EASO Country of Origin Information report

Afghanistan

Insurgent strategies — intimidation and targeted violence against Afghans

December 2012

SUPPORT IS OUR MISSION

European Asylum Support Office
Bureau Européen d'Appui pour l'Asile

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Country of Origin
Information report

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Disclaimer

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The information provided has been researched, evaluated and analysed with utmost care. However, this document does not claim to be exhaustive. If a certain event, person or organisation is not mentioned in the report, this does not mean that the event has not taken place or that the person or organisation does not exist.

This document is not conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Terminology used should not be regarded as indicative of a particular legal position.

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The target audience are caseworkers, COI researchers, policymakers, and decision-making authorities.

This report was finalised in Malta in November 2012. Any event taking place after this date is not included in this report.

Terms of reference

The topic of this report is 'insurgents' strategies: intimidation and targeted violence against Afghans' perceived as enemies by the Taliban. Since the target audience is those working in asylum authorities, attention is given exclusively to targeted Afghans and not to foreigners, because they are not subject to Afghan asylum applications. This report does not cover the phenomenon of indiscriminate or generalised violence.

The following elements are included in this report.
- Abduction
- Night letters
    - Format aspects: What do genuine Taliban night letters look like?
    - Content
- Targeting of education
    - Teaching girls
    - Female students
- Targeting of government officials, employees and sympathisers
- Targeting of journalists and media
    - Difference between people working on site or behind the scenes
- Targeting of construction workers
- Targeting of truck drivers
- Targeting of shopkeepers
- Targeting of spies
- Targeting of staff of foreigners (e.g. interpreters)
- Targeting of tribal elders
- Targeting of the political process
- Targeting of bank staff or clients
- Targeting of ethnic minorities

Several categories of people or profiles are present in the list of elements. The profiles are defined along their profession, perceived (political) position or activity.

In the decision-making process, there is the need for a regional assessment of the risks. Are the profiles at risk in all areas in Afghanistan? Is a lower government employee, for example, as much at risk in Kabul or Mazar as he is in Kandahar?

There is also the need to assess the possibilities for escaping the intimidation or targeting internally in Afghanistan. However, it is not possible to present a general overview of internal relocation possibilities within the scope of this report.

Finally, there is the need to assess the risk of a person quitting his or her job or activity or stepping down from a position which is targeted by insurgents.

Abbreviations

AIHRC	Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission
ANSO	Afghanistan NGO Safety Office
COI	Country of Origin Information
CPAU	Cooperation for Peace And Unity
EASO	European Asylum Support Office
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IEC	Independent Electoral Committee
IDP	Internally displaced Person
IHL	International Humanitarian Law
IMF	International Military Forces
IMU	Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
INSO	International NGO Safety Organisation
IO	International Organisation
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
IWPR	Institute for War and Peace Reporting
MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OMAR	Organisation for Mine Clearance and Afghan Rehabilitation
UN	United Nations
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

Glossary

ANA	Afghan National Army: the internationally trained Afghan Army (2002)
ANP	Afghan National Police — Subdivisions: Afghan Local Police (ALP); Afghan National Border Police (ANBP); Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP); Afghan Anti-Crime Police (AACP)
ANSF	Afghan National Security Forces — Subdivisions: Afghan National Army (ANA); Afghan National Police (ANP); National Directorate of Security (NDS)
APRP	The Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme is an Afghan Government peace programme designed, implemented, and executed by Afghans to provide a way for insurgents to stop fighting and rejoin their communities with honour and dignity. By joining the programme, the fighter makes the commitment to renounce violence, sever all ties with the insurgency and abide by the Constitution of Afghanistan: this includes the acceptance of the Government of Afghanistan's laws on women's rights [1].
Arbakai	An *arbakai* is a locally organised tribal or community militia.
Barakzai	The Barakzai is a Pashtun tribe within the Durrani (Zirak) tribal confederation.
BBIED	Body-Borne IED — Suicide bomb (can be the classical vest with explosives, but also, for example, a turban-borne IED).
CDC	Community Development Councils are locally elected councils to represent the rural communities in Afghanistan. The councils prioritised needs and planned, managed, and monitored the sub-projects of the National Solidarity Programme of the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development [2].
CIP	The Critical Infrastructure Protection is a security division mainly operated by tribal militias and armed individuals. They are used for the protection of NATO infrastructure and projects [3].
Complex attack	A deliberate and coordinated attack which includes a suicide device (i.e. BBIED, VBIED), more than one attacker and more than one type of device (i.e. BBIED and mortars). All three elements must be present for an attack to be considered complex [4].
Hawala	*Hawala* is an informal money transfer system, based on a *hawaladar* (money broker) who receives the money together with some kind of password. The *hawaladar* contacts another *hawaladar* where the money can be collected by providing this password. The money transfer happens without really moving the money. The *hawaladars* receive a commission.
Hotak	The Hotak is a Pashtun tribe in the Ghilzai (Turan) tribal confederation.
IED	Improvised Explosive Device — usually a self-made bomb. It can be remote-controlled (RCIED), vehicle or body-borne (VBIED or BBIED — car or suicide bombs), other variants are also possible. Used in asymmetric warfare.
Insurgency	Armed rebellion against the government. This term is the most used in the literature and by sources about the conflict in Afghanistan from 2001 and still ongoing.

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[1] ISAF, *Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme* (http://www.isaf.nato.int/article/focus/afghanistan-peace-and-reconciliation-program.html) (accessed 12 November 2012).

[2] Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD), National Solidarity Programme (http://www.nspafghanistan.org) (accessed 12 November 2012).

[3] Ghanizada, *Afghanistan halts NATO CIP Security Units*, Khaama Press, 26 December 2011 (http://www.khaama.com/afghanistan-halts-nato-cip-security-units-243) (accessed 31 July 2012).

[4] UNAMA and OHCHR (2012), *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 15.

ISAF	International Security Assistance Force — an international military coalition, based on the NATO alliance, active in Afghanistan to support the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA) and to secure and stabilise the country (http://www.isaf.nato.int).
Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan	The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan was the state form in Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001 under the Taliban regime, the Taliban still use this name (http://www.shahamat-english.com/).
Lahya	'Book of rules', the Taliban code of conduct for fighters and organisational rules.
LDI	The Local Defence Initiative is a programme of the US Special Operations Forces in villages designed to secure local communities by denying insurgents access to and support in local communities ([5]).
Mullah	A mullah is a religious functionary or cleric extremely prevalent outside the cities in Afghanistan. They are usually the single religious authority in a village and studied in a madrassa. They can often read Arabic and the Koran. They are teachers and preachers.
Mullahkheil	The Mullahkheil is a Pashtun tribe in the Ghilzai tribal confederation.
NDS	National Directorate of Security — the Afghan Intelligence Service
PGM	Pro-Government Militia
Pir	*Pir* is a title for an elder. In Persian, the word means 'old man' and has an equivalent in Arabic (Sheikh). In Sufism, it means a spiritual leader, master or teacher.
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
Quetta Shura	The leadership of the Afghan Taliban is located in Quetta. It is known as the Rabari (leadership) or Markazi Shura (Central Council), but is also often referred to as Quetta Shura. It is led by Mullah Mohammad Omar. It is not to be confused with the Taliban military council for the south of Afghanistan, which is also often called 'Quetta Shura'.
RCIED	Remote Controlled Improvised Explosive Device — this IED is controlled from a distance and makes it possible to detonate it when the target is nearby.
RPG	Rocket-Propelled Grenade
SAF	Small Arms Fire
Shabnamah	Night letter
Shura	A *Shura* is a community council.
SVBIED	Suicide Vehicle-Borne IED
Ushr	*Ushr* is an Islamic tax on certain products, for example on agricultural products: normally, 10 % of the value.
VBIED	Vehicle-Borne IED
Zakat	*Zakat* religious tax on assets and liquidity (2.5 %): the practice of almsgiving or *zakat* is one of the five pillars of Islam.

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[5] Lefèvre, M., *Local Defence in Afghanistan — A review of government-backed initiatives*, Afghanistan Analysts Network, May 2010 (http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/20100525MLefevre-LDIpaper.pdf) (accessed 12 November 2012).

Introduction

This report was authored by the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), according to its mandate. This report aims to provide information to support Country of Origin Information (COI) researchers, decision and policymakers active in the national procedures for the assessment of asylum applications from Afghan nationals.

This is the second EASO COI report on Afghanistan dealing with insurgent strategies. In the first report, which covered Taliban recruitment, a brief overview of relevant developments in the recent history of Afghanistan was given, as well as a general description of the Taliban, its structures and modus operandi ([6]).

Terminology

Some terms in this report have been used in their general meaning and not in a legal sense. The term 'civilian' does not necessarily refer to the legal concept applied in International Humanitarian Law (IHL), but does refer to the non-military position of the person. However, if a source states a civilian was killed by the insurgency, it is not always clear what the exact meaning is: in this situation, the only option is to take over the term as it is used by the source.

The term 'Taliban' is defined in the first EASO COI report, which covered Taliban recruitment ([7]). The term 'insurgent' is used when it is not clearly stated in the source which insurgent group is referred to. It could be Taliban, but it could also be another group. In different sources, other terms are used for this broad description, such as Anti-Government Elements (AGE) or Armed Opposition Groups (AOG). The element of political opposition against the government makes the distinction with purely criminal elements or groups, which are not subject of this report.

The sources do not always mention clearly who is the actor in such activities. It could, therefore, not always be confirmed that insurgents conducted an attack or abduction, for example. As the most important scope of this report is the actual acts of intimidation and targeting that individuals might face, rather than exactly which group is responsible for such acts, all found actions that resemble insurgents' known strategies or practices are used.

The term 'targeted violence' refers to acts of violence which are aimed at a certain person or at a group of persons, opposed to indiscriminate or generalised violence.

The regions used in this report are the south (Nimroz, Helmand, Kandahar, Uruzgan, Zabul and Ghazni); the south-east (Paktika, Paktya, Logar and Khost); the east (Nangarhar, Laghman, Kunar and Nuristan); the centre (Kabul, Wardak, Day Kundi, Bamyan, Parwan and Kapisa); the north-east (Baghlan, Panjsher, Kunduz, Takhar and Badakhshan); the north-west (Balkh, Samangan, Sar-e Pul, Jawzjan and Faryab) and, finally, the west (Herat, Badghis, Ghor and Farah).

Methodology

Defining the terms of reference

The definition of the terms of reference for this report was based on the study of questionnaires sent out to Member States, associated or not yet associated countries, by the European Commission for the Eurasil (European Union network for asylum practitioners) meeting on Afghanistan at the end of 2011, and by EASO at the beginning of 2012. The terms of reference were discussed in a meeting in July 2012 with COI experts on Afghanistan from Austria, Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands and Norway and in meetings with caseworkers and policymakers in Greece, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom in August and September 2012.

Collecting information

The report presents information found during a period of research on the subject from 1 July until 8 October 2012. After this period, some sources were added in order to update the information. A limited number of specialised

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[6] EASO, EASO *Country of Origin — Information report — Afghanistan — Taliban strategies — Recruitment,* July 2012 (http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum/european-asylum-support-office/bz3012564enc_complet_en.pdf) (accessed 5 October 2012).

[7] See footnote 6.

paper-based and electronic sources were consulted within the time frame and the scope of the research. Several authors with expertise on Afghanistan contributed articles for the book edited by Antonio Giustozzi, *Decoding the New Taliban: Insights from the Afghan Field*, which served as an important source because of its complete and detailed insights into the topics at stake in this report. In order to update the developments, the Afghanistan NGO Safety Office (ANSO) was used as a source for anecdotal evidence and analysis as it is a very valuable source referred to by many other authoritative sources. What ANSO provides is an extensive picture of the situation in the field which goes into regional details like no other publicly available source currently does. A third important source for this report is an extensive list of incidents from the first half of 2012 provided by UNHCR.

As analytical information is not always available or up to date, anecdotal evidence of events in 2012 is presented in text boxes with 'episodes' in order to try to get a view on recent trends in the events. These text boxes contain illustrative examples — they are not exhaustive. An exhaustive listing was not possible in the scope of the research, nor was it possible to provide an extensive analysis of developments and trends in all 34 provinces of the country.

Furthermore, a number of contact persons were interviewed via Skype or e-mail. All of the contacts reside at least partially in Afghanistan and many of them have a profound knowledge of the subject. For security reasons, several of the contacts cannot be named. They explicitly requested to remain anonymous; the choice had to be made between not interviewing them at all or referring to them as 'anonymous sources'. Considering the value of the information provided, the latter approach was chosen.

All sources together provide information on insurgent strategies between 2003 and 15 November 2012.

Analysing information

Whereas information provided by sources does not always fulfil the information needs in the refugee status determination process, an analysis of the information can try to partially fill this gap. An analysis was made where it was considered useful and possible. The assessment of the fear or risk in an individual asylum case is, however, not a matter for the COI and the individual merits of an asylum application should always be decisive for the assessment. The information or analysis provided in this report, in accordance with the EASO COI Report Methodology, could be supportive of this. The best method for an optimal understanding of the Taliban's strategies is extensive reading on the subject — and not only in this report, but especially in different specialised sources: this report contains an extensive reference section.

Consulting experts

A draft report was presented to national COI experts on Afghanistan from Austria, Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands and Norway. They were asked to review and comment on it. The annotated draft was then sent to a reference group of experts from Member States, associated or not yet associated countries, the European Commission and the UNHCR. All members of the reference group were invited to comment; all comments were considered and many of them were implemented.

Figure 1: Map of Afghanistan ([8])

([8]) UN, *Map of Afghanistan*, June 2011 (https://www.un.org/depts/Cartographic/map/profile/afghanis.pdf) (accessed 12 November 2012).

Executive summary

Shortly after the defeat of the Taliban regime in 2001–02, a renewed Taliban movement set up a violent intimidation campaign against the new government and its international allies and other insurgent groups soon joined the insurgency. The population was positioned in between both sides and the insurgents aimed to isolate the government and the international troops from the people.

They intimidated and targeted several categories or profiles of people using the following methods: night letters; illegal checkpoints; collection of taxes; abduction; targeted killings; Taliban courts and death sentences; shutting down mobile networks; command, intelligence and 'hit lists'.

It is important to keep in mind that the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan is largely defined by historical underlying mechanisms: Local rivalries, power play and tribal feuds. The insurgents often use these mechanisms to their benefit but it also works in the other direction.

There are regional differences in this campaign of intimidation and targeted violence, which can vary for the range of targeted profiles studied in this report.

1. Government officials and employees

High-ranking officials and government employees face a real risk of being intimidated or targeted by insurgents in all parts of Afghanistan. Low-ranking officials and government employees also face a real risk of being intimidated or targeted in peripheral unsafe areas and a low risk of being targeted in safer areas in Afghanistan which are not under the insurgents' control, for example the cities of Kabul, Herat and Mazar. For low-ranking government employees or officials, it is possible to escape insurgents' threats by stepping down from their position, unless there are specific individual circumstances that could lead to continued targeting. If a low-ranking official or government employee quits his activity and can flee the area and resettle in a safer area, he can normally escape targeting by insurgents, unless there are specific individual circumstances which would preclude this possibility.

2. Afghan National Security Forces

High-ranking ANSF officials face a real risk of being intimidated or targeted by insurgents in all parts of Afghanistan. Low-ranking members face a low risk of being intimidated or targeted in safer areas in Afghanistan which are not under the insurgents' control, unless there are specific individual circumstances that increase the risk. They also might be targeted by complex attacks in several other cities, including Kabul. ANSF members might face continued targeting by insurgents even after stepping down from their position. If a low-ranking ANSF member quits his activity and can flee the area and resettle in a safer area, he can normally escape targeting by insurgents, unless there are specific individual circumstances which would preclude this possibility.

3. Government supporters, collaborators and contractors

High profiles face a real risk of being intimidated or targeted by insurgents in all parts of Afghanistan. In general, low profiles also face a real risk of being intimidated or targeted in areas which are under insurgents' sustained control or strong influence, but not much risk in the safer areas of Afghanistan which are not under the insurgents' control: for example the cities of Kabul, Herat and Mazar. However, individual and specific circumstances might lead to an increased risk. For those with low profiles, it is possible to escape insurgents' threats by stopping an activity or quitting a job, unless there are specific individual circumstances that could lead to continued targeting. An example of these circumstances could be involvement in military opposition against the insurgents (e.g. PGM members or contractors to the ANSF). If a low-profile person quits his activity, can flee the area and resettle in a safer area, he can normally escape intimidation or targeting by insurgents, unless there are specific individual circumstances which would preclude this possibility.

4. Afghans working for international military forces

Those working for the IMF face a real risk of being intimidated or targeted by insurgents in all parts of Afghanistan, but the risk is lower in the city of Kabul. However, individual and specific circumstances might lead to an increased risk. For people working for the IMF, it might not be sufficient to simply quit their job or stop their activity in order

to escape intimidation and targeting by the insurgents. If someone working for the IMF quits his activity and can flee the area and resettle in a safer area, he can normally escape intimidation or targeting by insurgents, unless there are specific individual circumstances which would preclude this possibility.

5. Afghans working for international organisations, companies, NGOs and Afghan NGOs

There is evidence that the targeting of NGOs is decreasing and Afghan NGO workers are no longer systematically targeted by insurgents. There might be targeting, however, if certain circumstances are present (e.g. working in US-funded or for US organisations; activities which are perceived by insurgents to be partisan; cooperation with the IMF). Afghan UN staff members or Afghan employees of other international organisations are at risk of being targeted by insurgents. This is also the case for employees of foreign companies, especially if the companies are American, British or Indian. The risk of being intimidated or targeted is low for these profiles in the cities of Kabul, Mazar and Herat, unless there are specific circumstances which could increase the risk. The individual circumstances of the case determines whether the Taliban would further target or threaten a person after he quits his job or stopped activities. If an Afghan civilian working for an NGO, international organisation or foreign companies quits his activity and can flee the area and resettle in a safer area, he can normally escape intimidation or targeting by insurgents, unless there are specific individual circumstances which would preclude this possibility.

