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Top of Form





Bottom of Form

**Prepared Remarks of   
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“The Perilous State of Afghan Reconstruction: Lessons From Fifteen Years ”**

Thank you, Ann Jones, for the kind introduction, and for the invitation to speak here at Harvard. SIGAR's legislative mandate is to report to Congress and to the Secretaries of Defense and State, pointing out problems in the Afghanistan reconstruction effort and suggesting improvements. But we firmly believe that outreach to the American public, including researchers, commentators, and teachers, is also an important part of our job.

The world is a dangerous place, and the future is likely to include new "contingency operations" involving American military and civilian personnel in violent settings that will entail rebuilding failed or fragile nation-states. Close examination of operations like the one that began in Afghanistan nearly 15 years ago can help us make more informed decisions and, hopefully, produce better outcomes in the future.

A distinguished Harvard professor who also served as a learned and grumpy President of the United States drew a striking conclusion from his examinations of public life. John Quincy Adams, Harvard Class of 1787, wrote that "The public history of all countries and all ages, is but a mask, richly colored. The interior working of the machinery must be foul."[[1]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_edn1" \o ") With that working assumption, he would have made a good inspector general.

President Obama named me Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction in 2012, I have since spent most of my waking hours thinking about Afghanistan-about the thousands of brave men and women we have sent there, about the millions of Afghans who yearn for peace and a better life, and about the billons of U.S. taxpayers' dollars that have been committed to Afghanistan's reconstruction. Our efforts there have produced many good outcomes, as well as many disappointments and some genuine fiascos. The record is decidedly mixed.

Since fiscal year 2002, the United States Congress has appropriated more than $113 billion to reconstruct Afghanistan. That total includes funding for roads, clinics, schools, civil-servant pay, and Afghan military and police forces, but *not* the far greater costs of U.S. military operations in the longest war we have ever fought. Another distinguished Harvard professor, Linda Bilmes of the Kennedy School, famously co-authored a 2008 book on our second Iraq conflict that estimated its total long-term costs at three *trillion* dollars.[[2]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_edn2" \o ") More recently, she projected Iraq-Afghanistan total costs at four to six trillion dollars.[[3]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_edn3" \o ") The bill is still rising, and as the professor points out, large costs for war-related healthcare and payments to participants will persist for decades.

The struggle in Afghanistan, by the way, is not only America's longest war, but an outlier by the standards of insurgencies. A RAND Corporation study of 71 post-1945 insurgencies found the average and the median duration was about 10 years.[[4]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_edn4" \o ") Depending on how you calculate it, Afghanistan's civil war has been going on for upwards of 35 years.

And Afghanistan has achieved yet another statistical milestone. The $113 billion appropriated so far, when adjusted for inflation, exceeds the total spending under the Marshall Plan that helped rebuild Western Europe after the Second World War. Such an enormous effort bears close watching, and that's what we at SIGAR do.

SIGAR has so far produced more than 200 products-audits, inspections, investigative reports, special-project reports, alert and inquiry letters, and quarterly reports-examining the use of that vast amount of money. Sometimes we conclude that contract terms were carried out, that regulations were followed, that financial statements were fairly presented, and that programs and projects were successful. All too often, unfortunately, we report that something is wrong-sometimes very wrong, and in very important areas.

Consider security, without which many other reconstruction activities are impossible, or weakened, or under threat. The most recent State Department travel warning on Afghanistan says, in part:

The security situation in Afghanistan is extremely unstable . . . Travel to all areas of Afghanistan remains unsafe due to ongoing military combat operations, landmines, banditry, armed rivalry between political and tribal groups, and insurgent attacks, including attacks using vehicle-borne or other improvised explosive devices.[[5]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_edn5" \o ")

American personnel in Afghanistan, including more than two dozen SIGAR staff on duty there, know this to be true. They are generally confined to the U.S. Embassy, and must take a helicopter even to get to the airport because the roads are so unsafe. Large parts of Afghanistan are effectively off-limits to foreign personnel, whether they are managing projects or responsible for oversight functions. SIGAR, I should mention, is mitigating this challenge by using Afghan-national employees, using GPS technology, and by working with a local nongovernmental entity.

