[REFORMS IN REVIEW PART 4: CUTTING CORRUPTION AND PROFESSIONALIZING THE SECURITY SECTOR](http://policymof.gov.af/home/reforms-in-review-part-4-cutting-corruption-and-professionalizing-the-security-sector/)

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| “Let me summarize the reforms most relevant to peace. The key to our negotiating credibility will be whether we succeed in reforming our security sector. I have said elsewhere and I will repeat again here that the cutting edge for our security reform strategy is whether we succeed in reforming the Ministry of Interior.” –  *President Ashraf Ghani, Kabul Process conference, June 6, 2017* |

In 2014, security responsibility was handed over from international to Afghan forces. International forces assumed a role to train, advise and assist Afghan forces, who took a lead on battlefield operations across the country. In order to respond to the demand for increased capacity and capability, reforming the security sector has been a top priority for the National Unity Government, starting with the Ministry of Defense (MoD) and then the Ministry of Interior Affairs (MoIA).

Corruption in the security sector over the past decade has cost Afghanistan heavily in human and financial resources needed to protect citizens and enforce rule of law. Sweeping and unprecedented reforms have been on-going at the MoIA and MoD since 2014 to cut corruption, install systems of accountability and transparency, and establish responsible and qualified leadership. The goals of reforms are to 1) create effective governance of the security sector by introducing transparent, civilian systems, called ‘civilianization’ or ‘professionalization’ of the security sector, and 2) end security sector corruption.

Reforms are overseen by the International Community Advisor Steering Council, which meets weekly in Kabul and includes representatives of the Afghan government and the following agencies: UN Development Program, UNAMA, the German Police Project Team, and U.S. government departments and agencies.

As a result of reforms, US forces in Afghanistan reported to the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) that the Afghan National Army (ANA) performed better in 2016 than in 2015. Likewise, UNAMA’s 2017 annual report documented significant improvements in the way the ANDSF are fighting on the battlefield.

Deliverables of reforms, of which progress is explored below, are laid out in the US Compact and the Afghan National Strategy to Combat Corruption.

***Introducing civilian systems of procurement, human resources management, and financial transparency and accountability***

*Ministry of Defense*

In 2014, the US and Afghan governments signed the U.S.-Afghan Bilateral Civilianization Agreement to commit to civilianization reforms in the security forces. A High Oversight Board was established to provide guidelines and audits of senior security-related appointments and promotions, currently headed by Major General Abdul Khaliq Sarwari.

So far, eighteen general officers and 442 other officer-level positions have been converted into civilian positions. Out of these, approximately 250 of these positions have been filled through a competitive process via the Independent Administrative Reforms and Civil Service Commission (IARCSC). There are 5,164 civilian positions available in Grade 7 & 8, equivalent to all enlisted ranks in the 1397 Tashkil (human resources authorization document).

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| “Since 2014, we have replaced the previous corps commanders and hired professional, experienced, and educated people, who are clean from corruption, in different sections of Afghan National Army, especially for our corps leadership across the country. As a result, today we see their performance in the battlefield is much improved.” – [Deputy Minister for Defense, Tamim Asey](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yQqwYF8B1jk) |

The MoD has dismissed 1,400 staff members (including 946 officers, 230 financial personnel, 209 procurement officials) on the basis of corruption or nonperformance. Investigations are underway into 55 cases of illegal ammunition and weapons sales, in which 109 people were involved. 578 cases are being investigated for other crimes. Under these reforms, a major fuel theft case in the 205th Corps successfully made its way through the Afghan court system, which resulted in jail time for the offending leadership.

The Four-Year Security plan includes a leadership development program to provide further education and training to security sector personnel, particularly in intelligence. The MoD is also working to increase the number of women in uniform by 800 per year for the next eight years. There are currently approximately 1,300 women in Afghan National Army, including a female pilot. There has been some progress toward better integration of female soldiers into ANA but there are significant cultural, social, and structural barriers that collectively impede progress against United Nations Security Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 and the Afghanistan National Action Plan.