6. Spies

Civilians accused by the Taliban of being a spy face a high risk of being targeted in areas under the sustained control of the Taliban, which will very often result in the death of the victim. This risk is low in the cities of Kabul, Herat and Mazar. However, individual and specific circumstances might lead to an increased risk. If a low-profile civilian accused of being a spy can flee the area and resettle in a safer area, he can normally escape targeting by insurgents, unless there are specific individual circumstances which would preclude this possibility.

7. Journalists, media and human rights activists

In the documented episodes of targeting of journalists and media staff, on the one hand, and of women's rights activists, on the other, it is often unclear who the actor in the targeting was. In some cases, sources mentioned explicitly that insurgents targeted the victim. Two sources reported that the Taliban threatened and targeted women's rights activists.

8. Educational staff or students

Insurgents do not oppose education as such any longer and, thus, do not target educational staff or students for the single reason of their involvement in education. However, there are still several circumstances in which educational staff or students might be targeted by insurgents (e.g. situations of political struggle between the government and the insurgents in which the insurgents hijack education in order to put pressure on the government; educational staff or schools not complying with Taliban's demands; schools which are perceived by the insurgents as a platform for government recruitment or proselytism; girls' education). For low-profile persons (e.g. teachers), it is possible to escape insurgents' threats by quitting a job or obeying the Taliban's demands, unless there are specific individual circumstances that could lead to continued targeting. An example of these circumstances could be the accusation by the Taliban of spying or collaboration with the government. If a low-profile person quits his activity and can flee the area and resettle in a safer area, he can normally escape intimidation or targeting by insurgents, unless there are specific individual circumstances which would preclude this possibility.

9. Medical staff

Several sources provided indications that insurgents allow healthcare staff to work and that they do not target healthcare as such. However, there were still some incidents reported. In some cases, other reasons were behind the intimidation and targeting of healthcare, for example a clinic being outside the insurgents' control or misunderstandings. Two sources indicated that insurgent groups might be more restrictive towards female healthcare workers.

10. Construction workers

Construction workers could face a risk of being targeted by insurgents while they are on duty or on site in different regions of Afghanistan. In general, when construction workers are off duty, they do not risk being targeted by insurgents because of their job, unless a particular circumstance increases the risk, for example working for an IMF contractor.

11. Truck drivers

Truck drivers face the risk of being targeted when they are on the road. When they are off duty, no evidence is present that suggests they would be targeted by insurgents because of their job. However, circumstances could increase the risk of being tracked down while off duty, for example truck drivers who work for IMF.

12. People violating the Taliban's moral code

Sources reported intimidation by the Taliban against the population in order to make them obey moral decrees, for example prohibitions on shaving, women working outdoors, selling music and sweets or girls' education. Giustozzi and Reuter indicated in early 2011 that the Taliban were no longer applying the strict social decrees on un-Islamic behaviour, but they raised the question whether this was a tactical decision or a change in ideology. However, the intimidation and targeting continued in 2012. Several insurgent groups made it clear that they do not intend to tolerate so-called un-Islamic behaviour, for example music and dance, sports and television. In some recent episodes, exceptionally cruel attacks took place in, according to the insurgents, 'venues for non-moral behaviour which is against Islamic values'.

1. General

1.1 Violent intimidation campaign by insurgents

Martine van Bijlert ([9]) explained in her analysis of the Taliban in Uruzgan that they used different ways to control the local population: threats, intimidation and harassment, taxation, forced disarmament and limiting the freedom of movement of people ([10]). Christophe Reuter and Borhan Younus ([11]) explained that the Taliban in Ghazni killed ordinary people and forced villagers to provide their fighters with food. When the Taliban overran a region, they became more aggressive towards the local population and implemented harsh rules and jurisdiction ([12]). According to Abdul Awwal Zabulwal (pseudonym) ([13]) in his analysis of the insurgency in Zabul, the Taliban's first objective is to isolate the population from the government in order to curb its reach. They do this by propaganda and targeting government personnel and infrastructure. Furthermore, they use intimidation, violence and targeted killings to scare the population ([14]). In 2011, the Afghanistan NGO Safety Office (ANSO) ([15]) reported on a campaign of targeted killings and intimidations of civilians throughout the provinces of Helmand and Kandahar ([16]).

Giustozzi ([17]) and Reuter explained how the Taliban initiated their insurgency in the north of Afghanistan (north-east and north-west). Armed Taliban fighters infiltrated areas and visited villages where they mostly stayed not longer than 2 nights. They offered their services as mobile courts, collected taxes and intimidated persons who resisted or did not provide support. They gave instructions to the population, such as not sending their sons to the Afghan National Army (ANA). They also hired criminal groups to destabilise the area. They issued threats in night letters and carried out the threats. This campaign developed into a home-grown insurgency when they started sending in more fighters and recruiting locally. At this stage, a military campaign was undertaken against the government and its allies ([18]).

The UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Philip Alston, explained in the report on his mission to Afghanistan in 2009 that the Taliban routinely resorted to assassinations to coerce and punish civilians, threatened people in person, by telephone, through night letters and other publications. Via these threats, they tried to promote or impose social norms, to deter collaboration with the government, foreign troops and other actors ([19]).

([9]) Martine van Bijlert worked during the Taliban regime for a humanitarian NGO in Kabul, served from 2004 onwards as Political Adviser to the EU Special Representative for Afghanistan and has worked as an independent consultant on Afghanistan providing political analysis. The analysis in the chapter mentioned is based on conversations during several years with tribal leaders, commanders, villagers, government officials and NGO workers in Uruzgan.

([10]) Van Bijlert, M., 'Unruly commanders and violent power struggles', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 161–162.

([11]) Christophe Reuter and Borhan Younus have been covering the Taliban in Andar since 2006 until at least 2009. They visited the core Taliban group (with Mullah Farouq) in July 2006. Christophe Reuter has been covering Afghanistan since 2002. Borhan is a Mullah from Ghazni and a trainee of the Institute for War and Peace Reporting (http://iwpr.net). He knows many people in Ghazni, including Taliban who attended the madrassa together with him.

([12]) Reuter, C., Younus, B., 'The return of the Taliban in Andar District: Ghazni', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 115.

([13]) Abdul Awwal Zabulwal is the pseudonym of an Afghan author, who wants to remain anonymous for security reasons. He has worked in Zabul for many years and has a very good knowledge of the province.

([14]) Zabulwal, A. A., 'Taliban in Zabul: A witness' account', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 184, 186, 188.

([15]) ANSO is a project of the International NGO Safety Organisation (INSO: http://www.ngosafety.org/inso.html), established in 2002 by a group of like-minded NGOs concerned about changes in the underlying security situation. It was initially hosted by the International Rescue Committee (IRC) who handed the project over to Welthungerhilfe (WHH) in 2007. By July 2011, ANSO had become fully independent when its staff formed the International NGO Safety Organisation (INSO) for the explicit purpose of hosting the project and to establish similar platforms elsewhere in the world. Since its inception, ANSO has been financially supported by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection(ECHO), the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and, since 2007, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

([16]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 December 2011) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2011.html) (accessed 7 August 2012), p. 13.

([17]) Antonio Giustozzi has spent more than a decade visiting, researching and writing on Afghanistan. He is a research fellow at the Crisis States Research Centre, London School of Economics and the author of several works on Afghanistan, for example *Empires of Mud: Wars and Warlords in Afghanistan; Koran, Kalashnikov and Laptop: The Neo-Taliban in Afghanistan;* and several articles for papers.

([18]) Giustozzi, A., Reuter, C., *The Insurgents of the Afghan North*, Afghanistan Analysts Network, April 2011 (http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/AAN-2011-Northern-Insurgents.pdf) (accessed 28 March 2012), pp. 8–9.

([19]) UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Philip Alston — Addendum: Mission to Afghanistan, A/HRC/11/2/Add.4, 6 May 2009 (http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G09/131/17/PDF/G0913117.pdf?OpenElement) (accessed 16 July 2012), pp. 15–16.

In early 2011, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights stated that the Taliban had strengthened their campaign of intimidation against a wider and larger group of civilians who worked for, or were perceived as being supportive of, the government and foreign troops. This campaign included assassinations, executions, abductions, night letters and threats ([20]).

In March 2011, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) stated that insurgents 'aimed at undermining support for the Government of Afghanistan and its international military allies, and at spreading terror and fear among the civilian population as a means of control'. They used the following tactics: Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), suicide attacks, assassinations and executions, abductions, intimidation and harassment ([21]). According to UNAMA reporting in July 2012, the insurgents used night letters and radios to warn or threaten against cooperation with the government or International Military Forces (IMF) ([22]). In June 2012, UNAMA stated in a press statement that insurgents have directly targeted civilians, which is a violation of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) ([23]).

According to a local contact in south-east Afghanistan, intimidation by insurgents might happen through phone calls, text messages or night letters. The 'brutal and horrific' ways of killing people, such as beheading or shooting with many bullets, is also a way to intimidate government employees, contractors of IMF, policemen, soldiers, tribal elders or spies ([24]).

1.1.1 Night letters

After the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001, the senior Taliban leaders went into hiding and had no infrastructure available. While reorganising, their first statements appeared as Shabnamah (night letters in the form of pamphlets). The night letters also contained threats ([25]).

The UN Special Rapporteur, Philip Alston, referred to intimidation by night letters in the report on his mission to Afghanistan in 2009. The Taliban displayed them, for example, by nailing them to a mosque door or in schools and public markets and they contained general directives or threats to the population. Other night letters were individual and sent to a specific address. According to Alston in 2009, night letters in the east of Afghanistan were more general than in the south where they tended to be more specific towards individuals to instruct them to quit an activity ([26]).

The night letters contain insurgent threats to stop working for the government or IMF ([27]), not to join the Afghan Local Police (ALP) ([28]), not to watch television ([29]), not to go to school ([30]), to join the Jihad ([31]), to pay *ushr* or *zakat* ([32]) or to leave doors open at night to receive and accommodate Taliban members ([33]).

([20]) UN Human Rights Council, Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan and on the achievements of technical assistance in the field of human rights, A/HRC/16/67, 19 January 2011 (http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G11/103/31/PDF/G1110331.pdf?OpenElement) (accessed 16 July 2012), p. 5.

([21]) UNAMA and AIHRC, *Afghanistan — Annual Report 2010 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, March 2011 (http://unama.unmissions.org/Portals/UNAMA/human%20rights/March%20PoC%20Annual%20Report%20Final.pdf) (accessed 30 September 2012), p. 1.

([22]) UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 27.

([23]) UNAMA, *UNAMA reminds insurgents of their duty to protect civilians*, 26 June 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4feac0d02.html) (accessed 16 July 2012).

([24]) Local contact based in Khost, e-mail correspondence, 28 August 2012.

([25]) Nathan, J., 'Reading the Taliban', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, Columbia University Press, New York, 2009, p. 25.

([26]) UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Philip Alston — Addendum: Mission to Afghanistan, A/HRC/11/2/Add.4, 6 May 2009 (http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G09/131/17/PDF/G0913117.pdf?OpenElement) (accessed 16 July 2012), pp. 15–17.

([27]) UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Philip Alston — Addendum: Mission to Afghanistan, A/HRC/11/2/Add.4, 6 May 2009 (http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G09/131/17/PDF/G0913117.pdf?OpenElement) (accessed 16 July 2012), p. 17; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 9; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([28]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 March 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/store/files/The%20ANSO%20Report%20%2816–31%20March%202012%29.pdf) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 8; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([29]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([30]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([31]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([32]) UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 26; Giustozzi, A., Reuter, C., *The Insurgents of the Afghan North*, Afghanistan Analysts Network, April 2011 (http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/AAN-2011-Northern-Insurgents.pdf) (accessed 28 March 2012), p. 11.

([33]) UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 26.

Ahmad Quraishi referred to information he received from colleagues working in different media that most of the letters have the 'Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan' heading and a signature of the Taliban of the region, but no stamp ([34]). According to a local contact in south-east Afghanistan, the Taliban night letters contain their heading and stamp. The contact mentioned that it is hard to verify whether they are genuine or not ([35]).

A Human Rights Watch (HRW) report on the Taliban and women's rights provided several examples of Taliban night letters addressed to women received in 2009 and 2010 in areas where the Taliban were strong. This report provides five examples which clearly have the same basic layout: in the heading, a Taliban logo;

and the title of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan;

And there is a signature under the letter but no stamp. In one example provided by HRW in the same report, there is a difference in the heading. There is no logo ([36]). Other reports provided examples of older night letters (2003–06), which have a different layout. There is often no logo, no reference to the 'Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan' and no signature ([37]).

According to an article in *The Guardian*, there is a shop in the centre of Kabul where Afghans can buy all kinds of forged documents, including night letters. A clerk from the shop declared: 'We can write whatever you need, it depends. For example, we will mention you work in a government department, your job title and salary. It will say: "If you don't leave your job by this date, we will come and kill you or put a bomb in your house"' ([38]).

Analysis — night letters

Night letters have been an important method for insurgents to communicate with the population. Sources reported night letters addressing the whole community or addressing individuals. Several examples of the content can be found in this report in Section 1.1.1 Night letters, but also in the various sections on different profiles.

Several sources provided examples or descriptions of night letters with different features. The heading with the logo and title 'Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan' and the signature of the local Taliban commander appear to be features of genuine Taliban night letters, but it cannot be concluded that they are indispensable. Different layouts can appear in different regions and from different insurgent groups. A genuine commander can simply take pen and paper and write a genuine letter addressed to someone without any of the described features.

It is, on the other hand, also possible that a forged Taliban night letter has all the described features. The letters have no material guarantees of authenticity like other documents such as international passports. For this reason, it is very easy to produce forged Taliban night letters, as explained in an article in *The Guardian*, and very difficult to distinguish between the genuine and forged.

CONCLUSIONS

1. It is not possible to list indispensable features of genuine Taliban night letters or to define what they should look like.

2. It is very difficult to distinguish between genuine Taliban letters and forgeries.

([34]) Quraishi, A., Director of the Afghanistan Journalists Centre (http://afjc.af/english) and correspondent of Pajhwok Afghan News (http://www.pajhwok.com), e-mail correspondence, 10 September 2012.

([35]) Local contact based in Khost, e-mail correspondence, 28 August 2012.

([36]) HRW, *The 'Ten-Dollar Talib' and Women's Rights — Afghan Women and the Risks of Reintegration and Reconciliation*, July 2010 (http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/afghanistan0710webwcover.pdf) (accessed 25 September 2012), pp. 8–13.

([37]) Johnson, H. T., 'The Taliban Insurgency and an Analysis of Shabnamah (Night letters)', *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, Vol. 18, Nr. 3, pp. 314–377, September 2007 (http://www.nps.edu/programs/ccs/Docs/Pubs/Small_Wars_%20Pub.pdf) (accessed 5 October 2012), pp. 322, 327, 329, 333–334, 337; HRW, *Lessons in Terror — Attacks on Education in Afghanistan*, July 2006 (http://www.hrw.org/news/2010/02/10/attacks-education-monitoring-and-reporting-prevention-early-warning-rapid-response-a) (accessed 5 October 2012), pp. 46, 50, 53, 61, 68.

([38]) Boone, J., Nooruddin Bakhshi, *Boom time for Afghanistan's people smugglers*, 18 January 2012 (http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/jan/18/afghanistan-people-smugglers-taliban-europe) (accessed 11 November 2012).

1.1.2 Illegal checkpoints

According to UNAMA, insurgents establish mobile or permanent checkpoints in the areas in which they operate or control, enforcing restrictions of movement. At these checkpoints, they stop vehicles, interrogate passengers, confiscate property, impose taxes and search for evidence of links with the government or the IMF (e.g. by checking mobile phones). Civilians complain about harassment at these checkpoints [39]. ANSO reported different examples in 2011 and 2012 [40].

1.1.3 Collection of taxes

UNAMA reported that insurgents imposed taxes on the population in areas under their partial or full control. They operated checkpoints to tax travellers. They imposed the collection of *ushr* and *zakat* (Islamic religious taxes [41]) and very often they rely for this on the local imam, who then acts as a proxy for the Taliban. In areas where opium is grown, they impose the payment of *ushr* on the opium harvest [42].

According to Giustozzi and Reuter, these taxes serve two purposes: to generate income for the Taliban and to show to the population that they are the legitimate authorities and exert control [43]. ANSO mentioned insurgents entering an area and demanding religious taxes from the local population as a method of intimidation (e.g. in Samangan and Balkh) [44].

According to Giustozzi, the Taliban were even able to collect their taxes in government-controlled areas. Villagers have often been asked to provide food for the Taliban fighters as well. Only areas thoroughly controlled by pro-government militias or nearby IMF bases were Taliban-tax-free. Sanctions for not paying taxes to the Taliban are not really known, but include at least harassment and confiscation of goods [45]. ANSO reported the use of force in collecting taxes by insurgents (e.g. Laghman, Jawzjan) and cases of abduction of civilians when refusing to pay taxes to insurgents (e.g. Ghor, Herat) [46]. In June 2012, insurgents killed a village elder in Samangan who refused to collect taxes for them [47].

1.1.4 Abduction

In 2007, it was reported that the Taliban increasingly kidnapped Afghan civilians. The family of the victim was often required to pay ransom for the release [48]. Businessmen and investors were often targeted [49]. According to a staff member of an international development agency in Afghanistan, 'only a small part of the Taliban is ideologically motivated and the huge majority has criminal interests. Therefore, the rich are more at risk than the poor. Many of the rich businessmen and their families emigrated have already to Dubai and return only for a few days for business' [50].

[39] UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), pp. 25–26.

[40] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 9; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), pp. 6, 8; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), p. 7; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), pp. 16, 18, 21.

[41] Usher is an Islamic tax on certain products, for example on agricultural products: Normally, 10 % of the value. *Zakat* is a religious tax on assets and liquidity (2.5 %): the practice of almsgiving or *zakat* is one of the five pillars of Islam.

[42] UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 26.

[43] Giustozzi, A., Reuter, C., *The Insurgents of the Afghan North*, Afghanistan Analysts Network, April 2011 (http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/AAN-2011-Northern-Insurgents.pdf) (accessed 28 March 2012), p. 19.

[44] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), pp. 4, 10.

[45] Giustozzi, A., 'Afghanistan: Human Rights and Security Situation', *Landinfo*, 9 September 2011 (http://www.landinfo.no/asset/1745/1/1745_1.pdf) (accessed 5 March 2012), pp. 10–12.

