> Although there is a slight

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1. Jalali, "Afghanistan National Defense and Security Forces."

2. Department of Defense, "Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan," December 2018.

3. Department of Defense, "Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan," December 2018.

4. Ibid.

increase in funding in terms of Afghani, the target for full financial self-reliance by 2024 seems unrealistic given the ongoing violence and poor economy of Afghanistan.

### **6.3. Instruments of Security Sector Financing in Afghanistan**

Since 2002, over 100 countries and organizations have been providing security and civilian assistance to Afghanistan, from which more than 30 nations, including the US, contributing to financing the Afghanistan security forces.<sup>1</sup> The ANDSF is almost entirely reliant on external financial support, most notably for salaries, purchase of equipment such as weapons, vehicles, communication equipment, aircraft, etc., maintenance of the technical equipment, and capacity building programs. It is estimated that 90 percent of the ANDSF funding comes from the international sources being mostly channeled through the three main funding streams, the Afghanistan Security Forces Fund (ASFF), NATO ANA Trust Fund (NATF), and Law and Order Trust Fund Afghanistan (LOTFA). The Afghan government only contributes to the food and uniforms of the ANDSF. The US government provides approximately 75 percent of the funding through the ASFF and transmits a lesser amount directly to the government of Afghanistan as on-budget expenses to fund payments and operational activities. The funding provided by the other international donors is either bilateral or transmitted through one of the two multilateral funds of NATF or LOTFA.<sup>2</sup>

#### **6.3.1. Afghanistan Security Forces Fund (ASFF):**

Afghanistan Security Forces Fund (ASFF) was established by the US government to assist the Afghan security forces. The ASFF is believed to be the nucleus part of the Department of Defense (DoD) mission in Afghanistan, providing support to the U.S. commitment to durable defense partnership with the Afghanistan security forces through the provision of equipment, supplies, services, training programs, construction, repair and renovation of the infrastructure<sup>3</sup>, and recruitment of high-quality uniformed ANA personnel.

1. U.S. Department of State, "U.S. Relations With Afghanistan," January 20, 2021. Accessed June 11, 2021, <https://www.state.gov/u-s-relations-with-afghanistan/>.

2. Department of Defense, "Justification for FY 2021 Overseas Contingency Operations."

3. Defense Security Cooperation Agency. n.d, "Afghanistan Security Forces Fund (ASFF)," Accessed June 12, 2021, <https://www.dsca.mil/afghanistan-security-forces-fund-asff>.

Besides paying the salaries of ANA personal, the ASFF contributes to paying the salaries of civilian employees in MoD that support ANDSF in terms of technical assistance.<sup>1</sup> To keep the ANDSF professional, effective and sustainable, the total requirements for the ASFF is projected to be around USD 4 billion for 347,294 ANDSF personnel composed of 191,914 ANA personnel, 114,320 ANP personnel, 7,787 Afghan Air Force (AAF) personnel, and 33,273 Afghan Special Security Forces (ASSF) personnel for the 2021 Fiscal Year. Other donor nations also contribute funding to this force structure.<sup>2</sup>

### **6.3.2. NATO ANA Trust Fund (NATF):**

NATO ANA Trust Fund (NATF) was established in 2007 by the international community, including NATO and its partners, to layout a mechanism for providing operational support to the ANDSF in terms of transportation and installation of military equipment, procurement of new equipment and services for the engineering division of ANA, and capacity building programs within and outside the country. The NATF is managed by the US on behalf of NATO and other donor countries. Thirty-three nations have contributed over USD 2.5 billion to the NATF since its establishment.<sup>3</sup> The NATF is primarily focused on providing support to ANA, but in some cases, the fund can be used for other security institutions. The activities funded through the NATF are implemented based on a yearly implementation plan approved by the NATF board consisting of representatives from donor nations with a mandate to monitor and review the effectiveness, integrity, and accountability of the funding stream through quarterly reports and annual financial audit.<sup>4</sup>

### **6.3.3. Law and Order Trust Fund Afghanistan (LOTFA):**

Law and Order Trust Fund Afghanistan (LOTFA) was established in 2002 to provide a mechanism to channel resources from the international community to strengthen law enforcement in Afghanistan. The LOTFA is administered by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and mainly contributes

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1. Department of Defense, "Justification for FY 2021 Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO)."

2. Ibid

3. Ibid

4. NATO, "Afghan National Army (ANA) Trust Fund," February 2021, [https://www.nato.int/nato\\_static\\_fl2014/assets/pdf/2021/2/pdf/2102-backgrounder-ana-trust-fund.pdf](https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2021/2/pdf/2102-backgrounder-ana-trust-fund.pdf).

to providing financial support to the Ministry of Interior Affairs (MoI) and the Ministry of Finance (MoF) in terms of ANP salaries, purchasing equipment, developing system in the MoI and capacity building of ANP and the General Directorate of Prisons and Detention Centers (GDPDC).<sup>1</sup> LOTFA was amended in 2008 to provide an opportunity for establishing a platform where the government and development partners come together in support of national development strategies in terms of coordination in policy, planning, monitoring, and programming perspectives.<sup>2</sup> In 2018, LOTFA expanded its scope and included all security and justice institutions with a more focus on anti-corruption. To finance the expanded mission, the LOTFA Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) was launched and without the financial participation of the US, other 12 donor nations, including the United Kingdom, Canada, and the European Union, donated USD 306.05 million to the fund. The two LOFA funds have received nearly USD 6.24 billion in donations from 2002 till the end of 2021. The US has contributed USD 1.04 million in 2018, USD 0.95 million in 2019, and USD 5.54 million in 2020.<sup>3</sup>

#### **6.3.4. The Afghan Government:**

The government of Afghanistan has the minimum contribution to the financing of the Afghan security forces. Mostly, it provides food and uniforms for the ANDSF through internal revenues. However, at the 2012 NATO summit in Chicago and later at the 2018 NATO summit in Brussels, the Afghan government committed to increasing its share of funding to the Afghan security forces. The Afghan government committed to contributing about USD 500 million to the ANDSF.<sup>4</sup>

### **6.4. Corruption in Security Sector – An Overview**

Afghanistan has been recognized as one of the most corrupt countries for a long-time. In the 2020 Corruption Perception Index by Transparency International, Afghanistan is ranked 165 in 180 countries based on perceptions of public sector

1. Department of Defense, “Justification for FY 2021 Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO).”

2. Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF). n.d, “Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan,” accessed June 12, 2021, <http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/LTF00>.

3. “Quarterly Report to the United States Congress,” SIGAR, January 2021.

4. Department of Defense, “Justification for FY 2021 Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO).”

corruption.<sup>1</sup> The anti-corruption efforts made by the government of Afghanistan have lacked comprehensive strategies and efficient action.<sup>2</sup> It is believed that the engagement of the international community in Afghanistan has been associated with weak coordination and oversight mechanisms contributing to intensive misuse of public office and widespread corruption in the country.<sup>3</sup> The endemic corruption remains a big challenge and a serious threat to the legitimacy of the Afghan government and its security sector. Despite the inflow of billions of dollars in support of the ANDSF since 2002, the Afghanistan security forces are still not self-sufficient and are believed to be not capable of maintaining security across the country. The main reason behind the underdevelopment of the Afghan security forces is several cross-cutting issues including pervasive corruption in this sector.<sup>4</sup>

Corruption is mostly visible in recruitment, logistics, appointments, and payment of the ANDSF personnel, among others. The political elites infiltrate into the ANDSF employment process recommending their affiliate candidates to key security positions.<sup>5</sup> Additionally, a huge amount of money is embezzled while procuring food, fuels, commodities, and other equipment for the ANDSF.<sup>6</sup> Before 2006, the soldiers were receiving their salaries via a middleman, where a huge amount of money was stolen.<sup>7</sup> The problem, however, was resolved to some extent by the initiation of paying salaries through local banks.

Among all, the two main types of corruption overshadowing ANDSF have been the problem of ghost soldiers and the pilfering of fuel, supplies, ammunition, and other equipment of the security personnel. Ghost soldiers in ANDSF have been a prevailing issue for all stakeholders, including the international community. Ghost soldiers are the fictitious troops who do not have physical existence and the names are included in the rosters of security

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1. Transparency International. n.d, "Corruption Perceptions Index: 2020," accessed June 13, 2021, <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2020/index/afg>.

2. "Quarterly Report to the United States Congress," SIGAR, April 2021.

3. Mathias Bak, "Corruption in Afghanistan and the role of development assistance," August 2017, <https://www.u4.no/publications/corruption-in-afghanistan-and-the-role-of-development-assistance>.

4. "Reconstruction the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces: Lessons from the U.S. Experience in Afghanistan," SIGAR, September 2017.

5. Jalali, "Afghanistan National Defense and Security Forces."

6. Ibid.

7. "Reconstruction the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces: Lessons from the U.S. Experience in Afghanistan."

forces to provide the corrupt officials with extra pay allocated for these soldiers. In 2017, in a counter-corruption attempt, the US government removed more than 30,000 ghost soldiers from the Afghan security forces payroll. Before that, the police chief of Helmand province claimed that half of the police forces in this province were ghost soldiers.<sup>1</sup> To address the challenge of ghost soldiers in the ANDSF, the Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan (CSTC-A), a multinational military organization led by the US, developed the Afghan Personnel and Pay System (APPS) to mitigate corruption and fraud and to improve accountability, transparency, and audibility in the security forces payroll processes. As of January 2021, the total amount spent by the US government on the APPS has been USD 50.2 million.<sup>2</sup> In 2013, corruption was officially labeled as a serious threat to the United States' efforts and objectives in Afghanistan.<sup>3</sup>

Another problem has been the pilfering of food, fuels, ammunition, commodities, and other equipment of the ANDSF by both the Afghan and US corrupt officials. A considerable number of US military officers have been sentenced in charge of pilfering equipment intended for their fellow service members. Although various cases of corruption have been addressed, including the ghost soldiers and theft of fuel and other equipment, the relevant investigation body is believed to be not effectively cooperating in some complex cases, such as cases involving senior officials or higher amounts.<sup>4</sup>

Compared to ANP, the ANA has not suffered from endemic corruption. According to the National Corruption Survey by the Integrity Watch Afghanistan, the ANA is marked as one of the cleanest institutions in terms of corruption, while the judicial system, including judges, courts, and prosecutors being ranked as the most corrupt government body.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, it is believed that up to USD 200 million of assistance from the LOTFA could have

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1. Sarah Grant, "The Toll Corruption Takes on Afghan Security Force Capacity," June 5, 2017, <https://globalanticorruptionblog.com/2017/06/05/the-toll-corruption-takes-on-afghan-security-force-capacity/>.

2. "Quarterly Report to the United States Congress," SIGAR, April 2021.

3. Ibid.

4. "Quarterly Report to the United States Congress," SIGAR, January 2021.

5. "National Corruption Survey 2016: Afghan Perceptions and Experiences of Corruption," Integrity Watch Afghanistan, 2016.

been lost due to fraud, corruption, and mismanagement in the MoI. <sup>1</sup> In 2017, at the Third Annual European Union Anti-Corruption Conference in Kabul, President Ghani confirmed that his administration has not been successful in eradicating corruption, especially in the security sector. He pointed out the Ministry of Interior as the heart of corruption in the security system, which is severely in need of reform.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Mark Sedra. n.d, "An Uncertain Future for Afghanistan's Security Sector," accessed June 13, 2021, <https://www.stabilityjournal.org/articles/10.5334/sta.ei/>.

2. Sharif Amiri, "Ghani Vows to Reform MoI As EU, UN Warn Against Corruption," TOLONews, accessed June 13, 2021, <https://tolonews.com/afghanistan/ghani-vows-reform-moi-eu-un-warn-against-corruption>.

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## CHAPTER SEVEN

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### *A View from the Field Provincial Consultations on ANDSF Economization and Restructuring*

#### **7.1. A View from the Field – Provincial Consultations on ANDSF Economization and Restructuring**

This chapter presents the research participants' critical views towards the organization of ANDSF, its organizational performance, and recommendations for restructuring and economization of the ANDSF post peace settlement. The following paragraphs examines the participants' understandings regarding previous SSR efforts, as well as their preferences for implementation of future security sector reform initiatives.

##### **7.1.1. Structural Strength and Deficiencies of the ANDSF**

The research participants in general do not have a positive view towards structural capabilities of the current defence and security forces. A repeated theme across various FGDs and KIIs is that during the past two decades the focus has rather been on the size and quantity of the armed forces while the quality of their training and performance is ignored. As a result, the size of the defence and security forces increased, but they failed to perform their duties as required. Structural deficiencies of the ANDSF encompass faultiness in various areas from training and equipment to command structure.

##### **7.1.2. Training and Equipment**

The main critic of the research participants across all FGDs towards warfare capabilities of the armed forces is that they lack proper education and equipment. The training courses are too short; as a result, when despatched, the defence



and security forces are incapable of fulfilling their duties properly. In addition, veterans participated in the research suggest that the current voluntary force is not sustainable. They emphasize that conscription provides basis for long-term education.

*“Currently our forces are not professional, because they lack adequate training. Previously we had military and police educational centres and universities. Military personnel had to go through 9 years of military education and police personnel had to be trained for three years. Currently they are trained for three months which is not adequate at all”*.<sup>1</sup>

*“The education and training system is too poor: Officers graduated from Marshal Fahim Academy [National Military Academy], do not know anything about warfare; they only have some English and computer knowledge. There is no discipline within military units. Soldiers join the army on voluntary basis; he/ she could leave anytime”*.<sup>2</sup>

Many FGD and KII participants criticize that no proper vetting process exists in recruitment centres; hence a lot of unqualified individuals- including criminals and drug addicts, joined the ANDSF. Most personnel are only concerned about their monthly salary.<sup>3</sup> Some of the participants point out that since foreign advisors designed the training courses, they must be taken accountable for the shortcomings. Key Informant, retired Lieutenant General, Sibghatullah Saeq, suggests that some progresses have been made to upgrade the trainings, however, as long as foreign trainers lead the training programs the problem cannot be addressed. He argues:

*“Those who designed and shaped the trainings were foreigners. They got two major problems; first of all they were not familiar with local norms, values, culture and the sociology of Afghanistan. They made decisions out of ignorance. Secondly their educational curriculum is ignorant towards the geography and the guerrilla warfare technics. If locals are given the opportunity, based on their knowledge of local terrain, they would make use of international experience”*.<sup>4</sup>

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1. FGD female participant, retired police officer, Herat.

