

Afghan regime accuses US forces of torturing, murdering civilians

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A meeting of Afghanistan's National Security Council (NSC) chaired by President Hamid Karzai asked US Special Forces to leave Wardak and Logar provinces in two weeks, following an NSC review of reports that the American troops had tortured and murdered Afghan civilians.

The statement issued by the Afghan government—itsself a puppet regime set up by the United States and its allies—is a damning indictment of the US-led NATO occupation of Afghanistan, now in its thirteenth year.

It states: “After a thorough discussion, it became clear that armed individuals named as US Special Forces stationed in Wardak Province engage in harassing, annoying, torturing and even murdering innocent people. A recent example in the province is an incident in which nine people were disappeared in an operation by this suspicious force, and in a separate incident a student was taken away at night from his home, whose tortured body with throat cut was found two days later under a bridge... Such actions have caused local public resentment and hatred.”

According to separate reports, the student detained during the US operation was found with his fingers and head cut off.

The NSC statement also shed light on the kleptocracy over which the US presides in Afghanistan, where officials enjoying US support routinely steal prized land. The NSC pledged to “develop an orderly plan to handle the issue of land seizure, and restitute the lands illegally grabbed by powerful individuals by misuse of authority and official positions.”

At the same time, the NSC statement pledged that Kabul would continue negotiating “the military presence some countries are seeking beyond 2014 in Afghanistan.”

At a press conference in Kabul, commenting on the NSC statement, Afghan presidential spokesman Aimal Faizi said: “President Karzai ordered the ministry of defense to kick out the US Special Forces from Wardak and Logar provinces within two weeks. The US Special Forces and illegal armed groups created by them are causing insecurity, instability, and they harass local people in these provinces... We have received many complaints on this issue.”

Faizi added that the US operations fuel opposition to the Afghan government in these provinces and are a major concern for the Karzai regime. Wardak and Logar provinces—immediately to the southwest and southeast of Kabul, respectively—are key military gateways for Taliban forces attacking Karzai's US puppet regime in Kabul.

US occupation officials in Afghanistan were reportedly blindsided by the Afghan NSC statement and Faizi's press conference. They released a statement refusing to comment on the charges: “This is an important issue that we intend to fully discuss with our Afghan counterparts. But until we have had a chance to speak with senior Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan officials about this issue, we are not in a position to comment further.”

US officials also claimed that the atrocities Faizi raised might have been carried out by Afghans working with US forces.

The Afghan NSC statement briefly pierces the veil of lies with which the bourgeois press hides the realities of US-occupied Afghanistan. As the Karzai regime admits, US and NATO forces use torture and murder to terrorize the Afghan civilian population, which views the occupying forces with hatred.

The war in Afghanistan is a brutal war of imperialist plunder. It was launched on the basis of cynical claims

that, after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the US had to occupy the country in order to wage an all-out global war on Al Qaeda. The imperialist interests driving the US-led occupation—acquiring a military foothold in Central Asia and seizing control of Afghanistan’s estimated \$1 trillion in mineral wealth—were hidden from the public.

Nearly twelve years later, however, the “war on terror” has been exposed as a lie that served as a pretext for a massive escalation of US and NATO wars worldwide. Washington has used Al Qaeda forces as proxies in its wars in Libya and Syria, including most prominently the Al Nusra Front in Syria, while simultaneously claiming it must invade other countries, such as Mali and Niger, to fight Al Qaeda.

Throughout the 12-year occupation, the US and its allies have carried out atrocities—from the mass murder of prisoners of war who revolted under CIA interrogation at the Qala-i-Janghi fortress at the beginning of the war, to the routine use of torture at Bagram air base, to the regular use of air strikes and other indiscriminate forms of warfare against the Afghan people.

This now includes the use of air strikes by unmanned drones, which expanded amid rising popular opposition to the war in America and Europe. According to declassified US military statistics, between 2009 and the beginning of November 2012, the US military carried out some 1,160 drone strikes in Afghanistan alone, killing thousands of Afghans. As in its ground operations and manned air strikes, the US government does not bother to count the number of Afghans killed in these attacks.

These issues are now emerging, however, as the Karzai regime contemplates the implications of the drawdown of US and NATO forces planned for 2014. Despised by the Afghan people, it relies on the protection given by 100,000 NATO troops in Afghanistan. It is now anxiously asking itself how it will survive a significant cut in the level of NATO forces.

It is turning to criticizing some of the US policies that are most hated in Afghanistan, such as the routine use of air strikes and nighttime raids on civilian homes by Special Forces, to posture as an ally of the civilian population. Last week, Karzai condemned a NATO air strike that killed nine civilians, straining his relations

with US occupation authorities.

The exposure of the bloody record of US Special Forces raids and air strikes in Afghanistan highlights the criminal character of Washington’s deployment of troops and drones to Niger, announced on Friday, ostensibly to fight Al Qaeda. Niger is a strategically located country near oil pipeline routes for the massive Nigerian oil industry and itself home to some of the world’s largest uranium mines. France last month invaded its neighbor, Mali, with US support.

As in Afghanistan, these forces will soon be engaged in the torture and murder of African civilians and opponents of US imperialist intervention.



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