[46] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 March 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 9; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 10; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 18; UNAMA, *Today's Afghan Headlines — Articles*, 28 January 2012 (*Source:* Outlook Afghanistan) (http://unama.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?ctl=Details&tabid=12329&mid=15870&ItemID=33936) (accessed 19 September 2012).

[47] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 6 October 2012), p. 8.

[48] Farangis, N., *Afghanistan: Insurgents kidnapping Afghans, disrupting society*, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), 8 August 2007 (http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refworld/rwmain?page=country&docid=46c1d35ac&skip=0&coi=AFG&querysi=kidnapping&searchin=title&display=10&sort=date) (accessed 16 July 2012).

[49] Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR), *Afghan Investors Scared by Kidnapping Wave*, 14 February 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4f3e50d32.html) (accessed 5 September 2012).

[50] Staff member of an international development agency in Afghanistan, interview and e-mail correspondence (performed by Austrian COI Researcher), 3–5 October 2012.

Mohammad Osman Tariq Elias ([51]) mentioned in his study on the Taliban in Logar and Wardak the kidnapping of people by the Taliban in order to receive ransom. He refers to the *Lahya* ([52]) of January 2007 in which it is stated that Taliban can ask for money for the release of government, NGO and private company staff or truck drivers transporting loads for foreign troops or the government. In some cases, the Taliban purchased kidnapped victims from criminal elements when they expected political or financial gains ([53]). According to Christophe Reuter and Borhan Younus, abductions in Ghazni started targeting suspected Taliban opponents since 2007. Ghazni became one of the most dangerous kidnapping areas for government workers and NGO staff ([54]). In April 2012, ANSO reported, for example, that most kidnappings along the Sar-e Pul to Shiberghan road in Sar-e Pul were targeted. The targets were, for example, government employees ([55]).

1.1.5 Targeted killings

The UN Special Rapporteur, Philip Alston, indicated that the term 'targeted killing' is not defined under international law. Alston provided the elements of a targeted killing: 'A targeted killing is the intentional, premeditated and deliberate use of lethal force, by states or their agents acting under colour of law, or by an organised armed group in armed conflict, against a specific individual who is not in the physical custody of the perpetrator.' Alston explained that a targeted killing is, under most circumstances, a violation of the right to life, but may be legal in the exceptional circumstance of an armed conflict. Furthermore: 'The means and methods of killing vary, and include sniper fire, shooting at close range, missiles from helicopters, gunships, drones, the use of car bombs, and poison' ([56]).

The UN recorded a rise in assassinations and executions by the Taliban in 2010, compared with 2009. More than half of the total number of these killings happened in the south. Civilians targeted included, for example, teachers, nurses, doctors, tribal elders, community leaders, provincial and district officials ([57]). The UN recorded 495 targeted killings in 2011. Among the victims were high-ranking government officials, provincial and district governors, local government officials and workers, provincial and peace council members, community elders, influential local political and religious leaders, teachers, construction workers and people supportive or perceived to be supportive of the government or the IMF ([58]). UNAMA reported that during the first half of 2012, insurgents increasingly targeted and killed civilians perceived to support the government or the IMF. In the first 6 months of 2012, 356 civilians were victim of a targeted killing or an attempt by insurgents. The primary focus of these attacks were government employees, off-duty police officers, civilian police, tribal elders, civilians accused of spying for the government or IMF and government officials ([59]). In April 2012, ANSO analysed that civilians were usually victim of targeted killings for their perceived or real collusion with the ANSF, IMF or the government ([60]).

The UN recorded an 88 % increase between 1 May and 31 July in targeted killings of civilians, including government officials and workers, community elders and religious actors, compared with the same period in 2011. There was also an increased use of IEDs in targeted killings ([61]).

([51]) Tariq was a mujahideen fighter in the 1980s and worked as a development worker afterwards. He worked in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during the Taliban's regime. After the fall of the regime, he assisted in the UN special mission in Afghanistan in the south-east, was coordinator for the National Solidarity Programme in this region and worked in the Asia Foundation Afghanistan. He has a master's degree in governance and development.

([52]) Book of rules (organisational articles and a code of conduct for Taliban fighters, see Glossary).

([53]) Tariq Elias, M. O., 'The Resurgence of the Taliban in Kabul: Logar and Wardak', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 52–53.

([54]) Reuter, C., Younus, B., 'The return of the Taliban in Andar District: Ghazni', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 113.

([55]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 6.

([56]) UN Human Rights Council, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Philip Alston — Addendum: Study on targeted killings*, 28 May 2010 (http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/14session/A.HRC.14.24.Add6.pdf) (accessed 2 October 2012), pp. 1, 4–5.

([57]) UN Human Rights Council, *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan and on the achievements of technical assistance in the field of human rights*, A/HRC/16/67, 19 January 2011 (http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G11/103/31/PDF/G1110331.pdf?OpenElement) (accessed 16 July 2012), p. 5.

([58]) UNAMA and UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), *Afghanistan — Annual Report 2011 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, February 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/4f2fa7572.pdf) (accessed 16 July 2012), p. 4; UN Human Rights Council, *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the human rights situation in Afghanistan and technical assistance achievements in the field of human rights*, A/HRC/19/47, 18 January 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4f391a772.html) (accessed 24 July 2012), p. 6.

([59]) UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 16.

([60]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 21.

([61]) UN General Assembly Security Council, *The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security — Report of the Secretary-General*, 13 September 2012 (http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/N1249929.pdf) (accessed 10 November 2012), p. 8.

According to Thomas Ruttig, there is a trend within the Taliban to increasingly target government employees, people supporting the government or collaborating with the IMF, and to assassinate them. Ruttig referred to this strategy as a shadowing of the kill/capture strategy of the international troops [62].

1.1.6 Taliban courts and death sentences

Giustozzi explained that the Taliban installed a shadow government including a judiciary in areas under their control. This was most popular in the south. Taliban judges decided on the fate of alleged spies and government collaborators. In some areas, the Taliban even had prisons, but the death penalty was the most used punishment. Up to 2011, tens of such executions occurred every year and the number was limited because government collaborators tended to avoid the Taliban-controlled areas. According to Giustozzi, the Taliban judiciary was not very common in areas where they had no territorial control. In some areas, such as in pockets of insurgents' control in Baghlan, Kunduz and Badghis, the judiciary appeared but had to face alternatives such as local religious figures performing as judge [63].

In July 2012, UNAMA reported that the Taliban enforced their judiciary in areas under their control in order to settle criminal cases, private disputes and to try and punish civilians accused of spying for the government or the IMF. According to UNAMA, the Taliban judiciary can vary from their attendance of, and intervening in, traditional judicial structures, such as *jirgas*, to the appointment of Taliban judges, commissions and courts, which are usually mobile structures. In some cases (e.g. in Jawzjan), the Taliban allowed the local traditional structures to deal with disputes and complementary to this, demanded that criminal cases be judged by Taliban judiciary structures [64].

An Afghan reporter trained by the Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR) reported in August 2012 that the Taliban's control of the province of Logar was so complete that their justice system practically completely replaced the state courts: even government officials turned to Taliban courts for dispute settlement [65].

1.1.7 Command, intelligence and 'hit lists'

Mohammad Osman Tariq Elias explained in his study on the Taliban in Logar and Wardak that, in early stages of the insurgency, Taliban groups operate largely independently. If a group identifies someone as an opponent to be killed, no approval from a higher level is necessary. The group would simply identify the person as an 'American spy' [66].

According to Abdul Awwal Zabulwal, the Taliban has a commission responsible for all provincial affairs in Zabul, which was led by Mullah Nazir and located in Quetta. He took all decisions on the capture, punishment or execution of Afghan National Police (ANP), ANA, alleged spies, construction company workers, etc. The local Taliban commanders were officially registered with the Quetta Shura and received a letter that allowed them to conduct actions against the government or the IMF in the name of the Taliban (*rasmiyat*). The Zabul Commission usually gave orders to the local Taliban commanders by mobile phone or through messengers [67].

Martine van Bijlert mentioned that a captured assassin from the Taliban in Uruzgan in 2008 reported the existence of a 'hit list' of influential leaders in the area [68].

Graeme Smith [69] referred to a former Taliban official who worked with the government explaining that the Taliban ran two safe houses in a slum in Kandahar City where they compiled lists of city residents collaborating with the government. They efficiently arranged targeted killings of the people on the lists [70].

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[62] Ruttig, T., interview via Skype, 17 October 2012, 11.00–12.00, and e-mail correspondence, 9 November 2012.

[63] Giustozzi, A., 'Afghanistan: Human Rights and Security Situation', *Landinfo*, 9 September 2011 (http://www.landinfo.no/asset/1745/1/1745_1.pdf) (accessed 5 March 2012), pp. 10–13.

[64] UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), pp. 20–23.

[65] Azizi, A. M., *Taleban Justice dominant in Logar Province*, Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR), 2 August 2012 (http://iwpr.net/report-news/taleban-justice-dominant-logar-province) (accessed 28 August 2012).

[66] Tariq Elias, M. O., 'The Resurgence of the Taliban in Kabul: Logar and Wardak', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, Columbia University Press, New York, 2009, p. 50.

[67] Zabulwal, A. A., 'Taliban in Zabul: A witness' account', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 184, 186, 188.

[68] Van Bijlert, M., 'Unruly commanders and violent power struggles', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 162, 164, 171.

[69] Graeme Smith has worked as a journalist for the *Toronto Star* and, since 2001, for *The Globe and Mail*. He won several awards for journalism and has spent more time in southern Afghanistan than any other western journalist since the arrival of NATO troops. The war in Afghanistan became his full-time project in 2006.

[70] Smith, G., 'What Kandahar's Taliban say', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 192.

ANSO assessed that the insurgents have effective surveillance and intelligence in order to target high-profile governmental officials ([71]). According to Giustozzi, the Taliban infiltrated the poorest areas and Pashtun quarters of cities: in 2011, in Kabul, for example the Baghrami suburb, south-eastern Kabul, southern Kabul, and parts of western Kabul. In central Kabul, they developed a network of informants, including buying shops in strategic locations and staffing them with members and supporters in order to observe, for example, embassies and government buildings ([72]).

Hadi Marifat ([73]) explained that the Taliban may use modern tools to track down people, for example Facebook. Certain people, such as human rights activists, are present on Facebook because they want to air their opinions: this makes them easy to find. The Taliban use, for example, a Facebook profile with the picture of a beautiful girl to try to make contact with someone and then ask questions to get information about them in order to track them down ([74]).

1.1.8 Shutting down mobile networks

Between 2008 and 2012, several sources reported that the Taliban ordered mobile phone companies to shut down their towers 17.00–07.00. They did this because they perceived that mobile phones were a major factor in the discovery of the Taliban leaders: the local population were using mobile phones to inform the government or foreign troops of their position. The locations where the leaders were positioned were bombed. By shutting off the towers of the mobile networks, the Taliban send a daily reminder to the population that they are waiting to take over the country. Some of the companies' towers were blasted by the Taliban: after that, nearly all companies obeyed the Taliban's order. This was reported in the provinces of Helmand, Kandahar, Wardak, Logar, Kunduz, Baghlan, Sar-e Pul, Balkh, Faryab and Herat. Occasionally, workers from a telecommunications company that disobeyed the order were targeted as well ([75]).

Hadi Marifat explained that the Taliban would not immediately attack mobile phone companies because telecommunications are important to them as well as the population. Those companies who do not listen to their demands might be attacked ([76]).

1.1.9 Attacks on district centres, provincial capitals and Kabul

Attacks on provincial or district centres occur on a regular basis in different provinces, often with mortar or rocket attacks, called indirect fire (IDF) ([77]). It was sometimes reported that insurgents performed these attacks in order to show force, unsettle or intimidate the population ([78]).

([71]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 18; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([72]) Giustozzi, A., 'Afghanistan: Human Rights and Security Situation', *Landinfo*, 9 September 2011 (http://www.landinfo.no/asset/1745/1/1745_1.pdf) (accessed 5 March 2012), p. 15.

([73]) Hadi Marifat is director of the Afghanistan Human Rights and Democracy Organisation (AHRDO) (http://ahrdo.org) and one of its co-founders. AHRDO is an independent, non-governmental, non-partisan and non-profit organisation, which is committed to struggle to promote democracy and human rights, principally through engaging a variety of arts and culture-based programmes; creating space for dialogue at all level of society, peace-building, social justice, societal transformation and public participation. One of the methodologies that AHRDO uses is the 'theatre of the oppressed'. Marifat studied Politics and International Relations in the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). He has worked as a researcher for Human Rights Watch and as Human Rights Officer with the UN mission in Afghanistan.

([74]) Marifat, H., interview via Skype, 16 September 2012, 13.15–14.15.

([75]) Reuter, C., Younus, B., 'The return of the Taliban in Andar District: Ghazni', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 116; Coghlan, T., 'The Taliban in Helmand: An Oral History', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 142; Ghanizada, *Taliban threats disrupt overnight telecommunication services*, Khaama Press, 21 July 2011 (http://www.khaama.com/taliban-threats-disrupt-overnight-telecommunication-services) (accessed 31 July 2012); UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0. html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 28; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), pp. 3, 17; Giustozzi, A., Reuter, C., *The Insurgents of the Afghan North*, Afghanistan Analysts Network, April 2011 (http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/AAN-2011-Northern-Insurgents.pdf) (accessed 28 March 2012), p. 37; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 9; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 March 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 9; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), pp. 6, 20; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), p. 5; Rubin, A. J., *Taliban Using Modern Means to Add to Sway*, The New York Times, 4 October 2011 (http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/05/world/asia/taliban-using-modern-means-to-add-to-sway.html?pagewanted=1) (accessed 3 October 2012).

([76]) Marifat, H., interview via Skype, 16 September 2012, 13.15–14.15.

([77]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), pp. 13–14; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), p. 2; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012. html) (accessed 30 July 2012), pp. 10, 17; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012); ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012 (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012).

([78]) Van Bijlert, M., 'Unruly commanders and violent power struggles', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 173; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), p. 17.

Insurgents performed in coordinated or complex attacks targeting governmental compounds in the city centres. They were often aimed at police or officials ([79]). UNAMA's definition of 'complex attack' is a deliberate and coordinated attack which includes a suicide device (i.e. BBIED, VBIED), more than one attacker, and more than one type of device (i.e. BBIED + mortars). All three elements must be present for an attack to be considered complex ([80]).

1.2 Underlying mechanisms: Local rivalries and tribal feuds

Graeme Smith stressed the importance of local dynamics and tribal feuds in the insurgency. He referred to a US intelligence report that concluded that much of the violence is driven by local rivalries. President Karzai used state authority to support his own Popolzai tribe and had allies in other Zirak Durrani tribes. The Taliban used the resulting discontent or anger in other tribes who were disadvantaged in disputes over money, land, water or opium. The insurgency could perhaps not be qualified as a genuine tribal conflict, but it is certainly coloured by tribal rivalries ([81]).

Uruzgan provides a perfect example of the complexity of the conflict. Ethnic, tribal and political alliances, dynamics and conflicts dictate the events which are a continuation of historical rivalries mixed with US policies. The confluence of governance and inter- or intra-tribal power structures caused position taking and abuse of power. All these elements fed the insurgency and determined the activities of the Taliban ([82]). In April 2008, a Barakzai ([83]) *pir* (elder), Kheirullah Jan Agha, was killed in Uruzgan. According to Martine van Bijlert, the assassination was probably related to the fact that he was a spiritual opponent of the Taliban. However, there was an old tribal feud over a water dispute between Hotaki ([84]) and Barakzai in which the *pir* had played a role. It remains unclear what the main reason for the killing was. After a spike of local anger and tribal mobilisation, the Taliban leadership distanced themselves from the murder. Van Bijlert provided another example. The Taliban attacked the house of a Hazara security commander in Khas Uruzgan after repeated warnings that he had to quit his job at the US military base. The commander escaped but his mother and four attackers (e.g. from the Pashtun Mullahkheil ([85]) tribe) died in the fight between the Taliban and the commander's militia. This caused a displacement of a large part of the village Hazara population, who feared retaliation not by the Taliban but by the tribes of the killed attackers with whom they had old feuds such as land disputes ([86]).

In the district of Kohistan (Faryab), Taliban night letters appeared offering help in fighting rival communities. The villagers had to pay tax to the Taliban in exchange for their assistance ([87]).

In December 2007, a Barakzai tribal elder in Helmand explained to a British commander how his tribe was targeted by the Taliban. He explained that many Barakzai joined the ANA or ANP and that the tribal members were accused of being spies for the British troops. The Taliban fired from Barakzai areas in order to make the foreign troops shoot back at the Barakzai ([88]).

Martine van Bijlert pointed to the fact that several assassinations attributed to the Taliban are not solely related to the insurgency. They are usually determined by a history of power play, enmity, rivalry and revenge between the killer and the victim. However, according to van Bijlert, this does not minimise the Taliban's policy of killing opponents which coincided in many of these cases with private feuds ([89]).

Giustozzi and Reuter also point at how the Taliban exploited rivalries among communities and social or tribal divisions in several provinces in Afghanistan ([90]).

([79]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 18; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 19; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 13; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 1.

([80]) UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 15.

([81]) Smith, G., 'What Kandahar's Taliban say', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 197–198.

([82]) Fishtein, P., *BRIEFING NOTE: Winning Hearts and Minds in Uruzgan Province*, Feinstein International Centre, August 2012 (http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Uruzgan-Report.pdf) (accessed 24 September 2012), pp. 6–7, 10–11.

([83]) The Barakzai is a Pashtun tribe within the Durrani (Zirak) tribal confederation.

([84]) The Hotak is a Pashtun tribe in the Ghilzai (Turan) tribal confederation.

([85]) The Mullahkheil is a Pashtun tribe in the Ghilzai tribal confederation.

([86]) Van Bijlert, M., 'Unruly commanders and violent power struggles', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 171–172.

([87]) Giustozzi, A., Reuter, C., *The Insurgents of the Afghan North*, Afghanistan Analysts Network, April 2011 (http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/AAN-2011-Northern-Insurgents.pdf) (accessed 28 March 2012), p. 11.

([88]) Coghlan, T., 'The Taliban in Helmand: An Oral History', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 35.

([89]) Van Bijlert, M., 'Unruly commanders and violent power struggles', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 171, 173.

