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**The Need for a More Robust War Leadership**

W**ith the Taliban set to start launching the group’s spring offensive, this will be the time when the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) should step up their counteroffensive operations to the tune of the authorities.

The Taliban’s announcement comes in the wake of the Afghan government’s failure to act and demonstrate higher political will concerning the security and defense agencies. Afghanistan’s fledgling air force urgently needs to waste no time to fill the vacant positions for the ministers of the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Interior.

The national unity government has taken concrete measures on implementing the recommendations for improvement of ANSF capabilities in the battle against the Taliban. The struggling leadership of the ANSF has resulted to flawed changes in the mid-level leadership of the army and police forces.

Despite resiliency and bravery of armed forces in 2015, the ANSF suffered a significant setback in 2016 from the spring offensive. The authorities at the Ministry of Interior predict rise of security challenges this year, however, insist that the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) are ready for the upcoming spring campaign.

The spring campaign against the Taliban is a huge test for the Afghan government. The government needs to do more to plan a robust counterterrorism offensive and mobilize forces and resources required to win the tough battle ahead. Government currently rely on its close-up approach to the war and the way it has led the counterterrorism campaign so far. There have been many setbacks in terms of maintaining security and containing the resurgence of the Taliban and other militant groups. The counter-terrorism led by the national unity government has been flooded in many ways. The government needs to heed the calls for improvement of the handling of the security agencies and the campaign against the Taliban.

In 2015, when the ANSF took responsibility of security from NATO, the counterterrorism operations of the Afghan army and police forces were undermined by shortages and limitations such as lack of proper management of the US and European forces and personnel in the Afghan soil.

Lack of leadership has been perhaps the biggest factor that has failed the Afghan government in the operation to repel the attacks of the Taliban. The government will need to make all efforts to mobilize forces and resources for the Ministry of Interior.

The delayed, denied or plagued legal system has left people with no option but to follow traditional justice system. Many people view the federal system as justice, corruption, inefficient, expensive or geographically difficult to access. This is the case for the Taliban as well. Traditional justice systems are used exclusively or at least far more frequently than the formal system. Practicing traditional justice can be an effective way of managing disputes and maintaining peace in the absence of a reliable and effective legal system.

Some human rights activists believe that current government efforts could not do more to plan a robust counterterrorism offensive and mobilize forces and resources required to win the tough battle ahead. Government currently rely on its close-up approach to the war and the way it has led the counterterrorism campaign so far. There have been many setbacks in terms of maintaining security and containing the resurgence of the Taliban and other militant groups. The counter-terrorism led by the national unity government has been flooded in many ways. The government needs to heed the calls for improvement of the handling of the security agencies and the campaign against the Taliban.

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