To increase financial accountability and transparency, the MoD published its unconditional defense strategy**,** [available at this link.](http://mod.gov.af/Content/files/palicy/%2525D8%2525AE%2525D9%252584%2525D8%2525A7%2525D8%2525B5%2525D9%252587.pdf) The government’s national budget for the year 1397 (March 2018 through February 2019) [has been published in detailed form](http://www.budgetmof.gov.af/index.php/en/2012-12-06-22-51-13/national-budget), which also includes the defense budget. The government also established an oversight mechanism for confidential security sector procurement that helps ensures the interests of citizens while keeping security agencies accountable. [For more information, visit this link.](http://www.budgetmof.gov.af/index.php/en/policies/oversight-mechanism-for-procurement)

*Ministry of Interior Affairs*

Serious steps have been taken at the MoIA to bring in more accountable and qualified leadership and staff. A reform-oriented leader, [Minister Wais Barmak](http://moi.gov.af/en/page/introduction/5719), was appointed and confirmed by the National Assembly on December 4, 2017. Two deputy ministers were also replaced, including the First Deputy Minister, and the Senior Deputy Minister for Security. President Ashraf Ghani has appointed new leadership in 16 senior-most positions at the MoIA.

A major effort to civilianize the police force was initiated in June 2015 at the MoIA, articulated with a phased approach in the Road Map of Civilianization. The goal is to deconstruct corruption networks at the MoIA which developed through patronage networks and create a professional, citizen-focused police force with qualified and accountable leadership. As part of this road map, the MoIA implemented a comprehensive personnel analysis supported by UNDP’s Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOTFA) which focused on all levels of positions, including leadership. To date, all district police chiefs of Kabul province have been replaced as well as 14 new provincial police chiefs appointed.  Policing positions are filled through a high-appointments board chaired by the Deputy Minister of Interior for Security.

The MoIA signed memorandums of understanding (MoU) with the Civil Service Commission to recruit civil servant positions at the MoIA. As of June 2018, the first two phases had been completed, with the third recruitment phase starting. 191 senior and mid-level civilian staff had been recruited, including seven Directors, 15 Deputy Directors, and 34 Deputy Provincial Chief of Police. Two Deputy Ministers, six General Directors and Directors were appointed as part of MoIA civilianization process who were interviewed by H.E. the President, H.E. CEO and MoIA Minister. The recruitment process for lower level staff is ongoing. The civilianization process of MoIA Finance and Budget, Logistics and HR, Security, Investigation, Procurement and Facility departments are completed in a transparent manner.

To increase the number of women serving in the police force, 5,000 police positions were allocated for female staff, and over 50% of the target has been achieved with over 3,000 women in police roles currently.

New financial management and logistics and supply systems have been put in place, including Afghan Personnel and Payment System (APPS) for the management of personnel and their payment system, Afghan Financial Management Information System (AFMIS), Core IMS (Inventory management System) for logistics which is operational at the national and zone levels.

For accountability, better implementation, and more efficient follow-up, the previous vague and weakly-implemented policies, standard operating procedures, and guidelines of the Ministry, amounting to 125 in 1394, has been merged and reduced to 40 today.

Besides, Ministry’s highest decision-making body for reform implementation, the Strategic Leadership Board, led by the Minister himself, has been empowered by a stronger and more technical monitoring and evaluation Directorate-General, to make sure reform priorities of the National Unity Government are regularly and continually implemented and followed up.

***Anti-corruption reforms and addressing ‘ghost’ personnel***

A security sector anti-corruption strategy was approved on February 22, 2016. The anti-corruption action plan for implementing the strategy is also final and [available publicly at this link.](http://mod.gov.af/Content/files/palicy/%2525D9%252585%2525D8%2525A8%2525D8%2525A7%2525D8%2525B1%2525D8%2525B2%2525D9%252587%252520%2525D8%2525B9%2525D9%252584%2525DB%25258C%2525D9%252587%252520%2525D9%252581%2525D8%2525B3%2525D8%2525A7%2525D8%2525AF(1).pdf)

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| It is estimated that instituting reforms and fighting corruption has increased the sufficiency of ANDSF supply chains by 85%. To date, about 1.7 billion Afghanis has been saved due to cutting corruption from MoIA contracting and procurement processes. After and evaluation of 262 corruption cases in the MoIA, 112 officers, including generals, were referred to the Attorney General’s Office for further investigation.  A MoIA general was put on trial for bribery charges in a fuel contract scheme and was sentenced to 14 year in jail, the first time a high-ranking MoIA official has been prosecuted and sentenced on corruption charges. |

The Major Crimes Task Force (MCTF) and the Anti-Corruption Justice Center (ACJC) were established to deal with high-level cases of corruption. The MCTF is an elite unit within Ministry of Interior and through the MCTF, the MoI and MoD have submitted several corruption cases for prosecution. The ACJC focuses on high-level corruption and has successfully prosecuted several cases leading to the conviction of approximately 300 individuals for corruption. The court process is open, public and transparent and presents the government with a credible justice system for high level offenders.