([90]) Giustozzi, A., Reuter, C., *The Insurgents of the Afghan North*, Afghanistan Analysts Network, April 2011 (http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/AAN-2011-Northern-Insurgents.pdf) (accessed 28 March 2012), pp. 10–11.

1.3 Again towards ethnicisation?

In January 2012, the Interior Minister said that 'some countries and organisations' were trying to intensify ethnic divisions and feelings in the ANP ([91]). A *Los Angeles Times* article indicated that a peak in targeted assassinations or attempted assassinations in July 2012 was remarkably concentrated in northern areas of Afghanistan which are mostly populated by non-Pashtun ethnicities that have a stronger anti-Taliban tradition than the southern Pashtun areas ([92]). In August 2012, at least nine Pashtuns were forced out of their homes and executed by a Hazara commander in an action of retaliation in Uruzgan. Afghan officials called it an act of revenge of one ethnic group against another. The region had a long history of ethnic tension between the Hazara and Pashtun population ([93]).

When asked about a new enhanced ethnic dimension in the conflict and the role of the Taliban in this, Thomas Ruttig replied: 'There is an increase in the ethnic aspect of the conflict, but it is not especially Taliban-driven. In the political context, several players are instrumentalising and thereby further deepening ethnic divisions, like (political) opposition groups, but also players within the government. Secondly, many of the former Northern Alliance commanders or strongmen are involved in the new initiatives of establishing militias. Almost all of them are non-Pashtun, and it is part of their preparation for a possible future role of the Taliban in government, be it through a violent takeover or a power-sharing agreement. The Taliban is an Islamic movement which does not define itself ethnically. (Most of the Taliban are Pashtuns, though, with an increasing element of non-Pashtuns.) In the past they did attack minorities (mainly Shias), but this was partially also in the development of battles, like actions in retaliation. The Taliban did change this practice of targeting ethnic minorities' ([94]).

1.4 Regional differences

1.4.1 Control of areas

The UN Special Rapporteur Philip Alston explained that, in the south, the Taliban is apt to kill elders who had previously collaborated with the government and foreign troops in areas newly under their control. In areas under the sustained control of the Taliban, victims have more often been suspected spies ([95]).

Giustozzi and Reuter provided an example of how the Taliban threatened elders or eliminated those who resisted them in Chahar Dara (Kunduz) before taking full control of the district. Giustozzi and Reuter also indicated that in areas of Taliban control and dominance, they can demand obedience, threaten and kill people ([96]). Several sources reported that the Taliban were able to establish a judiciary in areas under their control, but not in areas under government control ([97]).

A local contact in south-east Afghanistan confirmed that regional differences do exist. According to the contact, the targeting of lower-ranking government officials is prevailing in areas under Taliban influence and such incidents happen more frequently in peripheral and insecure areas. The targeting of someone working for the IMF will be more important to the Taliban compared to the targeting of a cook or a cleaner working for an NGO, who will be more at risk in areas under Taliban influence ([98]).

([91]) UNAMA, *Today's Afghan Headlines — Articles*, 23 January 2011 (*Source:* Ariana TV) (http://unama.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?ctl=Details&tabid=12329&mid=15870&ItemID=34216) (accessed 19 September 2012).

([92]) King, L., 'In Afghanistan, targeted attacks on leaders an ominous trend', *Los Angeles Times*, 31 July 2012 (http://www.afghanistannewscenter.com/news/2012/july/jul312012.html#a3) (accessed 25 September 2012).

([93]) Rubin, A. J., Sangar Rahimi, 'Afghan Officials Cite Revenge Killings in Latest Outbreak of Ethnic Hatred', *The New York Times*, 3 August 2012 (http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/04/world/asia/9-afghans-killed-in-latest-ethnic-violence.html?_r=0) (accessed 3 October 2012).

([94]) Ruttig, T., interview via Skype, 17 October 2012, 11.00–12.00, and e-mail correspondence, 9 November 2012.

([95]) UN Human Rights Council, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Philip Alston — Addendum: Mission to Afghanistan*, A/HRC/11/2/Add.4, 6 May 2009 (http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G09/131/17/PDF/G0913117.pdf?OpenElement) (accessed 16 July 2012), p. 16.

([96]) Giustozzi, A., Reuter, C., *The Insurgents of the Afghan North*, Afghanistan Analysts Network, April 2011 (http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/AAN-2011-Northern-Insurgents.pdf) (accessed 28 March 2012), pp. 35–37.

([97]) Azizi, A. M., *Taleban Justice dominant in Logar Province*, Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR), 2 August 2012 (http://iwpr.net/report-news/taleban-justice-dominant-logar-province) (accessed 28 August 2012); UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), pp. 20–23; Giustozzi, A., 'Afghanistan: Human Rights and Security Situation', *Landinfo*, 9 September 2011 (http://www.landinfo.no/asset/1745/1/1745_1.pdf) (accessed 5 March 2012), pp. 10–13.

([98]) Local contact based in Khost, e-mail correspondence, 28 August 2012.

Hadi Marifat explained that there are differences between regions. The south and south-east are the worst. In areas in the north or centre of Afghanistan, the Taliban has a less strong presence, so their ability to target people there is less. According to Marifat, incidents happen nevertheless. For example, in Bamyan, the Taliban have no control of any area, but they might occasionally appear and temporarily control a road and target people ([99]).

Thomas Ruttig stated: 'There is no real difference in the policy or strategy of the Taliban between, for example, Kabul and other areas, although some parts of the broader Taliban movement (Haqqani network) particularly target Kabul for media effects. The difference is between areas predominantly under Taliban control, under government control (mainly in the north and centre) and contested between both sides. In contested and government-controlled areas there is a higher level of targeted killings than in areas which are completely under the control of the Taliban. There the Taliban needs to exert their control with the support of the population and locally influential persons' ([100]).

1.4.2 Cities v rural areas

Thomas Ruttig stated: "There are different security levels in the country. But not many areas have no threat level at all. Comparatively seen, Mazar is of course safer than Kandahar, for example. Herat and Mazar are probably slightly safer than Kabul and Kabul is safer than Khost or Kandahar, but this can differ depending on circumstances. The urban areas are usually safer than rural areas, but they are more vulnerable for 'spectacular' terrorist attacks, as are roads used by the IMF, through IEDs which often hit civilians. Often, the level of threat for persons or institutions depends on who they are: internationals are probably more under threat than Afghans, but since Afghans always move in an environment where their background is checked (by social control), they might be in danger just for their 'wrong' connections or background" ([101]).

A political analyst based in Kabul stated: "There are primary targets (red/high risk), like interpreters, contractors, and suppliers of the military and high-ranking government officials. The risk for mid-ranking government officials is lower (yellow/orange). There is a low risk for low-ranking or ordinary government officials in, for example, Mazar or other areas in the north. Only when travelling in volatile areas in the south, south-east or east there is a risk for the latter, as there is for anyone (ordinary people or NGO staff, for example). Mid- or low-ranking profiles are not at risk in Kabul, Herat or Mazar, except if there was another specific reason for targeting" ([102]).

Ahmad Quraishi stated that low-ranking government officials do not face much risk of being targeted by insurgents in some safer areas of Afghanistan, like Kabul or Mazar-e Sharif. He explained that the Taliban fear the influence of tribal leaders in the communities more than, for example, the influence of lower-ranking government employees. Therefore, tribal leaders face more risk of being targeted by Taliban in the safer areas of Afghanistan like Kabul or Mazar than the low-ranking government employees do ([103]).

Giustozzi stated in 2011 that in cities or in Kabul, the Taliban usually devote their efforts to attacking higher profiles, ranking from serving government officials upwards. Giustozzi stated that in Kabul, colonels in the army and the police have been targeted as well as commanders of security services, but that in the south, officials of all ranks were targeted ([104]).

This point of view was shared by UNAMA that stated in 2012 that high-profile persons might be targeted in Kabul, but that it was not likely that the Taliban would make it a priority or would have the capacity to track down low-profile individuals in Kabul. According to the Danish Immigration Service, the UNHCR also confirmed that, most probably, the Taliban would not make it a priority to track down low-profile people in Kabul. Several other organisations interviewed by the Danish Immigration Service, such as the AIHRC, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and Cooperation for Peace And Unity (CPAU) agreed that it would most probably not be the Taliban's priority to track down low-profile people in Kabul. The IOM added that the security situation in Herat City and Mazar-e Sharif is similar to the situation of Kabul ([105]).

([99]) Marifat, H., interview via Skype, 16 September 2012, 13.15–14.15.

([100]) Ruttig, T., interview via Skype, 17 October 2012, 11.00–12.00, and e-mail correspondence, 9 November 2012.

([101]) Ruttig, T., interview via Skype, 17 October 2012, 11.00–12.00, and e-mail correspondence, 9 November 2012.

([102]) Political analyst based in Kabul, interview via Skype, 18 October 2012, and e-mail correspondence, 15 November 2012.

([103]) Quraishi, A., Director of the Afghanistan Journalists Centre (http://afjc.af/english) and correspondent of Pajhwok Afghan News (http://www.pajhwok.com), e-mail correspondence, 10 September 2012.

([104]) Giustozzi, A., 'Afghanistan: Human Rights and Security Situation', *Landinfo*, 9 September 2011 (http://www.landinfo.no/asset/1745/1/1745_1.pdf) (accessed 5 March 2012), pp. 12–14.

([105]) Danish Immigration Service (DIS), *Afghanistan — Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process — Report from Danish Immigration Service's fact finding mission to Kabul, Afghanistan — 25 February to 4 March 2012*, May 2012 (http://www.nyidanmark.dk/NR/rdonlyres/3FD55632-770B-48B6-935C-827E83C18AD8/0/FFMrapportenAFGHANISTAN2012Final.pdf) (accessed 31 May 2012)., pp. 7–8.

A staff member of an international development agency in Afghanistan explained that the situation is different in Herat and Mazar to that in Kabul. According to the staff member, in Kabul, high profiles are more at risk of being targeted than in the other two cities. The Taliban are more interested in attacks in Kabul [106].

Hadi Marifat explained the situation in Mazar-e Sharif: "In Mazar City, government officials are less at risk of being targeted by insurgents, because they have little influence there. I guess you can say that Mazar is one of the safest places to live in Afghanistan. This is, of course, relatively seen, taking into account the situation of Afghanistan. There is in the area a worsening situation, like in Chimtal and Chahar Bulak. Furthermore, the IMU (Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan) is present there and they are as dangerous as the Taliban. But there have been no assassinations executed by insurgents in Mazar. There was a kidnapping, but that was financially motivated and before the elections a few murders of high-profile people happened, but these were related to local politics and not to the Taliban." Marifat explained that high-profile people are more at risk all over Afghanistan but that they, on the other hand, have more resources for protection, such as armed vehicles, bodyguards and protection from the IMF [107]. Soraya Sarhaddi Nelson referred to the Kandahar provincial council chief, Ehsan Noorzai, explaining that lower-ranking government officials across Kandahar province do not have as much protection as higher-ranking officials, who have bulletproof SUVs and bodyguards [108].

ANSO reported in June 2012 that insurgent activities in Herat City remained low [109]. There were no incidents of insurgents targeting civilians in Mazar-e Sharif in 2012 found in the reports. Some criminal acts or interpersonal disputes were found, but in none of them was indicated by ANSO that the actors might have been insurgents [110].

The Danish Immigration Service referred, in their fact-finding mission report of May 2012, to an independent policy research organisation that stated that Afghans associated with or employed by the IMF do not run a high risk of being targeted if their workplace is Kabul. If their workplace is outside of Kabul, however, there is a high risk for them regardless of the kind of job or position they have. This includes contractors, service staff, drivers and interpreters. The Danish Immigration Service also referred to the UNHCR that stated that all Afghans who are associated with foreigners could be at risk in Kabul or other parts of the country. However, according to the UNHCR, the risk is higher outside Kabul. Some of the sources consulted in the fact-finding Mission of the Danish Immigration Service stated that there is no risk for NGO staff in Kabul [111].

Summary — Regional differences

In 2009, Philip Alston explained that, in the south, the Taliban is apt to kill elders in areas which come newly under their control and that in areas under their sustained control, they kill more spies. In 2011, Giustozzi and Reuter provided an example in Chahar Dara (Kunduz, north-west) where the Taliban first killed resisting elders before taking control of the area. Giustozzi and Reuter also explained that in areas of Taliban control, they can threaten and kill people. A local source in the south-east stated that the targeting of low-ranking officials is prevailing in areas under Taliban influence. Hadi Marifat confirmed, in 2012, that in areas where they have a less strong presence, they have less ability to target people, but that incidents do happen there as well. Several sources explained that the Taliban were able to establish a judiciary in areas under their control. A political analyst based in Kabul stated that interpreters, contractors and suppliers of the military and high-ranking government officials are primary targets; mid-ranking government officials face a lower risk; and there is a low risk for low-ranking government officials in, for example, Mazar or other areas in the north. Thomas Ruttig stated, on the other hand, that the Taliban conduct more targeted killings in competed areas or areas under government control than in areas completely under their control.

Thomas Ruttig explained, in 2012, that urban areas are usually safer than rural areas, but cities are vulnerable to spectacular attacks. These kinds of attacks are described in Section 1.1.9 Attacks on district centres, provincial capitals and Kabul. Furthermore, Ruttig stated that Herat and Mazar are probably slightly safer than Kabul and Kabul is safer than Khost or Kandahar, but that this can differ depending on the situation or who you are. A political analyst

[106] Staff member of an international development agency in Afghanistan, interview and e-mail correspondence (by Austrian COI Researcher), 3–5 October 2012.

[107] Marifat, H., interview via Skype, 16 September 2012, 13.15–14.15.

[108] Sarhaddi Nelson, S., *For Afghan leaders, facing death is a fact of life*, NPR, 30 August 2012 (http://www.npr.org/2012/08/30/160306082/for-afghan-leaders-facing-death-is-a-fact-of-life) (accessed 25 September 2012).

[109] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 6 October 2012), p. 11.

[110] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 4.
ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 February 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), pp. 1, 6.

[111] Danish Immigration Service (DIS), *Afghanistan — Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process — Report from Danish Immigration Service's fact finding mission to Kabul, Afghanistan — 25 February to 4 March 2012*, May 2012 (http://www.nyidanmark.dk/NR/rdonlyres/3FD55632-770B-48B6-935C-827E83C18AD8/0/FFMrapportenAFGHANISTAN2012Final.pdf) (accessed 31 May 2012), pp 17, 19, 20–24.

explained that there is no risk of being targeted by insurgents for mid- or low-ranking profiles in the cities of Mazar, Herat and Kabul, unless there was another specific reason for targeting. Ahmad Quraishi confirmed that low-ranking government employees would not face much risk of being targeted by the Taliban in safer areas like Mazar or Kabul, but he stated that tribal elders face a higher risk. Giustozzi, the UNAMA, UNHCR, IOM, AIHRC and CPAU agreed that the insurgents would devote their efforts in cities such as Kabul and Mazar to higher profiles and that it would not be a priority to track down low profiles. Hadi Marifat stated that there have been no assassinations by insurgents in Mazar, which is, according to him, one of the safest places to live in Afghanistan.

Analysis — Regional differences

Several sources give indications that the Taliban has more ability to threaten or assassinate people in areas under their control, but there are also indications that they make efforts in areas which they do not control by targeting people in order to get control. It is not possible to conclude anything about the level of risk in all the different areas (Taliban control, government control or contested areas), based upon the presented sources.

However, it is important to point to the establishment of a so-called shadow judiciary in the areas under the Taliban's control, which provides evidence of their enhanced capacities there. Under Section 1.1.6 Taliban courts and death sentences and Section 2.3 Spies, how these Taliban tribunals often sentence and execute people on the allegation of spying or collaboration with the government is discussed.

This is in line with Philip Alston's statement about the south where spies were more often killed in areas under sustained Taliban control and tribal elders were more often killed in areas newly under Taliban control, which coincides with the need for the Taliban to eliminate resisting elements in order to get sustained control. The example of Chahar Dara in Kunduz illustrates this.

Regarding the cities, most sources agree that Kabul, Mazar and Herat are safer areas than many other parts of the country and that low-ranking profiles face, in general, a low risk, not much risk or even no risk of being targeted by insurgents in these cities. But several sources indicate that this might be different if there are specific, individual circumstances that increase this risk. Sources stated for example: 'It depends on who they are'; 'can differ depending on circumstances'; 'except if there was another specific reason for targeting'.

CONCLUSIONS

Higher profiles face a real risk of being targeted by insurgents in all parts of Afghanistan, including Kabul City.

In general, low profiles do not face much risk of being targeted by the insurgents in the cities of Kabul, Mazar and Herat because of their position, activity or job as such. However, individual and specific circumstances might lead to an increased risk.

1.5 Victims' reactions

Escaping threats: defecting or quitting activity and fleeing the area

Christophe Reuter and Borhan Younus explained that from 2006 onwards, the Taliban issued warnings to former commanders, government officials and district chiefs in Ghazni. Some of them surrendered their weapons. The example of Juma Gul was given by Reuter and Borhan, who surrendered to the Taliban and did not cooperate with the government any longer. This option was given to him by the Taliban. In a second example, the Chief of Qarabagh District in Ghazni did not want to surrender at first, but did so after the Taliban kidnapped his son. In a third example, the Chief of Andar District, Lahoor Khan, escaped several attacks by the Taliban: he finally surrendered to them, handed his over weapons, and was safe at home ([112]). Martine van Bijlert illustrated that not all reconciliation deals with the Taliban end well. A checkpoint commander from Dehrawud (Uruzgan) surrendered to the Taliban on the

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([112]) Reuter, C., Younus, B., 'The return of the Taliban in Andar District: Ghazni', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 108–109.

basis of a deal with them. However, the Taliban never released him and he was eventually killed following a fatwa from Quetta. The commander had a long history of killings and counter-killings of relatives with the local Taliban commander, Mullah Abdul Wali [113].

According to Thomas Coghlan, in 2008, locals in Helmand witnessed that the Taliban were less extreme and less tough to the people than during their regime from 1996 to 2001. It was, for example, reported by locals that the Taliban were offering amnesty to police and government officials who defected [114].

A woman working for an international NGO in a southern province quit her job and moved to another province due to the Taliban threatening her in 2010 [115].

