



SIGAR

Office of the Special Inspector General
for Afghanistan Reconstruction

February 14, 2017

The Honorable Hugo Llorens
Special Chargé d'Affaires
U.S. Embassy, Afghanistan

Dear Chargé Llorens:

I am writing to request information regarding the Department of State's ongoing and planned infrastructure development projects in Afghanistan. Infrastructure projects have been and continue to be a significant part of the Afghanistan reconstruction effort, and the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF) for 2017-2021 calls on international donors to support the Afghan government's efforts to improve the economic environment by focusing on infrastructure development, among other things, over the next five years.¹ In addition to understanding how State is responding to the Afghan government's call for infrastructure development, information about State's ongoing and planned infrastructure development projects in Afghanistan will help the new U.S. Congress and Administration understand existing reconstruction priorities and allow SIGAR to bolster our planning efforts.

Since its creation, SIGAR has conducted extensive oversight of infrastructure projects in Afghanistan funded by the U.S., and our efforts have resulted in hundreds of millions of dollars in cost savings. For example, as a result of our September 2013 audit examining ongoing and planned construction in support of the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces, the Department of Defense took actions to more closely align infrastructure development with projected needs. DOD's actions in response to our work resulted in approximately \$600 million worth of U.S. taxpayer funds being put to better use.²

To assist us in fulfilling our critical oversight mandate, please provide, no later than March 1, 2017, a list of all ongoing and planned State-funded infrastructure development projects in Afghanistan. The list should include infrastructure projects funded on- and off-budget, as well as individual infrastructure projects implemented as components of State programs. For each project, please include the project location, cost (planned or committed, obligated, and disbursed), program name

¹ Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, *Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF) 2017-2021*, p.34.

² SIGAR, *Afghan National Security Forces: Additional Action Needed to Reduce Waste in \$4.7 Billion Worth of Planned and Ongoing Construction Projects*, SIGAR 13-18, September 13, 2013.

(where applicable), expected period of performance (start and completion dates), and the sector to which the project is expected to contribute (e.g. transportation, energy, agricultural and natural resource, etc.).

I am submitting this request under the authority of Public Law No. 110-181, and the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended. Should you or your staff have any questions about this project, please contact Mr. Matthew Dove, Director of Special Projects, at (703) 545-6051 or matthew.d.dove.civ@mail.mil.

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

ENCLOSURE I: SUMMARY OF STATE DEPARTMENT RESPONSE TO SIGAR-17-29-SP

On March 21, 2017, State provided its response to our February 14, 2017 letter. State's response was marked "Sensitive But Unclassified" (SBU). According to State, the response was marked SBU because it contained pre-decisional information and detailed program budgets that State generally does not release publicly. In response to State's concerns, we agreed to withhold State's full response from publication and instead provide a summary of the response, including aggregated costs of State's ongoing and planned work.³

As of March 21, 2017, State had 61 ongoing infrastructure projects in Afghanistan. Fifty-three of those ongoing projects (with contracts worth approximately \$17.6 million)⁴ are funded by the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs' (INL) Good Performers Initiative.⁵ According to State's response, of the remaining projects, six used Foreign Military Financing and were executed by the Department of Defense and Resolute Support; one used funding from State's Nonproliferation, Anti-terrorism, Demining and Related Programs account.⁶ These seven projects generally provide funds for upgrades, maintenance, and repairs at Afghan government facilities. State's final ongoing project provided approximately \$8 million to construct a women's dormitory at Balkh University.⁷

In addition to its ongoing projects, State also had one planned project for the construction of a waste water treatment facility at Pol-i-Charkhi prison; however, the project design is currently being updated and the decision to proceed with the project is pending.⁸

³ State's grounds for withholding this information from public release seem weak, at best. Nevertheless, SIGAR was able to aggregate the information for the purposes of this summary.

⁴ As of February 28, 2017.

⁵ The GPI program offered Afghan provincial governors a tangible way to demonstrate to their constituents the benefits of reducing poppy cultivation. The program provided direct assistance funds to the Afghan Ministry of Counter Narcotics to incentivize provincial governors' counter narcotics activities. No new GPI projects have been approved since April 30, 2016, and INL recently decided to end the program however INL will continue to fund ongoing projects until their completion.

⁶ Due to differences in the reporting methods used by State, we were unable to provide an aggregate cost for these six projects.

⁷ SIGAR has an ongoing inspection to assess the construction of the State-funded women's dormitory at Balkh University.

⁸ See recommendations and agency response included in SIGAR, *Pol-i-Charkhi Prison: After 5 Years and \$18.5 Million, Renovation Project Remains Incomplete*, October 17, 2014.