

### (1) New Strategy...

prevent terrorists from regaining a foothold in Afghanistan - the country from where al-Qaeda, aided by the Taliban, planned and directed the attacks on Sept. 11, 2001.

"Yet the previous administration publicly placed an arbitrary end date on military operations in Afghanistan, enabling the Taliban to bide its time and begin a renewed campaign to reconquer its lost territory. We need only look at Iraq, and the rise of the Islamic State (Daesh) of Iraq and Syria following the last administration's withdrawal of US forces, to see where this path leads," he said.

According to him, Trump has reversed that policy and has ensured that the US's armed forces will have the resources and authorization they need in order to succeed.

"The president has authorized our armed forces to directly target the terrorists and militant networks that sow violence and chaos throughout Afghanistan, who put our soldiers at risk and destabilize the region. He has lifted the restrictions that prevented our commanders in the field from fully using their judgment and expertise to carry out their critical missions. Bureaucrats don't win battles; our brave men and women in uniform do, and they deserve the flexibility they need to fight and win every time," he said. Pence said that at the same time, the US's strategy will integrate all instruments of American power - diplomatic and economic as well as military - to move toward a political settlement in Afghanistan that protects America's interests.

"Achieving this goal requires that both the Afghan authorities and the Taliban demonstrate political will to participate in a meaningful dialogue. This means we must defeat the Taliban in the field and support the Afghan government. As President Trump has said, the United States of America seeks 'a future (in our hemisphere) where the people of each country can live out their dreams' - a future of freedom, security, and prosperity for us all," Pence wrote.

He said America's goal in Afghanistan is not to impose democracy or a strong central government that runs counter to Afghanistan's tradition of local autonomy. "Nonetheless, we insist that the Afghan government reduce corruption, implement reforms, and continue to strengthen its security forces, which have repeatedly proved their courage and resolve on the field of battle."

He stated that Trump has determined that conditions - not arbitrary timetables - will guide their strategy and that the previous administration alerted the enemies ahead of time by announcing troop numbers and timelines, "something President Trump has wisely refused to do."

"A stable Afghanistan will mean a safer America. To achieve this goal, President Trump's new strategy for South Asia also calls for a shift in America's policy towards Pakistan, a place he refuses to ignore."

Pence stated that Pakistan, like Afghanistan, is a haven for terrorist activity. Between the two countries, no fewer than 20 US-designated foreign terrorist organizations have been and conduct operations - the highest concentration of any region in the world.

"Pakistan, which has borne the weight of terrorist attacks in the past, shares with us a common enemy in ISIS (Daesh) and can be an important partner moving forward. Yet Pakistan too often turns a blind eye to the cancer of terrorism, and in many cases, Pakistan has contributed to the growth of terrorist groups," he wrote.

"America will not write a blank check for countries that fail to root out the same forces who try every day to kill our people. Pakistan has much to gain from partnering with our effort in Afghanistan. It has much more to lose by supporting terrorists. The president has put them on notice," he said.

He went on to say that finally, the president's strategy for South Asia involves a stronger strategic partnership with India. India has made important contributions towards Afghanistan's stability and security, and India has also pledged critical support to Afghanistan's development needs. "Because they directly affect America's interests, America will continue to work closely with New Delhi on these issues."

In conclusion he said Trump's strategy for South Asia will undo the failed policies of the past and put the safety and security of the American people first. "And with the president's leadership, with the courage of our armed forces, and with the prayers of our people: America will be stronger, safer and more secure than ever before." (Tolonews)

### (2) Over \$77m ....

Development - on August 17.

It adds that USAID in its comments highlighted the challenges it encountered in implementing the e-payment system including the need for Da Afghanistan Bank and the Afghanistan Customs Department to work together and the willingness of traders to use the system.

The Afghan Ministry of Finance rejects the findings in the report, saying that the e-payment system had been implemented in 95 percent of customs departments over the past two years.

"We have reforms plans every year and we have implemented them annually," said Najibullah Wardak, deputy head of Finance Ministry's Customs Department. "We started the e-payment system two years ago with the technical assistance of USAID. We are not aware of money they (SIGAR) are mentioning."

