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**Letter dated 4 October 2016 from the Chair of the  
Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution  
1988 (2011) addressed to the President of the Security Council**

I have the honour to transmit herewith the seventh report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team established pursuant to resolution [1526 \(2004\)](#), which was submitted to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution [1988 \(2011\)](#), in accordance with paragraph (a) of the annex to resolution [2255 \(2015\)](#).

I should be grateful if the report could be brought to the attention of the Council members and issued as a document of the Security Council.

*(Signed)* Gerard **van Bohemen**  
Chair

Security Council Committee established pursuant to  
resolution [1988 \(2011\)](#)



**Letter dated 3 October 2016 from the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team addressed to the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011)**

I enclose the Monitoring Team's seventh report pursuant to the annex to resolution 2255 (2015).

I want to particularly commend the experts and United Nations staff members who have done the bulk of the work in Afghanistan on this, and earlier, reports. Their extensive work in and around Afghanistan under conditions of significant risk continues to form the anchor on which Monitoring Team reporting, analysis and recommendations are based.

Please note that the original language of the report is English. For ease of reference, the recommendations made by the Team are in boldface.

(Signed) Hans-Jakob **Schindler**  
Coordinator  
Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team  
established pursuant to resolution 1526 (2004)

**Seventh report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2255 (2015) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace, stability and security of Afghanistan**

*Summary*

The present report provides an update on the situation in Afghanistan since the issuance of the Monitoring Team's sixth report (S/2015/648) in August 2015. Following the death of the Taliban leader, Akhtar Mohammad Mansour Shah Mohammed (Akhtar Mansour) (TAi.011), in May 2016, the Taliban quickly appointed as his successor Haibatullah Akhundzada (not listed). Under his leadership, the Taliban was able to slow down the splintering of the movement, which was particularly pronounced during the time when Akhtar Mansour was at the helm. At the same time, the Taliban as a whole has strengthened its relationship with Al-Qaida and Al-Qaida-affiliated entities.

During the current fighting season, violence has markedly increased and serious assaults on provincial capitals continue. The pervasive involvement of the Taliban in the narcotics economy of Afghanistan continues and interlocutors of the Team expect a rise in Taliban revenue from this income stream in 2016. Similarly, the Taliban continues to be deeply involved in the illegal extraction of natural resources in Afghanistan. While the use of improvised explosive devices in the battlefield has decreased during the current fighting season, the Taliban is increasingly using such devices to disrupt economic and social activity in the country, beyond the areas of direct conflict.

The Taliban as a whole under the leadership of Akhtar Mansour and under Haibatullah Akhundzada continues to refuse to take part in direct talks with the Government of Afghanistan. However, distinct progress was achieved through the signature of a peace agreement with Gulbuddin Hekmatyar (QDi.088) on 29 September 2016.

Significant additional challenges remain as several thousand foreign terrorist fighters continue to operate in Afghanistan. The majority of those fighters are currently in a symbiotic, mutually reinforcing relationship with the Taliban but retain their various regional and international agendas. During the past 12 months, Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) (listed as Al-Qaida in Iraq (QDe.115)) has lost significant territory and fighters in the east of the country. However, it remains a serious challenge. The ISIL core in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic continues attempts to fund ISIL operations in Afghanistan. At the same time, ISIL groups are beginning to develop funding streams inside the country. The interlinked network of terrorist actors currently operating in Afghanistan highlights that the threat is not limited to Afghanistan. Under current circumstances, it has the potential to permeate throughout the wider region, as well as the international community.

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## I. Status of the Taliban

### A. Taliban leadership transition

1. On 25 May 2016, the Taliban published a statement on its official Pashto and Dari web pages that acknowledged the killing of Akhtar Mansour and the appointment of Haibatullah Akhundzada as his successor. The statement confirmed that Mansour was killed on 21 May “between Registan district of Kandahar and Noshki district of Baluchistan”.<sup>1</sup> It added that the appointment of Haibatullah Akhundzada as Mansour’s successor had been reached by consensus of the Taliban leadership council. The statement also confirmed Mullah Yaqub (not listed) and Sirajuddin Jallaloudine Haqqani (TAi.144) as deputies.<sup>2</sup> The death of Akhtar Mansour has since been confirmed by several Member States. Those interlocutors of the Team emphasized that, in contrast to the appointment of Akhtar Mansour as the successor of Mullah Omar<sup>3</sup> in July 2015, the appointment of Haibatullah Akhundzada seemed to have been a relatively swift and uncomplicated process. While Mansour was forced to negotiate, compel and bribe several key commanders of the Taliban to swear allegiance to him in 2015, Haibatullah Akhundzada received loyalty assurances from all major Taliban power centres within weeks of his appointment.<sup>4</sup>

2. According to several Member States, the leadership transition has for the most part had the effect of strengthening the internal cohesion of the Taliban as a movement. While there was some fall-off in the tempo of attacks in the immediate aftermath of Mansour’s death, by early summer the Taliban had become organized in both Helmand and Kunduz Provinces. This enabled them to put pressure on the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces. Under the leadership of Akhtar Mansour, radical splinter groups such as Fidayi Mahaz (not listed) (S/2015/648, para. 6) actively set themselves up as an internal opposition force against the Taliban movement, voicing their opposition to any efforts towards a negotiation process (S/2014/888, para. 22). Member States pointed out to the Monitoring Team that the consensus-oriented leadership style of Haibatullah Akhundzada and his profile as a religious scholar, rather than a political or military figure, had for the most part reversed the splintering of the movement that had developed since 2013 (S/2014/402, paras. 20-24). However, the “broadening of the movement’s political tent” has also engendered a more negative stance concerning a potential negotiation process by the movement as a whole.

3. Not all Taliban members are content with Haibatullah Akhundzada’s leadership, however. On 9 August 2016, senior members of the family of the deceased Taliban military commander Mullah Dadullah Akhund pledged their

<sup>1</sup> See also para. 40 below.

<sup>2</sup> Statement by the Leadership Council of the Islamic Emirate regarding the martyrdom of Amir ul-Mumineen Mullah Akhtar Mohammad Mansour and the election of the new leader, published on the Taliban website on 13 June 2016.

<sup>3</sup> Listed as Mohammed Omar Ghulam Nabi (TAi.004).

