

Headlines:

- **Pentagon Reports No Progress on Afghanistan in past year**
- **After Vowing to Strangle US-backed Force, Erdogan Proposes Joint Deployment with US**
- **Pakistan Deploying Troops to Saudi Arabia**

Details:

Pentagon Reports No Progress on Afghanistan in past year

America's longest war is in Afghanistan, which it is continuing to lose despite changing its objectives to securing major cities only, instead of the entire country. The American leadership is of course unable to acknowledge the worsening situation, and even the Pentagon Inspector General has had to be very careful in his statements regarding the ongoing war. According to the *Washington Post*:

"The Pentagon watchdog suggested Friday that top U.S. officials overstated progress late last year when they said the tide had begun to turn in favor of U.S.-backed forces in Afghanistan, months after the Trump administration unveiled its new strategy against the Taliban."

The Department of Defense Inspector General released a report Friday saying that "no significant progress" had been made in 2017 toward Afghan authorities' stated goal of bringing 80 percent of the country's population under government control amid a Taliban insurgency.

The report found little evidence to support comments that the top U.S. commander in Afghanistan, Army Gen. John W. Nicholson Jr., and other top U.S. officials made late last year, arguing that U.S.-backed troops had "turned the corner" and gained momentum in their fight against the Taliban. At times, top officials appeared to attribute the change to the new strategy the Trump administration announced last summer.

"Overall, based on available data, it is too soon to judge whether the new strategy has broken the stalemate in the fight against the Taliban and other extremists," acting Inspector General Glenn A. Fine wrote in his introduction to the report. "During the quarter, there was no change in the percentage of the population or the number of districts under the control of the Afghan government, and there was no progress towards a reconciliation process with the Taliban."

The report found "no improvement" in security conditions in Afghanistan, highlighting the U.N. characterization of the environment in December as "highly volatile." Some 64 percent of Afghanistan's population lives in "government controlled or influenced" areas, Nicholson said, representing little change from previous months.

Spokesmen for U.S. Central Command and the Department of Defense did not respond to a request for comment on the inspector general's report."

Indeed, America would have been long ejected from Afghanistan if it were not for the support it receives from the Pakistan military establishment. America is undoubtedly a military giant and the current global superpower but its ability to project power across the other side of the world to landlocked Afghanistan is extremely limited. It is Pakistan, under the traitorous General Musharraf that opened the door for the American occupation and it is Pakistan even now that is complicit in supporting the continuation of this occupation. It is necessary for aware Muslims to expose the deception of their rulers and reject those that serve the foreign disbelieving master.

After Vowing to Strangle US-Backed Force, Erdogan Proposes Joint Deployment with US

Only last month, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan threatened 'to "strangle" a planned 30,000-strong U.S.-backed force in Syria "before it's even born,"'. But now, after a visit

by US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, Erdogan is talking about joint military deployment with the US in Syria. According to *Reuters*:

Turkey proposed on Friday staging a joint deployment with U.S. troops in Syria, as the two NATO allies sought to rescue a rapidly deteriorating strategic relationship that Washington acknowledged had reached a "crisis point".

U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson met President Tayyip Erdogan during a two-day visit that followed weeks of escalating anti-American rhetoric from the Turkish government.

Relations between Washington and its main Muslim ally in NATO have been strained to the breaking point by several issues, above all Turkey's anger over U.S. support for the Syrian Kurdish YPG militia, which Turkey sees as terrorists.

Turkey launched an air and ground assault last month in Syria's northwest Afrin region to sweep the YPG away from its southern border. The United States has armed, trained and aided YPG fighters with air support and special forces, as the main ground force in its campaign against Islamic State.

"We find ourselves at a bit of a crisis point in the relationship," Tillerson acknowledged at a news conference after meeting with Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu on Friday morning. He had met with Erdogan for a more than three-hour discussion on Thursday night.

"We're going to act together from this point forward. We're going to lock arms. We're going to work through the issues that are causing difficulties for us and we're going to resolve them."

Despite his boisterous rhetoric, Erdogan is in fact following American planning down to the last detail. America is playing a complex game in Syria, balancing various local, regional and international forces against each other. Our present rulers are incapable of resisting the allure of Western patronage, despite statements to the contrary. It is essential for Muslims to reject such cowards and traitors and instead give their support to sincere, aware, indigenous, ideological leadership that will serve the cause of the Muslim Ummah and its Deen and reject the plans of the imperialist disbeliever.

Pakistan Deploying Troops to Saudi Arabia

Despite previously resisting sending troops to Saudi Arabia, Pakistan has now announced that it will do so. According to *Reuters*:

As first reported by Reuters, the Pakistani Army is sending soldiers to Saudi Arabia on a "training and advice" mission.

This is notable because Pakistan has previously been reluctant to commit forces to Saudi military operations such as that in Yemen. Fearing a deterioration in relations with Iran (which is fighting the Saudis in Yemen right now) and being sucked into the Yemen quagmire, Pakistani Army headquarters had been happy to stay home (the Inter-Services Intelligence excluded), and the Pakistani Parliament deferred to that intent.

Pakistan continues to claim that its troops "will not be deployed outside the Kingdom" but the reality is that the Saudi regime is engaged in war in Yemen in which it is at a disadvantage because of its weakness in ground forces. The Saudis are mostly using airstrikes while dependent on the UAE to provide ground forces. But with divergences between the Saudi and UAE objectives, Saudi is desperate to inject its own ground forces into the war. The Pakistani contingent will be essential to this objective, even if kept close to the border.

Ultimately, the war in Yemen is being fought for US objectives and is another example of how America has increasingly turned to the armies of Muslim countries to fight its wars. Rather than a sign of strength, this is actually a sign of American weakness. It is time for Muslims to realise that they have to take control of their own affairs and cease this dependence on a foreign power that lacks the strength to carry out its purposes without the support of the very people it is oppressing.