ANSO reported that Critical Infrastructure Protection units (CIPs) [116] largely consisted of former insurgents that joined the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme (APRP). Insurgents targeted these CIPs throughout 2012. ANSO considered the possibility that some might defect back to the insurgency due to the targeting [117].

In May 2012, some local villagers in Jaji Maydan District (Khost) moved their family members to other parts of the district after they received threats from insurgents because they had supported some security guards in a fight in which two insurgents had been killed [118].

In July 2012, the UNHCR reported on IDPs in Afghanistan. Looking at the main causes of displacement, 'Intimidation and threats' was third, 'targeted persecution' the fourth and 'illegal taxation' the seventh causes respectively (Figure 2) [119].

Causes of displacement (overall)
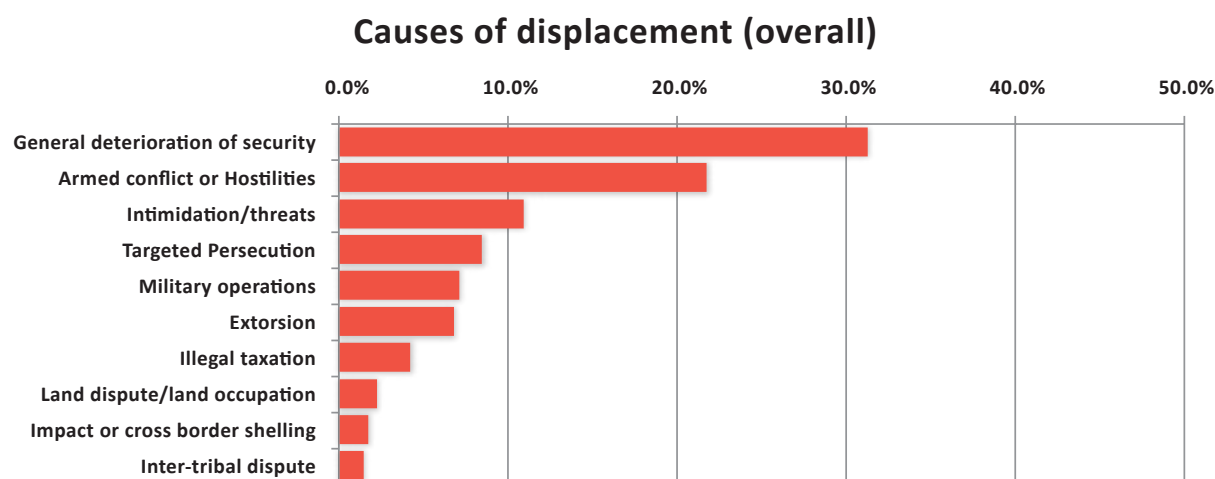
Figure 2: Causes of internal displacement in Afghanistan

Source: UNHCR, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,5035f0fe2,0.html).

Giustozzi explained in 2011 that government collaborators were aware of the effective Taliban intelligence system and avoided Taliban-controlled areas. The Taliban looking out constantly for government collaborators and alleged spies caused population displacement towards the cities where the government had more control, like Kandahar, before even there the government's control slipped away and many moved further to Kabul. Government officials also fled from their region to the cities or to Kabul. Giustozzi stated that the Taliban have the ability to track down and target people who go to work and do not hide, but Giustozzi stated that those escapees who stopped their collaboration with the government were a low priority for the Taliban in the cities or in Kabul and they have not been

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[113] Van Bijlert, M., 'Unruly commanders and violent power struggles', in: Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 172.

[114] Coghlan, T., 'The Taliban in Helmand: An Oral History', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 140.

[115] HRW, *The 'Ten-Dollar Talib' and Women's Rights Afghan Women and the Risks of Reintegration and Reconciliation*, July 2010 (http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/afghanistan0710webwcover.pdf) (accessed 25 September 2012), p. 25.

[116] The 'Critical Infrastructure Protection' is a security division mainly operated by tribal militias and armed individuals: they are involved in the protection of NATO infrastructure and projects.

[117] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 8.

[118] UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

[119] UNHCR Representation in Afghanistan, *Conflict-Induced Internally Displaced Persons in Afghanistan, Interpretation of Data as of 31 May 2012*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,5035f0fe2,0.html) (accessed 23 August 2012), pp. 16–17.

actively targeted any longer, neither have their relatives. The Taliban did not seem to transfer information about targeted individuals from one area to another: they have no databases. There could be a request for information on an individual from one area to another if needed, depending on the Taliban's activities ([120]).

Graeme Smith has already stated (in 2009) that Afghans resisting the insurgency in Kandahar are not safe anywhere in the province ([121]).

The UNAMA sometimes brings its staff to Kabul when they are facing a security risk. According to the Danish Immigration Service, the UNHCR also confirmed that, most probably, it would be possible for low-profile people fleeing a conflict with the Taliban in his area of origin to seek protection within his community in Kabul. But the UNHCR advised assessing this case by case. The UNHCR mentioned to the Danish Immigration Service that many Afghan ministers settled their family members in foreign countries in order to be ready themselves to move abroad ([122]).

Ahmad Quraishi stated that some people leave the area to escape threats and pressure from the Taliban. They go to a safer city and young people, especially, try to leave the country. He also stated that there have been no reports of threats to, or pressure on, people who quit their jobs and stay in the area ([123]).

According to a staff member of an international development agency in Afghanistan, for ANA and ANP soldiers it might not be sufficient to simply quit their job in order to escape the threat by insurgents. They would have to change sides in order to avoid further targeting. For NGO employees, on the other hand, it would be possible to escape a threat if they quit their job and left the province ([124]).

A local contact in south-east Afghanistan stated that the reaction of the Taliban against someone who quits their activity on their command or who shifts their family from a rural area to an urban place would differ depending on the circumstances. The contact made clear that the Taliban would, for example, not be satisfied with the targeted victim quitting the job if he worked for the ISAF or the ANSF ([125]).

Hadi Marifat assessed that, for example, in the south, people who did not take a Taliban threat seriously and continued their job, sometimes faced serious consequences, like assassination. On the other hand, people who took the threats seriously, and stopped their activities, could escape the threat and be safe. Marifat was referring in this instance to people such as teachers, doctors and court administrators ([126]).

A political analyst based in Kabul stated that someone could escape to the cities. According to the source, in Kabul, it would not be a priority for the Taliban to track someone down. The strategy of tracking individuals in the big cities would be militarily inefficient for the Taliban ([127]).

Another political analyst in Kabul stated the following when asked about the risk if someone quits their activity: "This depends upon the case. An interpreter, for example, could escape if he joined the Taliban or if he contacted them and proved to them that he was no longer supporting the government or the IMF. But even in around 30 % of these cases, the person could still face targeting. It would be, for sure, required that such a person would contact the Taliban and prove that he quit. And this risk is also confined to areas in the easy reach of the Taliban, such as rural areas' ([128]).

([120]) Giustozzi, A., 'Afghanistan: Human Rights and Security Situation', *Landinfo*, 9 September 2011 (http://www.landinfo.no/asset/1745/1/1745_1.pdf) (accessed 5 March 2012), pp. 10, 12–14.

([121]) Smith, G., 'What Kandahar's Taliban say', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 192.

([122]) Danish Immigration Service (DIS), *Afghanistan — Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process — Report from Danish Immigration Service's fact finding mission to Kabul, Afghanistan — 25 February to 4 March 2012*, May 2012 (http://www.nyidanmark.dk/NR/rdonlyres/3FD55632-770B-48B6-935C-827E83C18AD8/0/FFMrapportenAFGHANISTAN2012Final.pdf) (accessed 31 May 2012), pp. 7–8, 24.

([123]) Quraishi, A., Director of the Afghanistan Journalists Centre (http://afjc.af/english) and correspondent of the *Pajhwok Afghan News* (http://www.pajhwok.com), e-mail correspondence, 10 September 2012.

([124]) Staff member of an international development agency in Afghanistan, interview and e-mail correspondence (by Austrian COI Researcher), 3–5 October 2012.

([125]) Local contact based in Khost, e-mail correspondence, 28 August 2012.

([126]) Marifat, H., interview via Skype, 16 September 2012, 13.15–14.15.

([127]) Political analyst based in Kabul, interview via Skype, 18 October 2012.

([128]) Political analyst based in Kabul, interview via Skype, 18 October 2012, and e-mail correspondence, 15 November 2012.

Summary — Escaping threats: defecting or quitting activity and fleeing the area

There have been examples of the Taliban offering amnesty, examples of people moving to other areas in order to escape targeting, and examples of surrendering, defecting and making deals with the Taliban. The UNHCR illustrated that intimidation, threats and targeted violence were important reasons for internal displacement. UNAMA routinely brings people to Kabul for security reasons.

In one example, a commander was killed after making a deal with the Taliban. He had a long feud with the local Taliban commander.

In 2011, Giustozzi explained that the Taliban's threats caused displacement towards cities, but that, for example, Kandahar City also slipped out of the control of the government and people had to move further to Kabul. Graeme Smith confirmed that it was not possible to successfully escape targeting within Kandahar province.

Giustozzi explained, in 2011, that people who quit their activity and moved to cities had not been targeted any longer. The Taliban had the possibility to track people who went to work, but it was not a priority for them in the cities, for example, Kabul.

The UNHCR confirmed that it could be possible for low-profile people to escape targeting if they could relocate within their community in Kabul. The UNHCR advises assessing this case by case.

Several other sources confirmed that it would be possible to escape targeting by quitting an activity and fleeing to urban areas but, according to some sources, it would depend on the circumstances. Two sources mentioned that it would not be sufficient to quit a job for either ANSF soldiers or people working for the IMF. The former would have to change sides to satisfy the Taliban, according to one source. One source stated that a profile such as an interpreter would have to join, or at least contact, the Taliban and would then still face a chance of being targeted in areas which are within 'easy reach' of the insurgents (e.g. rural areas).

Analysis — Escaping threats: defecting or quitting activity and fleeing the area

1. Quitting or defecting

Looking at the available information, no evidence was found of further targeting by the Taliban after someone quit a job or activity, except for one case. In this case, a commander in Uruzgan was killed after he made a deal with the Taliban to surrender to them. In this case, there was an individual element present which obstructed the deal: the commander had a long feud with the local Taliban commander in which several relatives were killed on both sides. This is a perfect example of how individual circumstances can increase the risk. There were some examples found in the past of persons who quit and remained safe in Ghazni and of amnesty by the Taliban for policemen and officials in Helmand.

Ahmad Quraishi stated that there has been no report of people being further targeted by insurgents after they quit the job or activity. Hadi Marifat confirmed that someone who stopped activities could escape the threat and be safe. He referred to, for example, teachers, doctors or court administrators.

A contact in south-east Afghanistan mentioned explicitly that the Taliban would not be satisfied with the targeted person quitting if he worked for the IMF or was an ANSF soldier. Furthermore, the Taliban's reaction to someone quitting a particular activity would depend on the individual circumstances. A staff member of an international development agency in Afghanistan confirmed this. According to him, it might not be sufficient for ANA and ANP soldiers to simply quit their job: but they would have to change sides in order to avoid further targeting. A political analyst stated that it would depend on the circumstances but, for some profiles, for example, an interpreter, they would be required to join the Taliban or at least contact them in order to escape the threat. But even then, they still face a chance of being targeted in areas to which insurgents have an easy access.

CONCLUSION

The individual circumstances of the case determine whether the Taliban would further target or threaten a person after he quit his job, stopped activities or defected. Examples of circumstances increasing the risk could be: a feud with the Taliban; or the profile of the victim (working for the IMF or ANSF).

2. Quitting and fleeing the area

Giustozzi stated that there is no reporting of further targeting of escapees who flee to urban centres. They would have the possibility to track down people who are working, but it would not be a priority for them. Several other sources confirmed that if it was possible for targeted people to move to urban centres, they could escape the threats by the insurgents, but several of them pointed to individual circumstances. The UNHCR mentioned, for example, that it could be possible for low-profile people to seek protection in their community and that it should be assessed case by case, and a political analyst referred to the profile, giving the example of NGO workers who could escape by quitting and leaving the province.

In Section 1.4.2 Cities v rural areas, how UNAMA, the UNHCR, AIHRC, IOM and CPAU agreed that it would not be a priority for the insurgents to track down low-profile people in Kabul City is discussed. The IOM stated that the situation in Herat City and Mazar City is the same as in Kabul. Furthermore, several sources explained that there was a low risk for low-profile people in these cities of being targeted by insurgents. Giustozzi indicated that Kandahar was no longer safe and persons had to flee further to Kabul. Smith confirmed that an escapee would not be safe anywhere in Kandahar province.

CONCLUSION

If a low-profile person quits his activity and can flee the area and resettle in a safer area, such as Kabul City, Mazar City or Herat City, he can normally escape targeting by insurgents, unless there are specific individual circumstances which would preclude this possibility.

2. Profiles

2.1 People working for or supporting the government

In the Taliban's messages those working with the Karzai government are described using specific words such as *munafiq* (hypocrite), *ghulam* (slave), *ajir* (agent) and *gaudagai* (puppet) ([129]).

Starting in 2005–06, the insurgents in the south-east established a strategy of limiting government influence by alienating the population from the government. Intimidation and targeted killings of government officials or sympathisers were used to create an atmosphere of fear ([130]). In 2006, a call from Jalaluddin Haqqani was spread in the south-east to all Afghans working for the government, the Afghan army or the administration, to stop their activities. In two border districts of Paktia, mullahs in official mosques openly justified the killing of pro-government locals and government employees. Thomas Ruttig explained that from mid 2007, the insurgents started attacking district and provincial centres in the south-east. Night letters were distributed in order to intimidate government officials and civilians who sympathised with the government ([131]).

UNAMA, OHCHR and ANSO reported that the setting up of checkpoints is a strategy used by the insurgents in order to find people who have links to the government or ANSF members ([132]). In the first half of 2012, several cases of intimidation by night letters were reported in the east of Afghanistan (Nangarhar, Laghman). Insurgents urged the local population to stop working for, or supporting, the government ([133]). Giustozzi mentioned Taliban judges sentencing government collaborators in their courts in areas under their control ([134]).

Several organisations confirmed to the Danish Immigration Service on a fact-finding mission in February and March 2012 in Kabul, that people working for the government were targets of intimidation, kidnapping and killing by the Taliban and the family members of these people could also be targeted ([135]).

2.1.1 Government officials and employees

2.1.1.1 General

As mentioned previously, several sources reported the intimidation and targeting of government staff by the Taliban ([136]). According to Giustozzi, the Taliban also target, threaten, abduct or kill family members of government employees in order to force them to quit their jobs ([137]).

([129]) Nathan, J., 'Reading the Taliban', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 35.

([130]) Trives, S., 'Loya Paktia's Insurgency (II) Roots of the insurgency in the Southeast', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 93.

([131]) Ruttig, T., 'Loya Paktia's Insurgency (I) The Haqqani network as an autonomous entity', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 68 and 70–71.

([132]) UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), pp. 25–26; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 9 August 2012), p. 10; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 5; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 9; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), pp. 6, 8; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), pp. 6–7; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), pp. 16, 18, 21.

([133]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 14.

([134]) Giustozzi, A., 'Afghanistan: Human Rights and Security Situation', *Landinfo*, 9 September 2011 (http://www.landinfo.no/asset/1745/1/1745_1.pdf) (accessed 5 March 2012), pp. 10–13.

([135]) Danish Immigration Service (DIS), *Afghanistan — Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process — Report from Danish Immigration Service's fact finding mission to Kabul, Afghanistan — 25 February to 4 March 2012*, May 2012 (http://www.nyidanmark.dk/NR/rdonlyres/3FD55632-770B-48B6-935C-827E83C18AD8/0/FFMrapportenAFGHANISTAN2012Final.pdf) (accessed 31 May 2012), pp. 19, 23–24.

([136]) Zabulwal, A. A., 'Taliban in Zabul: A witness' account', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 184, 186, 188; UN Human Rights Council, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Philip Alston — Addendum: MISSION TO AFGHANISTAN*, A/HRC/11/2/Add.4, 6 May 2009 (http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G09/131/17/PDF/G0913117.pdf?OpenElement) (accessed 16 July 2012), p. 16; UN Human Rights Council, *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan and on the achievements of technical assistance in the field of human rights*, A/HRC/16/67, 19 January 2011 (http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G11/103/31/PDF/G1110331.pdf?OpenElement) (accessed 16 July 2012), p. 5; UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 27; local contact based in Khost, e-mail correspondence, 28 August 2012; UN Human Rights Council, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Philip Alston — Addendum: MISSION TO AFGHANISTAN*, A/HRC/11/2/Add.4, 6 May 2009 (http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G09/131/17/PDF/G0913117.pdf?OpenElement) (accessed 16 July 2012), p. 17; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 9.

([137]) Giustozzi, A., 'Afghanistan: Human Rights and Security Situation', *Landinfo*, 9 September 2011 (http://www.landinfo.no/asset/1745/1/1745_1.pdf) (accessed 5 March 2012), p. 12.

Farmers in Khost reported in 2005 that PKR 15 000 (USD 250) were offered for the assassination of Afghan government officials [138]. Thomas Coghlan explained that the Taliban have always been very harsh towards government officials in Helmand, assassinating many of them [139]. Since 2006, fighters from the Mansur clan, part of the Taliban network, have threatened, kidnapped, killed and attacked government employees in areas in the south-east [140]. According to Thomas Reuter and Borhan Younus, the Taliban grew stronger in parts of Ghazni in 2006 and started launching major attacks on government workers and threatened opponents face to face. Kidnappings of government workers intensified in Ghazni in 2007. A telling example was the abduction of five engineers of the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) by the Taliban. Three of them were killed [141]. According to Thomas Ruttig, Afghans reported night letters in Paktia and Khost in 2008 in which government officials were warned that if they continued their work, they might get hurt. Youths on motorbikes intimidated the officials by following them to their homes [142]. In 2009, Abdul Awwal Zabulwal explained that the insurgency controlled practically all districts of the province of Zabul, except for Qalat City. Members of the administration could not travel without IMF protection. According to Zabulwal, government representatives could only survive by tacit agreements with the insurgents [143]. Mohammad Osman Tariq Elias stated in his study of the Taliban in the provinces of Logar and Wardak that the Taliban's attitude towards local authorities depends on their relations with individual officials. If they have a good relationship, the official can stay. But if they do not, the official is at risk of being targeted in an assassination campaign [144].