<sup>4</sup> The Team outlined the structure of the Taliban leadership in the annex to its sixth report (S/2015/648).

allegiance to Haibatullah Akhundzada.<sup>5</sup> However, according to Afghan interlocutors of the Team, shortly after this, a splinter group of the “Mansur Dadullah Front” (not listed) established a 15-member council, which selected as its new leader the 25-year-old Mawlawi Mohammad Ebrahim Dewbandi (a.k.a. Emdadullah) (not listed), the nephew of Mansur Dadullah. The Front announced its opposition to Haibatullah Akhundzada and denounced him as the murderer of Mullah Omar, Mullah Dadullah and Mansur Dadullah.

4. Furthermore, several Member States explained to the Team that with the appointment Sirajuddin Jallaloudine Haqqani (TAi.144) as one of the deputies of Akhtar Mansour in 2015, the influence of the Haqqani Network (TAe.012) over the military affairs of the Taliban movement increased. That position was further strengthened after the appointment of Haibatullah Akhundzada and his confirmation of Sirajuddin Jallaloudine Haqqani as one of his deputies, a position in which he is judged to be in charge of day-to-day military operations. In the past, the Haqqani Network had demonstrated a distinctly hard-line stance towards any potential political negotiations. At the end of August 2016, the Taliban appointed Ibrahim Sadar as military chief, an appointment that appears to have been a reconfirmation of his position, as he had been previously appointed head of the Taliban military commission in 2014.

5. As far as the operational performance of the Taliban during the current summer offensive<sup>6</sup> is concerned, Member States and international interlocutors of the Team explained that the death of Akhtar Mansour had only a short-term impact on the operations of the Taliban. In fact, the level of violence has slightly increased compared with the same period in 2015 (S/2016/768, paras. 17-18). Several Member States, however, explained that the Taliban entered the current fighting season with the expectation of being able to capture, even temporarily, several provincial capitals. At the time of writing, the Taliban had not yet managed to achieve that goal. One Member State highlighted to the Team that the death of Akhtar Mansour in May 2016, shortly after the start of the current offensive, had led to some disruptions and confusion between various Taliban commanders, in particular in the south of Afghanistan, and that therefore the current failure of the Taliban to capture even one provincial capital during the ongoing fighting season might also be explained by the change in leadership in May.

## **B. Current Taliban offensive**

6. Although the beginning of the current fighting season seems to have demonstrated a certain weakness in the coordination between different Taliban commanders in the south of the country, compared with 2015, the military situation in Afghanistan has deteriorated in general. Overall, the number of armed clashes between government forces and the Taliban has increased by 10-13 per cent. Losses sustained by the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces in 2016 increased by 10 per cent compared with 2015. The use of improvised explosive devices has been

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<sup>5</sup> “Pledge of allegiance by family and commanders of the Islamic Emirate’s hero, the martyr Mullah Dadullah Akhund”, published on the Taliban website on 13 August 2016.

<sup>6</sup> On 12 April 2016, the Taliban announced on its website the start of the current summer offensive, called “Operation Omari”, in reference to Mullah Omar.

reduced. In 2015, such devices were reportedly used in about 30 per cent of attacks; however, this was reported to have declined to 18 per cent of attacks in the current year (S/2016/768, paras. 17-18). Member States and Afghan authorities explained to the Team that the Taliban was using improvised explosive devices increasingly to disrupt civilian infrastructure, for example to close off economically important roads. For example, international interlocutors of the Team explained that, during the current fighting in Helmand Province, the Taliban had placed such a significant number of improvised explosive devices on paved roads that civilians as a matter of principle stopped using roads in the province and preferred to travel alongside the asphalt rather than on it. According to the assessment of senior interlocutors of the Monitoring Team in Kabul, at the beginning of 2016 the fighting between the Taliban and the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces intensified in the provinces of Helmand, Ghazni, Paktika, Nangarhar and Kunduz. The current security situation in the southern region of Afghanistan was reported by international and Afghan interlocutors as one of rising Taliban pressure, while the Taliban was increasingly cementing alliances with local tribal groups.

7. Afghan and international interlocutors of the Team highlighted that, during the current fighting season, Helmand Province was a particular focus for the Taliban. One Member State explained to the Team that the leadership planned to relocate some of its members into Afghanistan and saw Helmand Province as a key area where this may be possible. Afghan officials pointed out that some key leaders, such as Mohammad Naim Barich (TAi.013); the head of the military commission, Ibrahim Sadar (not listed); Hafiz Mukhibullo Barakzai (not listed); and the new head of the Taliban security service, Mullah Shirin (not listed), had already relocated.

8. In the north of the country, several Member States explained to the Team that there was concern at Taliban attempts to take control of the border between Afghanistan and the Central Asian republics. This would not only allow Taliban forces to smuggle narcotics out of the country without interference but also potentially enable the Taliban to illegally obtain and transfer arms and ammunitions into Afghanistan through that border.

9. Several Member States highlighted that continuous international support for the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces, including air support, remained of strategic importance in order to contain the ongoing Taliban military pressure in the country.

### **C. Taliban and Al-Qaida**

10. Several Member States highlighted to the Team that the relationship between the Taliban movement and Al-Qaida, in particular the Al-Qaida core, had strengthened during the tenure of Mansour at the helm of the movement and that the change to Haibatullah Akhundzada had not reversed that trend. As pointed out by the Monitoring Team in its recent report (S/2016/629, paras. 1-2), that alignment was demonstrated when, on 31 May 2016, Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) (QDe.129), Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) (QDe.014) and Al-Nusrah Front for the People of the Levant (QDe.137) published a joint eulogy, signed by all three groups, for Mansour. This was followed by a similarly worded eulogy by Al-Qaida in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS) on 16 June 2016. The

current leader of Al-Qaida, Aiman Muhammed Rabi al-Zawahiri (QDi.006), declared his loyalty to the new leader of the Taliban, Haibatullah Akhundzada, on 27 May 2016.<sup>7</sup>

11. The former leader of Al-Qaida in Afghanistan, Nayef Salam Muhammad Ujaym Al-Hababi, a.k.a. Faruq al-Qahtani (QDi.390), left the country, and his location is currently uncertain. The new Al-Qaida leader in Afghanistan is Rasul Khan (not listed), son of Adam Khan, an Afghan national. According to Afghan security officials, current members of Al-Qaida in Afghanistan are very different from the Taliban in both their role and their outlook: they are more educated, more ideologically driven and more strategically inclined.

