WASHINGTON - A top Pentagon general on Tuesday called for maintaining an effective counter-terrorism platform and partner in Afghanistan, given that the threat from the region continues.

"While the fight against ISIL (Dawlul) dominates the headlines, we also continue to face an extremist challenge in the homeland and our interest in South Asia," Gen Joseph Dunford, Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, told a Washington audience.

He said the constant pressure they maintained on Al Qaeda in (the Afghanistan-Pakistan) region over the past 14 years had prevented another

Staff, told a Washington audience.

Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of "South Asia," Gen Joseph Dunford, added on Tuesday called for maintaining 'an effective counter-terrorism platform and partner in Afghanistan.'

While the focus has been on Al Qaeda, we have certainly seen recently the rise of the Islamic State in the Khorasan, and we're also dealing with that. That has further complicated the situation in ..(...More on P4)...(6)

9/11, but the threat had not been eliminated.

"And of course, I'm talking about largely the Afghanistan-Pakistan region," the Marine general said in his remarks to a top American think-tank, CSIS.

He said the continued threat required maintaining an effective counter-terrorism platform and partner in Afghanistan.

SCO, UN Mull Situation in Afghanistan

TASHKENT - Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the UN have discussed the situation in Afghanistan, the regional security and prospects for cooperation.

The discussions were held between Yongqin Sysoyev, director of the executive committee of Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO RATS) and Ashita Mittal, head of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Central Asia, said the message from SCO RATS. During the meeting, the parties exchanged views on the situation in the region and prospects for its improvement and expressed concern over the situation in Afghanistan.

SCO Director General, Yevgeniy Sysoyev, during the meeting, said that SCO member states should continue their efforts for the stabilization of the situation in Afghanistan.

Elders Ask Govt. to Pay Attention to Helmand Insecurity

KABUL - The acting minister of defense, Massom Stanikzai, said on Wednesday that foreigners under the name of Taliban are fighting security forces in Afghanistan.

"The ongoing war in Afghanistan is not a civil war and it is not a war among the people of Afghanistan. This war is a conspiracy of global terrorists and unfortunately Afghanistan has turned into a battleground," said Stanikzai while talking to army troops at 215th Military Corps.

Staniokzai Links Afghanistan’s War to Foreign Militants

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He added that foreign militaries are playing a key role in Afghanistan's war.

"You can find remnants of foreign military equipment in Khost, Barabara, Marja districts and every corner of Helmand province and you will also see tons or even hundreds of dead bodies of foreigners who have been killed by Afghan forces and nobody is ready to take away their bodies, because they are foreigners not Afghans," said Stanikzai.

He instructed Afghan security forces to ensure the security of border areas to prevent an influx of foreign militants.

="..."...(...More on P1-D)...(2)

KABUL - Critics have blasted the government for its failure to fill over 25,000 vacant posts - a move that could help reduce the unemployment rate.

The Director of the Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commis- sion, Ahmad Massoud Tokhi, on Wednesday confirmed in the House of Parliament that over 25,000 vacant posts have not been filled.

The Woelki Jirga (Lower House of Parliament) had summoned the Minister of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled, Naem Oryakhil and Tokhi to answer questions relating to widespread unemployment.

Tokhi said.

Oryakhil meanwhile blamed the lack of coordination among government organiza- tions for the unemployment crisis. She said.

She said that several agree- ments have been finalized with ..(...More on P4)...(1)

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KABUL - Afghan governors' association (AGA) chairman Abdul Jabar Taqwa told a press conference here that the country's security situation was getting worse day by day and warned if the government did not take urgent measures to control the situation, several provinces would fall into the hands of insurgents.

"The peace talks are only to get salaries and privileges of insurgents.

Oryakhil, head of the UN Office on Drug and Crime (UNODC) in Central Asia, said the message from SCO RATS. During the meeting, the parties exchanged views on the situation in the region and prospects for its improvement and expressed concern over the situation in Afghanistan. Sysoyev noted.

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