

For Immediate Release: Thursday, December 03, 2009

Contact: Oversight and Government Reform Press Office, (202) 225-5051

## **Chairman Towns Announces Investigation into Afghan Military and Police Training Contracts**

Washington, D.C. - Chairman Edolphus "Ed" Towns (D-NY) today announced that he is adding to the committee's investigation into the government's oversight of contractors in Afghanistan. Chairman Towns requested this week all contracts and contract documents from the Department of Defense (DoD) related to the training of the Afghan military and police force. The request includes documents detailing the Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan's (CSTC-A) current efforts to award their next security assistance contract for the Afghanistan National Security Forces (ANSF).

A recent audit by the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) found weak oversight of a CSTC-A training contract. The CSTC-A is a joint command under the U.S. Central Command, which is instrumental in providing ANSF with training, equipment, advisement, and mentorship which will eventually enable the Afghan government to provide their country's own security.

In his letter to Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, Chairman Towns writes, "Due to the major role that CSTC-A plays in providing security and stabilization to the Afghan people, I am troubled to learn that a \$404 million contract that provided training services to the ANSF in 17 different locations across Afghanistan lacked effective contract oversight..."

Chairman Towns is investigating the matter to ensure the process by which CSTC-A contracts are awarded, and performed, are void of waste, fraud, and abuse.

A copy of the letter from Chairman Towns to Defense Secretary Gates is below.

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December 1, 2009

The Honorable Robert M. Gates  
Secretary of Defense

U.S. Department of Defense  
1400 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Secretary Gates:

The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform is the principal oversight committee in the United States House of Representatives, with jurisdiction over "any matter." Under Rules X and XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee is conducting a broad investigation into the government's use of contractors in Afghanistan. As such, I am deeply troubled by a recent Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) audit that found weak oversight of a Combined Security Transition Command - Afghanistan (CSTC-A) training contract.

The CSTC-A, a joint command under the U.S Central Command, is responsible for the management of roughly \$ 15 billion in programs designed to provide security assistance to the Afghanistan National Security Forces (ANSF), which includes the Afghan National Army and the Afghan National Police. The CSTC-A is instrumental in providing the ANSF with training, equipment, advisement, and mentorship that will eventually enable the Afghan government to provide their country's own security.

Due to the major role that CSTC-A plays in providing security and stabilization to the Afghan people, I am troubled to learn that a \$404 million contract that provided training services to the ANSF in 17 different locations across Afghanistan lacked effective contract oversight by CSTC-A. For example, SIGAR found that visits to training sites were not performed by CSTCA and that the contract officer's representative, the front-line Army employee providing oversight of this contract, was located in New Cumberland, Pennsylvania—not Afghanistan.

I am aware that CSTC-A is currently in the acquisition process for awarding the next security assistance contract, worth over \$800 million, to provide similar training services to the ANSF. Because of my concern with CSTC-A's ability to effectively monitor its contracts, I am requesting that you provide the Committee with all contracts and contract documents related to training the Afghan military and police, specifically including the \$800 million contract referenced above. In addition, please arrange a time to provide committee staff with a full briefing concerning the aforementioned contracts.

Sincerely,

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Edolphus Towns  
Chairman