12. During the current offensive, Al-Qaida fighters and, in particular, cells that identify themselves as loyal to AQIS have taken on a more active supporting role for the Taliban fighting groups. Several Member States explained that Al-Qaida fighters acted as specialized instructors for Taliban groups, in particular as far as the design of improvised explosive devices was concerned.<sup>8</sup> In addition, one Member State pointed to the presence of AQIS fighters in Helmand Province, which was the first time that AQIS fighters were identifiable as a distinct group in southern Afghanistan.

13. In addition to AQIS, Afghan authorities as well as other Member State interlocutors explained that fighters from the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) (QDe.010) continued to fight in the north of Afghanistan as a distinctly identifiable group. While part of IMU had joined the emergent cells of Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in Afghanistan at the end of 2014 (S/2015/648, para. 19), other members of the group continued operations in the north of the country.

14. Finally, while fighters loyal to Al-Qaida-affiliated groups, such as Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (QDe.118) and Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) (QDe.132), who had relocated into Afghanistan to flee from military pressure levied upon them owing to operation “Zarb-e-Azab” (S/2015/648, para. 2), were fighting as distinct groups in the east of Afghanistan in 2015, during the current fighting season, those fighters seem to have been integrated into various Taliban fighting groups and are no longer identifiable as distinct operating entities. Consequently, Afghan officials reported to the Team an increase in arrests of insurgency fighters of Pakistani origin operating with the Taliban within Afghanistan.

#### **D. Taliban finances and connections to criminal organizations**

15. Analysis of Taliban revenue sources suggests that they remain highly diverse, with various income streams that enable the Taliban to quickly substitute for

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<sup>7</sup> This repeated the pattern already established in 2015, when the death of Mullah Omar and the appointment of Akhtar Mansour as Taliban leader was announced. In both cases, neither the leadership of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) nor the groups associated with it commented on the death of the leader of the Taliban.

<sup>8</sup> One Member State reported that one of the key facilitators of improvised explosive devices, Abd-al-Hamid al-Masli (QDi.320), had been killed in Afghanistan during the current fighting season.

declining asset streams. Afghan officials and interlocutors of Member States assessed that Taliban income was generated primarily from (in declining order) narcotics, mining, kidnap for ransom and external donations. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) documented a decline in overall opium production in Afghanistan in 2015 by about 19 per cent.<sup>9</sup> However, international interlocutors of the Team estimate that, for 2016, total production may rise again by 10 per cent. International interlocutors of the Team explained that the reasons for that potential increase were favourable climatic conditions in 2016, as well as a significant increase in poppy production in the north of the country, particularly in Balkh, Badghis and Faryab Provinces. This will also offset the expected reduction in poppy production caused by sustained fighting in Helmand Province, one of the main poppy-producing provinces of the country.<sup>10</sup> Consequently, UNODC estimates that both poppy cultivation and yield are likely to be up in 2016 and that the Taliban will receive up to \$400 million per annum from the illicit narcotics economy, amounting to approximately 50 per cent of Taliban income.<sup>11</sup>

16. According to Afghan officials, approximately 3 million Afghans are directly or indirectly connected to the narcotics economy. A senior Afghan official commented that, owing to the pervasiveness of the Taliban in the narcotics trade, there was no longer a dividing line between narcotics and terrorism. Indeed, if narcotics planting and growth areas are overlaid with a map of areas of the country where the Taliban devotes military resources to maintain a sustained presence, a significant overlap emerges.<sup>12</sup> Using military attacks on key checkpoints, as well as payments and negotiations, the Taliban is able to transport raw poppy from areas in Helmand and the south to the north-eastern region of Afghanistan for chemical processing, from where it is once again sent back to the south for export out of the country.

17. Illegal mining remains a significant income stream for the Taliban. Afghan officials as well as international interlocutors of the Team reported that the situation in that area had not strategically improved since the issuance of the Team's sixth report (S/2015/648). As outlined by the Team in its special report issued in 2015 concerning Taliban cooperation with organized crime (S/2015/79), the Taliban remains directly involved in the sector by controlling illegal mining sites, in particular in the south and east of the country, by extorting sums from licensed Afghan mining operations and by acting as a transport facilitator for other illegally extracted natural resources. That pervasive involvement of the Taliban in illegal mining also recently received international attention.<sup>13</sup> The Team was also informed by several provincial officials during its recent visit that the Taliban continuously targeted mining sites and mining companies in order to either take over the site itself or to extort money from ongoing legal mining operations.

<sup>9</sup> UNODC and Afghanistan, Ministry of Counter-Narcotics, *Afghanistan Opium Survey 2015: Socioeconomic Analysis* (March 2016), p. 3.

<sup>10</sup> See, for example, UNODC and Afghanistan, Ministry of Counter-Narcotics, *Afghanistan Opium Survey 2015: Cultivation and Production* (December 2015), p. 12.

<sup>11</sup> One Member State assessed that the estimated income for the Taliban of \$400 million per annum from the illicit narcotics economy could be on the high side, but concluded that whatever income it was receiving was sufficient to maintain Taliban fighting forces.

<sup>12</sup> This is a continuing situation; the Team had already highlighted this in paragraph 49 of its sixth report (S/2015/648).

<sup>13</sup> See, in particular, Global Witness, *War in the Treasury of the People: Afghanistan Lapis Lazuli and the Battle for Mineral Wealth* (June 2016), pp. 20-21.

## **II. Reconciliation**

### **A. Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and Hizb-i Islami**

18. Afghan officials outlined to the Team that, since the beginning of 2016, the regular contacts of the Government of Afghanistan with Hizb-i Islami Gulbuddin (not listed) and its leader, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, had gathered speed and intensity. As a consequence, a potential opportunity to reach an agreement that would reconcile Hizb-i Islami seemed possible. In May and June 2016 discussions were held between the High Peace Council and Hizb-i Islami to establish the conditions for a peace agreement in which, in summary, the latter would agree to end its military activities, cut its ties with all terrorist groups and other illegal armed groups and cease to provide further support to them, and recognize the Constitution and laws of Afghanistan. In return, the Government of Afghanistan agreed to pave the way for Hizb-i Islami to participate in government institutions.<sup>14</sup> Among other things, the Government also undertook to consult the Security Council, certain countries and other institutions to lift restrictions imposed by them against Hizb-i Islami, its leadership and members as soon as possible.