2. FGD male participant, retired army officer, Herat.

3. FGD male participant, civil society activist, Mazar-e Sharif.

4. Interview with Lieutenant General, Sibghatullah Saeq, Kabul.

Many FGD participants emphasize that foreign advisors have not contributed to the training of the ANDSF as required. This is consistent with the SIGAR's findings regarding the US role in reconstruction of post-2001 ANDSF. In its 2019 report, SIGAR highlights that the US military lacked the necessary competency to train the trainers engaged in ministerial capacity building programs across MoI and MoD. Consequently, advisory missions mostly were led by “untrained and underprepared” military advisers.<sup>1</sup> The report also suggests that most of the time the US failed to offer adequate training and sustainment for the equipment provided to the ANDSF.<sup>2</sup> Lack of sustainment and maintenance capacity is yet another structural deficiency related to training and equipping aspects of the ANDSF development.

*“Previously in Bagram airbase we had a specialized sustainment unit which carried out the maintenance and repairing of the aircrafts. We could repair all the aircrafts by ourselves. Now, our air force lacks such capacity”.*<sup>3</sup>

High rate of illiteracy within the ANDSF further complicates educational programs.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, participants argue that different countries involved in the trainings of the defence and security forces followed different methods and approaches. This – among other things, undermined the goal of standardization of the security and defence apparatus.<sup>5</sup> The SIGAR defines the problem as “*lack of standardized pre-deployment training*”.<sup>6</sup> Such pluralism has affected cooperation and coordination among the forces at different levels.<sup>7</sup>

Another major criticism regarding the quality of education within ANDSF is that the current security and defence forces are trained rather as counterinsurgency force not as conventional security and defence force.<sup>8</sup> Such approach impacted the development and performance of the ANSF in several respects. Firstly, it resulted in militarization of the police force; the

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1. “Divided Responsibility: Lessons From U.S. Security Sector Assistance Efforts in Afghanistan,” SIGAR, June 2019, <https://www.sigar.mil/interactive-reports/divided-responsibility/index.html>.

2. Ibid, 68.

3. FGD male participant, retired army Colonel, Mazar-e Sharif.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

8. FGD male participants, retired army officers, Herat, Mazar-e Sharif and Kabul.

police force is displaced. Since it is engaged in front line warfare, it does not function as law enforcement. Secondly, the army became subject to ad hoc management; instead of being deployed and managed according to long-term strategic planning, the army personnel are dispatched through sporadic military operations and patchy schemes.<sup>1</sup> FGD Participants say that lack of logistical support and organizational ignorance towards the fate of rank and file of soldiers largely effected the enthusiasm of youth for joining the ANDSF.

*“Due to lack of trained cadres, we have a high rate of casualty. Our bases are not protected well. Previously our military bases were supported by communication ditches. Now, our soldiers are left to the enemy’s hands. Since we do not care about our wounded soldiers, martyrs and their families, they lack motivation to fight. Previously in Shahin corps [in Mazar-e Sharif], every month we received some 400 volunteers; nowadays if you sum up volunteers coming to recruitment centres across Afghanistan, they merely reach a 1000 people”.*<sup>2</sup>

Several research participants assert that the ANDSF misses clear ideological orientation. They suggest that in order to prepare them for long term commitments, the defence and security personnel must be taught about national values and norms. Currently the line separating the enemy from friend is blurry and undetermined.<sup>3</sup> Veterans participated in the FGDs and KIIs point out that besides suffering from logistical shortcomings and poor education, the armed forces also suffer from lack of political support. The required political support for the defence and security forces is rather fragmented through ethnic and communal divisions. Lack of merit-based recruitment and appointment is considered to be a by-product of politicisation of the defence and security forces.<sup>4</sup>

*“Since our government do not have a solid strategy, we do not have a clear definition of the enemy. Our officers are discouraged, because they are confused about their commitments. Mostly they work for the small amount of money we are giving to them”.*<sup>5</sup>

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1. FGD male participants, retired army officers, Mazar-e Sharif and Herat.

2. FGD male participant, retired army colonel, Mazar-e Sharif.

3. Ibid.

4. FGD male participant, retired Lieutenant Colonel, Mazar-e Sharif.

5. FGD male participant, retired army General, Herat.

*“Currently uneducated people occupied top positions while their subordinates are graduates of military schools. Nobody worked for system-building. All people worked for money. Everybody took care of their group interest.”<sup>1</sup>*

FGD participants across all three provinces criticize that the intelligence department is not a functional component within ANDSF. Not surprisingly, there is no regard concerning military secrecy. Military personnel use unprofessional communication channels – such as mobile phones, to communicate with each other. *“We have expensive military radio systems at hand, but the personnel do not know how to use them”*.<sup>2</sup> Officials do not hesitate to share the details of military operations through media platforms.<sup>3</sup>

The research participants complain about dearth of equipment and warfare infrastructure. The veterans participated in FGDs and KIIs emphasize that through the DDR program, the inherited weaponry system was destroyed while the US-NATO promises regarding equipping the ANDSF were not realized. Lack of artillery and independent air support and lack of military engineers units, next to low-quality education, significantly contributed to the high rate of casualties among the fighting force in battle fields.

*“During the DDR program, I witnessed that people for two hundred dollars submitted their heavy weaponry such as tanks to the Americans. We could not make use of such weapons. At the end, our foreign advisors destroyed all the weapons and ammunition. But they failed to deliver on their promises [to equip us with new weapons].<sup>4</sup>*

*“Previously every regiment got its own artillery unit. Now a brigade responsible for covering several provinces has only one artillery unit available. A needs assessment should be conducted taking all technical requirements of units and battalions into consideration. We need independent air support”*.<sup>5</sup>

*“The existing air force does not provide in time support. If at this hour we ask for air support, it takes them a day or so to get prepared; they are*

1. FGD male participant, retired colonel, Mazar-e Sharif.

2. FGD male participant, retired Lieutenant Colonel, Herat.

3. Ibid.

4. FGD male participant, retired Jihadi Colonel, Herat.

5. FGD male participant, retired army General, Herat .

*ready but they do are not authorized to carry out an air attack. The ministry of defence should firstly coordinate with the Americans. By the time they come, our soldiers either fled their posts or got killed”.*<sup>1</sup>

SIGAR report highlights the fact that often the US provided equipment to the forces which did not match their needs.<sup>2</sup> For example, the US provided the Afghan military with large number of “High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle” known as “Humvee”, while such vehicles failed the test on the ground. *“In my battalion in Helmand province, within three months, all the Humvees given to us were broken and dysfunctional; these vehicles are too fragile on the ground”.*<sup>3</sup> According to the SIAGR, the US decisions on equipping the ANDSF lacked regular local involvement and input.<sup>4</sup>

The analysis of criticisms regarding education and equipment deficiencies within ANDSF highlights that proper education is a crucial part of equipping. Without adequate education and trainings, one cannot make use of the most advanced systems. This has been especially critical in terms of replacing the Soviet-style system with the NATO system in post-2001 reconstruction of ANDSF.<sup>5</sup> While there exist some positive views towards the US-NATO led train and equip mission in post-2001 Afghanistan, many participants of the research still lament the destruction of the Soviet sponsored security system.<sup>6</sup> Dependency of ANDSF on foreign administrators of reforms and sustainability concerns are major challenges yet to be faced and addressed.

### **7.1.3. Command Structure**

A major criticism regarding deficiencies of the ANDSF command structure—especially with regard to command structure of the national army, is that the current command structure is too centralized. The research participants suggest that the centralized bureaucracy within the defence and security institutions impact the performance of the forces negatively. With all the authority

1. FGD male participant, retired army officer, Mazar-e Sharif.

2. “Divided Responsibility: Lessons From U.S. Security Sector Assistance Efforts in Afghanistan,” SIGAR, June 2019, <https://www.sigar.mil/interactive-reports/divided-responsibility/index.html>.

3. FGD male participant, retired army Colonel, Kabul.

4. “Divided Responsibility: Lessons From U.S. Security Sector Assistance Efforts in Afghanistan,” SIGAR, June 2019, <https://www.sigar.mil/interactive-reports/divided-responsibility/index.html>.

5. Interview with retired colonel, Barat Ebrahimi, Kabul.

6. FGD participants in Kabul, Mazar-e Sharif and Herat.

concentrated at the centre, provincial commanders are not able to make timely decisions to deal with contextual circumstances. They cannot make decisions to undertake an operation or suggest appointments. Long bureaucratic processes and existence of parallel institutions has made life more difficult for them.

*“The government of Afghanistan is a centralized system; all the authorities are concentrated at the centre; one person makes all the decisions. When our defence and security forces came under attack, they cannot react accordingly; they need to wait until decisions are made at the centre. In several occasions, by the time decisions are made, hundreds of people – including our soldiers, lost their lives”.<sup>1</sup>*

*“I worked at logistic regiment. When we wanted to supply something, we needed to go through a long bureaucratic process; firstly we would go to administrative department, then we would go to directorship of logistics and so on. Because of existence of parallel institutions, we never managed to supply the forces on time”.<sup>2</sup>*

*“Nowadays all the appointments are decided from the above; as unit commanders, our suggestions are not taken into consideration. Appointments are not merit-based either.”<sup>3</sup>*

Moreover, the ANDSF command structure suffers from uneven distribution of personnel across central and provincial settings. Several participants across all the three provinces suggest that too many personnel are devoted to office work across administrative departments while less number of soldiers are available at corps and units.

*“Our organizational pyramid is upside-down. While the bottom do all the works, still the head is too big and the bottom is too tiny. For example, if you go to an office and you want to see a General, at three to four spots soldiers would stop you, until you get to see the General. This is why we do not have enough forces on the ground”.<sup>4</sup>*

In the meanwhile, the command structure of the defence and security forces is manipulated by politicization of the underlying institutions. Politicization of

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1. FGD male participant, civil society activist, Herat.

2. FGD male participant, retired Colonel, Kabul.

3. FGD male participant, retired Lieutenant Colonel, Mazar-e Sharif.

4. FGD male participant, retired General, Kabul.

the ANDSF is a multi-layered phenomenon involving various local and external actors and constituencies. Locally, the ANDSF is mainly politicized through ethnic politics and tribal rivalries. According to the research participants, the policy of ethnic balancing within ANDSF failed to achieve its intended purpose i.e. to promote national solidarity. Key Informant, civil society activist, Mohsen Usyan suggests that the ANDSF is overwhelmed by ethnic biases.

*“Rhetorically, our defence and security forces are meant to be apolitical national forces. However, in practice they only manage to get recruited, promoted and appointed through their affiliation with political leaders and ethnic power brokers. Moreover, from time to time the armed forces are utilized to further the interest of one particular national grouping [namely the Pashtuns]”.*<sup>1</sup>

*“The policy of maintaining ethnic balance within our structures hurt us badly. For example, if the vice president of your corps is a Hazara man and he gets killed, you have to replace him with another Hazara man, no matter whether he is a professional officer or not. As long as he is introduced by Mohaqiq or Khalili,<sup>2</sup> he would occupy the position anyways”.*<sup>3</sup>

The above mentioned politics of the ANDSF command structure has made it a fragmented and undemocratic structure. Various political parties and influential figures, such as community- ethnic leaders, influence the performance of the forces. Based on their share of power and the level of leverage they hold over government institutions- including the parliament and the defence and security forces, they shape the day to day operation of the ANDSF, sidelining the mainstream monitoring mechanisms of the rule of law.<sup>4</sup> Politicization of the national defence and security forces resulted in institutional discontinuity. Policies are short-lived and personnel are susceptible to abrupt changes which typically cost them their position and job. The ANDSF command structure suffers from rapid turnover of ministers. Key informant, civil society activist, Fresha Yaqubi, points out that historically reforms in Afghanistan- especially

1. Interview with civil society activist, Mohsen Usyan, Herat.

2. Mohammad Mohaqiq and Abdulkarim Khalili are the two major Hazara leaders who lead two branches of Hezb-e Wahdat-e Islami (The Islamic Unity Party) respectively. Hezb-e Wahdat is the mainstream Hazara political party established during anti-Soviet complain.

3. FGD male participant, retired Colonel, Mazar-e Sharif.

4. FGD male participant, retired Brigadier General, Mazar-e Sharif.

reforms within the defence and security institutions, have always been person-centred.

*“The main reason why we failed [to proceed with effective reform is that], reforms – especially within ANDSF, have always been short-range, person-centered endeavors. In recent history, several regimes with different ideologies came to power and destroyed everything. Look at the Defense Ministry; in short period of time, several ministers replaced each other. This [rapid turnover of ministers] imposes personal preferences upon the system”<sup>1</sup>*

*“In various instances, structures are created to satisfy personal interest. Instead of people serving the structure, they create structures to sever people’s interest. For example, if they wanted to promote an officers as a General and there was no position available, they immediately create a position to suit their General”.<sup>2</sup>*

Politicization of the ANDSF, in three important ways damages the integrity of the forces and for that matter the integrity of the command structure. Firstly, in a politicized environment, the personnel have to rely on power-brokers and politicians to make their way, hence losing ground for self-realization.<sup>3</sup> Secondly, it undermines professional criterions within the command structure—exemplified by lack of merit-based recruitment and appointment, and thirdly, division of the forces through ethnic- communal and political lines, make them indifferent towards long-term commitments towards their duties. In times of political upheaval or in chaotic situations, they would easily disintegrate and change side.

