

(1) US to Stand...

impact of the US strategy on Afghanistan and South Asia, reforms in the Afghanistan security sector and parliamentary, district council and presidential elections, the statement said.

They also discussed the war against terrorism and peace with Pakistan, with Mattis praising the unity government's efforts at introducing reforms, fighting terrorism and corruption.

The US defense secretary also paid tribute to the Afghan security forces for their matchless sacrifices in the war against terrorists.

Jim Mattis said the US would stand beside the government and the people of Afghanistan until they achieved peace, stability and prosperity. (Pajhwok)

(2) Govt Asked to and...

"If government does not have the ability to maintain security, it should give weapons to the people," said Sajad Hussain, member of local forces.

"Government cannot maintain security and I had to take weapon," said Abdul Hamid Alizada, member of the local forces.

Chaman Ali Behsodi, 60, a commander of the local forces in Dasht-e-Barchi, said the forces can act better than security forces in safeguarding people's safety.

"Currently, we maintain security of 101 mosques and we have over 500 weapons. This process has been effective because so far no incident has happened in the mosques where we are responsible for their security," said Behsodi.

The Ministry of Interior said arming Dasht-e-Barchi residents is not possible.

"It is impossible that people say the ordinary people should be given weapons. But if they have any comprehensive plan for safeguarding people's lives, they should share it with the security department," said Nusrat Rahimi, deputy spokesman for Ministry of Interior.

The local forces in in Dasht-e-Barchi are responsible for maintaining security of big gatherings in the area including their ritual events. (Tolo news)

(3) Finland Temporarily...

Europe Caroline Bach.

The guidelines are a 150-page document based on in-depth research, information provided by UNHCR's global network of field offices, material from independent country specialists, researchers and other sources.

Euronews recently reported on the story of a man who was denied asylum by Finland's immigration service but was later shot dead just weeks after his return to Iraq, according to Finnish public broadcaster YLE.

When asked if the decision to suspend asylum decisions from Afghanistan would affect other countries where there are conflicts, Migri said the move "does not affect decisions concerning asylum seekers from Iraq or other countries". (euronews)

(4) Afghan Troops...

he added, and crews for the planes were already training in China.

"Those are in the pipeline, and we hope they will be delivered to Afghanistan, to our national security and defence forces, soon," Mosazai said. "We have requested that they provide combat vehicles, combat helicopters, also air capabilities and reconnaissance."

Mosazai said China's response towards the request for the helicopters had been "positive", and that Kabul wanted Beijing to provide the capabilities or the "grant assistance" so Afghanistan could purchase them.

China's Defence Ministry did not respond immediately to a request for comment.

The provision of arms to Afghanistan marks a gradual evolution for Beijing, which had previously offered non-lethal assistance while promising to play a "huge" commercial role in the country's economic development, a pledge complicated by the security situation there.

Mosazai did not elaborate on financial details or types of vehicles under consideration, but said the helicopters being sought were most likely to be older Russian or Soviet-made equipment, such as the MI-35.

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China has stepped up "direct military assistance to Afghanistan", including providing small arms and logistics and equipment support, since the two countries established a military dialogue in 2016, the ambassador said.

Beijing has confirmed its backing for the Afghan defence forces struggling against a Taliban insurgency that has taken swathes of territory in recent years, but it has offered few details.

The Afghan air force, trained and assisted by NATO advisers, has slowly gained strength, but remains too small to meet the needs of its security forces. The United States has planned to help replace Afghanistan's aging fleet of Russian Mi-17 helicopters with U.S.-made UH-60 Black Hawks.

RETURNING MILITANTS

Last year, China opened its first overseas military base, in the Horn of Africa country of Djibouti. It has previously denied having plans for other overseas bases, but the United States expects it to build more, with Pakistan a possible location. Mosazai reiterated that "there will not be any Chinese military personnel in Afghanistan, related to the mountain brigade or otherwise". The "context" for setting up the brigade - likely to be based in Afghanistan's northeastern Badakhshan province - was to combat the return of al Qaeda and Islamic State fighters from the Middle East who aim to launch attacks in Central Asia and China, the ambassador said.

Among those militants are members of the East Turkestan Islamic Movement, he said, which Beijing blames for violence in its Xinjiang region bordering Afghanistan. China worries that militancy in Afghanistan could spill over into Xinjiang, home to the Muslim Uighur people, where human rights advocates say Beijing is implementing near martial law restrictions, including political re-education camps for potentially millions of Uighurs.

