



**SIGAR**

Office of the Special Inspector General  
for Afghanistan Reconstruction

August 24, 2016

Naseem Akbar  
Executive Director  
Afghanistan Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring  
and Evaluation Committee (MEC)  
Kabul, Afghanistan

Dear Mr. Akbar:

We read with great interest the MEC's June 2016 Special Report, "Vulnerability to Corruption Assessment in the Afghan Ministry of Public Health."<sup>1</sup> Frankly, I was surprised by the nature and extent of the corruption found by the MEC. Many of the complaints documented by the MEC Report were particularly wrenching and expressed the anguish and frustration of ordinary Afghans. No one should have to resort to bribery in order to obtain treatment in a Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) hospital or find that they are being treated with unsafe drugs.<sup>2</sup>

The MEC Report's findings of pervasive corruption in the Afghan public health system should serve as a wakeup call to the MoPH, the larger Afghan government, the U.S. Agency for International Development, the World Bank, and all other stakeholders. The next step is to take action. If even half the recommendations contained in the MEC report are implemented, it would significantly improve the delivery of health services to the Afghan people.

I plan to be in Kabul sometime in the next several weeks. At your convenience, I would like to meet to discuss our mutual goals of promoting transparency and detecting and deterring waste, fraud, and abuse. Among the issues I would like to discuss are the following:

- Has the MoPH responded to the MEC report? If so, were you and the MEC staff satisfied with the MoPH response?
- The MEC report made 115 recommendations. Does the MEC plan to monitor the MoPH's efforts to implement those recommendations or to assist the MoPH in implementing those recommendations?
- Does the MEC plan to examine other ministries within the Afghan government and produce similar reports? If so, which ministries and what are the possible timeframes?

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<sup>1</sup> MEC, "Vulnerability to Corruption Assessment in the Afghan Ministry of Public Health," June 4, 2016.

<sup>2</sup> The findings of the MEC Report are consistent with what SIGAR has found in the past. For example, our 2013 audit warned of the MoPH's financial management deficiencies and insufficient oversight, and found strong evidence that U.S. support provided to the MoPH under the U.S. Agency for International Development's Partnership Contracts for Health program was vulnerable to waste, fraud, and abuse (see SIGAR, *Health Services in Afghanistan: USAID Continues Providing Millions of Dollars to the Ministry of Public Health despite the Risk of Misuse of Funds*, Audit Report 13-17, September 5, 2013).

My staff will be in contact shortly to arrange a meeting to discuss these and related issues. Again, I found the report both informative and insightful, and am encouraged by the MEC's continued commitment to exposing and combating corruption in Afghanistan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John F. Sopko', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

John F. Sopko  
Special Inspector General  
for Afghanistan Reconstruction

Encl: I - MEC Response, dated August 31, 2016

ENCLOSURE I: AFGHANISTAN INDEPENDENT JOINT ANTI-CORRUPTION  
MONITORING AND EVALUATION COMMITTEE AGENCY COMMENTS FOR SIGAR  
16-55-SP, DATED 31 AUGUST 2016

د ادارې فساد پر وړاندې د څارنې او ارزونې  
څپلواکه او گډه کمیټه



Independent Joint Anti-Corruption  
Monitoring & Evaluation Committee

کمیټه مستقل مشترک نظارت و ارزینې  
مبارزه با فساد اداری

August 31, 2016

Mr. John F. Sopko  
Special Inspector General  
for Afghanistan Reconstruction  
1550 Crystal Drive, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Arlington, VA 22202

3094

Dear Inspector General Sopko:

Thank you for your letter of August 24, and your kind words regarding MEC's work with the MOPH Special Report.

As you know, the recently released Special Report on the MOPH was initiated in April of 2014, by a request from the current Minister Dr. Ferozuddin Feroz, with the support of USAID. In his request Minister Feroz asked for an independent report on vulnerabilities of corruption in his Ministry. The results of this would enable him to prepare an anti-corruption plan which he could implement in the MOPH. Minister Feroz has shown his support throughout this process, not only by initially requesting this work be done and instructing MOPH employees to cooperate, but also by taking the unusual step of participating in MEC's June 4 press conference where the release of the Special Report was announced and media were able to ask questions.

For the implementation of the recommendations, MEC will be providing updates on areas of progress with the MOPH's implementation and we are currently following the development of the Ministry's development of a comprehensive work plan.

There are other ministerial-level institutions that have approached MEC expressing their desire to having similar ministry-wide vulnerability to corruption assessments (MVCA's) conducted. MEC is in the process of developing work plans and hiring international subject-area consultants to conduct this work and it is expected that the first reports along these lines would be released at the start of 2017. We have planned to carry out a MVCA's or a special report on the following institutions:

1. Attorney General Office
2. Ministry of Education
3. Ministry of Commerce and Industry

We will also conduct vulnerability to corruption assessment (VCAs) in the following institutions:

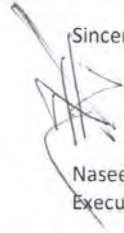
1. Breshna Electrical corporation
2. Traffic department /vehicle registration
3. Ministry of Transportation: Directorate General, Private sector ground transport

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August 31, 2016

I look forward to meeting with you in Kabul to further discuss these issues. The continued collaboration of MEC and the SIGAR in combating corruption in Afghanistan is important, and MEC looks forward to working with you to achieve our shared goals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Naseem Akbar', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Naseem Akbar  
Executive Director, MEC