

# *Afghan reconstruction watchdog tells U.S. Congress of mendacity and lies*

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Washington, January 17 (RHC)-- On Capitol Hill, the top government watchdog for Afghanistan reconstruction told lawmakers in Washington that U.S. officials have routinely lied to the American public throughout the U.S.-led war in Afghanistan, now in its 19th year.

Special Inspector General John F. Sopko testified to the House Foreign Affairs Committee, saying: "The problem is there is a disincentive, really, to tell the truth. And when we talk about mendacity, when we talk about lying, it's not just by lying about a particular program. It's lying by omissions, by saying, 'Oh, I can't tell you about the casualties,' or 'I can't tell you about how good the Afghans [inaudible] weapons,' or 'I can't tell you this and that.' Turns out that everything that's bad news has been classified over the last few years."

Last month, The Washington Post published excerpts from a confidential trove of documents that revealed how senior U.S. officials have repeatedly lied about the war's progress while hiding evidence the war had become unwinnable.

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