

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5051
MINORITY (202) 225-5074

<http://oversight.house.gov>

September 27, 2019

The Honorable John F. Sopko
Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction
2530 Crystal Drive
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Mr. Sopko:

I am writing to request that the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) conduct a comprehensive review of facilities in Afghanistan that have been constructed, financed, or subsidized with U.S. taxpayer funds, that were intended for use by U.S. military, local security forces, or to support reconstruction efforts, and that remain unused or underutilized.

SIGAR has already identified multiple instances of U.S.-funded facilities in Afghanistan that are unused or underutilized. For example:

- In January 2015, SIGAR reported that buildings at the Afghan Special Police Training Center's dry fire range in Wardak province were disintegrating, or "melting," just four months after the project's completion due to failures by the construction contractor. SIGAR noted the issue "was compounded by poor oversight on the part of the responsible U.S. government officials."¹
- In May 2015, SIGAR found an unused 64,000-square-foot command and control facility at Camp Leatherneck in Helmand Province, Afghanistan, built over the objections of military officials at a cost of \$36 million.²
- In April 2019, SIGAR reported that the Kang Border Patrol headquarters in Nimroz Province, which cost \$5.2 million and was transferred to the Afghan

¹ Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Afghan Special Police Training Center's Dry Fire Range: Poor Contractor Performance and Poor Government Oversight Led to Project Failure* (Jan. 2015) (online at www.sigar.mil/pdf/inspections/SIGAR-15-27-IP.pdf).

² Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *\$36 Million Command and Control Facility at Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan: Unwanted, Unneeded, and Unused* (May 2015) (online at www.sigar.mil/pdf/special%20projects/SIGAR-15-57-SP.pdf); *Boondoggle HQ: The \$25 Million Building in Afghanistan Nobody Needed*, ProPublica (May 20, 2015) (online at <https://projects.propublica.org/graphics/boondoggle>).

Ministry of Interior in February 2013, has never been used, and the Ministry has no plans to utilize the facility.³

- In July 2019, SIGAR reported that the Afghan National Police women's compound at the Jalalabad Regional Training Center has never been used, despite having been completed two years prior at a cost of \$6.7 million to U.S. taxpayers.⁴

These are only a few examples SIGAR has identified that demonstrate how improved planning, communication, and oversight could have prevented the waste of U.S. taxpayer funds. Given Afghanistan's continued need for external support, it is imperative that the U.S. government improve its strategic-planning and risk-management processes for any future construction projects by working with local and allied partners.

For these reasons, I request SIGAR produce a report that includes:

1. A review of all facilities in Afghanistan constructed, financed, or subsidized by the U.S. government that SIGAR has inspected and found to have been unused or underutilized, including:
 - a. the report name and number of SIGAR's review of each facility;
 - b. total U.S. taxpayer funds spent toward the facility's construction and maintenance;
 - c. an updated explanation of why the facility has been unused or underutilized; and
 - d. the facility's current ownership and status.
2. A review of all facilities in Afghanistan constructed, financed, or subsidized by the U.S. government that SIGAR has inspected and found to have deteriorated due to inadequate construction quality, maintenance, or a failure to meet required standards or specifications, including:
 - a. the report name and number of SIGAR's review of each facility;

³ Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Kang Border Patrol Headquarters: Construction Generally Met Contract Requirements, but Deficiencies Exist, and the \$5.2 Million Project Has Not Been Used or Maintained* (Apr. 2019) (online at www.sigar.mil/pdf/inspections/SIGAR-19-36-IP.pdf).

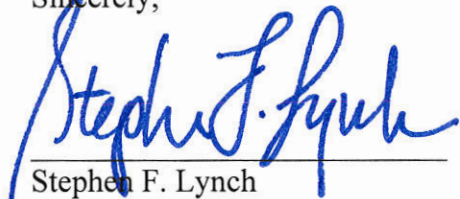
⁴ Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Afghan National Police Women's Compound at the Jalalabad Regional Training Center: Construction Generally Met Contract Requirements, but Fire-Related Deficiencies Pose Safety Hazards and the Almost \$6.7 Million Facility Has Never Been Used* (July 2019) (online at www.sigar.mil/pdf/inspections/SIGAR-19-48-IP.pdf).

- b. total U.S. taxpayer funds spent toward the facility's construction and maintenance;
 - c. an updated explanation of why the facility deteriorated due to inadequate construction quality, maintenance, or a failure to meet required standards or specifications; and
 - d. the facility's current ownership and status.
3. A summary of factors explaining why the facilities identified in items 1 and 2 above were unused, underutilized, or deteriorated, or failed to meet operational standards or specifications; and
4. Recommendations to the Subcommittee on how to address these deficiencies, prevent further waste, and help ensure future projects constructed, financed, or subsidized by the taxpayer resources support U.S. national security objectives.

The Committee on Oversight and Reform is the principal oversight committee of the House of Representatives and has broad authority to investigate "any matter" at "any time" under House Rule X.

Thank you for your urgent attention to this matter. If you have any questions regarding this request, please contact Committee staff at (202) 225-5051.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Stephen F. Lynch". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Stephen F. Lynch
Chairman
Subcommittee on National Security

cc: The Honorable Jody Hice, Ranking Member