Meanwhile, Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries (ACCI) officials said

the target given in the plan is high and that it needs more time.

"From the viewpoint of the private sector, the target (set in the project) is very high and its implementation is not possible even in 10 years. One problem is that the international donors set their goals without consulting with the private sector," said Atiqullah Nasrat, the CEO of the ACCI.

Economic affairs analysts Hasibullah Moahid said many systems are only projects implemented by international and national organizations.

"Basically many systems are established in Afghanistan but all of them are only projects. These projects are implemented without assessment of its challenges and opportunities," he said. (Tolonews)

### (3) Iran Offers...

of facilities has already been built at the Chabahar port and in order to encourage traders discounts are being offered for warehousing and services," said Karimzada. Meanwhile Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) has called for an increase in logistics capacity at Chabahar - especially for large cargo ships.

"What is so important is that standard airports where large planes can land, and (a proper harbor where) cargo ships can dock, are not yet in place," said ACCI deputy head Tawfiq Dawari.

According to the ACCI, the current trade volume between Afghanistan and Iran is worth an estimated \$1.5 billion USD - which includes a large percentage of Afghanistan's fuel that comes through Chabahar port. (Tolonews)

### (4) Gunmen Storm...

spokesman Ismail Kawoosi said the casualties may increase - after they received final information on the incident.

The attack started at 1pm on Friday afternoon when a group of three or four attackers entered the mosque when at least 200 worshippers including women were busy in Friday prayers.

The attackers killed two security guards and wounded two others by throwing hand grenades at them in the entrance of the mosque, the Interior Ministry officials said.

Eyewitnesses said the security forces arrived at the scene two hours following the attack. However, the Interior Ministry spokesman Najib Danish said the Crisis Response Unit of the Afghan National Police arrived at the attack scene sharply after it happened.

Many explosions were later heard from the area during the clearance operation by the Crisis Response Unit.

Danish said police rescued more than 100 worshippers who were caught in the fight between security forces and the attackers.

The attack on Imam Zaman Mosque in Kabul's PD11 continued for five hours. "The attack was carried out by three or four men and that one of them blew himself up outside the mosque, according to initial information," Danish told TOLONews.

According to him, at least 12 people were killed and 38 others were wounded in the attack.

President Ashraf Ghani in a statement condemned the attack and called it a crime against the people of Afghanistan.

The president called on Afghan religious scholars to raise their voice against such violent acts - carried by terrorists, the Presidential Palace said in a statement.

This is not the first attack on sacred places in the country. At least six people were killed when Al-Zahra Mosque in the west of Kabul was targeted by a blast in mid-June. Earlier this month, at least 29 people were killed and dozens others were wounded in an attack on Jawadia Mosque in Herat city in Afghanistan's west. (Tolonews)

### (5) Pakistan Calls ...

chiefs, heads of intelligence agencies, cabinet members in capital Islamabad.

"We would like to see effective and immediate U.S. military efforts to eliminate sanctuaries harboring terrorists and miscreants on the Afghan soil, including those responsible for fomenting terror in Pakistan," said the committee, advising the U.S. administration that the Afghan war cannot be fought in Pakistan.

Urging the United States to acknowledge Pakistan's sacrifices in the war on terror, the committee observed that Pakistan had to face the results of conflict in Afghanistan, including a deluge of refugees, a flow of drugs and arms, and terrorists' safe havens in eastern Afghanistan, where militant groups continue to operate and launch attacks inside Pakistan.

The NSC said that being Afghanistan's immediate neighbor, Pakistan has an abiding interest in peace and stability in the country. The committee also said that Pakistan had taken indiscriminate actions against all terrorist networks and sacrificed tens of thousands of troops and civilians in this fight, which finally resulted in improved security in the country.

The committee stressed that instead of any financial or material assistance, there should be an understanding and recognition of Pakistan's efforts, contributions and sacrifice of thousands of Pakistanis and over 120 billion U.S. dollars of economic losses.

