



کمیته مستقل مشترک نظارت و ارزیابی مبارزه علیه فساد اداری
د اداری فساد پروړاندې د مبارزې د څارنې او ارزونې خپلواکه گډه کمیته
Independent Joint Anti-corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee

Press Release

MEC Releases Inquiry on the Recruitment and Deployment Processes at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Kabul, Afghanistan, 07 August, 2019: The Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (MEC) released its Inquiry on the Recruitment and Deployment Processes at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) on August 07, 2019.

This Inquiry illustrates the differences between the standard, legal processes of hiring and deployment (and re-deployments) alongside examples of actual practices at MoFA. MEC's inquiry has identified weaknesses and inconsistencies in these recruitment, deployment, and re-deployment processes.

The MEC Inquiry has been conducted with information gathered through systematic research methods to map out the established legal, procedural, and policy framework for recruitment at MoFA, followed with a description of the recruitment processes in practice. The Inquiry describes deployment at MoFA and its legal requirements and juxtaposes these against what is actually practiced. The comparison paints a picture of vulnerabilities to corruption in the MoFA recruitment and deployment processes, as exemplified from actual cases which have been closely reviewed by MEC's researchers. A multi-method approach for data collection was used, consisting of semi-structured interviews with key informants, Focus Group Discussions, and primary and secondary document analysis.

Key Findings:

The MEC's Inquiry on MoFA revealed several vulnerabilities to corruption. MEC's significant findings include the following:

1. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs lacks a reliable Human Resource Management Information System (HRMIS) to assure that recruitment and deployment decisions of the Ministry are transparent.
2. Recruitment and deployment procedures at MoFA are inconsistent and unreliable. This indicates weak enforcement of policies, procedures and rules in the Ministry.
3. Established Policies, Procedures, and Rules of the Ministry have been subject to questionable influences and active evasion. As a result, there is speculation that the required qualifications and procedures that are essential for quality outcomes of recruitment and deployment processes in MoFA have been ignored or repeatedly disregarded.
4. Recruitment practices at MoFA are not consistently meeting their legal requirements; and some decisions on deployments and re-deployments are not based on MoFA procedure. There is not a formal procedure to redress grievances over deployments or re-deployments which has been consistently applied in the Ministry.
5. Concerns about interference in hiring and deployments in the Ministry go beyond violation of the standard rules and procedures and may affect Afghanistan's strategic foreign relations objectives. Lack of enforcement of rules and procedures for recruitment and deployment of individuals has been largely unchallenged.
6. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs lacks an institutionalized approach to the recruitment and training of Foreign Service Officers to support their career-long training and learning.



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Additional findings from the Inquiry:

- 44 per cent of the total cadre were recruited between 2011 to 2017 without completing a Kankor “entry exam”.
- As per the records, since 2009, only 2 Kankor exams have been conducted (28 candidates succeeded in 2014 and 43 succeeded in 2016); staff who succeeded in 2016 had yet joined MoFA at the beginning of 2019.
- Temporary attestations are provided by Ministry of Higher Education.
- Irrelevant degree holders are recruited -- Almost 15 per cent of the total cadre hold irrelevant degrees.
- Knowledge of Foreign language is only tested from those who joined MOFA through Kankor exams. Some of those who had passed the entry exam had failed their language tests (scoring less than the minimum required).
- Most of the staff deployed have not studied/completed a diplomacy course, which is a requirement in the Law.
- Early deployments of staff to higher diplomatic positions are common (within months after they are recruited).
- Hundreds of diplomats have not returned to MOFA after their completion to foreign missions; this includes staff who were deployed to temporary missions.
- Some of those staff whose contracts were terminated, based on the Law, were recruited back to MoFA.
- Staff waitlisted have waited for months in the Ministry as there were no vacant positions when they returned.

MEC’s Recommendations:

Strengthened Controls

1. MoFA should establish a Human Resource Management Information System (HRMIS) to capture all decision points of the recruitment and deployment process, in accordance with the MoFA Human Resource Policy Guide, within six months of the release of this Inquiry.
2. Clear sanctions should be put in place by MoFA for violations of all recruitment and deployment procedures, and proactively communicated to all staff, within eight months of release of this Inquiry.

Grievance and Redress Procedures

3. MoFA should issue specific and practical policies to better monitor compliance and detect violations of the national laws and the MoFA Human Resource Policy Guide, within six months of release of this Inquiry.
4. MoFA should create a strong HR mechanism for checking the educational background, experience, and language skills of candidates that makes validation a prerequisite for the extension of offers. This should be done within six months of the release of this Inquiry.



Criminal Investigations

5. MoFA should terminate employees recruited outside the regular recruitment procedure and refer their cases to the AGO within six months of the release of this Inquiry.

Specialized Recruitment and Training Institute

6. In order to establish full integrity of operations, MoFA should establish an Institute specializing in the recruitment and training of Foreign Service Officers within one year of the release of this Inquiry. Its remit should include formulating recruitment criteria for Foreign Service Officers, conducting exams and interviews, and, training selectees. The Institute should offer targeted career-long training and learning services to Foreign Service Officers upon ends of tours of duty and prior to re-deployments. The Institute should be led and managed by former diplomats and foreign service experts.

MEC will monitor implementation of these recommendations and publish the status of each recommendation on a quarterly basis.