

(1) Ambassador...

between presidential administrations in Washington, DC. A particular priority for Llorens will be working together with Afghanistan to improve the rule of law and combat all forms of corruption that continue to impede the country's progress. (Pajhwok)

(2) UNAMA ...

government control in key districts and attempting to cut off key highways and supply routes.

"Between 16 August and 17 November, the United Nations recorded 6,261 security incidents across the country, which represented a nine percent increase compared with the same period in 2015 and an 18 percent increase against the same period in 2014," he said.

"On 3 October, the Taliban entered the Kunduz city center. Expelled after only one week, Taliban fighters have maintained a significant presence in the city outskirts, despite clearance operations by the Afghan security forces supported by international military forces. The Taliban also captured the district administrative centers of Ghormach (Faryab), Omnah (Paktika) and Nawah-ye Barakzai (Helmand), in addition to launching offensives against district centers in the north-eastern, northern, south-eastern and eastern regions. The security forces have retaken control of Ghormach only," he said.

According to him, anti-government elements continued attacks through abductions, intimidation and assassinations. In total, from 16 August to 17 November, 183 assassinations, including 27 failed attempts, were recorded, representing a 32 per cent decrease against the same period in 2015.

In addition, 80 abductions were recorded across the country, including 11 instances of mass abductions.

"The number of suicide attacks increased to 19 from 18 in the same period in 2015," he said.

High-profile attacks in Kabul continued, including a complex attack against the Ministry of Defense in September, which resulted in 41 people killed, and for which the Taliban claimed responsibility.

On 12 November, the Taliban claimed responsibility for a suicide attack against the Bagram airfield in Parwan province, which resulted in four people killed.

Yamamoto stated that the operational capacity of the Afghan security forces remained under strain in the areas of command and control, leadership and logistics.

"Some progress was achieved in improving Afghan Air Force readiness and operational engagement. In October, Afghan Army troop levels and Afghan National Police numbers reached 87 per cent and 95 per cent, respectively, of target amounts," he said.

According to him, fighting also continued with Daesh.

"Since my previous report, Afghan security forces, supported by international military assets, have conducted regular air and ground operations against ISIL-KP (Daesh Afghanistan) in both Nangarhar and Kunar provinces. These operations have confined the group's presence in both provinces.

"An additional, smaller presence of ISIL-KP exists in Nuristan province. ISIL-KP conducted four suicide attacks, including on 11 October in Kabul, on the holiday of Ashura, and on 21 November in Kabul against a Shia mosque. Other attacks claimed by ISIL-KP included a suicide attack on 31 October against the guesthouse of community leaders in the Pachir wa Agam district of Nangarhar province and a suicide attack on 16 November against the vehicle of the presidential protection security forces in Kabul, which resulted in the death of eight civilians and injured 13." He also said in the past three months, relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan have

remained strained.

"Nevertheless, dialogue continued, including on economic cooperation."

President Ghani met the Adviser to the Prime Minister of Pakistan on Foreign Affairs, Sartaj Aziz, on the margins of the Brussels Conference on Afghanistan. Pakistan pledged \$500 million in economic assistance to Afghanistan and was publicly thanked by both Ghani and Abdullah.

"However, several members of the lower house of the National Assembly, as well as demonstrators in Paktika province on 7 October, called upon President Ghani to reject the assistance from Pakistan and accused Pakistan of supporting terrorism, calling for its cessation. President Ghani condemned the attack in Quetta, Pakistan, on 24 October, during which at least 61 Pakistani police cadets were killed, and reiterated his call for regional cooperation against terrorism," said Yamamoto.

He also stated that Afghanistan undertook efforts to deepen engagement with Gulf States, including on a peace process and cooperation on counter-terrorism.

He outlined progress made on infrastructural development and security cooperation between Central Asian countries, Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran. He spoke of the new railway link between Herat and Iran and the one between Turkmenistan and Aqina, Afghanistan.

He stated that Afghanistan and Uzbekistan increased their engagement during the reporting period.

Yamamoto stated that between 1 July and 30 September, the country task force on monitoring and reporting documented and verified 438 incidents that resulted in 919 child casualties (245 deaths and 674 injuries). Ground engagements remained the leading cause of child casualties, resulting in 512 casualties, followed by improvised explosive devices, with 149 child casualties, and explosive remnants of war, with 135 child casualties.