The NSC also reiterated Pakistan's resolve to continue to extend all possible cooperation to the international community for achieving the common objectives of peace and stability in Afghanistan and in the broader region. (Xinhua)

### (6) US Welcomes...

Chief Executive Dr. Abdullah Abdullah highlighted the fact earlier this week, when

he said that nation building is a job for the Afghans themselves to do and not the United States or other countries. "So we congratulate Afghanistan on that and look forward to any way that we can assist them," Nauert said.

The compact represents the Afghan Government's commitment to key reforms aimed at improving security and creating a more peaceful, stable, and prosperous society.

"We have long stressed and supported the Afghan Government's efforts to fight corruption and improve its governance, and the compact is an important new step in that effort," she said.

"The implementation of the new commitments, which include benchmarks in four key areas - governance, security, peace and reconciliation, and economics - they carry with them the opportunities to improve the delivery of government services, stem official corruption, and prepare for secure national elections in 2018. The benchmarks are tied to global standards of good governance put forward by the World Bank and other leading institutions," Nauert said.

Meanwhile the White House Press Secretary Sarah Sanders said when it comes to the strategy in Afghanistan, they're going to be focused on the conditions on the ground, which will be determined by the generals in the military on the ground and certainly through the Department of Defense and Defense Secretary James Mattis and his team, and not arbitrary timetables.

However, Sanders said the ultimate goal is a peaceful settlement between the government of Afghanistan and the Taliban that protects US interest and protects American lives. "That's the focus," she said in response to a question.

"The President's strategy is based on conditions on the ground, not arbitrary timetables. And it will ensure terrorists never again use Afghanistan as a haven to attack the United States," she said.

"The brave men and women of our nation's military have given extraordinary sacrifices to this longest war in American history," Sanders said. (Pajhwok)

### (7) Safe Havens outside ...

announce in advance the dates we intend to begin or end military options," Trump added.

Nicholson said the US and NATO would not let the people of Afghanistan alone and would continue supporting the Afghan security forces.

He stressed: "We stand beside the Afghan security forces because the enemy of Afghanistan is the enemy of the entire world and we will never face a defeat in Afghanistan."

The US would not let Afghanistan become a safe haven for terrorists to become a threat for the world and Afghanistan itself, the US general said. Nicholson said the US and NATO supported the Afghan security forces in their fight against terrorist groups such as Taliban, Daesh, Haqqani Network and others.

He said the new US strategy was aimed to reform and professionalize the Afghan security forces, eradicate corruption from the security sector.

The NATO forces commander said their train, advise and assistance mission of the Afghan security forces would be expanded because they spearheaded the conflict.

He said more focus would be paid to the Afghan Air Force in future and currently the AAF capabilities had enhanced.

Gen. Nicholson said the Taliban would never win because the new US strategy put more resources at NATO and US forces' disposal. He said it was the time for rebel groups to join peace.

Addressing the Taliban, he said: "Stop killing innocent people and your own citizens and accept the reconciliation. Shun violence and fighting. Don't be a cause of poverty and misfortune for your own people. Help in Afghanistan's development in order to make it a better place for your own children."

"The Taliban have become a criminal gang and they reimburse their operation cost through smuggling of drugs," he noted.

Gen. Nicholson further went on to say that Daesh had been defeated in Nangarhar and the militant group should know that they couldn't find a foothold in Afghanistan as everywhere they went would be chased and vanquished.

He said the unity government leaders were committed to bringing the needed reforms within the government and security organs. Without going into details, Gen. Nicholson said the US had initiated dialogue with Pakistan on eradicating terrorist safe-havens in the country.

He said the secret behind the success in Afghanistan was destruction of terrorist sanctuaries outside the country and cutting foreign support to terrorists.

Gen. Nicholson also notified about an increase in the number of US soldiers in Afghanistan, saying the orders had been given; however, the number of troops would not be specified.

"We admit the war in Afghanistan has been a long one for different reasons. Therefore, we are continuing our support and it is a time when we should be optimistic about future." Hugo Llorens, US chargé d'affaires, also spoke on the occasion, saying: "We will suppress the armed warriors in Afghanistan for the sake of peace in the country and we hope for a government that represents all the Afghans."