U.S. forces in Afghanistan in February said they had attacked networks of anti-China militants.

"Their primary targets are their countries of origin," Mosazai said of militants presumed to be returning from fighting in Syria and Iraq, adding that Afghanistan had been clear with countries in the region, including China, about the "need to step up" support. (Reuters)

(5) Efforts Underway...

of the country. We will not allow them to attack the city," said Zabihullah, who pointed out to areas from which Taliban conduct sporadic attacks on their outposts outside Maimana City.

Among army soldiers deployed outside Maimana was Faizullah, a former Taliban fighter, who joined government forces four months back.

"We are here to stand besides our brothers to fight against anyone who is against this country and anyone who is the enemy of this country," said Faizullah.

Faryab has witnessed heavy clashes between government forces and Taliban over the past few months. Residents of the province said last week that they are concerned about their security. They said the province will fall to militants if government stays reluctant to take any step against it.

Faryab has changed into an insecure province over the past three years. Taliban militants are now controlling most parts of the province, according to local officials.

"The majority of areas are under control of the Taliban," Faryab governor said last month but added that "only Bialchiragh (district) is fully under Taliban control - but they do not have full control over any other district in Faryab." (Tolo news)

(6) UK Sends First...

Thousands of our personnel stand shoulder-to-shoulder with NATO allies around the world. Those here in Afghanistan are just one example of Global Britain in action."

The British Army say that the additional troops will bolster the UK's existing contribution to the Kabul Security Force, which plays a critical role in enabling NATO advisers in the city to undertake engagement with the Afghan Government.

They will also continue to mentor the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces who are responsible for security in the capital. (Monitoring Desk)

(7) USAID Event...

over \$700 million in annual exports in 2017.

USAID agriculture programs are making a concerted effort to increase exports. Since October 1, 2017, USAID-supported agricultural programs facilitated over \$181 million in sales for Afghan sellers. (Pajhwok)

(8) Displacement...

"Afghanistan is at a crossroads. A combination of conflict, natural disasters and inadequate access to basic services and economic opportunities was causing continued waves of internal displacement.

"The country now more than ever needs the support of the international community, as it takes steps to pursue peace and stability, and to link humanitarian action to broader development efforts," he added.

Without a solution to displacement, he warned, there would be no lasting peace. Grandi also welcomed Afghanistan's commitment to a strengthened model for the return and reintegration of refugees and the internally displaced. He noted that the inclusion of refugee issues as part of a larger dialogue between Afghanistan and Pakistan was also a positive step.

Grandi and Lowcock commended the inclusion of displaced persons and returnees in national programming, addressing land issues for returnees, investing in districts of high return and working together to ensure return and reintegration is sustainable over the longer-term.

As of early September, some 12,000 refugees have returned to Afghanistan under UNHCR's voluntary repatriation programme this year, adding to the more than 5.2 million Afghan refugees who have been assisted to come back since 2002.

Still, 2.6 million refugees remain in Pakistan and Iran along with an even larger number of undocumented Afghans and others holding Afghan passports. Grandi visited Iran before arriving in Kabul and together with Lowcock will travel to Pakistan today.

Their visit took place at a time when 4.2 million people in Afghanistan are in acute need of humanitarian assistance due to conflict, displacement and natural disasters including ongoing drought. An ad-

ditional 8.7 million people facing abject poverty, unemployment and loss of livelihoods due to the effects of climate change are in need of assistance.

Grandi and Lowcock met internally displaced people and returnees at a community centre in Kabul, together with people receiving social services and livelihoods training.

These projects are part of community-based protection measures aimed at supporting the reintegration of returnees and IDPs and facilitating community development, including programmes that generate livelihoods opportunities, promote peaceful coexistence, and directly assist persons with specific needs, particularly women and children and persons living with disabilities.

Grandi stressed UNHCR's continued commitment to the 2.6 million Afghan refugees remaining in countries of asylum in the region, including efforts to facilitate their voluntary return and sustainable reintegration in Afghanistan.

He also reiterated his agency's intention to work with the government, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, led by Mr. Lowcock, and other partners to renew efforts to find durable solutions for the country's estimated 1.9 million IDPs.