"The task force attributed the remaining child casualties to tactics including aerial bombardments, incidents of targeted killing where children were bystanders, and suicide attacks," he said.

The country task force attributed 411 child casualties (45 per cent), the largest number, to anti-government elements, including 324 casualties attributed to the Taliban, followed by pro-government forces (33 per cent), of which 82 per cent were attributed to the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces, he said.

During the reporting period, the task force verified 38 incidents targeting or affecting health services and health-related personnel, compared with 19 in the previous quarter. The task force also verified 34 incidents targeting or affecting education and education-related personnel, three incidents of abductions involving one girl and 10 boys and 28 incidents of denial of humanitarian access.

"The task force verified the recruitment and use of at least nine boys. The majority of the violations were attributed to anti-government elements. The Ministry of the Interior continued to expand the number of child protection units in Afghan National Police recruitment centers and opened four new units in Daykundi, Paktiya, Takhar and Badakhshan provinces, bringing their total number throughout the country to 17."

On the issue of humanitarian assistance, he said the situation became ever more fragile during the reporting period, with rapidly increasing numbers of new conflict-induced internal displacements exacerbated by the surge of more than 600,000 returning refugees and undocumented Afghans from Pakistan.

"Combined with the existing needs in Afghanistan, 4.5 million people currently require

humanitarian assistance," he stated.

"As at 30 November, the United Nations had recorded 515,865 newly internally displaced persons since January 2016 in 31 of the 34 provinces, with more than 240,000 displaced since mid-August.

"This represents the highest number of internally displaced persons on record and a 15 per cent increase compared with the same period in 2015.

"In October, more than 70,000 people were displaced as a result of the Taliban's attempt to take control of the city of Kunduz. An estimated 16,500 people were also displaced in the past two months in southern Afghanistan owing to intensified conflict, primarily from Helmand and Uruzgan Provinces.

"The United Nations and non-governmental organizations provided humanitarian assistance, including cash, health services and supplies, shelter, food and non-food items, to the displaced populations."

He said the number of refugees returning through the United Nations repatriation programme increased by 450 per cent since 1 July, compared with the very low numbers between January and June. By 29 November, a total of 372,282 Afghans registered as refugees had returned from Pakistan, while 2,220 had returned from the Islamic Republic of Iran and 167 from other countries.

In October alone, there were 148,692 Afghan refugees newly returned from Pakistan. In November, returns slowed considerably, owing to the temporary suspension by UNHCR of facilitated registration during the winter.

He said on 5 September, the United Nations launched a flash appeal for \$152 million USD to provide life-saving assistance for internally displaced persons, undocumented returnees and registered refugees. Out of \$42.2 million in pledges so far, \$40.2 million has been received.

As at 20 November, overall humanitarian funding for Afghanistan stood at \$401 million, of which \$177.7 million was designated for activities envisaged in the 2016 Afghanistan Humanitarian Response Plan, now 52 percent funded. To date, the common humanitarian fund in Afghanistan has received \$46.7 million in 2016, with funding focused on emergency health care, assistance to displaced families and humanitarian assessments. VI. Counter-narcotics

Yamamoto said the number of newly displaced persons is increasing in the context of an overall rise in the number of Afghans on the move. It is currently estimated that up to 1.6 million Afghans will have been internally displaced or newly returned from Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran by the end of 2016.

"They will require assistance, as will those who repatriate from Europe. With the inclusion of internal displacement and refugees in the Afghan National Peace and Development Framework, such issues were recognized by many at the Brussels Conference as an element compounding the country's development challenges." He said: "In addition to immediate humanitarian assistance, government initiatives to develop an overall strategy for addressing the combined needs of the displaced and returnees are crucial. I welcome the proposal for a stronger coordinated approach between the government, donors and the United Nations in making the transition from humanitarian support for displaced people and returnee populations to their integration within communities. Without the development of concrete plans to manage the process of integration, food insecurity and poverty will continue."

In conclusion he said peace remains imperative for Afghanistan if it wants to reach its full potential. He also said he regrets that efforts towards direct talks between government and the Taliban have not progressed further.