He said the number of US troops in Afghanistan would be decided keeping in mind the country's situation and from now on, the US strategy would be guided by the country's

conditions, and not on a time-based approach.

Currently, about 8,400 US troops are stationed in Afghanistan. Most of the US soldiers are busy imparting training and giving advice to Afghan security forces.

Both the unity leaders, President Ashraf Ghani and CEO Abdullah Abdullah, were committed to their promises regarding improvement in governance sector organs, peace, security and reforms, Llorens concluded. (Pajhwok)

### (8) Trump Deserves...

the Taliban and other insurgents. "The president also adopted a realistic position regarding peace talks, moving away from (former) president Barack Obama's pursuit of reconciliation regardless of the deteriorating military situation."

But Khalilzad stated that for Trump to realize his aims, he must focus on three crucial areas of action. "First, the military surge must be accompanied by a strong diplomatic push to coordinate the new effort. The president could put the United States ambassador in Kabul or the NATO commander in charge, but the best approach would be to appoint a presidential envoy. A key task for this representative would be to work with Afghan leaders to ensure that they deliver on their commitments to reform and economic development."

"Second, the president must be ready for Pakistan to resist and test his resolve. This might come in the form of attacks on American assets in Afghanistan or of interference with supply routes across the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. Pakistan's security apparatus will try to prove that the United States cannot succeed without cooperating on Islamabad's terms."

Khalilzad also said the US should impose sanctions against senior officials in the Pakistani military and intelligence services who play a direct role in supporting terrorists and extremists. Washington should also suspend all American aid to Pakistan and use its influence with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to do the same, he said.

"It should begin a security assessment that would put Pakistan on the list of states that sponsor terrorist groups. Finally, the United States should conduct strikes against terrorist hide-outs in Pakistan," he stated adding that "the Trump administration should make clear to Islamabad that it would be willing to reverse these moves and repair relations - but only after Pakistan has demonstrated a change in conduct that has the clear result of diminished violence in Afghanistan."

The president's third course of action must be to give Afghanistan's leaders an incentive to work with the US and improve the country's governance, particularly in its security institutions.

"To win in Afghanistan, as the president wishes to do, will require the cooperation of Afghan society and a commitment by the country's main political groups to national, rather than parochial, goals. Afghan society, particularly its young people, are our best allies. The United States must find ways to help unlock that potential." (Tolonews)

### (9) U.S. Fighter ...

haven't since the U.S.-led "combat mission" in Afghanistan was called off at the end of 2014.

Among their targets since then have been Islamic State militants, who are also active in the country. "Between the two groups, the Taliban are definitely smarter," F-16 pilot Maj. Daniel Lindsey told Reuters. "The Taliban are much harder to kill."

While Islamic State has launched a series of deadly attacks around the country, it has nowhere near the influence, reach, and community ties that the Taliban has.

It's those factors that pilots say make the Taliban a more challenging target, and one that has outlasted years of heavy bombardment. (Reuters)

### (10) NZ to Send ...

helping train Afghan troops. "A deteriorating security situation has prompted the international community to refocus its efforts. Countries around the globe are making decisions to increase contributions to prevent Afghanistan from becoming a safe haven for terrorist organisations."

"New Zealand will continue to stand alongside our partners in supporting stability in Afghanistan and countering the threat of international terrorism," Mr Mitchell said in a statement. Prime Minister Bill English said terrorism from Afghanistan could pose a threat to New Zealand. "It's all about New Zealand playing its part in a global effort to smother the sources of terrorism, because Afghanistan was seen in that light and still remains potentially a very unstable environment that could generate terrorist activities that put our citizens at risk."

There was no indication there would be a request for more combat troops to Afghanistan, he said. (Agencies)

### (11) Afghan Media ...

against terrorists of all hue and colour and there are no safe heavens inside Pakistan which are used against Afghanistan. COAS emphasized the need for effective border management along Pak-Afghan border for which Pakistan has taken effective measures on its side of the border including fencing and establishment of new border forts / posts.