19. The agreement was initialled by representatives of the Government of Afghanistan and Hizb-i Islami on 22 September 2016<sup>15</sup> and formally signed by the President of Afghanistan, Ashraf Ghani, on 29 September 2016 and by Hekmatyar through a video link to the presidential palace in Kabul. The ceremony was broadcast live on television. The conclusion of that process can be seen as a distinct sign of progress in the reconciliation process as a whole. Some interlocutors of the Team assessed that the process used to bring Hizb-i Islami to a reconciliation agreement could also be seen as a template for reconciliation with other groups. However, others noted important differences between the structure of Hizb-i Islami and the far less hierarchically organized Taliban movement, which would likely necessitate significant differences in approach to come to a reconciliation agreement with the Taliban. Nonetheless, should the reconciliation with Hizb-i Islami prove sustained, Member States considered it to be a very symbolic achievement for the Government of Afghanistan.

### **B. Taliban**

20. In January 2016, Afghanistan, China, Pakistan and the United States of America formed the Quadrilateral Coordination Group to prepare the ground for peace talks with the Taliban.<sup>16</sup> Member States explained to the Team that, despite significant efforts by all members of the Group to start direct talks between Kabul

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<sup>14</sup> For a report on the details of the agreement, see, for example, TOLONews, “Details of peace agreement mapped out”, 20 September 2016.

<sup>15</sup> See, for example, Josh Smith and Mirwais Harooni, “Violent past revisited as Afghanistan initials accord with notorious warlord”, 22 September 2016. Available from [www.reuters.com](http://www.reuters.com).

<sup>16</sup> See, for example, Afghanistan, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Joint press release: Quadrilateral Coordination Group meeting of Afghanistan, China, Pakistan and the United States”, 11 January 2016.

and the Taliban, the Taliban released a statement on 5 March 2016 announcing that it currently had no intention to participate in the talks.<sup>17</sup>

21. Several Member States reported to the Team that the Taliban under the leadership of Akhtar Mansour had displayed no overt signs of wanting to negotiate and that this had not changed with the ascendancy of Haibatullah Akhundzada to the role of Taliban leader. The assessment of those Member States is that, while Haibatullah Akhundzada as a senior cleric has strong ideological credentials, his consensual leadership style will limit, for the time being, his ability to assert his authority, even if he were to have aspirations to enter into discussions on reconciliation. According to Afghan officials and several international interlocutors of the Team, the majority of power brokers within the Taliban movement believe that the current fighting season has gone well for them, and they continue to believe that they will be able to win the conflict militarily. Consequently, for the time being, they see no incentive for the leadership of the movement to enter into a strategic negotiation process.

22. In February 2016, Pir Sayed Ahmad Gailani was appointed head of the High Peace Council. The former Second Vice-President, Karim Khalili, the former Governor of Bamyan, Habiba Surabi, Mawlawi Aatur Rahman Saleem and Mawlawi Abdul Khabir were appointed deputies of the head of the Council. Afghan officials explained to the Team that the High Peace Council was currently fully functional, should the Taliban choose to engage with it in serious negotiations. Interlocutors of the Team highlighted that some changes were being made to improve the Council. In the new proposal, the Council would be reduced in number from 73 members to approximately 50. Those 50 members would be divided among three main committees and additional ad hoc committees created, if needed. The work of the committees would be based on the Council's revised policy that outlined the organization's five-year plan for achieving "peace and prosperity" based on its three key pillars of leading on peace initiatives; building on peace initiatives; and helping to bring about social peace and justice for all Afghans.

### **III. Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant**

23. The position of ISIL in Afghanistan has distinctly weakened since 2015 (S/2016/629, paras. 18-19). Afghan government officials stated that, at the high point of its influence in 2015, the group had been able to temporarily control up to nine districts in Nangarhar Province. Currently, however, the most active part of the group has been reduced to influence in, at most, three and a half districts within the province. At the same time, the number of ISIL fighters fell as a result of Afghan National Defence and Security Forces action against them and air strikes conducted by international forces. The group's ability to take and hold territory was also affected by clashes with Taliban fighters competing for local influence and particularly for resources, funding and manpower.

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<sup>17</sup> "New statement from the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan concerning non-participation by delegates in the upcoming Quadrilateral Coordination Group meetings", published on the Taliban website on 5 March 2016.

24. Several Member States reported to the Team that the number of ISIL fighters in eastern Afghanistan had dropped to about 1,600,<sup>18</sup> of whom more than 700 were foreigners, located mainly in the districts of Deh Bala, Kot, Achin and Naziyan in Nangarhar Province. About 200 ISIL fighters were based in Kunar Province. According to Afghan and international interlocutors of the Team, some ISIL fighters are trying to move from Nangarhar and Kunar to Nuristan Province. Small ISIL groups operate in the provinces of Laghman, Badakhshan and Baghlan (districts of Burkah and Nahrin), as well as in Kunduz and Zabul, in particular in the district of Kakar. In the northern part of Afghanistan, ISIL cooperates with Jundallah (not listed), an organization linked to TTP.

25. Afghan government officials and several Member States confirmed to the Team that Hafiz Saeed Khan (not listed), the ISIL leader in Afghanistan, had been killed by an air strike on 26 July 2016. Several Member States explained to the Team that nearly half of the members of ISIL in Afghanistan were of non-Afghan origin, with a large portion of fighters hailing from the Afghanistan-Pakistan border area. According to the assessment of several Member States, ISIL has lost significant numbers of ex-Taliban fighters who chose to return to the movement during 2015. Nevertheless, the group continues to be able to attract disgruntled Taliban fighters. One particular risk factor that was highlighted to the Team by Member States was potential recruitment by ISIL among returning Afghan refugees. According to Member State information, ISIL is able to pay its fighters a joining fee of around \$500.

26. Throughout 2015 and 2016, the group has maintained an active propaganda campaign inside Afghanistan. For example, according to Afghan officials, the key to those efforts continues to be a mobile radio station that the group operates, despite three successful operations by Afghan and international forces targeting the station. In addition, the group actively disseminates propaganda material through the Internet. According to information from Afghan interlocutors of the Team, the ISIL propaganda department in Afghanistan is led by a professional video producer and journalist, a graduate of the University of Jalalabad, Sultan Aziz Ezan (not listed). In the provinces of Nangarhar and Khost, ISIL also distributed so-called “night letters” to intimidate the local population and supporters of the Government of Afghanistan.