He also stated that countries in the region have a critical role to play in supporting Afghanistan in meeting its complex political, security, humanitarian and economic challenges.

"I call upon them to play a constructive role in promoting stability and economic growth benefiting all countries in the region. The regional infrastructure initiatives presented at the Brussels Conference can serve as an important pathway towards prosperity and stability and should be prioritized." (Tolonews)

(3) SSRB would ...

Afghanistan's enemies, supported by a number of regional countries, were trying to show the world the war had internal dimensions, a goal they had failed to achieve, the NSA said. He added the security sector's recruitment board, including military experts, would be launched soon. The duty of the board would be to appoint professional leaders of security and defense forces, Atmar explained.

The board would help professionalise the appointments and individuals would be hired on merit, he said. The training course was initiated by the NSC and Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies of US National Defense University. (Pajhwok)

(4) MoD Maps...

minister of interior for maintenance.

Meanwhile, the minister of interior said that during the current year, the Afghan National Police (ANP) conducted more than 3,813 counter-terrorism operations in the country in which more than 850 insurgents were eliminated and 380 others wounded.

In addition, minister of refugees and repatriation Sayed Hussain Alimi Balkhi said that more than 1.5 million Afghan refugees returned from Pakistan and other countries to Afghanistan while another 550,000 people were displaced internally due to certain issues, including war.

"The ministry of refugees and repatriation has a responsibility to persuade migrants and refugees to voluntary return," said Balkhi.

"We have completed the profiles of 46 border districts alongside the Durand Line including the completion of a map of 16 districts for the TAPI project," said Ghafoor Laiwal, deputy minister of tribal affairs and borders.

The security leadership's outline of a new plan comes at a time that a number of districts in the country are overrun by the Taliban.

Insurgents have also maintained their presence in suburbs of some strategic locations in Afghanistan such as Lashkargah, the provincial capital of Helmand, Trinkot in Uruzgan, Kunduz, Farah and Baghlan provinces. (Tolonews)

(5) Over One ...

of the newly displaced and returnee Afghans moving within the country are vulnerable and prone to secondary or repeated displacement because of security concerns and the limited ability of cities to absorb the influx, said the UNAMA report.

It went on to note that humanitarian access constraints continue to be recorded and are associated primarily with insecurity and conflict-related road closures particularly in the eastern and southern regions of Afghanistan.

Danielle Moylan, spokesperson for U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Afghanistan, however, said only 10 percent of the estimated 400,000 Afghans who have returned from Iran this year need humanitarian assistance.

"We consider many of the numbers from Iran to be circular - that means there are a significant number of cases where one person that is moving back and forth across the border could be counted many times," she told VOA. (VOA)

(6) Faryadi Released ...

anyone complains against Faryadi to the judicial centers, the complaints will be investigated," said Ainuddin Bahaduri from Afghanistan's Lawyer Union (ALU).

Surobi was reportedly Faryadi's main stronghold during the 1990s.

Mullah Qand was a driver who traveled along the Kabul-Jalalabad highway regularly during Faryadi's time as a commander. He also says Faryadi committed crimes.

"Faryadi was the cruelest person," Mullah Qand said.

Faryadi served more than 10 years in a UK prison on charges of torture and human rights violations. Twenty years ago he controlled parts of the key Kabul-Jalalabad highway before moving to London where he changed his name.

He was spotted in London in mid-2001 after charges were brought against him and was convicted in 2005 and sentenced to 20 years in prison. He was released and deported back to Afghanistan last week. (Tolonews)

(7) Britain's Queen ...

Behzad's brother. Britain's Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst (RMAS) is one of the most credited military academies in the world. (Tolonews)

(8) Tagab Pomegranate

Afghanistan, fearing fresh fruits would go rotten lost at the Torkham dry port if strict border restrictions remain in place.

Khairullah added pomegranate production had seen a boost as prices doubled in 2016. Last year, 560 kilograms accounted for 40,000 afghanis. But this year, the same quantity was priced at 80,000 afghanis, he explained.

Khyber, a resident of Tatarkehl neighbourhood, agreed the price of best-quality pomegranates was up this year. He said orchard owners were content and had reaped huge profits.