Afghan media delegation thanked COAS for his time and very candid discussion. They acknowledged that such interactions are very

useful to understand each other and they are carrying back home a facts based positivity through this tour. The delegation is on week long visit to Pakistan in coordination with ISPR. (PR)

### (12) CEO Vows to...

In a statement from the CEO office said members of the Kabul Moneychangers Union (KMCU) handed over their suggestions regarding the law on banknotes services, administrative corruption, embezzlement, fraud and highlighted problems surfaced after the end of the expiry date for changing old banknotes.

The asked the CEO to address their concerns in different areas such as loan, money transfer, the nature of investigation, legal issues and old banknotes.

They said the announcement of the invalidity date of old bank notes had created huge problems in the market and for more time was needed to resolve the issue.

The CEO hailed moneychangers for doing business in a tough security environment and pledged to convey their concerns to the Ministry of Commerce and Industries, the Attorney General Office and DAB.

The CEO also stressed security and safety of moneychangers. (Pajhwok)

### (13) Outgoing EU ...

diplomatic efforts in fight against terrorism, peace process, economic development and enhanced relation between Afghanistan and the EU.

He said the outgoing EU envoy role for strengthening relation between Afghanistan and EU was exceptional. "Fight against corruption needed effective steps in which you have cooperated greatly," the president said Mellbin expressed satisfaction over his stay in Afghanistan and hailed Afghan government and President Ghani efforts for good governance, poverty eradication and establishment of peace and stability. (Pajhwok)

### (14) Russia Chides ...

foreign ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova who likewise criticized the focus on a "military solution to the Afghan issue, including through beefing up foreign military contingents."

"This approach is in tune with the prescriptions for Afghanistan issued by the previous U.S. administration, which, as is known, failed to improve the security in the region," she added. "For our part, we are willing to continue to assist Kabul in training and equipping its national security forces as the main guarantor of security in Afghanistan, as well as in advancing the national reconciliation process." (RT)

### (15) Afghan Army ...

he said - referring to their military operations in the past five months.

According to him, the security forces had a tough time during the past five months but they were successful in their missions.

Meanwhile, Deputy Minister of Defense Gen. Iqbal Ali Naderi said the Taliban continued their efforts to fuel division among the people in order to insecure the north.

"Taliban with the support of Pakistan's intelligence agency (ISI) are trying to increase insecurity in the north by a failed effort to create division among different ethnic groups," he added. "The people must be alert. We are all Afghans and Afghanistan is our homeland." (Tolonews)

### (16) Pakistan Facilitates...

refugees would be documented at 21 registration centres of NADRA with the help of the Afghan government and UNHCR.

Twenty-five Afghan officials were dispatched on Monday to Pakistan to monitor the registration process, the ministry said. (Pajhwok)

### (17) Military Operation...

suggesting that more efforts should be done to fully clear the areas of the militants.

"If government launches the operation for few days and then ends it without any result, people's concerns will rise again and no doubt Taliban will increase their attacks," said Abdullah Naji Nazari, head of the council. (Tolonews)

### (18) Dostum Welcomes ...

The announcement of the new strategy by President Trump has attracted mixed reactions as the majority of the Afghan politicians, political parties and figures have welcomed the declaration, specifically the reconsideration of the US administration's views towards Pakistan. (KP)

### (19) Insecurity: ...

the worries of students and parents, she added.

Police spokesman Shapour Ahmadzai said the new check-posts had been set up to improve the security situation and secure school buildings. "These checkpoints are helpful in ensuring the safety of students and schools."

Saleem Saleh, the governor's spokesman, said the schools had not been closed. Only some students have spopped going to schools, he said. As many as 307 schools and educational centres are currently functional in Logar. Of them, 120 are without buildings. (Pajhwok)

### (20) Dozens of Insurgents ...

had been killed in foreign forces air raid in the Neash district. Seventy bodies of rebels found in the site of airstrike.

According to Razzeq, new US strategy was in the favour of Afghanistan and all requirements of security forces would be provided in the new strategy. (Pajhwok)