27. Several Member States and Afghan security officials assessed that relations between ISIL and the Taliban varied between different regions in Afghanistan. In some provinces, particularly in Kunduz and Kunar, ISIL fighters interacted with the Taliban fighting groups and avoided clashes. However, in other parts of the country, both groups competed for resources, territory and influence. This was most pronounced in the east of the country, in particular in Nangarhar Province. Nevertheless, Afghan officials reported to the Team that, despite regular clashes between Taliban groups and ISIL in the province, ISIL was still willing to pay Taliban field commanders a salary of \$1,000 per month if they were willing to cooperate with and not oppose ISIL.

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<sup>18</sup> See S/2016/629, para. 18, in which the number of ISIL (Da'esh) fighters was estimated at fewer than 3,500.

28. Apart from eastern Afghanistan, both groups also clashed in Farah and Helmand Provinces, where the Taliban was able to defeat various ISIL groups. According to several Member States, one major point of contention between the Taliban and ISIL is the influence over the narcotics business. According to information received from several Member States, in 2015 ISIL purchased and subsequently burned the poppy harvest in districts under its control in Nangarhar Province. Afghan authorities explained to the Team that, in other areas of the country, ISIL fighters stopped and destroyed consignments of narcotics belonging to the Taliban.

29. Several Member States outlined to the Team that the majority of the finances of ISIL in Afghanistan came from external sources. The ISIL core in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic has made efforts to financially support ISIL in Afghanistan, as it has done with other ISIL groups outside the region. Afghan interlocutors have reported to the Monitoring Team that ISIL also receives external support through individual donations from the wider region. According to several Member States, some of the external financial support provided to ISIL is transferred using informal channels, such as hawala. However, several Member States highlighted to the Team that ISIL had also begun to develop revenue sources inside Afghanistan: the group was extorting traders and the local population; used kidnap for ransom as an income source; and sold illegally logged wood. Afghan officials explained to the Team that ISIL fighters received a small monthly payment; however, their families were provided with housing, food, clothing and other necessary items. During the summer of 2016, the financial director of ISIL in Afghanistan, Azan Gul (not listed), was arrested by the Afghan authorities.

#### **IV. Foreign terrorist fighters in Afghanistan**

30. According to the assessment of several Member States and Afghan government officials, in total, the armed opposition in Afghanistan has about 45,000 fighters. Of those, between 20 and 25 per cent were assessed to be non-Afghan fighters. Several senior interlocutors of the Team described the current situation in Afghanistan as a “petri dish” of bad actors that mutually reinforced each other and presented a significant and rising terrorist challenge not only for the country but also for the international community.

31. Afghan interlocutors suggested that foreign terrorist fighters in the country could be broadly split into four groups. The first and largest proportion of those fighters were currently fighting in Afghanistan, approximately 7,500 to 7,600 individuals who had fled Pakistan owing to the military operation Zarb-e-Azb and were currently fighting alongside the Afghan Taliban. Those fighters hail from the Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) (QDe.132), Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (QDe.118), Lashkar i Jhangvi (LJ) (QDe.096), Jaish-i-Mohammed (QDe.019), Harakat ul-Mujahidin/HUM (QDe.008) and others.

32. According to Afghan officials, Lashkar-e-Tayyiba fighters, for example, are providing training to new Taliban recruits in the Maywand district of Kandahar Province. A group of fighters loyal to the Harakat ul-Mujahidin and consisting of 250 individuals cooperates in Paktiya Province with the Haqqani Network (TAe.012). In summer 2016, that organization, headed by Abdul Haq Ayoubi and

located in the Dand Wa Patan and Jaji districts of Paktiya Province, participated together with the Afghan Taliban in an attack on the Hisarak district. Uzbek-Uyghur foreign terrorist fighters also joined the attack.

33. A second group of foreign terrorist fighters reportedly comprises individuals from China, the Russian Federation and Central Asia. Those militants are currently fighting with IMU, the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM) (QDe.088), the Islamic Jihad Group (QDe.119), Jundallah (not listed) and Jamaat Ansarullah (not listed). Afghan officials reported to the Team that, in recent months, about 300 militants from Central Asia along with their families appeared in the districts of Daychopan, Arghandab and Kakar in Zabul Province.

34. In the north of Helmand Province, many fighters of Uzbek and Tajik origin have also been reported. Afghan authorities believe that they may be members of the Katibat Imam Bukhari group (not listed) who took the oath of allegiance to the new leader of the Taliban movement, Haibatullah Akhundzada, having previously transferred from the Syrian Arab Republic to Afghanistan (S/2016/629, para. 19). Senior Afghan officials assessed that the reason for those fighters' presence in Afghanistan was to create a network of supporters in the provinces in the northern and north-eastern parts of the country in order to obtain experience, network and potentially prepare for a return to their countries of origin. IMU and ETIM work closely with the Afghan Taliban, yet often identify themselves with ISIL. This should be seen as a symbiotic relationship in which cooperation is beneficial to both partners.

35. A third group of foreign terrorist fighters comprises members of ISIL located mainly in the Nangarhar and Kunar Provinces. Approximately 1,600 militants, who hail from neighbouring countries, are based in Nangarhar, and 200 are in Kunar. ISIL foreign terrorist fighters in Afghanistan came mainly from three agencies in the Afghanistan/Pakistan border area: Orakzai, Khyber and Bajaur.

36. The fourth group of foreign terrorist fighters in Afghanistan includes representatives of Al-Qaida who are part of AQIS. Currently they are struggling for relevance in Afghanistan. Afghan officials assessed that Al-Qaida members in Afghanistan numbered between 400 and 600 and were present mainly in the southern, eastern and north-eastern provinces of the country. In 2016, 120 families of Al-Qaida members moved into the Khogyani district of Nangarhar Province. The members of Al-Qaida are not significantly engaged in fighting in Afghanistan but act mainly as embedded trainers and advisers to the Taliban, the Haqqani Network, Lashkar-e-Tayyiba and IMU.

37. Most of the foreign terrorist fighters in Afghanistan require the assistance of the Afghan Taliban for the provision of safe havens, from where many look to use Afghanistan as a launch pad to pursue primary objectives in their home countries. The presence of the Taliban and affiliated groups in the far north of the country, such as in Kunduz and Badakhshan Provinces, are examples of this symbiotic relationship. Senior Afghan officials therefore stressed that they saw the threat currently posed to Afghanistan as international in nature and coming at a time when Afghanistan was not able to manage the situation on its own. They also emphasized that the problem could be exacerbated by an influx of up to 1 million Afghan

refugees expected to return from Pakistan during 2016.<sup>19</sup> Senior Afghan officials are currently concerned that the large number of returning refugees could present a fertile recruiting ground for a range of radical groups in Afghanistan.