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On November 6, 2017, a committee was established to address corruption and deal with the issue of ghost soldiers. There are currently four existing biometric payment systems operating in the security sector to ensure that all active military personnel are accounted for and paid electronically. Those systems include the Afghan Human Resources Information Management System (AHRIMS), the Afghan Personnel Pay System (APPS), the Afghan Automated Biometric Identification System (AABIS), and the ANDSF Identification Card System (ID). Efforts to integrate all of these systems is currently on-going.

The Human Resource Management System (HRMS) was implemented at MoD, with around 159,078 military personnel and civil servants registered in the system. Currently, the MoD is transferring from the HRMS to the Afghan Personnel Pay System (APPS) with the goal of being fully operational by end of September 2018. In order to receive pay, every individual has to be slotted in the system and has to meet critical attributes, including the biometric number, name, father & grandfathers name, ID Card number, Date of birth and actual rank. This will significantly reduce the number of “ghost soldiers”. Using the personnel information from the system, the MoD conducted technical investigations of approximately 50,000 Afghan National Army officials, and as a result nearly 300 individuals were identified as perpetrating ghost soldier corruption schemes, and referred to the justice sector for prosecution.

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| “Gen. Mohammad Moeen Faqir, the former commander of embattled Helmand province, and Abdul Ghafar Dawi, the director of a large fuel company, chafed in silence as prosecutors in an anti-corruption court charged them with embezzlement and abuse of authority. The two brief trials, which concluded with prison terms and large fines imposed on both men, were among a clutch of [high-profile anti-corruption cases](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/finally-afghanistan-is-trying-to-penetrate-and-purge-high-level-corruption/2016/11/25/73610b50-a6a0-11e6-ba46-53db57f0e351_story.html?utm_term=.66b660595ace) brought by the Afghan government.” – [Pamela Constable for the Washington Post](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/how-afghanistan-is-ramping-up-its-fight-against-corruption--especially-among-the-countrys-elite/2017/08/18/b2b25ac4-81bb-11e7-9e7a-20fa8d7a0db6_story.html?utm_term=.f73d93a4d4ae) |

*Ministry of Interior Affairs*

As articulated in this plan, anti-corruption efforts are being implemented across all the levels of MoIA and ANP, including zone, province and district levels. These measures include revision of internal procedures, the establishment of internal control programs, as well as reporting and oversight mechanisms. In particular, the MoIA has built the capacity of its Inspector General and internal audit organs. Disciplinary measures have been increasingly used as well as prosecutions and trials when criminal conduct was involved. These measures are expected to increase the low public trust in the Afghan National Police.

President Ghani ordered that the issue of ‘ghost police’ in the ANP be addressed immediately. The MoIA established 20 mobile teams to conduct a nation-wide physical inventory of all personnel, and take biometrics for all soldiers and police officers at the central and provincial level.

As of September 2018, the personnel inventory and bio-metric process of 114,934 (97%) ANP personnel, 28,041 (96%) Afghan Local Police, and 4,272 (62%) of Prison and Detention Centers police was completed. This is an on-going process and MoIA is committed to complete the personnel inventory process as planned. From the beginning of the personnel inventory process, 598 ghost police have been identified in Farah, Badghis, Uruzgan and Helmand provinces.

Once personnel have completed biometric registration (see above section), e-payments are made via the LOTFA-funded Support to Payroll Management project (SPM). MoIA’s biometric human resource records are reconciled with the payroll system, thus eliminating the possibility of ‘ghost police’. As of September 2018, 97.71% of police salaries are paid directly to individual bank accounts, 0.14% transferred through mobile money systems, and 2.15% still paid through trusted agents in areas with no bank access.  [Read more here on the SPM program.](http://www.af.undp.org/content/afghanistan/en/home/operations/projects/crisis_prevention_and_recovery/SPM.html)

***Clarifying the mandates of defense and policing***

In 2017, as part of on-going reforms at MoIA and part of the Four Year Security plan, President Ghani issued a decree to transfer Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP) and Afghan Border Police (ABP) from the MoIA to the Ministry of Defense (MoD). This process was completed and acknowledged in an official ceremony on Qaws 8, 1396 (November 29, 2017); 19,322 ABP personnel transferred to MoD and 4,000 ABP personnel remained in MoIA and will be stationed at customs ports and airports. 13,049 (out of 15,599) ANCOP personnel transferred to MoD; 2,550 ANCOP personnel remained with MoIA as counter-crisis police.

