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Afghanistan Jails US Government Employee

April 25, 2013



A former contractor for a recently completed U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) project in Afghanistan has been sentenced to two-and-a-half years in prison and a \$9,500 fine.

Noor Anwarzai, 36, was sentenced by Afghanistan's Special Anti-Corruption Tribunal on April 8, 2013. The Tribunal found Mr. Anwarzai guilty of violating Afghan Penal Code Article 268, regarding embezzlement of funds and Article 310 regarding the forgery of official documents.

Abdul Khabir Kakar, another former contractor accused in the case, was acquitted and subsequently released. He was not found to have been involved in the fraud.

The sentencing came as part of what U.S. Government officials described as an ongoing campaign against fraud and waste in reconstruction and development activities in Afghanistan. The investigation was conducted jointly by the Afghanistan Attorney General's Office Anti-Corruption Unit and USAID's Office of Inspector General.

Commenting on the Anti-Corruption Tribunal's ruling, USAID's Deputy Inspector General Michael G. Carroll expressed his appreciation for the strong partnership between USAID's OIG investigators and Afghan law enforcement officials that led to the recent ruling. "Partnerships with law enforcement agencies overseas are critical to our efforts to combat waste, fraud, and abuse in development activities worldwide. This sentencing demonstrates how effective these partnerships can be," he said.

Noor Anwarzai and Abdul Khabir Kakar are former employees of the recently concluded Afghanistan Farm Service Alliance project implemented by Citizen's Network for Foreign Affairs (CNFA). The two were arrested by the Afghan National Police in November 2012 on charges of conspiring to embezzle approximately \$10,000 of USAID funds. They were accused of falsifying official documentation from the Afghan Ministry of Finance, indicating that CNFA had paid the appropriate local property taxes for the office building when they had not.