UNAMA and the AIHRC documented at least 140 government officials that were killed across Afghanistan in 2010, but stated that this figure is probably under-reported [145]. In January 2011, for example, the Taliban abducted the director of the Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission in the north-east zone. They released him on the condition that he stopped working for the government [146]. In the single month of July 2011, four high-profile political figures were killed in the south of Afghanistan [147]. Obaid Ali [148] reported in September 2012 that the security situation in the province of Faryab was deteriorating due to a mix of insurgency and factional rivalry which even reached the capital Maymana, where the Taliban have targeted high- profile figures in broad daylight [149].

In their 2012 annual statement on the inception of their 'Al Farooq' spring operation, the Taliban stated that high-ranking officials of the government, members of parliament, those associated with Ministries of Defence, Interior and Intelligence and members of the High Peace Council were primary targets [150].

2.1.1.2 MPs and council members

The UN Special Rapporteur, Philip Alston, mentioned that members of provincial councils, and especially female members, have been threatened and targeted by the Taliban [151]. UNAMA and AIHRC reported that at least 25 council members were killed across Afghanistan in 2010 [152]. UNAMA also reported targeted killings of provincial and peace council members in 2011 [153].

[138] Franco, C., 'Islamic militant insurgency in Afghanistan experiencing "Iraqization"', *Eurasianet*, 8 November 2005 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/46f2580dc.html) (accessed 28 June 2012).

[139] Coghlan, T., 'The Taliban in Helmand: An Oral History', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 129, 140.

[140] Ruttig, T., 'Loya Paktia's Insurgency (I) The Haqqani network as an autonomous entity', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 78–79.

[141] Reuter, C., Younus, B., 'The return of the Taliban in Andar District: Ghazni', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 107, 113–115.

[142] Ruttig, T., 'Loya Paktia's Insurgency (I) The Haqqani network as an autonomous entity', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 71.

[143] Zabulwal, A. A., 'Taliban in Zabul: A witness' account', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 180.

[144] Tariq Elias, M. O., 'The Resurgence of the Taliban in Kabul: Logar and Wardak', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 50.

[145] UNAMA and AIHRC, *Afghanistan — Annual Report 2010 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, March 2011 (http://unama.unmissions.org/Portals/UNAMA/human%20rights/March%20PoC%20Annual%20Report%20Final.pdf) (accessed 30 September 2012), p. 12.

[146] UNAMA, *Today's Afghan Headlines — Articles*, 25 January 2011 (*Sources:* Kunduz (RTA) Headlines and Outlook Afghanistan) (http://unama.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?ctl=Details&tabid=12329&mid=15870&ItemID=34214) (accessed 19 September 2012).

[147] UN Human Rights Council, *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the human rights situation in Afghanistan and technical assistance achievements in the field of human rights*, A/HRC/19/47, 18 January 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4f391a772.html) (accessed 24 July 2012), p. 6.

[148] Obaid Ali is a political researcher for the Afghanistan Analysts Network in Kabul.

[149] Obaid Ali, *Insurgents and Factions: Waves of insecurity rising in Faryab*, Afghanistan Analysts Network (blog) 21 September 2012 (http://aan-afghanistan.com/index.asp?id=3006) (accessed 27 September 2012).

[150] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), pp. 1, 20.

[151] UN Human Rights Council, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Philip Alston – Addendum: MISSION TO AFGHANISTAN*, A/HRC/11/2/Add.4, 6 May 2009 (http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G09/131/17/PDF/G0913117.pdf?OpenElement) (accessed 16 July 2012), p. 16.

[152] UNAMA and AIHRC, *Afghanistan — Annual Report 2010 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, March 2011 (http://unama.unmissions.org/Portals/UNAMA/human%20rights/March%20PoC%20Annual%20Report%20Final.pdf) (accessed 30 September 2012), p. 12.

[153] UNAMA and UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), *Afghanistan — Annual Report 2011 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, February 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/4f2fa7572.pdf) (accessed 16 July 2012), p. 4; UN Human Rights Council, *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the human rights situation in Afghanistan and technical assistance achievements in the field of human rights*, A/HRC/19/47, 18 January 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4f391a772.html) (accessed 24 July 2012), p. 6.

Over the years, several Members of Parliament, High Peace Council Members, members from local councils and their family members have been targeted and killed by insurgents. Several attacks occurred in cities such as Kandahar, Lashkar Gah (Helmand) and Taluqan (Takhar). One of the incidents which received the most media attention was that of the murder of the head of the High Peace Council and former president of Afghanistan, Burhanuddin Rabbani, in his home in Kabul City in September 2011 ([154]).

2.1.1.3 Provincial governors

The Taliban have targeted and killed several provincial governors in Afghanistan. People connected to governors were also targeted (e.g. relatives or staff). For example, in 2008, insurgents killed the spokesman of the Paktika governor ([155]). Another example concerns a complex attack on the provincial governor's office in Farah ([156]) by insurgents in 2010.

2.1.1.4 District governors

In 2008, several Taliban on motorcycles attacked the convoy of the District Governor of Andar in the centre of Ghazni City and killed him ([157]).

UNAMA and AIHRC reported that at least five district governors were killed across Afghanistan in 2010 ([158]). UNAMA also reported targeted killings of district governors in 2011 ([159]).

According to a staff member of an international development agency in Afghanistan, district governors and mayors are targeted by insurgents because they represent the government. Many of them do not reside in their district of accountability for security reasons ([160]).

2.1.1.5 Judiciary

Insurgents have targeted, abducted and killed several judges, prosecutors and attorneys over the years of insurgency in Afghanistan. Their family members have also been targeted ([161]).

([154]) Coghlan, T., 'The Taliban in Helmand: An Oral History', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 119; UN Human Rights Council, *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan and on the achievements of technical assistance in the field of human rights*, A/HRC/16/67, 19 January 2011 (http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G11/103/31/PDF/G1110331.pdf?OpenElement) (accessed 16 July 2012), p. 5; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 December 2011) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2011.html) (accessed 7 August 2012), pp. 4, 13; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 6 October 2012), p. 7; RFE/RL, *Bomb kills local Afghan official, peace council member*, 13 August 2012 (http://www.rferl.org/content/afghan-officials-killed-in-north-bombing/24675215.html) (accessed 28 August 2012); US Department of State, *Country reports on terrorism 2011*, July 2012 (http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/195768.pdf) (accessed 28 August 2012), p. 130; Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken (Netherlands), Directie Consulaire Zaken en Migratiebeleid, Afdeling Migratie en Asiel, *Algemeen Ambtsbericht Afghanistan*, July 2012 (http://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten-en-publicaties/ambtsberichten/2012/07/05/afghanistan-2012-07-04.html) (accessed 23 July 2012), p. 35.

([155]) Franco, C., 'Islamic militant insurgency in Afghanistan experiencing "Iraqization"', *Eurasianet*, 8 November 2005 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/46f2580dc.html) (accessed 28 June 2012); UNAMA, *Today's Afghan Headlines — Articles*, 30 January 2011 (*Sources:* Tolo TV and the *Afghanistan Times*) (http://unama.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?ctl=Details&tabid=12329&mid=15870&ItemID=34210) (accessed 19 September 2012); Ruttig, T., 'Loya Paktia's Insurgency (I) The Haqqani network as an autonomous entity', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 69, 72; Reuter, C., Younus, B., 'The return of the Taliban in Andar District: Ghazni', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 107; UNAMA and UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), *Afghanistan — Annual Report 2011 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, February 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/4f2fa7572.pdf) (accessed 16 July 2012), p. 4; UN Human Rights Council, *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the human rights situation in Afghanistan and technical assistance achievements in the field of human rights*, A/HRC/19/47, 18 January 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4f391a772.html) (accessed 24 July 2012), p. 6.

([156]) UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, *Travel advice by country — Afghanistan*, updated 18 September 2012 (still current at 7 October 2012) (http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/travel-advice-by-country/asia-oceania/afghanistan) (accessed 7 October 2012).

([157]) Reuter, C., Younus, B., 'The return of the Taliban in Andar District: Ghazni', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 104, 110, 114–117.

([158]) UNAMA and AIHRC, *Afghanistan — Annual Report 2010 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, March 2011. (http://unama.unmissions.org/Portals/UNAMA/human%20rights/March%20PoC%20Annual%20Report%20Final.pdf) (accessed 30 September 2012), p. 12.

([159]) UNAMA and UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), *Afghanistan — Annual Report 2011 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, February 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/4f2fa7572.pdf) (accessed 16 July 2012), p. 4; UN Human Rights Council, *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the human rights situation in Afghanistan and technical assistance achievements in the field of human rights*, A/HRC/19/47, 18 January 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4f391a772.html) (accessed 24 July 2012), p. 6.

([160]) Staff member of an international development agency in Afghanistan, interview and e-mail correspondence (by Austrian COI Researcher), 3–5 October 2012.

([161]) Smith, G., 'What Kandahar's Taliban say', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 192; UN Human Rights Council, *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan and on the achievements of technical assistance in the field of human rights*, /HRC/16/67, 19 January 2011 (http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G11/103/31/PDF/G1110331.pdf?OpenElement) (accessed 16 July 2012), p. 5; Ruttig, T., 'Loya Paktia's Insurgency (I) The Haqqani network as an autonomous entity', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 72; Reuter, C., Younus, B., 'The return of the Taliban in Andar District: Ghazni', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 114.

According to CPAU, judges in the provinces are not working because they are afraid of being targeted by the Taliban ([162]). In July 2012, UNAMA reported that government-appointed judges and prosecutors are often unable to stay in areas under the control of insurgents due to insecurity. According to UNAMA, they are particularly at risk for targeted killings by insurgents ([163]).

2.1.1.6 People involved in the political process

Civilians involved in the political process were targeted more often starting from the end of 2007 in the south-east ([164]). In 2009, a woman working with the local electoral commission in a southern province was threatened by a night letter signed by the Taliban. She ignored the letter and her father was killed after a couple of days. She resigned from her job and moved away ([165]).

The Taliban assassinated candidates and other people involved in the parliamentary election campaign in 2010. According to the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), four candidates and 24 campaign workers were killed between June and August. On 18 September 2010, Election Day, the Taliban and other insurgents attacked the polling stations and the voters. On this day, 33 people were killed and 103 wounded, according to OHCHR and UNAMA documentation. Most of the 136 casualties fell in the east, followed by the south-east. In the south, the number of civilian casualties was limited. This violent intimidation campaign intended to reduce the voters' participation and disturb the election process. During the 2009 presidential and provincial council elections, 31 civilians were killed and 79 wounded ([166]).

2.1.1.7 Bank staff

In 2010, a top US official declared that the Central Bank of Afghanistan is a prime target of the Taliban, because they understand that a transparent and stable central bank is crucial for a state to enhance economic growth and for the provision of services to the population ([167]).

There have been attacks or attempts at attacks on branches of the Kabul Bank (e.g. Kandahar City, Khost City, Jalalabad City, Kabul City and Sar-e Pul City) in which guards or bank staff were killed or wounded ([168]). A major complex attack occurred in February 2011 in Jalalabad, where the Taliban targeted policemen waiting in line to receive their monthly salary. The attack happened on payday and was aimed at inflicting the maximum number of casualties among the police ([169]). The Afghan government uses the Kabul Bank to pay all salaries of teachers, army soldiers and policemen ([170]). *Pajhwok Afghan News* reported that, in April 2012, the Taliban took Kabul Bank account cards from teachers and warned the people not to accept government salaries ([171]).

([162]) Danish Immigration Service (DIS), *Afghanistan — Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process — Report from Danish Immigration Service's fact finding mission to Kabul, Afghanistan — 25 February to 4 March 2012*, May 2012 (http://www.nyidanmark.dk/NR/rdonlyres/3FD55632-770B-48B6-935C-827E83C18AD8/0/FFMrapportenAFGHANISTAN2012Final.pdf) (accessed 31 May 2012), p. 24.

([163]) UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), pp. 21–22.

([164]) Ruttig, T., 'Loya Paktia's Insurgency (I) The Haqqani network as an autonomous entity', in: Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 70.

([165]) HRW, *The 'Ten-Dollar Talib' and Women's Rights Afghan Women and the Risks of Reintegration and Reconciliation*, July 2010 (http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/afghanistan0710webwcover.pdf) (accessed 25 September 2012), pp. 26–27.

([166]) UN Human Rights Council, *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan and on the achievements of technical assistance in the field of human rights*, A/HRC/16/67, 19 January 2011 (http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G11/103/31/PDF/G1110331.pdf?OpenElement) (accessed 16 July 2012), p. 6.

([167]) K Jha, L., 'Afghan Central Bank a prime Taliban target: US', *Pajhwok Afghan News*, 29 January 2010 (http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2010/01/29/afghan-central-bank-prime-taliban-target-us) (accessed 23 August 2012).

([168]) Naadem, B. A., 'Three Kabul Bank guards killed in blast', *Pajhwok Afghan News*, 11 June 2009 (http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2009/06/11/three-kabul-bank-guards-killed-blast) (accessed 23 August 2012); ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 December 2011) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2011.html) (accessed 7 August 2012), p. 10; US Department of State, *Country reports on terrorism 2011*, July 2012 (http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/195768.pdf) (accessed 28 August 2012), p. 129; Siddiqui, A. K., 'Two staffers killed in Kabul Bank attack', *Pajhwok Afghan News*, 21 February 2011 (http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2011/02/21/two-staffers-killed-kabul-bank-attack) (accessed 23 August 2012); Khitab, H., '4 held for plotting attack on Kabul Bank', *Pajhwok Afghan News*, 18 July 2012 (http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2012/07/18/4-held-plotting-attack-kabul-bank) (accessed 23 August 2012); Ehsas, Z., '5 militants, bank security guard killed in Sar-i-Pul', *Pajhwok Afghan News*, 15 October 2010 (http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2010/10/15/5-militants-bank-security-guard-killed-sar-i-pul) (accessed 23 August 2012).

([169]) Roggio, B., 'Taliban suicide assault team kills 42 at Jalalabad bank', *The Long War Journal*, 19 February 2011 (http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2011/02/taliban_suicide_assa_3.php) (accessed 11 November 2012).

([170]) BBC News South Asia, *Afghan row with IMF over failed bank threatens salaries*, 20 June 2011 (http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-13847292) (accessed 11 November 2012).

([171]) Mirwais Himmat, 'Taliban shut schools after govt ban bikes', *Pajhwok Afghan News*, 19 April 2012 (http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2012/04/19/taliban-shut-schools-after-govt-ban-bikes) (accessed 11 November 2012).

Hadi Marifat explained that the most significant attack against the Kabul Bank was in Jalalabad. There have been several reports of attacks and the Kabul Bank, as it exists now, might be perceived as a nationalist project and as the funder of the Karzai government. According to Marifat, the Taliban might have targeted the Bank for these reasons in some attacks, but these attacks were more as an example, to make their political point. Marifat stated that they do not systematically target the bank's staff, which numbers thousands of employees in total ([172]).

When asked about the targeting of Kabul Bank staff by the Taliban, Thomas Ruttig replied: "It is difficult to say. There have been high-profile attacks in different provinces, like the one on the Jalalabad branch which killed many civilians and was highly indiscriminate. The Bank is seen as linked to some high-profile government officials, but also to corrupt practices. This might be the motive for the attacks. It cannot be concluded that staff members are generally targeted: it would depend on the situation. I did not hear that the Taliban specifically target the bank's staff" ([173]).

A political analyst based in Kabul stated: "There were very few high-profile attacks on banks. These attacks do not target the staff for their activity, but there were different reasons for the attacks. In the Jalalabad attack, for example, ANA soldiers were present collecting their salaries. I don't think the bank is attacked because it is a bank" ([174]).

Government officials and employees — episodes in 2012

SOUTH	Reports were found of several targeted attacks by insurgents in the south in 2012: the killing of a district governor with an SVBIED ([175]); killing of three district council members ([176]); killing of a peace council member ([177]); killing of a district director of the Water and Irrigation Department ([178]); killing of the Mayor of Kandahar City, Ghulam Haider Hamidi, by a suicide bomber wearing a turban-borne IED ([179]); wounding by IEDs of a former head of a provincial council and a head of a provincial taskara programme ([180]); wounding of the head of a district council ([181]); attacks on two district governors ([182]); a grenade attack on a provincial office of the Department of Public Works ([183]); an attack on the chairman of a provincial council ([184]).
	Furthermore, insurgents killed two members of the *shura* of Panjway (Kandahar) in the city of Kandahar in January 2012 ([185]). Insurgents detonated an IED against the vehicle of several officials in Tirin Kot District (Uruzgan): two tribal elders and a Senator were killed ([186]). Insurgents hit the vehicle of a senior adviser (and former Meshrano Jirga member) of the Governor in Tirin Kot City (Uruzgan) with an RCIED: the adviser was killed together with four other people ([187]). Two insurgents attacked the provincial governor's compound in Kandahar: they were both killed by security guards. Two vehicle loaded with IEDs were found near the

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([172]) Marifat, H., interview via Skype, 16 September 2012, 13.15–14.15.

([173]) Ruttig, T., interview via Skype, 17 October 2012, 11.00–12.00, and e-mail correspondence, 9 November 2012.

([174]) Political analyst based in Kabul, interview via Skype, 18 October 2012.

([175]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 12.

([176]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 14; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 20; UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 17.

([177]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([178]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 18; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([179]) US Department of State, *Country reports on terrorism 2011*, July 2012 (http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/195768.pdf) (accessed 28 August 2012), p. 129.

([180]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 19; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 25; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([181]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 22; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([182]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 22.

([183]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 19; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([184]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 20; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([185]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([186]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([187]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 March 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 19.

compound ([188]). Insurgents conducted a complex attack in the capital of Nimroz province. Nine BBIED attackers engaged in a firefight with security personnel at the provincial governor's office, guesthouse, the provincial council and the ANP headquarters ([189]). In August 2012, it was reported that the new mayor of Kandahar received death threats on his cell phone. The person threatening him called and identified himself. He warned the mayor that he would be killed if he did not quit his job. The new Kandahar provincial council chief, Ehsan Noorzai, received similar threats by phone. The governor survived two assassination attempts ([190]).