## V. Sanctions implementation

### A. Travel ban

38. The implementation of the travel ban against listed individuals remains a challenge. The Monitoring Team continues to monitor regular but unconfirmed national, regional and international media reports that allege international travel of listed individuals. Most of those reports allege that the travel of the listed individuals is related to ongoing efforts to start a direct negotiation process between the Taliban movement and the Government of Afghanistan. The Monitoring Team has not received official confirmation of any of those potential violations by a Member State.

39. The travel ban established pursuant to resolution [1988 \(2011\)](#) continues to be a powerful sanctions measure that the Taliban previously criticized, noting that they could not move freely because of it ([S/2015/648](#), para. 33). Therefore, strict implementation of the travel ban against all listed individuals remains a key tool in maintaining leverage over the Taliban leadership. In this context, it is worth noting that, reportedly, a key issue for the potential reconciliation between Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and the Government of Afghanistan was that the Government would agree to commit to consult with the United Nations Security Council to lift the sanctions placed on Hekmatyar as soon as possible. Hekmatyar is currently listed under the ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida sanctions regime.

40. At the time of his death, Mullah Mansour was located in the area “between Registan district of Kandahar and Noshki district of Baluchistan”, according to a Taliban statement.<sup>20</sup> Press reporting, some of it attributed to the Taliban spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahed, suggests that, prior to his death, Mansour had travelled to other countries for meetings and to raise funds. Senior officials of the Government of Afghanistan also confirmed their understanding that Mansour was travelling throughout the region prior to his death. This highlights the risk that some listed individuals may have obtained identity documentation using false or fraudulent identities.

41. The provision of biometric data, in particular pictures and fingerprints, is one instrument through which a more effective implementation of the travel ban can be achieved. Biometric data allow the identification of an individual independent of the identity data in a potential travel document. For a number of years, the Team has worked with Member States to gather such data for inclusion in the International

<sup>19</sup> Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Update on Return of Afghan Refugees from Pakistan* (5 September 2016). Available from [www.refworld.org/docid/57d0106e4.html](http://www.refworld.org/docid/57d0106e4.html).

<sup>20</sup> Statement by the Leadership Council regarding the martyrdom of the leader of the faithful Mullah Akhtar Mohammad Mansour and the election of the new leader, published on the Taliban website on 28 May 2016.

Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL)-United Nations Security Council Special Notices (S/2014/402, paras. 38-39). This has led to a significant increase in the provision of biometric data for individuals listed on the sanctions list established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011). However, key individuals, such as Akhtar Mansour, continue to lack verified pictures in their data sets.

**42. The Monitoring Team recommends that the Committee encourage Member States to submit pictures of individuals currently listed on the 1988 (2011) sanctions list for inclusion in the respective INTERPOL-United Nations Security Council Special Notices, as the Committee had previously requested in 2014.**

43. Discussions of the Team with specialists at INTERPOL as well as several national law enforcement agencies highlighted the fact that, for fingerprints, the most significant data format is the ANSI/NIST-ITL format.<sup>21</sup>

**44. In order to ensure greater international interoperability of fingerprint data provided by the Committee, the Monitoring Team recommends that the Committee write to Member States encouraging those that have not yet done so to submit to the Team and the Security Council Affairs Division the fingerprints of listed individuals, if available, for inclusion in the INTERPOL-United Nations Security Council Special Notices in ANSI/NIST-ITL 1-2007 format.**

## B. Asset freeze

45. Afghanistan has continued to develop its legal and regulatory framework with the aim of countering the financing of terrorism. That work is done in close cooperation with the Financial Action Task Force. The Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Center of Afghanistan (FinTRACA), the financial intelligence unit of Afghanistan, plays a crucial role in this regard. The Team has documented the process of licensing money service providers in Afghanistan since its third report (S/2013/656, para. 49). The process is ongoing and has expanded to most provinces of the country. FinTRACA maintains on its website lists of licensed money service providers for each region of the country.<sup>22</sup>

46. The process of licensing money service providers, which the Team considers a potential best practice for the region, is augmented by the provision of sanctions-related information by FinTRACA. On its website, FinTRACA maintains links to the 1988 (2011) and the ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida sanctions lists.<sup>23</sup> In addition, Afghan officials reported to the Team that the unofficial Dari and Pashto translations of the 1988 (2011) list<sup>24</sup> were particularly useful for their daily work in

<sup>21</sup> INTERPOL, "ANSI/NIST-ITL 1-2007, data format for the interchange of fingerprint, facial and SMT information: INTERPOL implementation (version No. 5.03, April 2011).

<sup>22</sup> See, for example, the list of registered money service providers for the south-west region, Kandahar Province, available from [www.fintraca.gov.af/MSPs/SouthWestZoneActive.html](http://www.fintraca.gov.af/MSPs/SouthWestZoneActive.html).

<sup>23</sup> See [www.fintraca.gov.af/UNList1988.html](http://www.fintraca.gov.af/UNList1988.html) and [www.fintraca.gov.af/UNList1267.html](http://www.fintraca.gov.af/UNList1267.html), respectively.

<sup>24</sup> For the Dari translation, see [www.un.org/sc/suborg/sites/www.un.org.sc.suborg/files/1988\\_dari.pdf](http://www.un.org/sc/suborg/sites/www.un.org.sc.suborg/files/1988_dari.pdf); for Pashto, see [www.un.org/sc/suborg/sites/www.un.org.sc.suborg/files/1988\\_pashto.pdf](http://www.un.org/sc/suborg/sites/www.un.org.sc.suborg/files/1988_pashto.pdf).

implementing the relevant sanctions provisions. The Dari and Pashto lists have been provided to all provincial Governors, who in turn have informed the relevant financial stakeholders in their respective provinces. Should transactions that are suspected to be in connection with listed individuals or entities be detected, the provincial offices of FinTRACA report back to Kabul, where the reports are checked against the official English version of either sanctions list. If a match is found, the respective funds are frozen. Afghan officials explained to the Team that, while in the past each freezing order required a specific instruction by the Attorney General of Afghanistan, on 20 July 2016 the Attorney General of Afghanistan issued a standing order enabling the freezing to take place if a match is found with current as well as all future updates of the 1988 (2011) and the ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida sanctions lists.<sup>25</sup>

47. On 1 September 2016, new versions of the sanctions lists, ordering the list entries in alphabetical order and by permanent reference number, became operational. This changed the web addresses of the 1988 (2011) and the ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida lists.