*“This is a universal norm that the army protects the people and represents the peoples will; they do not serve individuals. If it is politicized, a minor crisis would provoke the forces to disintegrate and go to their political or ethnic-communal parties. During the Mujahedeen time, we experienced such phenomenon”.<sup>4</sup>*

Under the current command structure, the relationship between subordinates and their superiors are not professionally defined and observed. According to

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1. Interview with civil society activist, Freshta Yaqubi, Herat.

2. FGD male participant, retired Major General, Kabul.

3. FGD male participant, retired police Coloner, Herat.

4. FGD male participant, retired Colonel, Mazar-e Sharif.



the research participants, the roles and responsibilities of the officers and the personnel are not defined properly. Informal relations overshadow the command structure, hindering the development of formal professional relationship within the chain of command.<sup>1</sup>

The ANDSF command structure is also politicized through external imposition of modalities put forward by the many actors engaged in security sector assistance and nation-building processes. Several research participants suggest that the US-NATO partnership with the ANDSF is overshadowed by politically driven decisions unilaterally made by the donors. They emphasize that local actors do not have the authority to make independent decisions.

*“The same US [who sponsored our forces] undermined the morality of our forces. The Americans one day say that they are going to withdraw; the next day they threaten us that they would cut their aid. They do this purposefully”.*<sup>2</sup>

*“The main problem is that we do not have the authority to determine our fate. We are homeowners without having the discretion to make decisions by ourselves. We hope to integrate the Taliban within the system, but the Taliban too does not have the authority to make independent decisions. They are being sponsored by Pakistan and we are listening to the Whitehouse. We are yoked by the west; so we do what they ask us to do”.*<sup>3</sup>

Key Informant, retired Lieutenant General, Sibghatullah Saeq, suggests that in the absence of a national security doctrine, the ANDSF command structure will continue suffering from fragmentation and foreign interference. A national security doctrine integrates all the components of the security sector together. It ought to represent the interest of people as a whole.

*“Our main problem regarding the fragmentation of the ANDSF command structure is that we failed to articulate a national security doctrine. The national security doctrine functions as an umbrella covering our foreign policy, national interest, border security, counterinsurgency policies, and [warfare strategy] to fight foreign enemies. We failed to integrate all these under a national security doctrine”.*<sup>4</sup>

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1. FGD male participant, retired Colonel, Mazar-e Sharif.

2. FGD male participant, retired officer, Herat.

3. FGD male participant, retired General, Mazar-e Sharif.

4. Ibid.

Creation and promotion of the militia forces in the name of local police force, regional armies [known as Arbaki forces] and local resistance forces is considered to be a major challenge ahead of consolidation of the ANDSF command structure. The research participants suggest that making and promoting “semiformal security forces damages” the credibility of the ANDSF command structure. As semiformal forces, local militias lack professional education and do not abide by the existing military rules. Moreover, since all these forces are created to fight the Taliban insurgency, they contribute to militarization of the ANDSF command structure. The promotion of militia force, made the institutional displacement of the police force more complicated.

*“We have bitter memories from the past. The then government [Najeebullah, s government] for practical considerations, organized the militias under the so called national [ethnic] battalions. A big sum of money was spent on them. But that policy did not bear positive results. Because they did not have military trainings. Nowadays, Arbaki forces or local police forces are created based on the same logic that such forces will defend their community. However, we see that they act irresponsibly, misusing their power and killing people. We must strengthen our formal defence and security forces”.<sup>1</sup>*

*“We must capitalize on structures that last for future; we need institutionalized defense and security forces. For example, once we created an organization to maintain the security of highways; but it was demolished through a singly decree; we wasted out resources for nothing. A single command structure shall not rely on parallel security institutions”.<sup>2</sup>*

Many of the deficiencies of the ANDSF command structure, according to the research participants, has roots in unresolved historical challenges including: a) lack of institutional continuity and politicization of the defence and security forces, b) lack of institutional accommodation for the existing cultural diversity within the country, c) continued dependency on foreign security assistance and as a result, lack of self-reliance, d) continued war in the country and as a result getting used to militarization and economy of war, e) lack of a national security

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1. FGD male participant, retired army officer, Herat.

2. Ibid.

doctrine which would make long-term strategic assessments possible.

## **7.2. Economization of the ANDSF**

Economization of the ANDSF must address two major problems, including: 1) dealing with structural corruption within the ANDSF, and 2) economization through structural and procedural reforms within ANDSF.

### **7.2.1. Dealing with Structural Corruption within ANDSF**

The research participants suggest that economization of the ANDSF starts with effective anti-corruption campaign across all government institutions. The ANDSF is not an isolated institution and corruption within ANDSF is not an isolated phenomenon. While the post-2001 SSR in Afghanistan introduced a new security system doctrine i.e. a civilian controlled security system, the program outcomes lack the very quality it was supposed to insert in the Afghan security system i.e. systemic monitoring of the defence and security apparatus. A key theme in analysis of corruption within the ANDSF is that “*corruption is political*” hence “*it is structural*”. Various FGD and KII participants emphasize that corruption first and foremost must be fought across political institutions and that corruption must be addressed politically. Without political will, economization of ANDSF is not possible.

*“Corruption [within ANDSF] is a political phenomenon. All corrupt behaviours are shaped by political behaviours. The defence and security institutions by themselves are not corrupt; neither the financial institutions are corrupt by themselves. Unless politicians decide to conduct corruption, the defence and security institutions never get involved in corruption; if politicians are not corrupt, corruption within ANDSF remains limited to individual cases”.<sup>1</sup>*

*“As long as the prevailing corruption exists in this country, we will not be able to do anything. The prevailing corruption destroys everything. I remember although in pervious era we had a weak economy, we managed to create a great army equipped with aircrafts and modern weaponry systems. But today, despite the flow of money to Afghanistan, our soldiers are killed and nobody cares about it. Millions of dollars are stolen across customs.*

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1. Ibid.

*Unless customs are controlled, reforms are meaningless. Government offices and positions are sold and bought and merit-based recruitment is missing”.*<sup>1</sup>

The above statements highlight that local financial resources such as customs revenue and human resources are manipulated and wasted by corrupt officials who feel safe within their political network. Unless good governance is ensured across all government institutions, dependency on foreign aid and external resources remains the only available option for the survival of ANDSF. Corruption within the ANDSF and for that matter corruption within government of Afghanistan takes place in variety of forms. Depending on the type of corruption we face, suitable anti-corruption mechanisms and measures must be introduced and implemented. However, all anti-corruption measures and mechanisms depend on cooperation and coordination among the armed forces and the civilian institutions.

*“The main problem is caused by civilian institutions; such as the court system and local governance institutions across provinces and districts. Just look at the prevailing corruption in the court system. Currently our civilian institutions are not in harmony with our defence and security institutions. The armed forces do not have any problem with each other; they always consult each other regarding their day to day affairs”.*<sup>2</sup>

Lack of cooperation and coordination among the armed forces and the civilian institutions of government resulted in lack of service delivery and large scale deprivation. Many FGD participants emphasize that trust-building between government institutions and the people is widely ignored. An intrinsic component of economization of the ANDSF is the legitimacy of the government as a whole. If people trust their government, they are less likely to join the insurgency or terrorist groups. At the end of the day, it is war and conflict that absorb most of the resources.

*“Trust-building between the government and the people is necessary. During the past twenty years, we lost lots of opportunities. In the beginning, after the collapse of the Taliban, it seemed that nobody would follow the group anymore. However, today, if 500 Taliban fighters are killed, 500 new*

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1. FGD male participant , retired army officer, Herat.

2. FGD male participant , retired police officer, Mazar-e Sharif.

*fighters join the group. This is because we lost our legitimacy. I worked as commander in a recruitment centre; according to my observation less and less number of people are interested to join the ANDSF, because they do not trust it”.<sup>1</sup>*

As the primacy beneficiaries of the system, people need to be involved in decision making processes. They need to influence the outputs and the outcomes of reforms. The research participants in general emphasize that democratic governance helps to reduce the costs of security sector reform. The critical element in democratic governance is the relationship between the people and the government. Key Informant, Abdulhadi Wasiqi, religious scholar in Herat city, says that people do not want anything from democracy but an attentive mutual relationship. In the absence of proper relationship between people and government authorities, middlemen start to dominate the situation and as a result corruption starts to prevail.

*“When the relationship between the people and the government is disrupted, the middleman starts to fill the gap and middlemen need to be pleased. They ask for special privileges. This causes miscommunication between the people and the government; a message would be manipulated several times until it reaches its destination. By itself it promotes corruption”.<sup>2</sup>*

*“Peoples participation in governance means that they share everything from costs to benefits in various areas of governance from politics to security and judiciary. A democratic system is a holistic system; if you are deprived in some respect you cannot call it democracy”.<sup>3</sup>*

*“Why we protest against the newly appointed security chief in Herat city? Because he is being appointed by other people that we do not trust; he is coming from elsewhere. They make their way through their relationship. Anybody who have some relationship in the presidential palace, Arg, are able to make their way”.<sup>4</sup>*

According to the research participants, corruption within the ANDSF and for that matter within the government could be curbed if misconduct is taken

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1. FGD male participant, retired officer, Mazar-e Sharif.

2. Interview with Abdulhadi Wasiqi, religious scholar, Herat.

3. Ibid.

4. FGD female participant, civil society activist; journalist, Herat.

seriously and offenders are brought to justice. Currently, criminals scape justice, because they feel safe within their political networks.<sup>1</sup> Professional and timely audits are needed to ensure budgetary transparency. Merit-based recruitment and appointment is essential part of transparency within the system. And finally computerized management system within the ANDSF is necessary to limit criminal interventions.<sup>2</sup>

### **7.2.2. Economization through Structural and Procedural Reforms within ANDSF**

According to the research participants, the ANDSF suffers from deficiencies of its structural design- among other things. As mentioned, the existence of parallel institutions tasked with similar assignments, prevented the ANDSF from functioning efficiently. Such phenomenon complicated bureaucratic procedures and paved the way for corrupt interactions among corresponding actors. Structural overload prevented proper monitoring from taking place. Moreover, according to the participants, privatization of procurement, has significantly contributed to the endemic corruption within the forces.

*“The private companies who contracted the procurement of the ANDSF, do business as they wish. Previously, we did all procurements by ourselves. Privatized procurement procedures paved the way for corruption, because they are not monitored.”<sup>3</sup>*

*“We need to have a fiscal monitoring department within the ANDSF and reduce dependency on private contractors. Logistical establishments must be set up within the ANDSF and our semi-professional forces put to work in such establishments. They can produce things that currently we buy from external contractors”.<sup>4</sup>*

Starting from reclaiming procurement, the research participants say that the ANDSF should initiate their own profitable businesses. Restoring logistical and production capabilities within the ANDSF is part of available instruments and investment opportunities for guaranteeing fiscal sustainability of the ANDSF.

*“Time and again we proposed that we need to establish our own armoury*

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1. FGD participants across all provinces.

2. FGD participates across Herat and Mazar-e Sharif.

3. FGD male participant, retired army General, Mazar-e Sharif.

4. FGD male participant, retired army Colonel, Mazar-e Sharif.

*to produce our own ammunition and weapons. If we set up the logistic system within the ANDSF structure, we would solved the problem”.*<sup>1</sup>

*“We must establish farming departments within the corps. The Shakin corps for example have thousands of hectares of land with access to water. They must invest on such sites. They must invest on livestock and gardening, so we produce the personnel’s daily needs. Previously we had such institutions in place; the government must restore the production capability within the ANDSF”.*<sup>2</sup>

The research participants suggest that the current privatized and centralized procurement procedures have been costly and ineffective.<sup>3</sup> Economization through structural and procedural reform of the ANDSF should empower the ANDSF to restore its logistical capabilities. However, to that end, reforms must give the provincial- local authorities the discretion to use available local resources and act upon their own needs assessment. That way, local economies and the national economy will reinforce and support each other. In other words, in order for the national economy to be able to lessen its dependency on foreign funding, local economies must flourish and get rid of dependency on the current centralized – and for that matter privatized, administrative system.

*“We lack proper management. We have a centralize system of logistics; all the supplies need to come from centre and this is not cost-effective. For example, transportation costs for distribution of heaters from Kabul to provinces is a hundred times higher than the price of such heaters in Herat or other provinces. We must be able to use local capacities. Why all the financial affairs are monopolized by a handful group of people at the centre? Such system promotes corruption and damage the credibility of the government”.*<sup>4</sup>

Financial sustainability of the ANDSF and for that matter financial sustainability of the government, requires proper management of the existing resources. Beside local businesses that need government’s support, it is important to secure the natural resources. The research participants point out

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1. FGD male participant, retired Colonel, Herat.

2. FGD male participant, retired Colonel, Mazar-e Sharit.

3. Ibid.

4. FGD male participant, retired police Colonel, Herat.

that the country's natural resources such as water, mineral resources and even opium production, are some of the main sources of the ongoing conflict. If such resources are properly managed, some of the main sources of conflict will be eliminated. Moreover, such resources could be used to support the ANDSF.

*“We need to identify the geography of war. The region knows about it, but we are ignorant towards it. For example, our waters are important natural resources; if managed properly, it would bring us wealth and power. Or think about legalization of opium production. Currently in Badakhshan, Taliban extracts gold from the river”.*<sup>1</sup>

Women are part of the available human resource and must be included in various departments of the defence and security forces. The research participants in general support the inclusion of women in the ANDSF; they emphasize that women have major role to play especially in policing and managerial positions within the ANDSF. However, the role of women within the ANDSF should not be symbolic. Due to lack of merit-based recruitment, many unqualified women filled positions within the ANDSF. In the meanwhile, the dominant masculinity within the ANDSF overwhelmed women's presence in the system.

