

John F. Sopko Special Inspector General

John F. Sopko was sworn in as Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction on July 2, 2012. Mr. Sopko, appointed to the post by President Obama, has more than 30 years of experience in oversight and investigations as a prosecutor, congressional counsel and senior federal government advisor.

Mr. Sopko came to SIGAR from Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP, an international law firm headquartered in Washington, D.C., where he had been a partner since 2009.

Mr. Sopko's government experience includes over 20 years on Capitol Hill, where he held key positions in both the Senate and House of Representatives. He served on the staffs of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, the Select Committee on Homeland Security and the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations.

In his most recent congressional post, Mr. Sopko was Chief Counsel for Oversight and Investigations for the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, chaired by Rep. John D. Dingell (D-Mich.), during the 110th Congress. There, he supervised several investigations focused on matters regulated by the Food and Drug Administration, Department of Energy, Department of Commerce, Federal Communications Commission, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, U.S. Commodity Futures Trading Commission and Consumer Product Safety Commission.

Mr. Sopko also served as General Counsel and Chief Oversight Counsel for the House Select Committee on Homeland Security, where he focused on homeland security and counter-terrorism investigations and issues.

At the Senate Subcommittee on Investigations, chaired by then-Sen. Sam Nunn (D-Ga.), Mr. Sopko conducted investigations on a broad range of issues, from healthcare insurance to complex weapons systems. From 1982 to 1997, Mr. Sopko led investigations for the chairman and subcommittee members that included a multi-year investigation related to health insurance; union infiltration by organized crime; protection of critical infrastructure; the potential spread of weapons of mass destruction in the former Soviet Union and elsewhere; enforcement of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act; cybersecurity; international drug interdiction programs; counter-terrorism policies and procedures; government procurement fraud and the illegal export of dual-use technologies.

After his work in the Senate, Mr. Sopko was recruited by the Commerce Secretary to manage the department's response to multiple congressional, grand jury and press inquiries. While at the Commerce Department, Mr. Sopko was named Deputy Assistant Secretary for Enforcement for the Bureau of Export Administration, and Deputy Assistant Secretary for the National Telecommunications and Information Administration.

Mr. Sopko previously served as a state and federal prosecutor. As a trial attorney with the U.S. Department of Justice Organized Crime and Racketeering Section, he conducted numerous long-term grand jury investigations and prosecutions against organized crime groups. He was the lead attorney in the first successful federal RICO prosecution of the entire leadership structure of an American La Cosa Nostra crime family. In 1982 he received the Justice Department's Special Commendation Award for Outstanding Service to the Criminal Division, and in 1980 he received the department's Special Achievement Award for Sustained Superior Performance.

Mr. Sopko began his professional career as a state prosecutor in Dayton, Ohio, with the Montgomery County prosecutor's office. He served as an adjunct professor at American University's School of Justice, where he received the Outstanding Adjunct Faculty Teaching Award in 1984 and the Professor of the Year Award in 1986. He received his bachelor's degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1974, and his law degree from Case Western University School of Law in 1977. He is a member of the bars of Ohio and the District of Columbia.