**48. Given that FinTRACA and other government authorities regularly consult these lists through the website of the respective Security Council Committees, the Monitoring Team recommends that the Committee transmit by a note verbale to all Member States the new web addresses of the 1988 (2011) and the ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida sanctions lists.**

49. The Taliban continues to be directly, as well as indirectly, involved in the illegal exploitation of natural resources in Afghanistan.<sup>26</sup> According to the assessment of the Monitoring Team based on its discussions with the Government of Afghanistan as well as several Member States, this continues to be a significant income stream for the Taliban in addition to damaging the economic development of the country by stealing non-renewable natural resources. The Team has documented the issue since its fourth report (S/2014/402, paras. 51-54). In addition to strengthening domestic controls of the industry inside Afghanistan, greater awareness among international customers of natural resources hailing from Afghanistan is necessary to build up potential hurdles hampering the ability of the Taliban to generate assets in this regard.

50. Taliban extortion from legal and licensed Afghan mining operations is a domestic law enforcement issue and is currently pursued by the Government of Afghanistan.<sup>27</sup> In addition, the Government cooperates with the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative of the International Monetary Fund to increase the transparency of the industry in Afghanistan.<sup>28</sup> This work will also increase the

<sup>25</sup> Afghanistan, Freezing Order of Funds and Assets of Individuals, Entities and Organizations Designated under United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1267 (1999), 1988 (2011) and Successor Resolutions Issued by the United Nations Security Council Acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations (20 July 2016).

<sup>26</sup> See para. 17 above.

<sup>27</sup> See, for example, Cecilia Jamasmie, "Afghanistan deploys security forces in large illegal mining crackdown", 8 June 2016. Available from [www.mining.com/afghanistan-deploys-security-forces-in-large-illegal-mining-crackdown](http://www.mining.com/afghanistan-deploys-security-forces-in-large-illegal-mining-crackdown).

<sup>28</sup> See, for example, Pablo Valverde, "Informing reforms — one report at a time" (9 March 2016). Available from <https://eiti.org/node/4490>.

hurdles aimed at preventing the Taliban from extorting the legal mining industry in the country. Furthermore, the ability of the Taliban to generate assets from natural resources that they have illegally extracted themselves is an issue for which the [1988 \(2011\)](#) sanctions regime can also be employed. The Taliban has to bring such natural resources to the international market. Consequently, both the resources in question and the financial transactions involved cross international borders and are subject to international controls. As outlined in the Team's special report on the cooperation between the Taliban and criminal organizations ([S/2015/79](#)), Taliban-controlled illegally extracted natural resources reach the global market with forged documents of origin ([S/2015/79](#), para. 25).

51. Further discussions of the Team with specialists in the sector as well as from the Government of Afghanistan and several other Member States again emphasized the fact that more stringent compliance and due diligence procedures on the part of international customers necessitated greater knowledge of the networks involved in this illegal asset generation as well as the geographical location of those illegal mining sites.

**52. The Monitoring Team recommends that the Committee send a note verbale to all Member States encouraging those that have not yet done so to raise the awareness of the respective private sector stakeholders that illegally extracted natural resources from Afghanistan may also benefit the Taliban.**

**53. In addition, the Monitoring Team recommends that the Committee encourage Member States by means of a note verbale to submit potential listing requests targeting individuals involved in the international distribution of illegally extracted natural resources by the Taliban.**

**54. Finally, the Monitoring Team recommends that the Committee mandate it to continue working with the Government of Afghanistan as well as relevant private sector stakeholders to explore possibilities through which greater detailed knowledge of the location of illegal mining sites in Afghanistan can be disseminated to relevant governmental and industry stakeholders.**

## **C. Arms embargo**

### **1. Improvised explosive devices**

55. While the overall use of improvised explosive devices has been reduced in the current fighting season,<sup>29</sup> the Team continues to receive documentation from Member States highlighting that the supply of components of such devices, such as detonators, detonating cord and remote control triggers, as well as precursors for homemade explosives, continues. All interlocutors of the Team stressed that the Taliban did not seem to lack supplies of those components. In his recent report on countering the threat posed by improvised explosive devices, the Secretary-General named Afghanistan as one of the countries most affected by improvised explosive devices and highlighted that such devices in Afghanistan killed 10 times as many civilians as landmines did ([A/71/187](#), paras. 5 and 11). Furthermore, as outlined above, the Taliban also uses improvised explosive devices as a political tool: by

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<sup>29</sup> See para. 6 above.

disrupting civilian infrastructure, the Taliban hampers the ability of the Government of Afghanistan to deliver services to the population. Consequently, any reduction in the supply of such components to the Taliban would not only ensure a more stringent implementation of the arms embargo but also potentially result in positive political effects.

56. As outlined in the sixth report of the Team (S/2015/648, paras. 52-53), the legal and regulatory framework of Afghanistan concerning the import and handling of civilian components that are at risk to be misused in improvised explosive devices has significantly developed over the past few years. Therefore, strengthening controls at the level of the industry which produces those parts is an opportunity to increase the effect of the arms embargo in this regard. The recent report of the Secretary-General on countering the threat posed by improvised explosive devices also highlights this issue and recommends that national codes of conduct of relevant industries should be developed (A/71/187, recommendation 1). The Monitoring Team has continuously highlighted the importance of such industry guidelines since its third report (S/2013/656, paras. 59-66). The Team will continue to work with relevant industries and such regional initiatives as the Istanbul Process to further raise awareness of this issue.

57. The report of the Secretary-General on countering the threat posed by improvised explosive devices is a crucial document and makes a range of important recommendations to Member States. Therefore, greater awareness of the report and its recommendations is important.