*“Presence of women in the ANDSF is necessary. However, it is important to recruit qualified and educated women, not women who join the forces out of need for money. Currently many female personnel are unqualified people. Women can play a vital role in searching and investigation i.e. policing”.*<sup>2</sup>

*“We need to keep in mind that crime is not a male only phenomenon; policewomen are needed to investigate women's crime. In jail system and policing, women have important role to play”.*<sup>3</sup>

*“The importance of presence of women within the ANDSF is obvious; they can reach out to their fellow Muslim women. However, their role must be preserved and promoted beyond symbolic presence; we must produce educated female cadres. Promoting women is not equitable to recruiting beautiful girls as secretaries”.*<sup>4</sup>

While not obvious, proper training and professional education, is the backbone

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1. FGD female participant, civil society activist, Herat.

2. FGD male participant, retired General, Mazar-e Sharif.

3. FGD male participant, retired army officer, Mazar-e Sharif.

4. Ibid.



of efficiency within the ANDSF. Lots of financial and human resources are lost and wasted because at different levels, the defence and security forces were not capable of fulfilling their tasks professionally or simply because they had flawed understandings about available and accessible resources. At strategic level i.e. ministerial level, at operational level i.e. planning level and at tactical level i.e. the rank and file level, the security and defence forces need education on how to use their resources. Given that at different levels the forces hold different views towards available and accessible resources they are prone to miscommunication, among other things. Education impacts all aspects of economization of ANDSF including the size of the force; experience shows that less number of educated forces overcome large number of uneducated force.<sup>1</sup>

Most research participants are in favour of conscription; they suggest that revival of conscription is essential for financial sustainability of the ANDSF. However, the research participants also warn that increased economic vulnerability within society, makes conscription a difficult -if not impossible, policy option.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Ibid.

2. Ibid.

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## CHAPTER EIGHT

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### *Models for Future Afghan Security Forces Options for Restructuring and Fiscal Sustainability*

#### **8.1. Security Sector Spending<sup>1</sup>**

The security sector spending in Afghanistan is clearly on an unsustainable trajectory and needs to be reduced over time. Total security (on and off-budget) expenditure is equal to around 30 percent of GDP in 2019. In 2019 the domestic revenue, excluding grants, was 14 percent of the nominal GDP. The security expenditure is projected to remain more or less the same level of GDP over the next few years. Assuming a three percent constant GDP growth, the domestic revenue is expected to grow steadily as a percentage of GDP over the next few years (Please see Table 1). With the total on-budget expenditure of around 29% of GDP, the expenditure path looks more unsustainable.

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1. Security sector expenditure in this section include Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Interior, National Directorate of Security, National Security Council, and Presidential Protection Services for comparability purposes. The remaining sections will just cover expenditure of Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior, and some specific costings on total strength of National Security Forces.

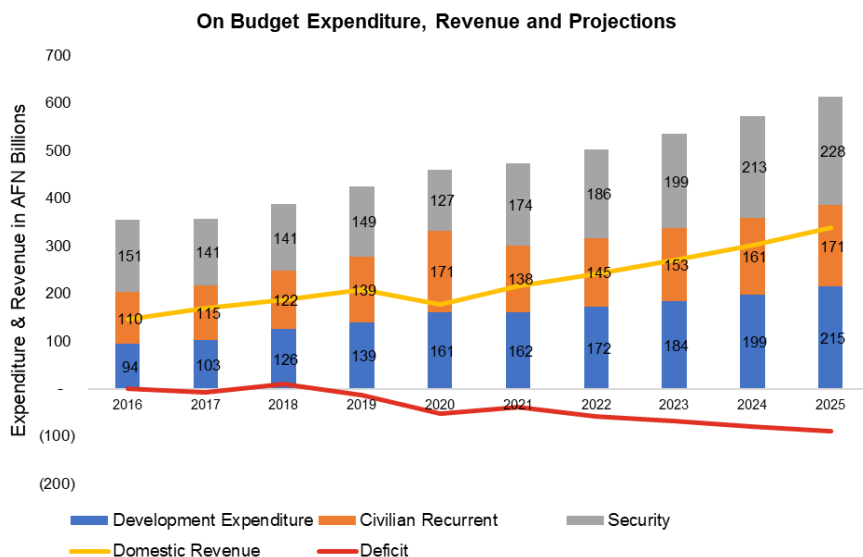


Figure 1: Data Source – National Budget

The growing security sector’s long-term fiscal costs have budgetary implications as such costs will crowd out the civilian spending. The economic growth and continued domestic revenue performance will provide a more extensive resource base to cover security expenditure needs over time steadily. There is an immense need to constrain security sector spending if the government has to reach its self-reliance objective.

Table 1	On budget Expenditure - Actual		Estimated	Budgeted	Projections					
% GDP	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Development Expenditure	8%	8%	10%	9%	10%	10%	10%	11%	11%	12%
Civilian Recurrent	17%	17%	18%	19%	21%	19%	19%	20%	20%	21%
Security	12%	11%	11%	10%	8%	11%	11%	12%	12%	13%
Domestic Revenue	12%	13%	14%	14%	11%	13%	15%	16%	17%	19%
Deficit	0.0%	-0.6%	0.7%	-0.9%	-3.3%	-2.3%	-3.5%	-4.0%	-4.5%	-4.9%

Total Expenditure	29%	28%	29%	29%	29%	29%	30%	31%	33%	34%
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The growing security expenditures resulting from insecurity throughout the country are expected to build further fiscal pressure over the next several years. The on-budget security expenditures are expected to increase substantially as more responsibility for providing security services are transferred to the government from the international community. Any unexpected decline in aid in the security sector will overtake more on-budget resources, and the government is also expected to resume full responsibility for financing the security forces. The on-budget security cost is 71 percent of domestic revenue, and the total estimated security cost is around 151 percent of the domestic revenue. The government’s contribution from domestic revenue to security sector financing was 17 percent of the total revenue in 2019. Weak economic growth and a low revenue base will be unfavourable for the government to absorb the security fiscal pressure.

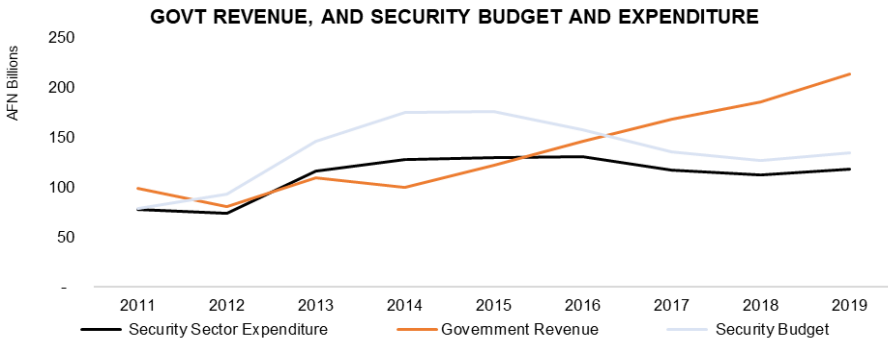


Figure 2: Source National Budget

The increasing security needs under resource constraint national budget will likely crowd-out civilian expenditure, especially the development expenditure. The decreasing fiscal resources for public investment will bear further stress on the economic development leading to service delivery cuts. The deteriorating development outcomes will further dampen poverty and unemployment.

## 8.2. Security Sector Financing

International partners provide the majority of funding for training, sustaining, and developing the Afghan Security Forces. The United States provides the majority funding through Afghanistan Security Forces Fund (ASFF), NATO Allies, and other partnered nations provide their pledged/committed contribution through the NATO ANA Trust Fund (NATF) and Law and Order Trust Fund (LOFTA).<sup>1</sup>

The 2018 NATO Summit renewed the international commitment to the Afghan Security Forces until the end of 2024, extending the 2016 Warsaw commitments until 2020.<sup>2</sup> The Afghan government had agreed with international participants at the 2012 NATO Summit in Chicago to finance its security forces starting from at least USD 500 million in 2015 with an annual increase to assume full responsibility no later than 2024. Following the 2012 NATO Summit in Chicago, donors at the 2016 Warsaw Summit had pledged USD 900 million to the country's security forces until 2020.<sup>3</sup>

There is limited or no data publicly available on the multilateral donor's detailed disbursed funds to the Afghan Security Forces. From 2002 to 2019, The United States has appropriated a total fund of almost USD 81 billion, of which around USD 71 billion has been disbursed, LOFTA has received almost USD 5.8 billion from partner nations<sup>4</sup>, and NATO's cumulative contribution is over USD 3.2 billion<sup>5</sup>. There is also no publicly available data on the amount of security forces funds disbursed through the national budget out of the total international funding for security forces annually. Although, the United States has provided around USD 15 billion through on-budget assistance to the Afghan government since 2002.<sup>6</sup>

1. Department of Defense, "Enhancing Security and Stabilization in Afghanistan," June 2020, [https://media.defense.gov/2020/Jul/01/2002348001/-1/-1/1/ENHANCING\\_SECURITY\\_AND\\_STABILITY\\_IN\\_AFGHANISTAN.PDF](https://media.defense.gov/2020/Jul/01/2002348001/-1/-1/1/ENHANCING_SECURITY_AND_STABILITY_IN_AFGHANISTAN.PDF).

2. NATO, "Brussels Summit Declaration," July 2018, [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_156624.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_156624.htm).

3. Department of Defense, "Enhancing Security and Stabilization in Afghanistan," June 2020, [https://media.defense.gov/2020/Jul/01/2002348001/-1/-1/1/ENHANCING\\_SECURITY\\_AND\\_STABILITY\\_IN\\_AFGHANISTAN.PDF](https://media.defense.gov/2020/Jul/01/2002348001/-1/-1/1/ENHANCING_SECURITY_AND_STABILITY_IN_AFGHANISTAN.PDF).

4. "Quarterly Report to the United States Congress," SIGAR, January 2020, <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/2020-01-30qr.pdf>.

5. NATO, "NATO Allies and partners reaffirm their commitment of support for sustainable Afghan security forces," last updated October 19, 2020, [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news\\_178884.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_178884.htm).

6. Ibid.

The security forces' overall funding remains substantially high that is financed through the national budget (on-budget) and direct assistance (off-budget) from international donors. The on-budget and off-budget total security expenditure amounted to around 30 percent of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2018<sup>1</sup>. For the same year, the on-budget security expenditure was around 11 percent of the GDP.

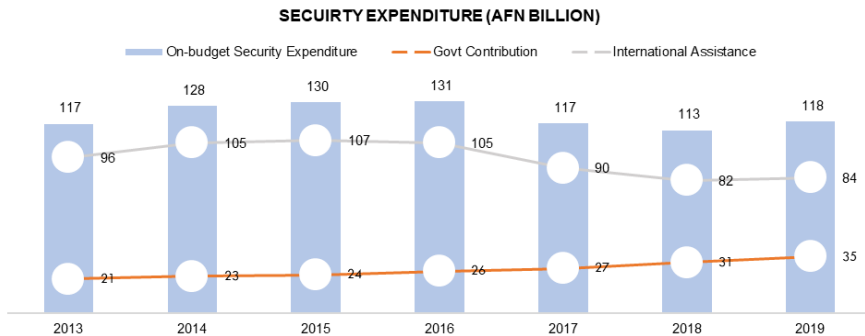


Figure 3: Source -AFMIS Data

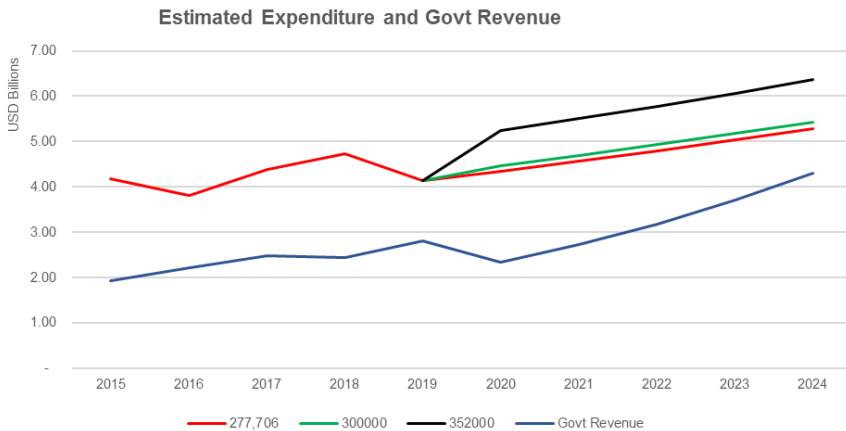
From 2013 to 2019, the Afghan government's cumulative security expenditure share has been almost USD 2.8 billion (AFN 186 billion). The cumulative donor on the budget expenditure of security assistance has been almost USD 10.3 billion (AFN 668 billion). Afghan government's contribution share has slightly increased annually; however, it falls short of USD 500 million commitment and incremental increase on the commitment. The 2019 government's share of expenditure was almost around USD 457 million (AFN 35 billion)<sup>2</sup>. The on-budget international assistance expenditure has been declining since 2015. The steady decline in the security budget corresponds to decreasing international on-budget assistance.

The current security sector cost is highly unsustainable without donor assistance. Figure 3 provides projections of estimated costs at different force levels in the outer years. The security forces strength was reported just over

1. Tobias Haque and Habiburahman Sahibzada, Afghanistan: Public Expenditure Update (The World Bank Group, July 2019).

2. The exchange rate used for the year 2019 is USD to AFN 76. For previous years, the exchange rate of the national budget is used.