Fazal Haq Sapi, a businessman, verified that this year the quality of pomegranate was wonderful and the price also pretty high. Local buyers are in contact with the market price in Pakistan and treated accordingly.

"We place pomegranates in two types of bags, weighing 1,120 and 840 kilograms, and hire workers to fill and load them on trucks. If the trucks have the required documents, they transport the fruit to Peshawar. If not, they carry it to Nangarhar."

Some residents of Tagab lashed out at the department of agriculture for not taking steps for pomegranate storage.

Haji Latif blasted the agriculture department for failing to build facilities where pomegranates could be stored for a long time. If kept in an ordinary place, he argued, the fruit lost its quality. Cold storage would enable farmers to sell their produce at an appropriate time for reasonable prices.

Abdul Wahab Naseemi, agriculture director, acknowledged no solid steps had been taken by his predecessors to promote pomegranate production in the district. He was appointed recently to the position and did not have enough information.

He, however, regretted insecurity impeded the construction of cold storage facilities in Tagab district, though some fruit depots had been set up in the provincial capital for grape orchard owners. (Pajhwok)

(9) Roadside Bomb...

apparently was district governor of Batikot but he escaped unhurt.

Taliban militants have yet to claim responsibility for the bloody bombing. Nangarhar province with Jalalabad as its capital 120 km east of Kabul has been the scene of increasing militancy conducted by Taliban and Islamic State armed groups. (Xinhua)

(10) Afghan Migrants...

as saying. He said two of the

42 were boys aged 10 to 12, while the others were between 15 and 20."Some of them were unconscious, some vomited when they were found," Kujundzic said. "They were in serious condition, dehydrated and apparently have not eaten for five days."

Some 650,000 people passed through Croatia from September 2015 to March this year on the so-called Balkan route used by migrants, mainly from Syria, heading toward western Europe, especially Germany.

The route was largely shut down in March after a series of border closures.

Many migrants have turned to smugglers to help them cross borders illegally. (Reuters)

(11) Taliban Publicly...

been identified but there are no reports if the perpetrators have been arrested. The Taliban militants group has not commented regarding the report so far.

This comes as numerous incidents involving murder of women have been reported during the recent months across the country.

At least four women were shot dead by a relative in northern Balkh province of Afghanistan earlier this month while a young woman was set on fire by her husband in western Herat province of Afghanistan earlier in the month of October.

Apart from that, the Taliban militants executed a 19-year-old girl in Sar-e-Pul province of Afghanistan while a 22-year-old woman was shot dead in July by her relatives on charges of having relations with a stranger over the telephone. (KP)

(12) Taliban Gun ...

has been in Iran for work. "Her former husband authorised one of his relatives here to divorce Aziza," he said. Later on, Aziza tied the knot with another man, with whom she lived happily. Upon his return from Iran a few days earlier, her first husband denied divorcing her.

He expressed the desire to continue living with her wife, an issue that became town talk in a matter of days. He referred the matter to Mullah Esmat, Taliban's shadow district chief, who ordered Aziza executed by shooting. Zahir Bahand, the governor's spokesman, confirmed the woman's killing by Taliban. However, he did not provide further information while the Taliban have not commented yet on the shooting. (Pajhwok)

(13) NATO Seeks...

discussed, has provided a dark backdrop for the meeting, diplomats said.

However, NATO allies, particularly Germany, have been pushing for a meeting with Grushko to explain why they are sending four multinational battalions of up to 4,000 troops to the former Soviet states of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland from early 2017. (Reuters)

(14) Thousands Protest.

latter use the region to cross the Turkish border from its camps in northern Iraq. (Xinhua)

(15) May Urged...

like the NHS at risk," said O'Grady. Marshall holds similar worries, saying that "Business communities across the UK are deeply frustrated that ministers have declined to guarantee the residence rights of their EU employees and colleagues. Some firms are already losing key members of staff due to this avoidable uncertainty." He also urged for a quick move to ease the anxiety. (Xinhua)

(16) All 39 People...

injured had been delivered by four helicopters of the local division of the country's Emergencies Ministry to a hospital in the settlement of Tiksi. (Xinhua)