These security concerns are not the consequences of large, set-piece battles, but are more like the death of a thousand cuts. The Taliban and other insurgents repeatedly carry out hit-and-run assaults on Afghan army and police checkpoints and small outposts, capturing weapons, inflicting casualties, and eroding the credibility of the government in Kabul. For example, within the space of a few days in late March, insurgents assassinated an Afghan army general in Kandahar Province and a judge in Ghazni Province, and fired rockets at the new Afghan parliament building. [[6]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_edn6" \o ")

Other consequences of insecurity are less headline-grabbing, but are still evil omens for the future of a desperately poor and largely illiterate country. Late last month, a spokesman for the Afghan Ministry of Education was quoted as saying 714 schools have been closed and more than 2.5 million children were being denied schooling, mainly because of the war.[[7]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_edn7" \o ")

Such conditions are not, to put it mildly, what we would hope to see 15 years into a counterinsurgency and nation-building campaign. Apart from the particular distress such incidents create, they illustrate a grim strategic threat. As James Clapper, the Director of National Intelligence, told the US. Senate in March, "Kabul will be unable to effectively address its economic situation or begin to cut its dependence on foreign aid until it first contains the insurgency."[[8]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_edn8" \o ")

That will be a serious challenge. Bruce Hoffman, formerly of the RAND Corporation and the CIA, now at Georgetown University, pointed out "the fundamental asymmetry" of insurgents versus counterinsurgents when he said: "The guerrillas do not have to defeat their opponents militarily; they just have to avoid losing."[[9]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_edn9" \o ") Bombings, raids, ambushes, land mines, and temporary seizures of key points-last fall's Taliban occupation of the provincial capital of Kunduz comes to mind-can all serve to undermine the government's credibility and affect security force and popular morale.

Last month, the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Afghanistan told the Security Council that "For 2016, survival will be an achievement for the [Afghan] National Unity Government."[[10]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_edn10" \o ") I emphasize that the envoy said*survival*. Nicholas Haysom, a veteran UN and South African government official, explained that the Kabul regime's survival requires overcoming each of "five distinct hurdles": a contracting economy, an intensifying insurgency, a divided political setting, a need for medium-term international financial support, and a stalled peace process.

Based on what I have seen personally and the results of our work at SIGAR, I believe General Clapper and Special Representative Haysom are correct in their diagnosis. The reconstruction effort in Afghanistan is in a perilous state. Afghanistan has had the lead responsibility for its own security for more than a year now, and is struggling with a four-season insurgency, high attrition, and capability challenges. Heavy losses in the poppy-growing province of Helmand have required rebuilding an Afghan army corps and replacing its commander and some other officers as a result, a U.S. general said, of "a combination of incompetence, corruption, and ineffectiveness."[[11]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_edn11" \o ")

I have spent some time talking about security for three reasons. First, it is where most of the U.S. reconstruction funding has gone, about 61% of the $113 billion Congress has appropriated since fiscal year 2002, or $68 billion.[[12]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_edn12" \o ") Second, security is the essential ingredient for establishing a credible, viable, legitimate government-and for persuading insurgents that they need to negotiate. And third, the Afghan security sector is the setting for many of the instances where SIGAR has documented that something has gone wrong in the mostly U.S.-funded Afghanistan reconstruction effort.

Let me give you a few striking examples of things that have gone wrong in the security sector:

* A SIGAR investigation helped produce a late-2015 criminal complaint against a trucking company owner, Hikmatullah Shadman, who allegedly conspired with and bribed at least two U.S. soldiers and others to obtain more than $77 million in contracts despite asking higher prices than competitors. SIGAR's work also helped trigger a first-of-its-kind freeze on $63 million in bank accounts he controlled.[[13]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_edn13" \o ")
* As a result of the U.S. military drawdown in Afghanistan, the Department of Defense has lost much of its ability to collect reliable information and data on Afghan security capability and effectiveness. U.S. advisors have little or no direct contact with ANDSF units below the army-corps and regional police-headquarters level.[[14]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_edn14" \o ") As our military leaders have put it, the United States has lost "touch points" with the Afghan battalions and brigades and police units that actually conduct operations. Meanwhile, we continue to rely on Afghan reporting on unit strengths-a concern because the rolls may contain thousands of "ghost" personnel whose costs we pay and whose absence distorts realistic assessments of Afghan capabilities.
* U.S. taxpayers spend huge amounts of money on fuel for Afghan security forces. But SIGAR investigators found in 2012 that the U.S.-led Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan had lost track of so much data that it could not account for $201 million in fuel purchases for the Afghan Army. [[15]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_edn15" \o ") In 2015, our investigators found worse news: four Afghan contractors had fixed prices, rigged bids, and paid bribes prior to the award of a multi-year Ministry of Defense fuel contract. Their actions criminally increased cost to the Afghan government and to American taxpayers by more than $214 million.[[16]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_edn16" \o ")
* In a case of very poor procurement, the Department of Defense spent $486 million to buy 20 second-hand G222 medium-lift cargo planes from Italy for the Afghan Air Force. Unfortunately, the planes were unsuitable for operating in Afghanistan, had not been properly refurbished, and would need parts for maintenance that were no longer available. DOD ended the program in March 2013 and later sold 16 of the planes as scrap metal for six cents a pound, for a grand total of $32,000.[[17]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_edn17" \o ")
* A recent SIGAR Inspections report found that construction of the new $155 million, U.S.-funded headquarters building for the Afghan Ministry of Defense failed to satisfy several contract requirements to protect against seismic activity and ensure proper roof drainage. [[18]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_edn18" \o ") This represents a failure of good contract management, not to mention a possibly lethal failure considering the fact that Kabul is in an earthquake zone.
* DOD spent about $32 million on contracts that included installing steel bars in culverts to prevent Afghan insurgents from placing bombs under roads. But SIGAR found that two Afghan contractors in one province had either never installed or incorrectly installed 250 of these culvert-denial systems. U.S. troops may have died or suffered wounds as a result. SIGAR's Office of Special Projects also found it impossible to determine how many systems had been installed because much required documentation was lacking, including evidence of site-visit confirmations by U.S. contracting officials. [[19]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_edn19" \o ")
* One of the more bizarre episodes we have uncovered is the melting building of Logar Province. SIGAR reported last year that DOD contracted with an Afghan firm to build a $500,000 dry-fire range for training Afghan police. A dry-fire range uses no live ammo, but trains people on stance, aiming, and weapons familiarization. The U.S. government accepted the completed work and paid the contractor in full. Within four month, however, the range's buildings began to "melt" in rain and crumble because of substandard bricks and other materials. To make matters even worse, U.S. officials failed to hold the contractor accountable before the contractor's warranty expired, so the buildings had to be demolished at additional cost to American taxpayers. [[20]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_edn20" \o ")

Those are a few examples from the security side of reconstruction. Unfortunately, there are many more security-related problems. I refer you to SIGAR quarterly reports, available online at sigar.mil, for details. But reconstruction has suffered in many other areas. Again, a few instances:

* The U.S. Congress has appropriated $8.4 billion since FY 2002 for counternarcotics programs in Afghanistan. Even if you exclude funding for some aircraft that also have a counterterror mission, the total is still nearly $7 billion. This is an important effort, because narcotics use, chiefly opium-related, is a public-health crisis that also fosters corruption and provides major funding to insurgents. Nevertheless, the United Nations reports that Afghanistan remains the world leader in illicit opiate production, accounting for 80% of global output for the past decade. [[21]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_edn21" \o ") Figures for land cultivated and opium production fluctuate over time, but have generally trended upward. Afghan opium production for 2015 is estimated at 3,300 tons, or 6.6 million pounds.[[22]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_edn22" \o ") Unfortunately, 3,300 tons is exactly the same number the UN calculated for Afghanistan's opium production in the year 2000. [[23]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_edn23" \o ")
* Since 2003, DOD, the Departments of State and Justice, and the U.S. Agency for International Development have spent more than $1 billion on at least 66 programs to promote the rule of law in Afghanistan. This is another important effort to foster government legitimacy, encourage economic development, and counter the influence of traditional, informal dispute-resolution methods-and of insurgent-enforced application of their own version of religious mandates. SIGAR auditors found, however, that the U.S. agencies have operated without a comprehensive strategy to guide their efforts, and that none of six programs audited had performance-management systems capable of clearly determining whether programs had achieved their objectives. [[24]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_edn24" \o ")
* SIGAR inspectors who examined the nearly $600,000, DOD-funded Salang hospital in Afghanistan found construction problems that could cause the building to collapse in an earthquake. They also found the Afghan contractor had not corrected contract failures identified by U.S. contracting officials, including water and electrical systems. Consequently, newborn babies and other patients were being washed with untreated water from the nearby river. Our inspectors also found, among other things, that the hospital was short of furniture and equipment, that the roof leaked, and that the hospital had no fuel budget to operate its electric generator.[[25]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_edn25" \o ")
* When SIGAR inspectors examined the Gareshk Cold and Dry Storage Facility, however, they found a well-built project intended to help Afghan farmers. DOD's now-defunct Task Force for Business Stability Operations had provided $2.9 million for the project. Unfortunately, it was never used, and there was no apparent private-sector interest in using it.[[26]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_edn26" \o ")