277,706 in March 2020, validated by the APSS<sup>1</sup> data<sup>2</sup>. Using the average nominal revenue growth of 16.5 percent for the last five years and constant strength of 277,706, the domestic revenue will still fall short by 18 percent by its entirety to finance the security forces. If ANDSF reaches its full authorized force level, the financing gap will increase to 32 percent. Figure 3 uses the ASFF estimated disbursement funds<sup>3</sup> and actual on-budget expenditure data of LOFTA and the government’s contribution to security forces expenditure. Publicly available data on the annual disbursement of NATF was not found and hence not added. Since its establishment, NATF has disbursed an estimated USD 3.2 billion (see ANDSF financing section), it’s inclusion may not significantly change the estimates.



### Author’s Calculation

Although the Afghan government had committed to fully assume the security forces’ costs, however, based on this trajectory, it is improbable until at least the end of 2030. The current revenues are insufficient even to finance either the civilian or the security expenditures fully. Half of the current budget expenditures are financed by international assistance.

1. SIGAR Quarterly reports provides cautious on the reliability of APPS data since data-consistency challenges are reported with data.

2. “Quarterly Report to the United States Congress,” SIGAR, January 2020, <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/2020-01-30qr.pdf>.

3. From 2020 - 2019 total ASFF disbursed amount was almost USD 71 billion (87 percent) from the appropriated total, hence figure 3 uses 87 percent as disbursement rate for the actual appropriations’ of ASFF from 2015 – 2019 taken from SIGAR’s quarterly reports.

### 8.3. Expenditure Review (Cost-Savings)

There is no available off-budget data on the Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior Affairs' expenditure. The on-budget assistance mostly received is for the security forces' salaries and wages; other expenses are paid through off-budget assistance. This section reviews the on-budget expenditure and looks at the budget items.

**Table 1**

Economic Codes AFN Billions (Rounded)	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>Ministry of Defense Total</b>	68.7	65.8	70.7	58.8	64.0	66.9
Wages and Salaries Expenditure	45.6	44.9	51.5	49.3	58.3	59.9
Use of Goods and Service	15.4	17.2	17.9	8.1	4.5	5.5
Subsidies Grants & Social Benefit	0.0	1.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Acquisition of Asset	7.6	2.6	1.2	1.4	1.2	1.5
<b>Ministry of Interior Affairs Tot</b>	59.2	64.5	60.4	58.3	48.9	51.5
Wages and Salaries Expenditure	41.4	41.4	42.2	47.4	40.3	41.5
Use of Goods and Service	14.9	19.2	15.4	8.3	5.9	6.6
Subsidies Grants & Social Benefit	0.5	0.8	1.4	1.4	1.4	2.2
Acquisition of Asset	2.5	3.0	1.5	1.2	1.3	1.2
<b>Total MoD and MoI</b>	127.9	130.3	131.1	117.1	113.0	118.5

In 2019, the security expenditure was 27 percent of the total AFN 424 billion national budget. The on-budget total security (MoI and MoD aggregate) sector expenditure in 2019 had declined by 9 percent from the 2015 spending level (please see Table 1). The steady decline is seen mostly in MoI expenditure. The Use of Goods and Services and the Acquisition of assets have declined by more than half since 2014 for both ministries.

The aggregate expenditure decline of MoI and MoD expenditure is due to the substantial decrease in spending in the use of goods and services category. The reduction comes as the CSTC-A has taken control of the fueling costs



management<sup>1</sup>. Hence, on-budget fuel expenditure cost had reduced from around AFN 21 billion in 2016 to AFN 1.6 billion in 2019. The 92 percent on-budget reduction in fuel costs explains the expenditure level drop in the Use of Goods and Services Category.

However, Wages and Salaries costs have increased steadily over the same period. The Wages and Salaries costs accounted for around 85 percent of the total security sector expenditure in 2019. It also includes spending on food, allowances, and bonuses, among other expenditure items.

**Table 2:**

<b>Wages and Salaries in AFN Billions</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>
<b>Total Ministry of Defense</b>	<b>45.62</b>	<b>44.92</b>	<b>51.48</b>	<b>49.29</b>	<b>58.26</b>	<b>59.87</b>
Wages and Salaries in Cash	31.55	31.54	36.88	36.06	44.68	45.48
Wages and Salaries in Kind	10.09	8.81	9.24	8.69	9.70	10.15
Wages and Salaries Advance	0.00	0.04	0.15	0.02	0.06	0.02
Social Benefits - in Cash	0.35	0.61	1.04	1.08	2.53	3.24
*Unknown	3.81	4.11	4.34	3.85	1.84	1.86
<b>Total Ministry of Interior Affairs</b>	<b>41.35</b>	<b>41.40</b>	<b>42.16</b>	<b>47.42</b>	<b>40.31</b>	<b>41.51</b>
Wages and Salaries in Cash	32.31	31.32	31.67	32.04	30.08	29.18
Wages and Salaries in Kind	7.82	8.35	8.40	12.83	7.49	9.21
Wages and Salaries Advance	0.00	0.12	0.10	0.02	0.02	0.01
Social Benefits - in Cash	0.32	0.64	0.94	1.41	1.82	2.08
*Unknown	1.00	1.05	1.11	1.20	0.97	1.10
<b>Total MoD and MoI</b>	<b>86.98</b>	<b>86.32</b>	<b>93.65</b>	<b>96.71</b>	<b>98.57</b>	<b>101.38</b>

\*Some line expenditure is not classifiable and are added to unknown and it includes incentives.

1. "Quarterly Report to the United States Congress," SIGAR, June 2019, <https://www.globalsecurity.org/jhtml/jframe.html#https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/sigar/sigar-report-2019-07-30.pdf>||SIGAR%20Report%20to%20Congress:%20July%2030,%202019%20Quarterly%20Report%20to%20the%20United%20States%20Congress.

For MoD, total salaries expenditure is almost 89 percent of its total on-budget spending. The same for MoI is 81 percent. The wage bill has been growing for MoD, the wages and salaries in cash have increased by more than AFN 13.9 billion from 2014 to 2019. There have been minor fluctuations in MoI spending in this category. The Wages and Salaries in Kind include payments for transportation, food, and housing. Food for both MoD and MoI is more than AFN 18 billion, and this expense item line is well known for weak procurement and control systems vulnerable to corruption.

Table three provides major spending categories across all significant economic codes of the security institutions. The salary item includes armed or combat forces and civilians, including the contractors. Salaries of ghost soldiers have been an issue that has remained focused past few years. Using rough estimates between the self-reported forces level of 2019<sup>1</sup> and APPS<sup>2</sup> validated personnel of 277 thousand<sup>3</sup>, there is room to reduce costs by USD 50 (minimum effects) – USD 70 (full effects) million in associated costs of salaries, allowance, food, and hazard pay, by eliminating ghost soldiers.

Table 3: in AFN Millions	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>Salary</b>	31,838.2	32,042.7	34,766.8	48,888.5	48,663.0
<b>Allowance</b>	299.4	1,425.3	2,122.3	2,663.9	2,619.6
<b>Bonus</b>	117.5	671.1	1,112.5	1,102.1	1,023.4
<b>Food</b>	17,293.5	17,593.1	21,558.4	17,849.8	20,204.5
<b>Fuel</b>	19,191.5	21,231.9	6,802.1	1,186.4	1,638.6
<b>Vehicles</b>	829.1	57.3	122.3	57.3	231.8
<b>Office Equipment &amp; Supplies</b>	1,139.7	448.8	449.4	655.9	883.1
<b>Hazard Pay</b>	11,391.9	12,265.6	12,938.9	15,807.7	15,551.4
<b>Total</b>	82,100.9	85,735.9	79,872.9	88,211.5	90,815.4

The food expenditure that in 2019 was AFN 20 billion (almost USD

1. "Quarterly Report to the United States Congress," SIGAR, October 2020, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/2020-10-30qr-section3-security.pdf>.

2. SIGAR reports note that APPS data provides the estimates and does not provide the exact number, hence it is treated as an estimate in this report.

3. "Quarterly Report to the United States Congress," SIGAR, April 2020, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/2020-04-30qr.pdf>.

265 million) has regularly come under the spotlight for corruption<sup>1</sup>. Food expenditure is 17 percent of the total security sector on-budget expenditure, the second largest spending item after salaries. Using the self-report ANDSF strength of 306,807<sup>2</sup>, the monthly estimated food cost per personnel was almost AFN 5,488 (nearly USD 72) in the year 2019. The meal plan might not cost that much. However, reducing corruption in procurement will reduce food costs. This line item is particularly vulnerable at the payment order and payment stage of expenditure. The contractors can well inflate the food costs than the market price, and in some instances, payment may be made without any delivery.

There have been implementation challenges of implementing systems to improve accountability for the security forces' equipment, logistics, and supply<sup>3</sup>. Weak institutional infrastructure makes many expenditure lines, such as vehicles, equipment, supplies, and fuel, prone to corruption or underutilization of resources. Furthermore, personnel management also remains a challenge that includes staff training, merit-based promotions (also "reactive promotions – to fill vacancy), and staffing structure in the security institutions<sup>4</sup>.

The procurement and payment systems are weak, creating a fertile ground for corruption and waste of expenses<sup>5</sup>. The payment system has limited control conducive to collusion between staff and contractors. Procurement of items such as vehicles, equipment, and services becomes prone to corruption. During the payment stage, standards of contracts are not checked, payment to ghost soldiers is made, and payments to no service delivery are made. Ministry of Interior has been accumulating arrears for years now; the food item arrears in the year 2017 were more than AFN 3 billion.<sup>6</sup> Generally, all government ministries accumulate arrears, and that's due to corrupt practices. Pertaining to MoI and MoD based on their financial capacity and systems, the budget lines most

1. Alijan Ershad, "We Haven't eaten for days: Afghan soldiers suffer amid widespread corruption," France 24, last modified February 2020, <https://observers.france24.com/en/20200218-afghanistan-corruption-rations-soldiers-army-eat>.

2. "Quarterly Report to the United States Congress," SIGAR, April 2020, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/2020-04-30qr.pdf>.

3. Department of Defense, "Enhancing Security and Stabilization in Afghanistan," June 2020, [https://media.defense.gov/2020/Jul/01/2002348001/-1/-1/1/ENHANCING\\_SECURITY\\_AND\\_STABILITY\\_IN\\_AFGHANISTAN.PDF](https://media.defense.gov/2020/Jul/01/2002348001/-1/-1/1/ENHANCING_SECURITY_AND_STABILITY_IN_AFGHANISTAN.PDF).

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

6. Interview with former Ministry of Finance official.

prone to corruption are (1) wages and salaries, (2) procurement and delivery of food, (3) allowances and bonuses, (4) purchase of vehicles and machinery, (5) equipment maintenance costs, (6) tools and materials such as Household and Kitchen supplies cost almost USD 10 million (AFN 537 million) in 2014, it is reduced to USD 2 hundred thousand (AFN 153 million), (7) construction of buildings and construction equipment. The reduction in some expenditure items is primarily associated with the decrease in donor aid.

Improving the institutional systems and processes of financial and human resources management can significantly reduce the existing on-budget costs. Using efficiency indicators for cost savings, the security sectors can reduce expenditure by an estimated USD 38 million (incremental improvement) to USD 115 million (moderate enhancements). Adding estimated costs of eliminating ghosts soldiers, there is room for saving from USD 88 million to USD 185 million. The incremental improvement indicates improving accountability by some marginal levels, and moderate improvements substantially improve accountability and transparency.

Other costs related to logistics, equipment, and operations of the security forces are directly paid off-the budget, and there is no public data available to review the budget lines. A thorough and joint (CSTC-A, MoF, and Security Institutions) expenditure review, both on and off-budget, may provide more room for cost-saving. The security institutions need to invest heavily in systems and improve the procurement and control system to reduce corruption and waste.

#### **8.4. Afghan Security Forces Strength and Costs Models**

This section explores three alternate security forces' strengths to model their costs with the objective of longer fiscal sustainability. The baseline of the expenses used is 277 thousand security forces; since the self-reported security forces include ghost soldiers, it will further inflate the costs of the outer years. The current security force levels are not sustainable and are entirely dependent on international financing. The three scenarios provide cost estimates for security forces level of:

- a. 250,000 estimating costs at high threat level (existing country context-based);

- b. 180,000 strong at medium threat level (50 percent of insecurity reduction from current levels); and
- c. 100,000 at low threat level (70 percent insecurity reduction from current levels).

**8.4.1. Scenario A – 250k Force Level**

The first scenario model estimates cost based on a strong force of 250 thousand, of which 180 thousand will be ANA including AAF, and 70 thousand of ANP. Using the existing highly insecure environment costs, the 250 thousand authorized forces will roughly cost around USD 4.1 billion. At the average government’s nominal revenue growth rate, the security forces will require substantial external financing from donors in the medium-term. The donor assistance will reduce gradually in the long-term. The government’s domestic revenue will exceed security expenditure in the 6th year.