SOUTH-EAST	Reports were made of several targeted attacks by insurgents in the south-east in 2012: the killing of the brother in law of a former district administrator ([191]); the killing of a district governor ([192]); the killing of a mayor of a district capital ([193]); the killing of a government official ([194]); an RCIED attack on a provincial representative ([195]). In January 2012, three insurgents wearing BBIEDs and armed with several weapons managed to occupy the Telecommunications Department in Sharan City (Paktika) and attacked the surrounding governmental premises from there: three ANP and four government employees were killed in the fighting ([196]). Furthermore, insurgents attacked the governor's office in Pul-i Alam (Logar) ([197]). A local who was working as a driver for an NGO was abducted from his home by insurgents in Barak-i Barak (Logar). He appeared to have been kidnapped because he was mistakenly identified as a government employee. During questioning by the insurgents, he was accused of working for the government. He was released after 12 hours and negotiating with tribal elders ([198]). Haqqani fighters wearing BBIEDs attacked the office of the province governor of Paktika with SAF and RPGs ([199]). In June 2012, insurgents abducted the nephew of the provincial governor of Paktya in Ahmadabad District ([200]).
EAST	Reports were found on several targeted attacks by insurgents in the east in 2012: killing of two deputy district governors, the brother of one of them, the wounding of a civilian companion and the killing of a district finance director ([201]) attacks on two district governors killing and wounding bodyguards ([202]); abduction and killing of a Community Development Council (CDC) member and the burning of the private residence of a CDC Head, injuring two children ([203]); killing of two APRP officials reaching out to insurgents to join the APRP programme ([204]); an IED attack against the house of the deputy mayor of Jalalabad City ([205]); the targeted killing of a judge ([206]); an IED attack against the Governor of Khugyani District (Nangarhar) ([207]).

([188]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 18.

([189]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 19.

([190]) Sarhaddi Nelson, S., 'For Afghan leaders, facing death is a fact of life', NPR, 30 August 2012 (http://www.npr.org/2012/08/30/160306082/for-afghan-leaders-facing-death-is-a-fact-of-life) (accessed 25 September 2012).

([191]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([192]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 15.

([193]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([194]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), p. 18; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([195]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 2.

([196]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 13.

([197]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 2.

([198]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), p. 2.

([199]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), p. 18.

([200]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([201]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 13; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 15.

([202]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 13; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 14.

([203]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 17.

([204]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 20.

([205]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 March 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 14.

([206]) UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 22.

([207]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 6 October 2012), p. 14.

Furthermore, insurgents attacked the residence of a government official in the city of Jalalabad (Nangarhar) [208]. The residence of an employee of the Attorney of Jalalabad was attacked by insurgents in Behsud District (Nangarhar) [209]. Mr Qurban Karimi, a judge from Behsud (Nangarhar), was abducted: his last appearance was in Jalalabad city and his corpse was found beheaded in the district of Chaparhar [210]. Insurgents kidnapped a government official in Bati Kot (Nangarhar): he was released after mediation by elders [211]. Insurgents attacked the private vehicle of a tribal elder in Chaparhar: two government officials accompanying him were killed, a third official and the elder were wounded [212]. Four employees of the provincial department were injured by an IED blast in Jalalabad City (Nangarhar) [213]. In September 2012, it was reported that the Taliban established checkpoints in several districts in Nangarhar to search vehicles for government employees [214]. Insurgents abducted a member of the High Peace Council, Mr Mawlawi Shafiullah Shafi, in Bar Kunar District (Kunar) [215]: he was released in February 2012. According to the Governor, efforts made by tribal elders and the council secured his release [216]. Insurgents abducted Mr Mohibullah, a shura member, in Manogai (Kunar): he was released after mediation by tribal elders [217]. A Taliban suicide attacker killed the head of the Peace and Reintegration Council in Kunar, Mawlawi Mahmad Hashem Munib: the attacker met the Mawlawi on the way from the mosque to his home in the district of Wata Pur (Kunar) and triggered a device hidden in his turban (BBIED) when he embraced the victim [218]. Insurgents abducted a prosecution officer in Manogai (Kunar). He was released after mediation by tribal elders [219]. Insurgents fired rockets and mortars on the governor's palace in Asadabad (Kunar) [220]. The Taliban attacked district governors' offices, police and army posts and other government buildings in six districts of Kunar and in the capital of the province, Asadabad [221]. Insurgents set up vehicle checkpoints on the main road of the district of Mandol (Nuristan) to look for government employees [222]. Taliban set fire to two private residences in Kamdesh (Nuristan) of Hezb-e Islami figures that joined the APRP. ANSO explains that Hezb-e Islami has been de facto representing the government's authority since early 2010 in the area and that the Taliban is competing against this authority [223]. The governor of Nuristan escaped a Taliban attack on his convoy. It was reported that this was not the first such attack on him [224]. Insurgents attacked the convoy of a senator in Laghman: the senator was not hurt, but two bodyguards were [225].

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[208] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 9 August 2012), p. 15.

[209] UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

[210] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 March 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 14; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012; UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 22.

[211] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 13.

[212] UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

[213] Tolonews, *Five civilians injured in Nangarhar blast*, 13 August 2012 (http://tolonews.com/en/afghanistan/7206-five-civilians-injured-in-nangarhar-blast) (accessed 3 October 2012).

[214] Ariana News, *Taliban warns Nangarhar Mullahs not to perform funeral prayers on government security forces*, 9 September 2012 (http://ariananews.af/regional/taliban-warns-nangarhar-mullahs-not-to-perform-funeral-prayers-on-government-security-forces/) (accessed 25 September 2012).

[215] UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

[216] UNAMA, *Today's Afghan Headlines — Articles*, 27 February 2012 (*Source: Afghanistan Times*) (http://unama.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?ctl=Details&tabid=12329&mid=15870&ItemID=33913) (accessed 24 September 2012).

[217] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 17; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

[218] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 16.

[219] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 17; UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 22.

[220] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), p. 12.

[221] Rubin, A. J., 'Afghan Strike Shows Force and Restraint of Taliban', *The New York Times*, 3 August 2012 (http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/04/world/asia/taliban-strike-afghan-government-buildings.html) (accessed 3 October 2012).

[222] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 March 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012) pp. 14–15, 21.

[223] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), p. 14.

[224] King, L., 'In Afghanistan, targeted attacks on leaders an ominous trend', *Los Angeles Times*, 31 July 2012 (http://www.afghanistannewscenter.com/news/2012/july/jul312012.html#a3) (accessed 25 September 2012).

[225] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 18; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

CENTRE	In April 2012, three units of insurgents attacked, among other targets, the Parliament building, an ANP station and the ANA Academy, in the heart of Kabul City using mortars, small arms fire and BBIEDs ([226]). Mawlawi Arsala Rahmani, parliamentarian and member of the Peace Council was murdered by unknown gunmen near the university of Kabul City. Insurgents ambushed the convoy of a member of the Afghan Upper House of Parliament in Surobi: two bodyguards were wounded ([227]). A judge was kidnapped by insurgents in Shinwari (Parwan) ([228]). Insurgents ambushed the vehicle of the Governor of Shinwari District (Parwan): there were no casualties ([229]). Insurgents ambushed the vehicle of the Governor of Parwan: two ANP officers were killed in the attack ([230]). Insurgents attacked the convoy of the provincial governor in Wardak and an RCIED was targeted at the district governor of Saighan in Bamyan. ANSO assessed this incident as evidence of a growing confidence in insurgent ranks to target in this area ([231]). In July 2012, the Taliban killed the District Governor of Chak District (Wardak), Ismail Wafa, and his son in an attack on their vehicle ([232]).
	In the first half of 2012, Afghan senators received threatening messages on their cell phones saying that they would be targeted if they approved a strategic partnership agreement with the United States. The members of the Parliament declared that the messages had been sent by the 'Mullah Dadullah Front' (Mullah Dadullah was a Taliban commander killed in a US-led attack in 2007) ([233]).
NORTH-EAST	An IED was discovered and removed from the office of the head of the provincial council in Taluqan city (Takhar) prior to a meeting with several government VIPs to be held in the office. Insurgents set up a checkpoint and stopped cars in order to find government officials in Warduj (Badakhshan) ([234]). An IED detonated ineffectively in Kunduz District against the district governor of Chahar Dara (Kunduz) ([235]). In August 2012, insurgents killed the district mayor of Ishkamish (Takhar), Abdul Aziz, and the Takhar High Peace Council member together with three others with an IED ([236]).
NORTH-WEST	Two illegal checkpoints set up by insurgents were reported in Sar-e Pul. The insurgents were looking for government officials or ANSF staff ([237]). A government employee working for an international organisation on a daily wage contract was abducted by insurgents along with his driver on the Sar-e Pul to Shiberghan road in Sar-e Pul: both were released without ransom. It was reported that their involvement in the international organisation's medical project helped to secure their release, because of the strong community support for this programme ([238]). A group of civilians in a white Toyota was stopped by insurgents and abducted in Sar-e Pul. After interrogation, it became clear that they were mistakenly kidnapped: the insurgents explained to them that they expected government employees to travel the route in a similar vehicle and they were supposed to be the target and the civilians were released ([239]). Insurgents killed a village irrigation representative in the district of Khuln

([226]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 1.

([227]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), p. 1; UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 17; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([228]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), p. 2.

([229]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 5; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([230]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 5.

([231]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 6 October 2012), p. 4.

([232]) RFE/RL, *Afghan District Governor, Son killed in attack*, 29 July 2012 (http://www.rferl.org/content/afghanistan-district-governor-killed/24660049.html) (accessed 28 August 2012).

([233]) RFE/RL, *Afghan Senate Chairman Confirms Threatening Messages*, 19 May 2012 (http://www.rferl.org/content/afghan-senate-head-confirms-threats/24586431.html) (accessed 16 July 2012).

([234]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), pp. 6–7.

([235]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 9.

([236]) RFE/RL, *Bomb kills local Afghan official, peace council member*, 13 August 2012 (http://www.rferl.org/content/afghan-officials-killed-in-north-bombing/24675215.html) (accessed 28 August 2012).

([237]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 5.

([238]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 9.

([239]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 6.

(Balkh) [240]. Insurgents killed the brother of a village representative in Mingajirh District (Jawzjan) [241]. Insurgents abducted the son of the head of a Community Development Council in Khanya District (Jawzjan) [242]. Insurgents detonated an IED in front of the house of the Head of the Independent Electoral Committee in Shiberghan city (Jawzjan), wounding 11 persons including his wife and two of his children [243]. The son of the member of a community district council was abducted by insurgents in Jawzjan, allegedly because of a discussion about paying taxes to the insurgents [244]. Insurgents conducted an attack on the convoy of the district governor of Qaysar (Faryab). The Head of Security for the ANP and the Head of the Criminal Department were also in the convoy [245]. A district court official was injured in an attack by insurgents in Khan Chahar Bagh District (Faryab) [246]. Insurgents killed an influential tribal elder together with a couple of his family members with an IED in the district of Qaysar (Faryab). The elder was a member of the district *shura* and the former district governor [247]. Insurgents targeted government officials in Dawlatabad (Faryab) [248]. An IED was discovered in front of the office of the mayor of Qaysar (Faryab) [249]. In September 2012, the Taliban abducted four tribal elders from their houses in Faryab: all of them were members of the community development council [250].

WEST	Reports were found of several targeted attacks by insurgents in the east in 2012: killing of the head of a district development council [251]; killings of a legal officer and of a CDC head [252]; attacks wounding three district governor and killing two relatives [253]; abduction of three employees of the Statistics Department [254].

Three government employees were captured at an insurgents' check point in Bala Buluk District (Farah) [255]. A SVBIED detonated along the access to the airport in Guzara (Herat), killing three ANP officers, nine civilians and wounding several other civilians. According to ANSO, the intended target of the attack could have been a high-profile government official who was scheduled to travel through the area. The attackers seemed to have changed their plan when an ANP vehicle tried to apprehend the SVBIED vehicle [256]. Insurgents abducted two government officials in Pasaband (Ghor) [257]. A government official was abducted and assassinated by insurgents in Aziz Abad (Herat) [258]. Insurgents abducted and killed the Prosecutor of Farsi District in Adraskan District (Herat) [259]. In June 2012, a grenade was thrown into the residence of the Faryab governor: one person was wounded [260]. Insurgents abducted and killed the Provincial Primary Court Judge of Ghor: the day before, insurgents

[240] UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

[241] UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

[242] UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

[243] UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012; UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 14.

[244] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 6 October 2012), p. 10.

[245] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 8.

[246] UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

[247] UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 14.

[248] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 7.

[249] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 7.

[250] Humayoon Zaheen, M., Qutbuddin Koti, 'Taliban abduct 4 tribal elders in Faryab', *Pajhwok Afghan News*, 24 September 2012 (http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2012/09/24/taliban-abduct-4-tribal-elders-faryab) (accessed 25 September 2012).

[251] UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

[252] UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

[253] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), p. 11; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 11; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

[254] UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

[255] UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

[256] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 10.

[257] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 11; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

[258] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 12.

[259] UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

[260] UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

abducted his father and a villager, but released both after the intervention of village elders (²⁶¹). Insurgents struck the acting district governor of Dawlat Yar (Ghor) with an RCIED (²⁶²). In July 2012, UNAMA reported that the district judge of Sagha District was moved to the provincial centre of Ghor because of security concerns (²⁶³). The Taliban killed the Mayor of Shindand District (Herat) in front of his residence (²⁶⁴). Insurgents killed a provincial council member and the Major of Ghormach (Badghis) together with five civilians in a shop in Ghormach with an IED blast: seven other civilians were wounded (²⁶⁵).

Summary — government officials and employees

The Taliban and other insurgent groups intended to take away popular support and isolate the people from the government by intimidation, night letters, kidnapping and targeted killings against government officials and employees. The insurgents set up checkpoints in order to look for government staff. People connected to the officials (e.g. their relatives), were also often targeted in order to put pressure on the officials. The Taliban and other insurgent groups declared, in public statements or messages, that government officials are a target and demanded the people to stop working for the government.

Evidence is present of the intimidation or targeting by insurgents of a variety of government officials: Members of Parliament, High Peace Council members, local council members, provincial and district governors, judges, prosecutors, election workers and other government officials.

An indication of the current development of this situation can be found in anecdotal evidence of 2012. In the approximately 116 documented episodes of 2012, which are far from exhaustive, the following figures are present.

In the south, at least 22 episodes of threatening or targeting of government officials and employees by insurgents were documented. Three of the episodes were in Kandahar city, one in the city of Zaranj (Nimroz) and one in Tirin Kot City (Uruzgan). In the south-east, at least 10 episodes were documented: one episode was in the city of Pul-e Alam (Logar) and two were in the city of Sharan (Paktika). In the east, at least 34 episodes were documented: two in the city of Asadabad (Kunar) and three in Jalalabad city (Nangarhar). In the centre, at least nine episodes were documented: two of them in Kabul City. In the north-east, at least five episodes were documented: one was in the city of Taluqan (Takhar). In the north-west, at least 18 episodes were documented: one was in the city of Shiberghan (Jawzjan). In the west, at least 18 episodes were documented.

In all regions, in at least 28 episodes, council members were targeted; in at least 27 episodes, district governors/mayors/administrators; in 11 episodes, provincial governors or their representatives; in 10 episodes, judges, prosecutors or employees of the judiciary; in six episodes, Members of Parliament; in two episodes, city mayors; in one episode, an election official; and in 31 episodes, other officials or employees were targeted.

In at least 12 episodes, the victims were targeted when off duty or in their private residence. In at least 13 episodes, it was reported that relatives from the government official or employee were targeted.

Analysis — intimidation and targeting of government officials and employees

Many sources reported and documented a large-scale and proclaimed violent insurgents' campaign against government officials and employees. In 2012, at least 116 episodes of the targeting of profiles related to the government were documented in this report. This figure cannot be seen as an exhaustive number of incidents and no conclusions can be drawn from it on the frequency of the incidents. It is an illustrative list which provides an indication of the trends in 2012. It indicates that the targeting of these profiles continues. It was reported in several

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(²⁶¹) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 15; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

(²⁶²) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 6 October 2012), p. 12.

(²⁶³) UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 22.

(²⁶⁴) Sajad, 'Taliban assassinate district mayor in Herat Province', *Khaama Press*, 14 July 2012 (http://www.khaama.com/taliban-assassinate-district-mayor-in-herat-province-887/) (accessed 25 September 2012).

(²⁶⁵) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

episodes that government officials and employees were targeted while off duty or in their private residence. There is also reporting of the direct targeting of relatives. These elements provide evidence of the tracking down of the targeted individual by insurgents.

In the episodes of 2012, there are examples of low-ranking profiles (e.g. driver, government employees of departments, clerk of the court) and examples of high-ranking profiles (e.g. MPs, governors, members of the High Peace Council). For some profiles, it is more difficult to define the ranking, which will have to be assessed on individual circumstances. What is important is how the profile could be perceived by the actors: the insurgents. A local council member or a head of a local department might, for example, be high-ranking in his locality but lower-ranking when he is outside of his province. A local council member who was a famous mujahideen commander and has an armed group might then again also be assessed as high-ranking in other provinces.

Members of Parliament and other council members were intensively targeted in 2010 and 2011. In 28 of the presented episodes of 2012, this group was targeted. The UN mentioned that female council members, especially, have been targeted. The list of episodes is non-exhaustive, but it provides sufficient evidence to state that the targeting of this group continued in 2012.

Provincial governors and people in their environment (representatives, staff or relatives) have been targeted by insurgents in the past and in the episodes of 2012, evidence is present that the targeting of this group continues. They are under attack in their private residences, in ambushes on their convoys or in their offices.

District governors, mayors or administrators are in the same situation as the provincial governors. In 2012, 27 episodes were documented, which gives a clear indication that the targeting continues. A source mentioned that many district governors are not able to reside in their district because of the threat.

Judges, prosecutors and other staff of the judiciary have been targeted by insurgents through the years, as well as their relatives. In 2012, this targeting continued. It was reported that judges and prosecutors were not able to stay in their area and were no longer functioning because of the threat. This targeting fits in the general effort of insurgents to establish their judiciary in areas under their control.