Clearly, reconstruction problems in Afghanistan cover a wide range of issues, from execution of particular physical projects to broad strategic guidance. They are, of course, not unique to Afghanistan or even to conflict situations. Iraq reconstruction was also fraught with problems, and the problem-riddled reconstruction after Haiti's earthquake disaster did not involve an active insurgency.

Still, Afghanistan poses a special challenge to inquiring minds. As Norway's respected Christian Michelsen Institute for development research observes:

15 years of unparalleled Western military and aid involvement in Afghanistan have left few able to predict what the future holds for the country. . . . Afghanistan faces a deep crisis, politically, economically and militarily.[[27]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_edn27" \o ")

Fifteen years into an unfinished work of funding and fighting, we must indeed ask, "What went wrong?" Citing instances of full or partial failures, as I have done so far, is part of the answer. But no catalog of imperfections captures the full palette of pathologies or root causes. Some of those answers will appear next month when SIGAR issues an updated and revised version of its December 2014 *High-Risk List*. As I stated for a Senate appropriations subcommittee in February, the high-risk areas we identified persist.[[28]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_edn28" \o ") The high-risk areas include:

* **Corruption.**Abuse of position for private gain is pervasive in Afghanistan, but is not purely an Afghan problem. American military personnel, both officers and enlisted, and federal civilian employees, as well as contractor employees, have pled guilty or been convicted of soliciting and taking bribes, conspiring, money laundering, and other offenses. For its part, Afghanistan continues to be ranked near the bottom of rankings for perceived corruption, and holding high-ranking or politically connected individuals accountable continues to be a major challenge. Unfortunately, the United States continues to operate without an overall strategy for combatting corruption, which saps Afghan revenues, undermines government legitimacy, and wastes American taxpayers' money. SIGAR's Lessons Learned Program is currently preparing an extensive report on corruption.
* **Sustainability.**We have built Afghanistan a government and a military that it cannot afford: The country already relies on international donors for about 60% of its budget. The temptation to focus on creating or building, while neglecting sustainment needs, has been a major problem. The results includes roads that crumble for lack of repair, power plants that lack provision for fuel, clinics that cannot resupply their pharmacies, and equipment that Afghans cannot operate or maintain on their own. Programs need more thorough, realistic and disciplined analysis of needs, resources, and ongoing requirements before they are launched.
* **Contract management.**SIGAR has documented numerous instances of poor contract management by DOD and civilian agencies. This is not for want of applicable laws and regulations. As a January 2012 conference of U.S. agencies in Kabul concluded, reconstruction projects have often suffered from widespread failure to observe existing laws, regulations, and guidance. Problems have included failures to conduct on-site inspections, maintain required documentation, ensure that work is completed to contract standards before accepting it, and holding contractors accountable for defects before warranties expire. DOD has in fact acknowledged that U.S. forces in Afghanistan lack the capacity to administer, oversee, and close contracts to ensure proper performance. [[29]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_edn29" \o ") This is an extremely difficult problem to correct-not least because U.S. contracting officers are often not held accountable for failing to do their job properly-but that difficulty should itself be recognized whenever the federal government contemplates and plans a contingency operation.
* **Strategy and planning.**Agencies' programs have at times worked at cross purposes, or spent money on duplicative or unnecessary efforts, because they failed to plan and coordinate efforts. For example, stability is a key U.S. objective in Afghanistan. Since 2003, USAID has spent at least $2.3 billion on stabilization programs intended to engage and support at-risk populations, extend the Afghan government's reach to unstable areas, provide income opportunities, build trust between citizens and government, and encourage local people to participate in development. However, USAID recently told us that it has received no new funding for stabilization programming, and has no plans to continue stabilization activities in Afghanistan, possibly indicating that these programs did not succeed.[[30]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_edn30" \o ") This suggests, to say the least, a regrettable shortcoming in planning and coordination.