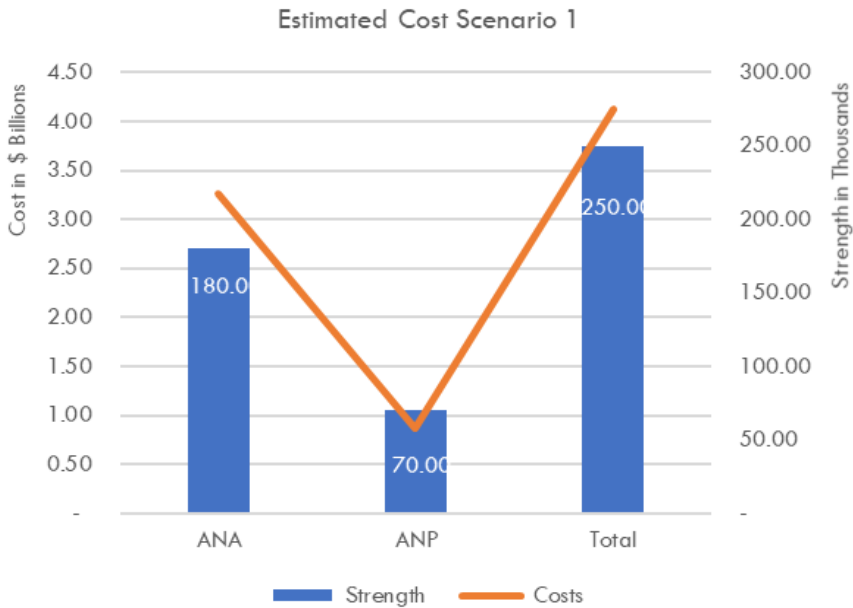


Figure 4: Authors calculation

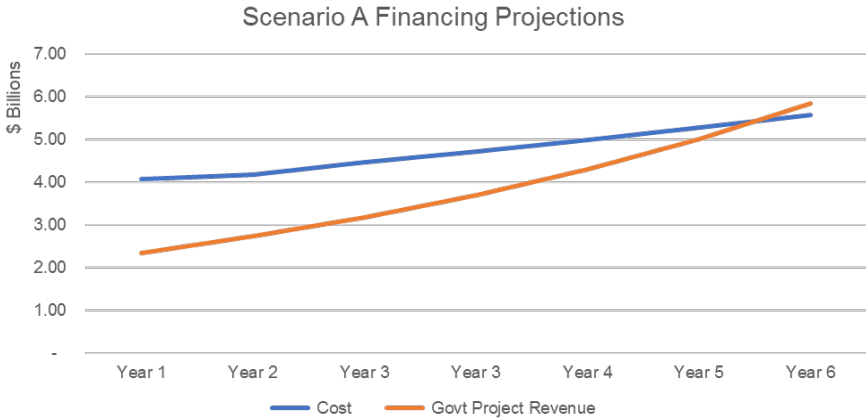
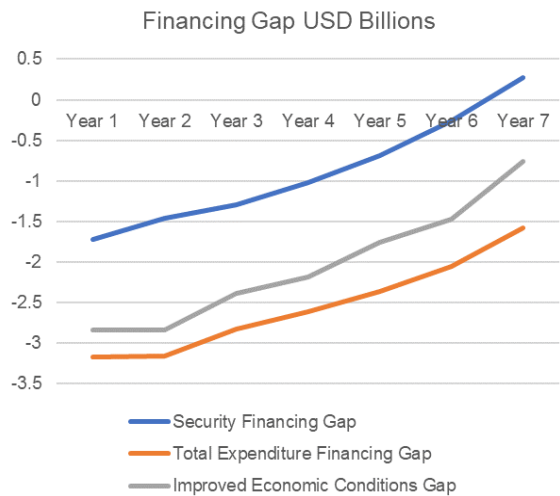


Figure 5: Author's Calculations

However, the domestic revenue will not suffice for many years to finance both civilian and military expenditure. If political, economic, and security conditions become favorable, it will take at least 16 years to sustain this force level. Suppose the domestic revenue increases by 14 percent per year and there are no major government policy change. In that case, it will take the government 7 years to reduce the financing gap of total expenditure and domestic revenue by half, assuming that civilian is totally financed by donor aid. The civilian expenditure is also growing in nominal terms as donor aid has been declining over the years.

The government will need stronger revenue mobilization driven by robust economic growth. The government will have new policy initiatives to stimulate the economy, and such costs will further



widen the gap if the outcome is not desirable. There will be a dependency on international aid that may decline slowly as more revenue is raised. The

value-added tax will rapidly increase the government's revenue. The improved economic condition financing gap reflects total government expenditure (including security), improved economic growth (3 percent every year), and better revenue mobilization and administration.

#### 8.4.2. Scenario B – 180k Force Level

The second scenario model costs expenditure for 180 thousand forces, of which ANA will be 120 thousand, and ANP will be 60 thousand. This scenario assumes a relatively stable security level that requires lesser equipment, ammunition, logistics, and infrastructure costs. The 180 thousand strong forces will have an estimated cost of USD 1.7 billion. The ANA cost will remain higher given the size relative to the size of the national police.

In this scenario, the government will require external assistance in the short-term and can assume full financial responsibility in the medium term. The

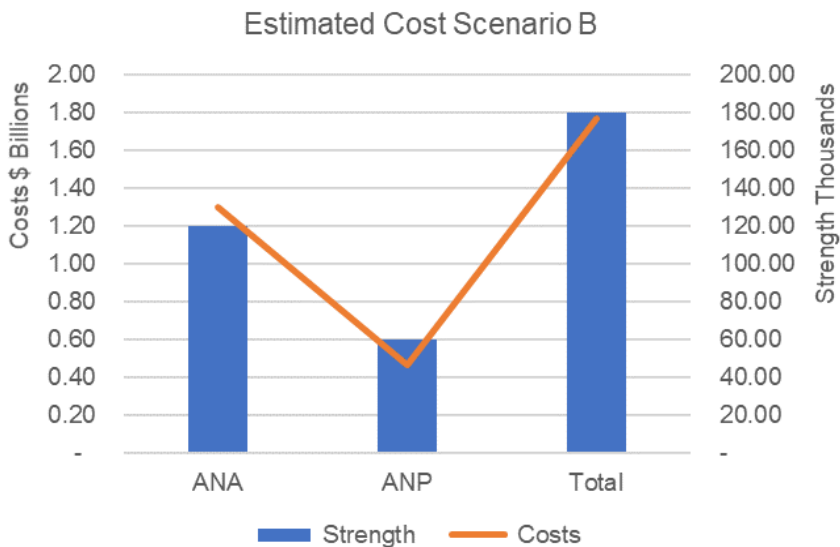


Figure 6: Authors Calculations

nominal revenue growth projections remain the same for all three scenarios.

The scenario assumes less security volatility compared to the first scenario. In the short-term, with reduced security expenditure, the government will be

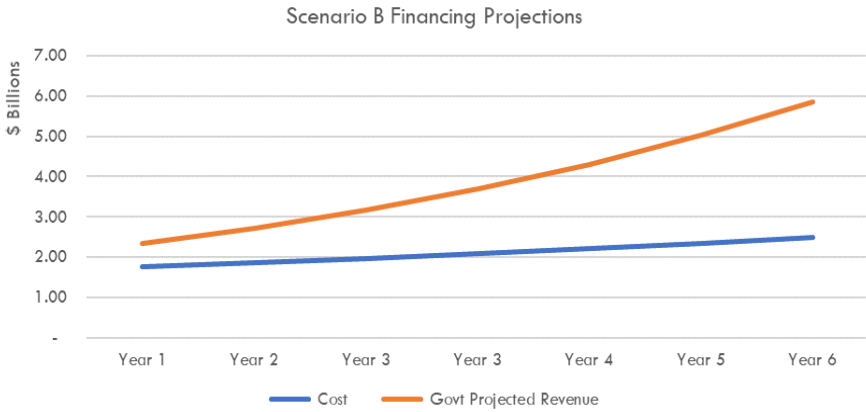
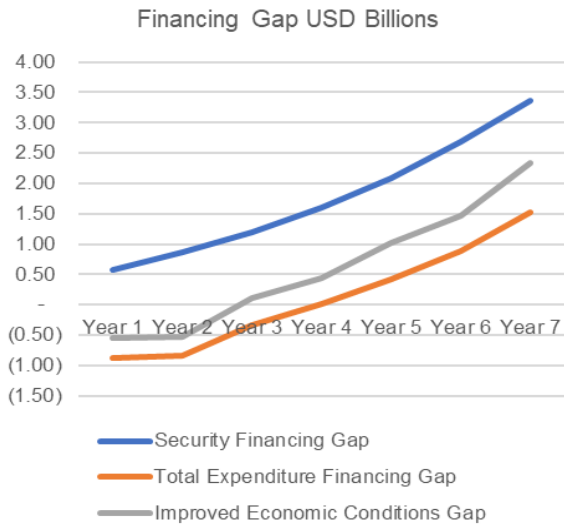


Figure 7: Author's Calculation

able to finance the total expenditure and the security expenditure fully. There is a strong likelihood of surplus as well, given there are no major policy changes. With some policy changes, the government will be able to meet its financing needs through domestic revenue, and there is less dependency on international aid.

### 8.4.3. Scenario C – 100k Force Level

The third scenario model costs an expenditure of 100 thousand strong security forces. This scenario assumes a low threat level or seventy percent reduction of insecurity at the current level. The cost of a security force of such size is estimated at around USD 1.4 billion. Except for personnel wages and salaries costs, all other costs are adjusted for a drop of insecurity level by 70 percent.



Such security forces' size will be sustainable immediately without any donor assistance through government revenue and will require minimal to no external financing in the medium term.



The security forces level in the third scenario remains substantially low compared to scenarios A and B. This scenario assumes a stable security situation across the country, and all the security factors have improved drastically. However, this is unlikely unless there is a peace agreement and all parties are in full compliance with the agreement.

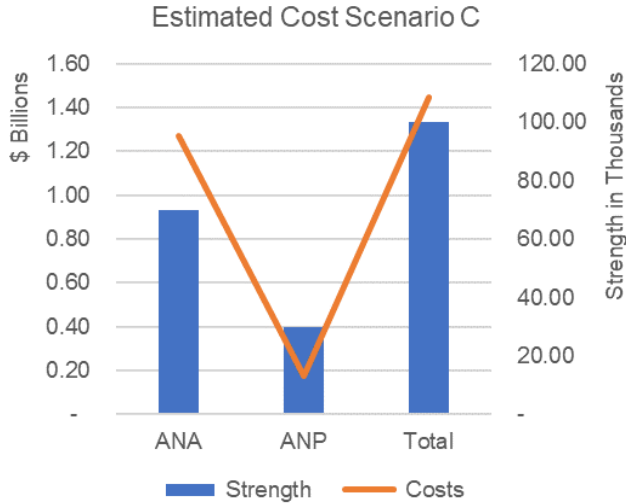


Figure 8: Author's Calculation

The domestic revenue can fully cover the security expenditure. Still, there will be a need for some external financing for the total government expenditure without having any major policy changes. In the medium, the surplus can accommodate major policy changes in the government's expenditure level since the security costs are reduced drastically by the size and the assumption

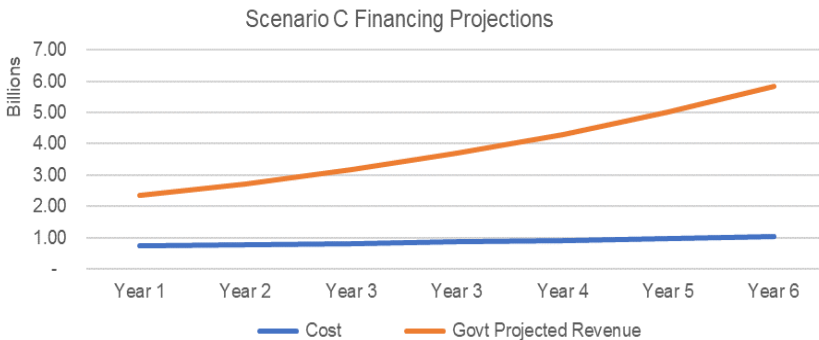
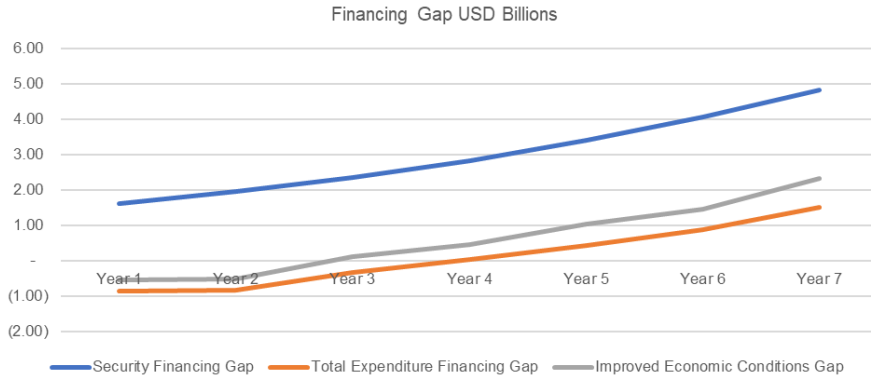


Figure 9: Author's Calculation

that the security is very stable in the country. The revenue mobilization efforts here can be entirely concentrated on civilian expenditure and service delivery.



## 8.5. ANDSF fiscal sustainability

At the existing insecurity level, corruption and a weak control system will increase the security costs as the security forces will require more equipment and supplies to respond to battlefield reality. Spending on the security forces is an essential step towards stabilizing the current situation and providing security through the country. The expenditure of the security forces requires substantial external financing for years to come. Making the security expenditure affordable, sustainable and efficient has been a challenge for both the Afghan government and international partners. To overcome this challenge, there is a need for a comprehensive expenditure review of both on-budget and off-budget expenditure that CSTC-A should jointly undertake, Ministry of Finance, and the Security Institutions that may be a 6 to 12 months long exercise.

Hence, spending of the security institutions can be reduced in the medium run by rationalizing the spending items. Such reduction should come through a comprehensive security sector expenditure review exercise and financial and human resources management assessments. The security sector expenditure review can examine the security sector's resource allocation and assess those allocations' effectiveness and efficiency. Using the public financial management tools, the expenditure review can provide insights into how the inputs relate to the security institutions' outputs.

The expenditure review can also identify the reforms needed to improve the accountability of the expenditure. It is crucial to assess the security risk factors into current military expenditure priorities. The existing security risks across the country demand a constant search for achieving efficiency in resource allocation. This includes building internal accountability mechanisms, streamlined systems for financial and human resource planning and management.

