



**Independent Joint Anti-Corruption  
Monitoring & Evaluation Committee**

**NEWS RELEASE**

**The Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (MEC) considers further strengthening of the Supreme Audit Office (SAO) to be necessary**

**KABUL, Afghanistan, June 1, 2014** – MEC has reviewed the procedures and practices of the SAO and determined that the performance of SAO towards realizing its goal of improving management within the government and performing proper oversight of embassies around the world is not without challenges.

The SAO is the highest institution responsible for independently inspecting and auditing the accounting and financial affairs of all public institutions in Afghanistan. The recently-enacted *Audit Law* created a stronger legal framework for auditing the use of public funds. However, the *Audit Law* does not include any administrative procedures for reporting or penalizing institutions that unjustifiably refuse to implement SAO's recommendations, which leads to many concerns being left unaddressed.

MEC has learned through its evaluation of SAO that Afghan embassies are audited once every five years. These audits are not effective at such long intervals and will pave the way for corruption in the embassies (particularly at costly embassies). Therefore, in order for more accurate evaluations of the embassies, it is required that all embassies and consulates are audited within a shorter timeframe. The importance of performing the audits is greater than the added cost of the audits.

Additionally, the justice and judicial institutions evidently refrain from informing the SAO about their decision made against cases sent to them in a timely manner. However, the law explicitly stipulates that the judicial organs must inform the SAO of the outcomes of cases sent through the SAO.

Mr. Yasin Osmani, MEC's current Chair, stated:

Those institutions that ignore the provisions of the law or fail to cooperate should have penalties or sanctions imposed against them to increase the likelihood of the institutions addressing the audit recommendations.

As the independent voice monitoring national and international anti-corruption efforts in Afghanistan, MEC will monitor the effectiveness and implementation of the recommendations to improve the compliance with the SAO audits and accountability of embassies and consulates.

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