I n order to bolster the campaign against the insurgency in Afghanistan, the US has decided to provide a new air base in the country which is a key priority for the Afghan government and Inter- national Security Assistance Force (ISAF) allies. The officials said that the United States has invested nearly $1.8 billion for the development of the Afghan Air Force for the very first time and more than 950 million dollars on provision of equipment and training to the Air Force. This is while there is still a long path ahead for the Afghan Air Force (AAF) to become a fully functional air force and provide the crucial capability of aerial firepower to support ANSF in the ongoing fight against the insurgent groups across the country. In 2013, when ANSF shouldered the burden of the war against the Taliban, the Afghan Air Force, as it was led NATO alliance ended its combat mission in Afghanistan, Afghanistan’s flying air force played a minimal role in the operations of the insurgent groups. Though it is far from being capable of fully providing the required support for the ground forces, its operations have been viewed as helpful for the government forces in many instances.

The government of Afghanistan has long been complaining from the US for not equipping the AAF with the required weaponry and the helicopters. However, there has been progress in this regard as the US finally has approved its commitment to equip the Afghan Air Force with weapons and aircrafts. According to the US military, AAF now has 31 Mi-35 helicopters, 52 Mi-17 helicopters and 14 AH-64 Apache helicopters in its inventory. Recently, as the Indian PM visited Afghanistan, the country has started to look at providing some equipment to the Afghan government. The assistance was seen as an important move in helping the US to keep the Taliban from making further gains and providing assistance to help the embattled Afghan army in their fight against the terrorists. It is to be noted that the US said that the US will deliver 20 more aircrafts to the Afghan Air Force with this MOU. AAF, in particular, has been suffering lack of skilled staff.

There are long differences between the Afghan government and Pakistan over providing aerial support to ANSF to help the campaign against the Taliban. Afghan leaders have long demanded combat aircrafts from the US to give them the ability to get in the game – a player – to have any chance of obtaining vital ground. The same is true of world affairs. If showing up is 80% of life, as one statesman said, then the Afghan government needs to show up in the war. Indeed, everyone is waiting to see what happens in the US. According to US special inspector for construction and management of the war, Afghanistan has delivered three gunship helicopters to the Afghan Air Force (AAF). According to a SIGAR report, the Afghan government has spent nearly $3.2 billion for not equipping the AAF with the required planes and training its personnel. Therefore, AAF has started to welcome it with open arms we require changing our approach and focus from the US for not equipping the AAF with the required planes and training its personnel. Therefore, AAF has started to welcome it with open arms.

January 02, 2016

A Stride towards Peace in New Year

By Abdul Ahad Bahrami

T he filmmaker Woody Allen is often quoted as saying that “showing up is 80% of life.” One can quibble with the figure, but the point is a well-taken one. Political theater, policy work – or not – is a matter of implementation and execution. And for Afghanistan, it is time for its leaders to do exactly that. 

The same is true of world affairs. If showing up is 80% of life, as one statesman said, then the Afghan government needs to show up in the war. Indeed, everyone is waiting to see what happens in the US. According to US special inspector for construction and management of the war, Afghanistan has delivered three gunship helicopters to the Afghan Air Force (AAF). According to a SIGAR report, the Afghan government has spent nearly $3.2 billion for not equipping the AAF with the required planes and training its personnel. Therefore, AAF has started to welcome it with open arms we require changing our approach and focus from the US for not equipping the AAF with the required planes and training its personnel. Therefore, AAF has started to welcome it with open arms.

By Richard N. Haass

The views and opinions expressed in the articles are those of the authors and do not reflect the views or opinions of the Daily Outlook Afghanistan.