Long-term economization requires substantial improvements in the factored security risk factors. These factors could be fighting insurgency, drug trafficking, and internally organized crimes. Without efficient institutions, assessment, and reforms, the Afghan security forces' long-term sustainability will depend on major donor financing.

The government needs have to improved revenue mobilization and substantially reducing revenue leakages and corruption for the long-term fiscal sustainability of the security forces. The expenditure review aimed at reducing costs should simultaneously proceed with realistic plans of increasing public resources.

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## CHAPTER NINE

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### *Military Power Sharing and Inclusion in Peace Options to Integrate Taliban Fighters and Commanders within ANDSF*

#### **9. Military Power Sharing and Inclusion in Peace: Options to Integrate Taliban Fighters and Commanders within ANDSF**

##### **9.1. Military Power Sharing**

Military power sharing with Taliban is considered to be one pillar of the peace process and post-conflict integration. Military power sharing gives belligerent parties some level of confidence that their rivals will not be able to sideline them in the process. From this perspective, fears and concerns of each parties depend on their political demands and motivations for fighting.

Constitutionally the defense and security forces of Afghanistan function under a civilian government. Accordingly they need to act responsibly. Certain norms and standards including national and international regulations limit the scope and nature of their operations. In contrast, the Taliban is an ideologically driven movement seeking to implement the so called Sharia Law across the land. Taliban forces consider themselves as freedom fighters, army of God and heroes of patriotic wars. While the intra-Afghan peace talks continue, the Taliban opted for “talk and fight” strategy. In contrast the Afghan government repeatedly called for ceasefire. This chapter presents the research participants views and recommendations for possible military power sharing and integration between the Afghan government and the Taliban.

According to the research participants military power sharing with the Taliban should take place within the existing defense and security structures.

Professionalizing the ANDSF must be the priority of any power sharing agreement. Given that the current forces is marred by politicization and lack of regard for professional criterion, the research participants hope that military power sharing with Taliban provides ground for reform and improvement of the forces.

*“We need a neutral and an apolitical military. If youth from all national groupings join the forces, we will be able to form a national security apparatus. At tope positions we need educated and professional people. If Taliban have educated and professional personnel with them, they can introduce them. Others need to go through professional training. After the peace, we must refrain from promoting antagonistic rhetoric such as anti-US slogans, so we will be able to have a positive relationship with the world”.<sup>1</sup>*

Others suggest that without regional and international consensus, military power sharing will not lead to termination of conflict. Such consensus must end foreign interferences in internal affairs of Afghanistan and stope the use of proxies by external players. Regional and international actors must reach a political consensus about the purpose of the intra- Afghan peace process and the underlying power sharing schemes including military power sharing. Otherwise foreign players will continue manipulating local actors as proxies. As long as regional and international players capitalize on proxies to further their interest and address their security concerns, military power sharing will not result in peace. Regional and international consensus on power sharing paves the way for effective monitoring of military power sharing. International actors must guarantee the implementation of military power sharing agreement. Accordingly, military integration must be part of the peace agreement and violators of such agreement must be kept responsible.

The research participants categorically reject the notion that the Taliban fight for religious reasons. Even those who recognize Taliban as a religious movement, do not agree with Taliban’s religious narrative. The research participants point out that the Taliban leadership is power thirsty and should be approached accordingly. Military power sharing with Taliban should satisfy

1. FGD male participant, retired General, Mazar-e Sharif.

their thirst for power.

*“We failed to observe peoples traditions and religious believes; so we gave the Taliban the excuse they were looking for. They suggest that they are fighting because they are Muslims; and they want us to accept that. But throughout history we have been Muslims; we do not need them to teach us how to be a Muslim. The fact is that they are power thirsty. It would be good to share power with them and at the same time preserve our achievements”.*<sup>1</sup>

The national defense and security forces do not need to go through religious reforms or religious scrutiny. The only criterion for reform of the ANDSF is professional criterion. All personnel including the ANDSF rank and file and Taliban fighters have to come to the terms regarding professional requirements of a military power sharing. Military power sharing must not become a bargaining ground for ideological imposition. On the contrary, it must be viewed as an opportunity to address strategic challenges of the defense and security forces such as fighting foreign terrorists, border management and securing national infrastructure and national resources.

Ideally, military power sharing with the Taliban, facilitates inclusivity within the government paving the way for solving unresolved issues and deficiencies including socio-political grievances. Through military power sharing former belligerent parties need to think out of the box i.e. political contestation. In the absence of foreign forces, military power sharing must be viewed as an opportunity for national reconciliation and national solidarity.

It is being argued that the Taliban rank and file and midlevel commanders have little incentives to join a military power sharing deal with the current system. Fighting creates income for Taliban commanders; they have their own financial resources and the rank and file soldiers are being compensated. The Afghan government does not have necessary financial resources to encourage peaceful integration of such forces.

*“The Taliban cannot agree with a ceasefire, because their local commanders rely on war as a source of income. Through fighting they generate wealth*

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1. FGD male participant, retired conolel, Mazar-e Sharif.

*for themselves; so fighting is in their interest. In such circumstances, we need to support our own soldiers; they need moral support”<sup>1</sup>*

Another pessimistic argument is that the Taliban has the upper hand in the battlefield; so they are not going to negotiate the terms of military power sharing. On the contrary they will impose their will upon the weak government.

*“The Taliban suggest that they are in control of 70% of the country. How do we integrate them? Without having the upper hand in the battlefield we cannot hope for successful military integration. Only after the Taliban is defeated in the battlefield we will be able to negotiate the terms of peaceful integration with them”<sup>2</sup>*

The research participants – especially those with military background, compare the current notion of military power sharing, with Mujahedeen’s narrative for power sharing. During 90s, various armed Mujahedeen factions marched toward Kabul while the incumbent regime was politically surrendered. They suggest that Dr. Najeebullah’s government was defeated politically rather than militarily. In other words, political breakdown of the government led to final military defeat of the regime and subsequent destruction of the defense and security forces. This time around, the government and foreign mediators must take precautionary measures not to fall in similar traps. They must not be given the opportunity to impose the terms of military integration.

*“If military integration of Taliban follows Mujahedeen’s integration with Dr. Najeebullah’s government, we are against it. At the time, I was commander of a division; they come and say we are uniting with Mujahedeen. Mujahedeen came and took all our equipment. Nobody was responsible. If military integration costs us our army and security forces, we do not want it”<sup>3</sup>*

In order to mitigate possible risks of military integration with Taliban, such process should take place incrementally. The research participants categorically rejected proposals for transferring control of certain territories or corps to the Taliban.

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1. FGD male participant, civil society activist, Mazar-e Sharif.

2. FGD male participant, retired officer, Herat.

3. FGD male participant, retired colonel, Mazar-e Sharif.

*“It will have dire consequences. The country will disintegrate. They [the Taliban] would bring changes in government institutions as they wish; they will appoint their own people and get rid of others whom they dislike. They must not be given the chance to enter the cities collectively. Their integration must take place gradually though professional criterion. They must be registered, get the national ID and accept the constitution”.<sup>1</sup>*

The research participants point out that in order to secure an inclusive peace, certain compromises regarding the reform of political system need to be considered. Once the political system is reformed, the defense and security forces along with all the other institutions of governance need to abide by professional rules and procedures. They are no more allowed to apply arbitrary power.

Some FGD participants suggest that in order to integrate the Taliban forces within the defense and security institutions, temporary structures must be designed for the Taliban fighters, where they undergo professional training and get prepared for full integration. All appointment and recruitment processes must be merit based.

## **9.2. Inclusive Peace**

The research participants across all three provinces of Kabul, Balkh and Herat suggest that the Taliban are not a unified front. According to the participants, the fighting machinery of the Taliban consists of various individuals and groups whose motivations for joining the Taliban differ from one another. In order to initiate an integration process, different categories of Taliban must be identified and be dealt with separately. From this perspective, military power sharing and for that matter political power sharing alone cannot bring the conflict into an end. The Taliban fighters and commanders also need to go through a civilian integration process. Civilian integration must deal with Taliban’s socio-cultural transformation.

*“Taliban forces fight for different reasons. One of the reasons is financial; like our own army, probably a portion of Taliban forces joined the Taliban for financial gains of the war economy. Others fight out of radical religious*

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1. FGD male participant, retired General, Kabul.



*believes. The Taliban is not great in number, but it has popular support”.<sup>1</sup>  
“Military integration is part of the solution; the other part is social and civilian integration. If social i.e. civilian integration does not take place, military integration will fail. The families of Taliban fighters must be monitored for long period of time; because people got naive views about them. Also it is important that both military and civilian integrations are locally owned processes”.<sup>2</sup>*

Military integration or power sharing does not compensate the suffering people endured during the war. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to compensate the victims of war. Compensation does not always need be in form of financial compensation. Perpetrators of war crimes should regret the past atrocities and ask for forgiveness. Past mistakes and wrongdoings must be acknowledged.

The post-peace deal government must make sure that the endemic corruption is dealt with decisively. While some participants suggest that Taliban has the ability to curb the corruption, others point out that Taliban forces too are engaged in various types of corrupt activities including collecting ransom money and ad hoc taxation. Future power sharing agreements must mitigate the risk of tolerating such misconduct.

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1. Ibid.

2. Female FGD participant, civil society activist, Herat.

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## CHAPTER TEN

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### *A Roadmap to Security Sector Reform for Peace ANDSF Restructuring, Economization and Military Power Sharing with the Taliban*

#### **10. A Roadmap to Security Sector Reform for Peace – ANDSF Restructuring, Economization and Military Power Sharing with the Taliban**

##### **10.1 Military Power Sharing**

In order to reach a sustainable peace in Afghanistan, it is important – among other things, that the belligerent parties including the ANDSF and the Taliban fighting machinery find a middle ground for possible military integration or military power sharing. It is advisable that the two parties hold dialogue among both their respective political and military representatives to prepare for a wholesome SSR. However, if political leaders take the initiative, they need to openly discuss the underlying issues of a military integration next to political integration. This is essential for setting the criterion for reconstructing and economization of the defence and security forces in post peace situation.

Like any other armed groups, the Taliban has its own fighting machinery and military structure. From warfare capabilities point of view, the ANDSF – which is primarily built as a counterinsurgency force, is not so different from the fighting machinery of the Taliban. The ANDSF air force, artillery and armour constitute their main military advantage over the Taliban fighting machinery. However, the Taliban got their own military advantages including their intelligence capabilities, their use of land mines and above all their aspiration and morality to fight. Moreover, the Taliban conducts non-conventional warfare i.e. guerrilla warfare which gives them considerable flexibility on battle ground.

Besides these differences, the Taliban too got its own logistics, transportation and radio systems, special forces, and its own command structure.

The Taliban's command structure- across strategic, planning and rank and file levels, provides space for both top-down and bottom-up engagements. Their commanders across regional, provincial and district headquarters engage in decision makings regarding the group's daily warfare activities. Taliban commanders have considerable authority over their forces. Over the years they have managed to improve their intelligence capabilities. The fact that Taliban commanders directly engage in day to day warfare activities, provides major moral support for their rank and file. Moreover, it is not typical of the Taliban to leave their injured and murdered soldiers behind.

The above characteristics make the Taliban a capable fighting machinery. Hypothetically, military integration contributes to strengthening of both the forces and long- term self-reliance. The US already took measures to facilitate a military integration. It is believed that the US sponsored regional armies - created two years ago, are designed to accommodate the Taliban.<sup>1</sup> Also forced retirement of hundreds of high ranking officers provided opportunities for new recruitment within the ANDSF institutions. According to Antonio Giustozzi, Taliban has some 200,000 personnel including 150,000 military personnel from which some 60,000 are permanent fighters and some 90,000 join the fight on seasonal basis. If we accept that the Taliban has some 60,000 permanent fighters (SIGAR gives similar account), then proportionate to their size, they could occupy the following positions within the army and police institutions: 1 corps commander, 2 corps chiefs of staff, 2 corps deputies, 6 brigade commanders, 6 brigade chiefs of staff, 35 regiment commanders, 35 regiment chiefs of staff, 180 company commanders, and 537 platoon commanders. In addition, they could take hold of 6 provincial security directorates, 6 chiefs of security and up to 6 personnel within various provincial headquarters.

Moreover, through political agreement, military integration is also imaginable at strategic level. At strategic level i.e. ministerial level, the Taliban high ranking personnel could serve as deputy minister of defence, and senior security deputy

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1. Ibid.

of interior ministry. Also one of the deputies of the National Directorate of Security could be given to the Taliban. In addition, they could take hold of 5 to 6 departments across the defence and security institutions. In general, besides those who get integrated within the system through a political agreement, other forces need to go through the typical vetting and recruitment processes. Overall, short-term and long-term training courses should be provided to all integrated individuals in need of professional education.

In the international experience, military integration of an insurgent force takes place through the following three methods:

1. Military integration within a newly established force
2. Military integration without total disintegration of the insurgent force structure
3. Individual integration of the insurgents

Individual integration of qualified Taliban forces within the ANDSF is preferable. However, given that the Taliban lately developed their own special forces i.e. Red Units, it is also possible to integrate them collectively. Military integration through a newly established force is advisable when the two belligerent parties are sponsored by two adversary patrons; like post 2001 military integration of the US sponsored Mujahedeen and the Soviet sponsored former defense and security forces. But when the two belligerent parties are sponsored by the same patrons, their integration *within the existing force* is advisable. In our case both the Taliban and the ANDSF are sponsored either by the US or its allies – such as Arab Gulf countries and Pakistan. Hence, military integration of the two parties within the existing structure would suffice.

## **10.2. KEY GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR RESTRUCTURING AND ECONOMIZATION OF ANDSF**

1. Revise the structure of ANDSF through rightsizing. Accordingly, make decisions regarding the design and deployment of units.
2. Preserve the current achievements (6 regional Corps, Air corps, spec. ops. Corps, Support and Engineering Brigades). Each corps should have four brigades (3 conventional + one border brigade) and each should have 2500 to 3000 people.