Under the Four Year Security plan for the ANDSF, the Afghan National Police’s mission and mandate has been clarified as conducting community policing with a focus on rule of law. However, because the ANP had been trained as a counterinsurgency force, the ANP lacked the ability to protect the general populace as a civilian policing institution, and to address crime prevention. It is now mandatory for all Afghan police to complete the required training programs before starting their assignments.

***Revising laws needed for reform***

The Inherent Law came into being to shape the force to match the Tashkil authorizations via the mandatory retirements of certain general officers and colonels, mainly by lowering the retirement age of military officers from 65 to 55 years. This allows for a younger, more qualified generation of 5,000 officers to progress through the Officer Corps. The Inherent Law is being implemented in three phases. Phase I started in January 2018 when 656 officers were subjected to immediate mandatory retirement. Phase II began in July 2018, where 651 additional officers were subjected to retirement. Phase III will commence in January 2019, as 633 officers will be subject to retirement. To fill the personnel gaps caused by Inherent Law, the MoD has replaced the senior leadership through merit-based appointments, who are vetted for corruption, including in the corps leadership across the country.

The Afghan Police Law, which contains such rules as who the police is, police ranks, grades and classification, duties and responsibility of police, the way police must perform his duties and responsibility, has been reviewed and revised.

***Improving accountability and public engagement***

*Ministry of Defense*

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the government and civil society was approved and signed in 2016. Revisions of the overall anti-corruption legislation and policies, which also concern the security sector, had input from civil society groups, as well as the Second Vice President’s Office, Ministry of Justice, Islamic scholars’ council, and media.

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A [call-in hotline to receive complaints](http://moi.gov.af/en/page/5747/119-police-directorate) (119) has been operational since 2009, and under the new leadership at MoIA has started actually referring complaints for investigation. General Enamuddin Hoshmand was appointed to be in charge of the hotline on June 2018. Most of the cases referred need urgent actions such as security threats, suspected bomb placement and etc. Minister Barmak also initiated a new two-and-half hour weekly radio program broadcast on the MoIA’s police radio station 20 Qows 1396, where he directly takes citizens’ and police complaints, and in the following week’s program he shares with viewers how the complaints have been addressed. 10 programs have been conducted in which 150 cases of complaints were received and solved. Furthermore, an MoU was signed between MoIA and Human Rights Commission to address human rights violation cases by ANP.

***Next steps for Ministry of Defense***

* Continue with implementing the Inherent Law to allow younger and better trained officers to move into key positions.
* Continuing implementing the civilianization plan. In the 1397 Tashkil, there are still 358 military positions identified for conversion to civilian in the future
* Fully implement APPS as the basic payment system for ANDSF, therefore reducing the possibility of corruption and fraud.
* To increase the number of quality female officers and non-commissioned officers in ANA, the recruiting initiatives include an undergraduate scholarship program that is currently being reorganized to include several universities throughout Kabul and the rest of Afghanistan, the Gender Occupational Opportunity Development (GOOD) program and a number of emerging overseas training programs. The next step for the MoD is to create a force development plan, by identifying positions in selected specializations, where women can promote based on merit. From that, a specific training requirement and recruitment plan can be developed, thus ensuring that women are employed effectively in the organization.

***Next steps for Ministry of Interior Affairs***

* To speed up reform in MoIA, a four year MoIA Strategic Plan (MISP) for 2018-2021 (MISP) has been developed and approved. To achieve the strategic goals of MISP, implementation plans for each department/command have also been developed. This plan will be implemented at national, zone and provincial levels over the next four years which will guide all reform initiatives within MoIA. The implementation of MISP will be continuously monitored and evaluated to ensure strategic goals are achieved.
* Action plan for National Anti-corruption Strategy is developed and being implemented.
* A program on civil policing will be designed and piloted in Kabul and Herat provinces, and then based on results and lessons from piloting the program in these two provinces, it will be applied step by step in all provinces of Afghanistan.