

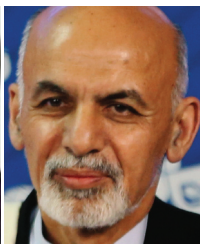
Taliban rift could swell Islamic State ranks

An emerging power struggle within the Afghan Taliban leadership could drive disgruntled fighters to join the so-called Islamic State (IS) group, which is already believed to have established a foothold in Afghanistan

TALIBAN LEADERSHIP

■ **Mullah Akhtar Mansoor** (right) named leader in July after confirmed death of founder **Mullah Omar**. Mansoor seen as moderate who favours peace talks with government. Reputation boosted after his fighters briefly occupied northern city of Kunduz in September

■ **Anti-Mansoor faction:** Many Taliban commanders, including prominent dissident **Mullah Abdul Qayyum Zakir**, oppose peace process and are meeting to choose rival leader to Mansoor. Faction supported by **Tayyab Agha**, former head of Taliban political office in Qatar



AFGHAN GOVERNMENT

President **Ashraf Ghani** (above right) pushing for negotiated settlement to 14-year insurgency, which has escalated since withdrawal of NATO troops in 2014. Taliban rift could discourage Mansoor from continuing with Pakistan-based talks

Militant attack and support zones April-October 6, 2015

■ Attack ■ Support