3. Continue supplying the ANDSF with weapons, vehicles and other equipment.
4. Conduct Education in three categories: elementary (OCS, military schools and University of Marshal Fahim), intermediate (staff course) and strategic (Strategic College and overseas colleges). The University of Marshal Fahim must be rebuilt like the former military university.
5. The Ministries of Defense and Interior and not private contractors should be in charge of maintenance of vehicles and facilities. In the long term, central military factory of both ministries and its units should be capable of maintaining and repairing of the vehicles and facilities. Repairing of vehicles and weapons should be carried out in three steps: current, medium and capital, each of them has its own process. Broken vehicles and weapons shall be repaired first and then if not repairable, they could be destroyed. Contracts for importing spare parts to repair the weapons and vehicles should be between governments.
6. Revise the personnel's nutrition curriculum. Currently everyday they eat meat. They do not need such expensive nutrition regime. For example, a three days meat and three days fruit curriculum suffice them. Invest on building logistical capabilities – such as tailoring, within the ministries.
7. Relevant ministries should be in charge of procurement while regional officials be given the authority and discretion to address their procurement requirements.
8. Balance the deployment of the forces between headquarters and the corps. Headquarters should be thin and hidden unemployment should be eliminated within the headquarters.
9. Where possible, all units should be connected to the urban power network. As it is known already, from 16,000,000 liters of gas, 40% are allocated monthly to vehicles and 60% to generators.
10. Intelligence and discovery institutions should be improved and made accountable. Prevent corruption in contracts and the sale of weapons, ammunition, spare parts, fuel and other military equipment.
11. Avoid hiring Ford Ranger vehicles to transport officers individually. Such vehicles are tactical warfare vehicles not for transportations of the personnel.

Instead of providing transportations for the officers, it is advisable to offer them stipend.

12. Ministries and headquarters are civilian offices. Accordingly, civilian personnel should occupy the positions within these offices.

The General Staff must be a Gen. Lieutenant, the deputy of the General Staff must be a Major General, the commander of the Army Corps a Maj. General, the Chief of staff of the Army Corps a Brigadier general, the directorates of the chiefs of staff a Brigadier general and the commanders of the brigades a Colonel, the commanders of the battalions a LT. Colonel, the chief of staff a Major, the commanders of the companies a Captain, and the commanders of the squads a Lieutenant. The ranks of branches shall be set according to the ranks of their superior steps. Likewise, the Security Deputy of MOI must be a Major General, its directorates a Brigadier General, The Chief of Police of the First-Class Provinces a brigadier general, other provinces a Colonel, the chief of police of the first-class districts a Lieutenant Colonel and other districts a Major, the commanders of companies must be a Captain and the squad's lieutenants. The ranks of branches shall be set according to the ranks of their superior steps. The Deputy Minister of Public Protection should become a directorate under the command of the Security Deputy of the Minister. The size of personnel for the security of various provinces must be proportionate.

1. Deputies of Ministries of Defense and Interior excluding first deputy for MoD and security deputy for MoI should be reduced to directorates.



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## CHAPTER ELEVEN

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### *Conclusion and Recommendations*

## **11. Conclusion and Recommendations**

### **11.1. Conclusion**

Historically system-building in Afghanistan has been a flawed process; instead of focusing on institutionalizations of reforms, reforms have been person-centered and unsystematic. As a result, reforms were short lived. Politicization of the security force and ethnic discrimination are major historical challenges ahead of development of the security apparatus. The prominence of the militia force across various localities presents another challenge in that regard. The security force suffers from widespread corruption in areas such as recruitment and appointments, logistics and procurement. Recruitment and appointments are not merit-based. Powerful people intervene recruitment and appointment processes.

Both ANDSF and the Taliban machinery suffer from corruption. To some extent, the Taliban has succeeded to curb corruption within territories under their control; for example, in areas under their control, the Taliban managed to curb extortion across the roads. However, while corruption within government institutions is well documented and scrutinized, corruption within Taliban movement is yet to be systematically scrutinized and documented.

For the Afghan government to be able to cover its own army, police and intelligence budget and financial requirements – it has to economize its national budget and work on a roadmap based on fiscal and revenue projections based on an agreed framework to cover the expenditures of the Afghan National Budget on a phase to phase basis. It should also work on building domestic indigenous



capabilities and industries to drive down the cost of security expenditures. This requires an in-depth analysis, a broad-based political support and agreement and finally a commitment from the international community to support this process.

### **11.1.1. Defense Budget, Financial Management, Procurement and Logistics**

The Afghan national security forces lack an organized and computerized system of budgeting, financial management, procurement and logistics. The Afghan army and national police have been accused time of corruption in various contracts i.e. boots, uniforms and recently the famous case of the army hospital Sardar Mohammad Daud Khan in which millions of dollars worth of medical equipment and medicines were embezzled.

The Resolute Support Mission (RSM) states one of its key mission objectives to assist Afghan national security forces build their financial management, procurement and logistics capabilities but many challenges remain till date.

### **11.1.2. The Civilian Phobia: Role of Civilian Managers and Leaders in the Afghan National Security Forces**

Like any army and security force albeit to a lesser degree – the Afghan security forces are not welcoming to civilians joining their ranks to undertake key administrative, policy, financial management and logistics tasks within their institutions leaving the battle field tactics and fights for them. Professional civilians are rarely welcomed and sometimes even forced out to leave the force while the military and police themselves lack the capacity to undertake some of the key administrative, financial and policy functions.

This culture has to change because the Afghan security institutions need expertise and resources in many areas where only the civilians can provide it. In the long run with the establishment of army institutes and colleges – this function might be handed over to the military personnel themselves but in the short run there is a dire need for civilian expertise in the country's security agencies.

### **11.1.3. Transparency and Accountability in Security Expenditures**

Part of any military and security agency's job is to keep secrets and their budget

on certain items are highly kept secrets. But Afghanistan as a democracy like any other has to strike a balance between transparency and national security concerns so that the millions of dollars are accounted for and the Afghan public are aware of the expenditures of their security agencies. The old soviet practices should not prevail. Today - little is known about the process of Afghan national security forces budgeting and financial management process. Part of it has to do with the fact that financial resources are coming through the US/NATO military channels and part of it is due to the non-transparent nature of the allocations and expenditures of the Afghan security institutions.

The Afghan army, police and intelligence agencies as institutions of a democratic state should reveal their budgets and finances both for public scrutiny and support. It is only through popular support and public trust that these institutions would succeed in meeting their basic objective of providing security to the Afghan public.

#### **11.1.4. The Forgotten Afghan Indigenous Defense Industry**

Afghanistan lacks basic military factories and industry to support its expanding army and police. For the first time - the British, Turks followed by the Soviets built very basic arms and ammunition factories in Kabul. These factories were destroyed, looted or became obsolete with the factional wars for the control of Kabul in early 1990s. Today – Afghanistan lacks any sort of basic defense and military industry.

Building a defense and military industry for Afghanistan is key to economize and drive down the security expenditure of the Afghan security agencies. This will also assist the Afghan security agencies to be less dependent on outside markets for their basic equipment and ammunition. The US/NATO forces have only been successful in building few workshops for repair and maintenance of Afghan military equipment.

There is a need for significant financial and technical investment in reviving and building new military and defense factories for the Afghan security institutions. This will be the first key step in economizing the Afghan national security forces budget.

### **11.1.5. Building a Fiscally Sustainable Force - A Framework**

The current force level is not financially and economically sustainable for the Afghan government. In the medium to long run – the Afghan government based on the threat level and level of violence in the country will have to decrease the number of its forces unless there is a drastic economic miracle within the Afghan economic scene to be able to afford such an expensive force.

Like any other army and security force for building a fiscally sustainable Afghan national security apparatus – the Afghan government should focus on four pillars of a framework to build an economically and financially sustainable army and police:

1. Build Financial Management and Logistics capabilities within all the Afghan security institutions through establishing financial management, procurement and logistics systems with trained personnel.
2. Re-evaluate the entire security apparatus of the country from a financial and budget sustainability point of view. Based on the findings of this evaluation – take steps to economize the expenditures of the Afghan army and police.
3. Further political dialogue with Afghan neighbors and the armed opponents through peace process and other mechanisms to drive down the level of threats and violence in the country. This will assist in reducing the size of the Afghan army, police and intelligence. An over militarized Afghan society is not in the benefit of any of the actors in the country.
4. Launch a comprehensive program of investment in building indigenous defense and military factories and industry in the country.

## **11.2. Recommendations**

### **11.2.1. On Restructuring of the Defence And Security Institutions**

- Revive conscription; a committed national security force needs to be built upon local resources. However, such endeavor depends on post-war developments. If financial concerns of the people- among other things, are not addressed young people won't be able to offer military service as required. Currently youngsters are breadwinners of their families and they cannot afford conscription.
- Get rid of parallel security institutions. Parallel institutions cause

organizational confusion and create hidden unemployment; many people get paid without contributing.

- Do not encourage or promote semi-official forces. Such structures only widen the gap between the people and the government. Instead focuses on improving the formal defence and security institutions.
- Eliminate unnecessary advisory posts; most advisory posts are created based on political reasons (such as ethnic politics considerations) rather than professional considerations.
- Equip the security and defense institutions with advanced regionally-matched technology and warfare machinery.
- Improve the quality of training and educational programs in training institutions both at center and in provincial unites. Review and update the training agenda of the security sector; it should support and improve the moral and motivation of the security forces. Security training programs should include political and peace trainings as well. Lack of proper education is a major reason behind high rates of casualties.
- Conduct a system-wise reform to address the structural deficiencies of the forces. Currently essential components of the defense and security forces – including air defense system, artillery, tank, anti-tank missile, are missing.
- Articulate a national security doctrine. Currently due to lack of long-term strategic planning, the security force is prone to manipulations through ad hock management.
- Eliminate all kinds of discrimination across the defence and security institutions; promote merit-based practices.
- Rejuvenation of the security force is good; but the security force need to improve on previous generations advise and consultation.
- Right-size the size of the security force in post-conflict era. A strength of 100000 security personnel suffices the security requirements of the post-conflict era.
- A mixed combination of NATO and Warsaw security systems work better in Afghanistan.
- The security force should become smaller in number but greater in quality and function.

- In order to protect the rule of law, the police force needs to function not as soldiers but as law enforcement agents.
- Provide greater support to the defense and security forces and their families; the families of martyrs and retired officers need to be supported.

### **11.2.2. On Economization And Fiscal Sustainability of The Defence And Security Institutions**

- Invest in organizational capacity building inside the security and defense institutions; for example, improve maintenance capacity within the defence and security institutions. That would reduce the existing reliance on expensive external contractors. Economization starts with efficiency and organizational capacity building inside the government.
- Standardize salaries for the defence and security forces; significant discrepancies in salaries negatively impact the personnel.
- It is advisable that the UN as a neutral international organization coordinate all the security assistance programs. The UN must make sure that no local or international actors are able to misuse the funds.
- Improve the management and monitoring of the customs; upgrade them with modern technology. Currently they are not controlled and monitored properly; as a result, irresponsible agents collect the profit.
- Invest in production capabilities within the defense and security institutions; In order to guarantee self-reliance of the security force, the security force must be capable of producing basic commodities- such as ammunition and other basic logistical items.
- Initiate profitable activities within the defense and security organizations; their revenue generating capacity must be developed.
- Through automation of the management system, upgrade the administration of the defense and security institutions. It will facilitate proper monitoring and reduce the chances for misconduct and corruption.
- Fight the endemic corruption inside government institutions. Corruption within the defense and security institutions is part of the bigger picture i.e. corruption within all institutions of government.
- Decentralize logistical procedures; currently logistical procedures are

highly centralized and time consuming; such centralized system hinders institutional efficiency within the security sector.

- Invest in management of national resources such as waters and minerals; lack of proper management of national resources resulted in waste and theft of resources at the hands of local powerbrokers, the insurgency and regional countries interfering in local affairs.
- Legalize opium cultivation and business; it will enhance the economy of Afghanistan and reduce illegal drug trafficking.
- Work on developing a public financial management system; without such system in place, strategic management and monitoring of public expenditures- including expenditures within the defense and security institutions, will not be possible. Improve financial management and monitoring of the security force budget; without proper management and monitoring of financial resources, economization of the security force is impossible. The security sector must be responsible before people.

### **11.2.3. On Military Power Sharing And Integration**

- Undertake a proactive diplomacy to gain regional and international consensus on peace and security sector reform processes.
- Conditional military integration of the Taliban is advisable; integration of the Taliban forces within the ANDSF should be incremental. Their integration must take place through certain professional principles including professional training. Their background and educational level shall be taken into consideration.
- Provide the Taliban forces integration opportunities such as employment opportunities. However, providing support for integration processes shall not ascend to awarding the militias for their past militancy.
- Next to military integration of the Taliban forces, promote social integration. Social integration requires encouraging peaceful coexistence among different parties. Through civil integration processes, the government makes sure that achievements of the past two decades such as freedom of speech and women's rights are not ignored.
- Integration of the Taliban must be part of the peace agreement and it should

be supervised by international observers.

- After making peace with the Taliban, consider dealing with the problem of foreign fighters.
- Post-conflict compensation for victims of war should be considered as essential part of post-conflict integration.

#### **11.2.4. General Recommendations**

- Learn from the past experiences of state-building; during past periods of government-building a lot of mistakes were committed including ignoring local cultural norms. Security interventions and reform agendas should not ignore local settings.
- Encourage women's participation in public decision making processes.
- Politicization of the security force must be avoided. A politicized force only work for politicians and powerbrokers.
- Create jobs for all people including educated youth.

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