**58. The Monitoring Team recommends that the Committee explore possibilities, such as workshops, to disseminate the report of the Secretary-General (A/71/187), for example through the United Nations resident coordinators in the region, to respective stakeholders dealing with the issue. The Monitoring Team stands ready to present in such workshops.**

## **2. Arms and ammunition**

59. In addition to components of improvised explosive devices, the Taliban supply of arms and ammunition remains a continuing concern. The Government of Afghanistan as well as all international interlocutors which the Team engaged on this issue highlighted the fact that at no point during the current or past fighting seasons did the Taliban seem to have difficulties in resupplying its fighting forces with such materiel. Several Member States as well as the Government of Afghanistan explained to the Team that the origin of such materiel was difficult to trace, as Afghanistan and the wider region was awash with arms and ammunition. Consequently, part of the arms and ammunition used by the Taliban may be illegally obtained by the movement outside Afghanistan. The Team will continue to engage with Member States of the region in order to further raise awareness of this issue.

60. In addition, several interlocutors highlighted the challenges that Afghanistan faced in managing the stockpiles of arms and ammunition of its security forces. This, in combination with resupplies during the ongoing fighting, entailed the risk that a significant number of arms and ammunition might go missing. Discussions of the Team with Afghan military officials as well as international interlocutors suggested that significant quantities of arms and ammunition from Afghan military

stockpiles in fact remained unaccounted for. During its recent visit, the Team discussed the challenges of stockpile management with the relevant Afghan authorities. The Team will continue these discussions in order to ascertain whether further measures could be taken to mitigate this risk.

**61. The Monitoring Team recommends that the Committee encourage the Government of Afghanistan to explore potential measures which could be taken, within existing means, in cooperation with relevant United Nations bodies to improve stockpile management.**<sup>30</sup>

62. In addition to the supply of arms and ammunition, several-high ranking officials of the Government of Afghanistan highlighted the fact that, during the ongoing fighting season, an increasing amount of highly specialized, modern equipment such as sniper rifles, laser sights and night-vision goggles had been seized from Taliban fighters. Several Member States also emphasized that fighters loyal to ISIL in Afghanistan, despite being under sustained military pressure, had also been able to obtain such specialized equipment. According to Afghan officials as well as international interlocutors of the Team, the seized specialized equipment was of foreign origin. The Taliban had always been able to obtain small amounts of specialized equipment in the past, either through theft or by capturing such equipment during engagements on the battlefield. The Team has documented the issue to the Committee in the past. However, during the Team's recent discussions, it became apparent that the problem had reportedly grown and could no longer be explained solely by individual incidents of theft or battlefield capture. Similar to the issue of spare parts of improvised explosive devices, documentation of seizures of such equipment is crucial in order to identify potential risk areas.

**63. The Monitoring Team recommends that the Committee mandate it to develop a specialized project similar to its ongoing project documenting the seizure by Afghan forces of components of improvised explosive devices, with the aim of systematically documenting seizures, types and makes of specialized equipment seized from Taliban, Al-Qaida and ISIL-affiliated fighters in Afghanistan. Such documentation could then be fed by Member States into the INTERPOL mechanism through Orange and Purple Notices.**<sup>31</sup>

## **VI. Work of the Monitoring Team**

### **A. Cooperation with Member States and academic and civil society experts**

64. The Monitoring Team cooperates closely with the Government of Afghanistan on a continuous basis and looks forward to returning to a schedule of frequent visits

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<sup>30</sup> The current mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali could serve as a potential blueprint for such a project. See resolution [2227 \(2015\)](#), paras. 14 and 34.

<sup>31</sup> Orange Notices allow the sharing of information concerning an event, a person, an object or a process representing a serious and imminent threat to public safety. Purple Notices allow the sharing of information concerning modus operandi, objects, devices and concealment methods. See [www.interpol.int/INTERPOL-expertise/Notices](http://www.interpol.int/INTERPOL-expertise/Notices).

to the country in 2017. During its visits the Team also organized workshops for Afghan officials concerning the 1988 (2011) sanctions regime and relevant processes. In addition, the Team gathered information on the situation in Afghanistan for the present report during various country visits and during several regional and international intelligence service meetings. The Team also continued to engage academic and civil society experts on the Taliban movement and the situation in Afghanistan. Since June 2015, the Team has engaged with Afghan analysts and academics during its visits to the country. In addition, the Team engaged academic experts on Afghanistan in the Russian Federation, the United States of America and Europe.

## **B. Cooperation with regional organizations**

65. In addition to its ongoing cooperation with the Government of Afghanistan, the Monitoring Team continues to work with Combined Maritime Forces Combined Task Force 150 (CTF-150) in Manama and UNODC to identify and analyse Taliban involvement in drug flows out of Afghanistan through the Indian Ocean (S/2015/648, para. 55). The Team updates the Committee on a regular basis on the progress of this particular project.

66. In a similar manner, the Team has engaged with the Collective Security Treaty Organization in order to identify Taliban involvement in the flow of narcotics through the so-called “northern route”. Since the issuance of the sixth report, the Team has held several meetings with the organization’s representatives in Moscow and New York, and on 1 June 2016 the Deputy Secretary-General of the organization briefed the Committee on its current counter-narcotics and counter-terrorism work. The Team has also engaged the Shanghai Cooperation Organization with a similar proposal.

## **C. Cooperation with other United Nations bodies**

67. The Monitoring Team continues to cooperate closely with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and is grateful for the support that the Team receives on a regular basis from UNAMA under the leadership of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan and Head of UNAMA, Tadamichi Yamamoto, during and in between its visits to the country. In addition, the Team continues to engage with relevant UNODC experts on the drug economy in Afghanistan.

#### **D. Cooperation between the Security Council and the International Criminal Police Organization**

68. The Monitoring Team has established intensive and frequent cooperation with the National Central Bureau of INTERPOL in Kabul. This cooperation regularly results in the exchange of threat assessments and the provision of official information on listed individuals to the Team. In addition to the National Central Bureau, the Team also cooperates closely with various INTERPOL working groups and departments at the headquarters of the organization in Lyon, France. Thanks to the work of the INTERPOL New York Liaison Office and United Nations staff members mandated to support the work of the Monitoring Team, the Team has also received relevant information on listed individuals and entities from various INTERPOL national central bureaux located in Member States. The Team also took part in regional United Nations sanctions training workshops organized by INTERPOL to raise awareness of the [1988 \(2011\)](#) sanctions regime with relevant stakeholders.

#### **E. Contributing to the public debate**

69. The Team welcomes feedback on the analysis and suggestions contained in the present report, which can be sent by e-mail ([1988mt@un.org](mailto:1988mt@un.org)).

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