There are other answers to the question "What went wrong?" Some of them rest on a fact pointed out by Afghanistan's former interior minister, who participated in a U.S. Institute of Peace lessons-learned forum last year. Ali Jalili said, "It was an accidental war" following the 9/11 terror attacks, ". . . with no plans or strategy for what needs to happen after that."[[31]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_edn31" \o ") Similar observations have been made about the Iraq war.

In both theaters, what went wrong is what usually goes wrong, including:

* Failure to expect surprising things to happen.
* Failure to make adequate provision for problems and countermeasures once you intervene.
* Failure to understand local culture, grievances, and expectations.
* Failure to identify key players, their motives, and their susceptibilities.
* Failure to remember that money, power, and other inducements can and will lead some people far from the path of duty.
* Failure to coordinate plans and activities among your own agencies, and with local officials and leaders, international allies, civil society, and nongovernmental organizations.
* And, especially important from SIGAR's point of view, failure to provide for comprehensive oversight before you intervene, not years afterward.

That concludes my quick tour of what went wrong in Afghanistan reconstruction and why it went wrong. To be fair, I remind you that U.S. agencies have had reconstruction successes in Afghanistan. Despite ongoing violence, the Afghan people are healthier, better schooled, and less impoverished than they were 15 years ago. We can learn from those successes. But it is the disappointments and failures that threaten achievement of objectives and stewardship of taxpayers' dollars, so they deserve our keenest attention. I look forward to hearing your thoughts. Thank you.

[[1]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_ednref1" \o ") John Quincy Adams, diary entry of 11/9/1832, quoted in Robert A. Nowlan,

[[2]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_ednref2" \o ") Linda J. Bilmes and Joseph E. Stiglitz, *The Three Trillion Dollar War: The True Cost of the Iraq Conflict* (Norton, 2008).

[[3]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_ednref3" \o ") *Washington Post* , "Study: Iraq, Afghan war costs to top $4 trillion," 3/28/2013.

[[4]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_ednref4" \o ") RAND Corporation, *Paths to Victory: Lessons from Modern Insurgencies*, prepared for the Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2013, p. 158.

[[5]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_ednref5" \o ") U.S. State Department, "Afghanistan Travel Warning," 11/19/2015, https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/alertswarnings/afghanistan-travel-warning.html

[[6]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_ednref6" \o ") Radio Free Europe, "Army General Assassinated in South Afghanistan," "Taliban Guns Down Afghan Provincial Judge," "Rockets Fired At Afghan Parliament Building, No Casualties Reported," http://www.rferl.org, all 3/28/2016.

[[7]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_ednref7" \o ") Tolo News (Afghanistan), "2.5m Afghan Children Denied Schooling," www.tolonews.com, updated 3/24/2016.

[[8]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_ednref8" \o ") James R. Clapper, statement for the record, U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence hearing, "Worldwide Threat Assessment of the U.S. Intelligence Community," 2/9/2016, p. 26.

[[9]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_ednref9" \o ") Bruce Hoffman, *Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Iraq*, RAND Corporation Occasional Paper OP-127-IPC/CMEPP, 6/2004, p. 15.

[[10]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_ednref10" \o ") United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, "Briefing to the United Nations Security Council by the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Afghanistan, Mr. Nicholas Haysom," 3/15/2016, p. 1.

[[11]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_ednref11" \o ") Brigadier General Wilson Shoffner, U.S./NATO spokesman in Afghanistan, quoted in Associated Press, "US general: Afghan army being 'rebuilt' for Taliban battle," bigstory.ap.org, 1/25/2016.

[[12]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_ednref12" \o ") SIGAR, *Quarterly Report to the Congress of the United States*, 1/30/2016, p. 65.

[[13]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_ednref13" \o ") Radio Free Europe, "U.S. Charges Afghan Businessman With Bribing For Contracts," 12/30/2015.

[[14]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_ednref14" \o ") USFOR-A (U.S. Forces-Afghanistan), response to SIGAR data call, 12/4/2015.

[[15]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_ednref15" \o ") SIGAR Investigative Report 13-1, *Afghan National Army: $201 Million in DoD Fuel Purchases Still Unaccounted For Because Records Were Shredded*, 12/20/2012.

[[16]](https://www.sigar.mil/newsroom/ReadFile.aspx?SSR=7&SubSSR=29&File=speeches/16/SIGAR_Harvard_Speech.html" \l "_ednref16" \o ") SIGAR, *Quarterly Report to the Congress of the United States*, 4/30/2015, i.

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