"Inclusiveness is critical in the Afghan context. Humanitarian action must meet everyone's needs and priorities," Lowcock stressed after meeting a group of physically disabled people, some of whom established small businesses through cash grants. "The most vulnerable groups, including people with disabilities, must not be forgotten - particularly in the midst of a humanitarian crisis."

With Afghan displacement entering its fourth decade next year, the joint mission to Afghanistan seeks to reinforce timely and predictable international support toward the humanitarian situation and ongoing efforts to respond and seek solutions. (Pajhwok)

(9) IEC to Merge...

In addition, the deterioration of security situation, the closure of some voting centers and lack of election materials at some polling stations are the challenging facing the upcoming parliamentary and presidential elections in the country.

"If the situation continues like this, the elections might not be held even if it were held it will not be a countrywide polling," said Nayeem Ayoubzada, Head of TEFA. (ATN)

(10) Balkh Journalists...

Ansari, head of Afghan journalists safety committee in the north.

"We will witness such incidents one after another, if the situation continues," said Mina Khair Andesh, head of Nai office in Balkh, an organization supporting open media in Afghanistan. (Tolo news)

(11) 'Gov't Peace...

and that's why we have no control over peace, war and economy." He said billions of dollars had been spent on the peace process over the last 17 years, but the result was seen on Wednesday when a large number of youth were killed and wounded.

About differences inside the government, he said: "Regional and other countries have strategic interests in Afghanistan and in such a situation, there are serious differences among the Presidential Palace, the chief executive office, the first and second vice-presidents, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and governors."

Massoud said Afghanistan was put being into complex games and peace would continue to elude the country until an accountable and national government was formed.

He expressed concern about recent attacks in the country and asked the public to get united against infiltration of Afghans' enemies. (Pajhwok)

(12) Efforts on to...

textbooks but they needed more textbooks.

Saif Malok, a member of the provincial council, accused some individuals of interfering in the education sector, which had a negative impact on the sector.

Governor Mohammad Yaseen Khan at the end of the ceremony said serious steps would be taken with the help of tribal elders to reopen closed schools.

He promised to prevent interferences and land grabbing in the education center and urged residents of the province to send their children to schools. (Pajhwok)

(13) Military Operations...

Haqqani network militants have been arrested during separate operations in Kabul.

The Afghan Intelligence, National Directorate of Security (NDS), in a statement the militants were arrested during the operations from the 5th and 12th districts, Paghman and Bagrami districts.

According to the National Directorate of Security, the detained militants were involved in some major terrorist related activities, including attacks on government and security officials, tribal elders, and roadside bombings. (KP)

(14) Paykan Granted...

process the case and Zamarai Paykan is not detained yet.

When asked why Zamarai Paykan could not be jailed, Jamshid Rasouli, AGO spokesman, said the question should be asked from the Ministry of Interior (MoI).

Pajhwok Afghan News tried several times to contact the MoI spokesman for comment about the issue, but no one responded.

Mohammad Kabir Ranjbar, a legal expert, says anyone sentenced to imprisonment by the court should be arrested and jailed by the AGO in cooperation with police. However, Paykan was instead granted 20 bodyguards for his protection.

Mohammad Radminsh, deputy Defense Ministry spokesman, said Paykan as a precautionary measure had been put under house arrest in his own residence.

Paykan has also requested 20 bodyguards from the Ministry of Defense in a letter, a copy which is obtained by Pajhwok. The ministry has approved the request on July 28.

In his letter Paykan said: "As security threats are increasing with each passing day, I ask the Chief of Army Staff to deploy security men from the public order police (for my protection) so I do not face any problem until my case completes in the courts." The letter is signed by Paykan.

Gen. Mohammad Sharif Yaftali, Chief of Army Staff, responded to the letter as: "Dear public order police headquarters, deploy 20 personnel to Zamarai Paykan by considering the security situation of Kabul and demand of Paykan, please also take action for salaries of the personnel."

Mohammad Radminsh said the issue should be discussed with the Chief of Army himself.

But Paykan told Pajhwok no government weapons or security personnel were with him.

He did not provide details about his letter to the MoD, but said: "I have been living in my home since last one year."

About the ACJC initial court verdict, he said: "I will go to the court when biased judges go away and the judiciary system is cleansed of politics." (Pajhwok)