Election workers and candidates were targeted in waves of attacks by insurgents in the periods prior to the elections.

Sources indicated that the Central Bank and the Kabul Bank are important targets for the insurgents because of their importance to the Afghan Government and because of the payment of salaries to teachers, the ANA and the ANP via the bank. However, several sources (Marifat, Ruttig and a political analyst) stated that this does not mean that the bank's employees are systematically targeted by the insurgents. In the examples of attacks on the Kabul Bank, no evidence was found of individual targeting (night letters, abduction or targeted killings) of the bank's employees.

Regional differences

Reference is made to Section 1.4 Regional differences for an analysis of regional differences. The general conclusions can be applied and some more specific information relevant to government officials and employees is presented in that section. A local contact in south-east Afghanistan stated that the targeting of lower-ranking government officials is prevailing in areas under Taliban influence and such incidents happen more frequently in peripheral and insecure areas. Hadi Marifat stated that in Mazar-e Sharif government officials are less at risk of being targeted by insurgents, because they have little influence there. He further explained that the south and south-east are the worst areas. In areas in the north or centre of Afghanistan, the Taliban has a less strong presence, so their ability to target people there is reduced, but incidents happen nevertheless. A political analyst based in Kabul stated that there is a low risk for low-ranking or ordinary government officials in, for example, Mazar or other areas in the north. Only when travelling in the volatile areas in the south, south-east or east is there a risk. Mid- or low-ranking profiles are not at risk in Kabul, Herat or Mazar, except if there is another specific reason for targeting. Ahmad Quraishi stated that low-ranking government officials do not face much risk of being targeted by insurgents in some safer areas of Afghanistan, such as Kabul or Mazar-e Sharif. In 2011, Giustozzi stated that in cities or in Kabul, the Taliban usually devote their efforts to higher profiles ranking from serving government officials upwards. Thomas Ruttig stated that, in contested and government-controlled areas, there is a higher level of targeted killings than in areas which are completely under the control of the Taliban, but he did not specify whether it concerned high-ranking or low-ranking victims. A political analyst stated that high-ranking government officials face a high risk; mid-ranking government officials a lower risk; and low-ranking government officials a low risk in, for example, Mazar or other areas in the north. Mid- or low-ranking profiles are not at risk in Kabul, Herat or Mazar, except if there is another specific reason for targeting.

In addition, reports are presented in Section 2.1.1 Government officials and employees of intimidation and targeted violence against government officials and employees in the cities of Kandahar, Lashkar Gah (Helmand), Ghazni, Zaranj (Nimroz), Tirin Kot City (Uruzgan), Pul-e Alam (Logar), Sharan (Paktika), Asadabad (Kunar), Jalalabad (Nangarhar), Taluqan (Takhar), Shiberghan (Jawzjan) and Farah. In the cities of Kabul and Maymana (Faryab), some attacks on high-profile targets were reported. Evidence of intimidation and targeting of government officials and employees by insurgents was found in all regions of Afghanistan (south, south-east, east, centre, north-east, north-west and west).

Possibilities to escape intimidation and targeting

Reference is made to Section 1.5 Victims' reactions for an analysis of the possibilities to escape threats.

In the scope of the Taliban's general aim of isolating the people from the government and taking away the latter's support or influence by intimidating and targeting, the defection of intimidated officials and employees represents a success for their strategy. Furthermore, there was no evidence found of continued targeting of government officials or employees after they stepped down from their position.

CONCLUSIONS

High-ranking officials and government employees face a real risk of being intimidated or targeted by insurgents in all parts of Afghanistan. Low-ranking officials and government employees also face a real risk of being intimidated or targeted in peripheral unsafe areas and a low risk of being targeted in safer areas in Afghanistan which are not under the insurgents' control, for example the cities of Kabul, Herat and Mazar.

For low-ranking government employees or officials it is possible to escape insurgents' threats by stepping down from their position, unless there are specific individual circumstances that could lead to continued targeting.

If a low-ranking official or government employee quits his activity and can flee and resettle in a safer area, he can normally escape targeting by insurgents, unless there are specific individual circumstances which would preclude this possibility.

2.1.2 Afghanistan's National Security Forces (ANSF)

Afghanistan's National Security Forces (ANSF) consist of the Afghan National Army (ANA), the Afghan National Police (ANP) and the National Directorate of Security (NDS). The latter is the intelligence department of the Afghan authorities. Different specialised police departments fall under the ANP, such as the Afghan National Border Police (ANBP), the Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP) and the Afghan Anti-Crime Police (AACP). There is also the Afghan Local Police (ALP), but the initiative to install this force is uncompleted and the ALP consists of several local militias which are not always controlled by the government ([266]).

Several sources previously mentioned reported the intimidation and targeting of ANSF by the insurgents ([267]).

The Taliban targeted the ANP in a campaign of violence and Mullah Omar stated in an interview in 2008: "If the police of a state consist of people who are immoral and irreligious, who are drug addicts and who are turned away from by their families, how can they protect the property, dignity and honour of the people?" ([268]). In 2011, Human Rights Watch stated that the ANP is a relatively soft target for the insurgents because they are less well armed than the ANA and more exposed in the local checkpoints or posts. According to Human Rights Watch, this was even more the case for the ALP ([269]). According to the Afghan Ministry of Interior, violence in Afghanistan killed 1 292 and wounded 2 447 policemen in 2010 ([270]).

([266]) Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken (Netherlands), Directie Consulaire Zaken en Migratiebeleid, Afdeling Migratie en Asiel (http://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten-en-publicaties/ambtsberichten/2012/07/05/afghanistan-2012-07-04.html) July 2012, pp. 17, 19, 21–22 and 35.

([267]) Giustozzi, A., Reuter, C., *The Insurgents of the Afghan North*, Afghanistan Analysts Network, April 2011 (http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/AAN-2011-Northern-Insurgents.pdf) (accessed 28 March 2012), pp. 8–9. Local contact based in Khost, e-mail correspondence, 28 August 2012; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 March 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/store/files/The%20ANSO%20Report%20%28*16–31*%20March%202012%29.pdf) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 8; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012; Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken (Netherlands), Directie Consulaire Zaken en Migratiebeleid, Afdeling Migratie en Asiel (http://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten-en-publicaties/ambtsberichten/2012/07/05/afghanistan-2012-07-04.html) July 2012, pp. 17, 19, 21–22 and 35.

([268]) Nathan, J., 'Reading the Taliban', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 35.

([269]) Human Rights Watch (HRW), *Just Don't Call It a Militia - Impunity, Militias, and the 'Afghan Local Police'*, September 2011 (http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/afghanistan0911webwcover_0.pdf) (accessed 30 September 2012), pp. 24–25.

([270]) Tolonews, *2010 Claims Lives of 1292 Afghan Police*, 2 January 2011 (http://www.tolonews.com/en/afghanistan/1489-2010-claims-lives-of-1292-afghan-police-) (accessed 30 September 2012).

In 2012, the UN reported targeted killings of policemen who were off duty ([271]). ANSO reported, in April 2012, that usually five to eight ANSF members are subject to targeted killing just in Kandahar City during a period of 2 weeks ([272]). Infiltration by insurgents is an increasing security problem for the ANSF. The intruders are able to attack the ANSF members from within ([273]). ANSO explained that, in Kandahar and Helmand, ANP staff and locals associated with the ANSF were primary targets of SAF attacks from insurgents on motorcycles ([274]). ANSO also reported several cases of poisoning of policemen by insurgents in different regions of Afghanistan ([275]). Insurgents also conducted suicide and complex attacks against ANSF targets in cities, for example Kabul, Sharan (Paktika) and Kandahar ([276]).

ANSF — episodes in 2012

	In February 2012, the Taliban abducted and amputated the hand of a man whose family members allegedly worked for ANSF. According to witnesses, a Taliban court made the sentence of amputation ([277]).
SOUTH	Reports were made of several targeted attacks by insurgents in the south in 2012.
	Many ANSF members died or were wounded in several targeted IED attacks. Insurgents conducted many direct and complex attacks and targeted assassinations on ANSF members, vehicles, patrols, checkpoints, posts and headquarters with SAF, heavy weapons, BBIEDs and VBIEDs. They conducted several attacks on poppy eradication teams. According to ANSO, these events indicate the importance of the poppy industry for the insurgents. Many ANSF members were abducted and killed, even when they were off duty. Insurgents also killed several family members of ANSF ([278]).
	For example, insurgents initiated an attack with an RPG in Kandahar City. Subsequently, a SVBIED detonated when members of the ANP and civilians gathered in the area, killing 10 and wounding 22 ([279]). An insurgent detonated a SVBIED near an ANP substation in Kandahar City. The blast was followed by an attack from another insurgent wearing a BBIED and the second attacker was killed quickly ([280]). A multiphase suicide attack was carried out by insurgents against the district centre of Musa Qala (Helmand). BBIEDs caused several victims among the police forces ([281]). A 13-year-old boy was told by insurgents to bring a donkey carrying an IED to an ANP checkpoint in Tirin Kot District (Uruzgan): the device detonated prematurely and

([271]) UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 16.

([272]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), pp. 17–19; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), pp. 18–19, 21.

([273]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 18.

([274]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 December 2011) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2011.html) (accessed 7 August 2012), p. 13.

([275]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), pp. 18, 22; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), p. 10; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 13.

([276]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 13; UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, *Travel advice by country – Afghanistan*, updated: 18 September 2012 (still current at 7 October 2012) (http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/travel-advice-by-country/asia-oceania/afghanistan) (accessed 7 October 2012).

([277]) UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 24.

([278]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 December 2011) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2011.html) (accessed 7 August 2012), p. 13; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 12; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 9 August 2012), p. 21; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 March 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), pp. 17–19, 20–21; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), pp. 17–19; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), pp. 18–19, 21; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), pp. 16–17, 19; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), pp. 17, 19, 21; ANSO, *The ANSO* Report (1–15 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), pp. 22–24; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012; UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 17; UN Human Rights Council, *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan and on the achievements of technical assistance in the field of human rights*, A/HRC/16/67, 19 January 2011 (http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G11/103/31/PDF/G1110331.pdf?OpenElement) (accessed 16 July 2012), p. 5; RFE/RL, *Afghan District Governor, Son killed in attack*, 29 July 2012 (http://www.rferl.org/content/afghanistan-district-governor-killed/24660049.html) (accessed 28 August 2012); Sajad, *Taliban behead 12 years old Afghan boy in Kandahar*, Khaama Press, 31 August 2012 (http://www.khaama.com/taliban-behead-12-years-old-afghan-boy-in-kandahar-743/) (accessed 24 September 2012).

([279]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 12.

([280]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 March 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 17.

([281]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 18.

the child was killed ([282]). The Taliban killed a senior police officer with an RCIED in the city of Ghazni. In August 2012, the Taliban killed the police chief of the district of Shamozai (Zabul) with an IED ([283]).

SOUTH-EAST	Reports were made of several targeted attacks by insurgents in the south-east in 2012.
	Insurgents targeted the ANSF in the south-east with direct and complex attacks, abduction, targeted killings, and IED strikes on many occasions: off-duty ANSF members were killed and their private residences were also attacked ([284]).
	For example, a local insurgent group abducted two locals returning home to Azra (Logar). Both were employed by the Nangarhar police. The same day, the local community managed to negotiate the release of both. ANSO considered this to be an example of local relations prevailing over ideological concerns in a local context ([285]). Insurgents detonated an IED in a park in front of the Educational Department in Khost city (Khost) in order to draw out the ANP: they detonated a second (follow-up) IED in order to strike the ANP ([286]).
EAST	Reports were made of several targeted attacks by insurgents in the east in 2012.
	Insurgents targeted the ANSF in the east with direct and indirect attacks, IEDs, abduction and targeted assassinations; insurgents also attacked ANSF poppy eradication teams in the east of Afghanistan ([287]).
	Insurgents abducted 14 Nuristani ANP members in Pech Valley (Kunar). Tribal elders intervened in order to have them released, but the abductees had to take an oath not to go back to their work in the ANP ([288]).
CENTRE	Reports were made of several targeted attacks by insurgents in the centre in 2012.
	Insurgents targeted the ANSF in the east with direct attacks and IED attacks. Insurgents also attacked ANSF poppy eradication teams in the centre of Afghanistan. Family members of ANSF were also threatened, killed and wounded in targeted attacks ([289]).

([282]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([283]) Haleem , A., *Afghan militancy, conflicts claim 35 lives in 2 days*, Xinhua, 1 August 2012 (http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2012-08/01/c_131754059.htm) (accessed 3 October 2012).

([284]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 March 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 16; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), pp. 2, 14–15; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), pp. 2–3, 15, 20; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), pp. 15, 18; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), pp. 3, 14, 20; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), pp. 4, 19, 21.

([285]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 9 August 2012), p. 3.

([286]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), pp. 15, 18; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 3.

([287]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 11; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), pp. 13, 14–16; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), pp. 14, 16–17; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), pp. 13–14; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), pp. 13–14, 16; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), pp. 16, 18, 20; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012; UNAMA, *Today's Afghan Headlines — Articles*, 11 January 2012 (*Source:* Ariana TV) (http://unama.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?ctl=Details&tabid=12329&mid=15870&ItemID=33951) (accessed 18 September 2012).

([288]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 9 August 2012), p. 16.

([289]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), pp. 2–4; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), pp. 1–2; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), pp. 1–3; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 4; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), pp. 1–3, 5; UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 14; RFE/RL, *Two Soldiers, Four Afghan Intelligence Officers Killed*, 14 August 2012 (http://www.rferl.org/content/two-soldiers-four-afghan-intelligence-officials-killed/24667268.html) (accessed 14 August 2012); UNAMA, *Today's Afghan Headlines – Articles*, 5 January 2012 (*Source:* Tolo TV) (http://unama.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?ctl=Details&tabid=12329&mid=15870&ItemID=33956) (accessed 18 September 2012).

NORTH-EAST	Reports were found of several targeted attacks by insurgents in the north-east in 2012.
	Insurgents targeted the ANSF in the north-east with direct attacks, IEDs, abduction and targeted assassinations ([290]).
	In September 2012, a suicide bomber killed 10 policemen and 6 civilians in Kunduz City: the Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack ([291]).
NORTH-WEST	Reports were found of several targeted attacks by insurgents in the north-west in 2012.
	Insurgents targeted the ANSF in the north-west with direct attacks, IEDs, abduction and targeted assassinations: family members of ANSF were also targeted ([292]).
	In June 2012, insurgents attacked the ANSF in the city of Sar-e Pul ([293]).
WEST	Reports were found of several targeted attacks by insurgents in the west in 2012.
	Insurgents targeted the ANSF in the west with direct attacks, IEDs, abduction and targeted assassinations. Family members of ANSF and off-duty ANSF members were targeted as well. Poppy eradication provoked many insurgent attacks ([294]).
	In April 2012, insurgents beheaded several ALP in Pusht Rod (Farah). According to ANSO, this indicates that insurgents wanted to deter the communities from engaging in the APRP and from joining the ALP project ([295]).

Summary — ANSF

The Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), including the Afghan National Police (ANP), the Afghan National Army (ANA) and the National Directorate of Security (NDS), are a proclaimed target of the Taliban and other insurgent groups. The ANP, including the Afghan Local Police (ALP), is particularly vulnerable to insurgent attacks due to their exposure in local and remote positions in the field.

Insurgents' infiltration of ANSF ranks, targeted killings (e.g. SAF attacks by motorcyclists), poisoning, complex and suicide attacks by insurgents are a constant threat for security staff. Events of this nature even took place in Kabul City.

In the documented episodes of 2012, abundant evidence was found of the very frequent to regular targeting of ANSF in all regions of Afghanistan. They are subject to targeted killings, abductions, poisoning, mutilation, IEDs, attacks and complex attacks. They are not only targeted when on the job but in around 15 documented episodes, they were targeted when off duty or acting in a private capacity. In around 10 documented episodes, their family members or relatives were targeted as well. Sometimes, they were addressed by an individual night letter or sentenced by a Taliban court.

([290]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 9 August 2012), p. 11; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), pp. 6, 7–8; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), pp. 5, 8; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), pp. 4, 6, 8; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), pp. 5, 9; RFE/RL, *Bomb kills local Afghan official, peace council member*, 13 August 2012 (http://www.rferl.org/content/afghan-officials-killed-in-north-bombing/24675215.html) (accessed 28 August 2012).

([291]) Reuters, *Suicide bomber kills 16 in North Afghanistan*, 10 September 2012 (http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/09/10/us-afghanistan-bomb-idUSBRE8890OP20120910) (accessed 3 October 2012).

([292]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 9 August 2012), p. 9; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 March 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 7; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), pp. 5, 9; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), pp. 6–7, 9; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), pp. 5, 8; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), pp. 6–8, 10; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), pp. 7, 9–10.

([293]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 6 October 2012), p. 6.

([294]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 9 August 2012), pp. 12–13; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 March 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 10; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 March 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 7; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), pp. 10–12; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), pp. 12–13; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), pp. 9–10; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), pp. 10, 12; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), pp. 14–15.

([295]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 12.

There was evidence found of the targeting of ANSF in several cities in Afghanistan, including attacks on their headquarters: Lashkar Gah (Helmand), Ghazni, Sharan (Paktika), Gardez (Khost), Khost (Khost), Pul-e Alam (Logar), Jalalabad, Mehterlam (Laghman), Kunduz, Sar-e Pul and Kabul. But at the top of the list is Kandahar City for which ANSO reported, in April 2012, an average of five to eight targeted killings of ANSF members every 2 weeks.

Analysis — Intimidation and targeting of ANSF

The targeting of ANSF members by insurgents is frequent and widespread. They are subject to attacks, targeted killings, public executions, death sentences by Taliban courts, abduction and mutilation. Family members of ANSF staff are targeted as well to put pressure on the policemen or soldiers to defect. There are examples of the targeting of ANSF members while they are off duty, at home or acting in a private capacity. Several elements of the targeting give an indication that the individual had been tracked down by the insurgents.

High-ranking ANSF members are, for example, commanders or colonels; low-ranking ANSF members are, for example, ANA soldiers or policemen.

Regional differences

Reference is made to Section 1.4 Regional differences for an analysis of regional differences. The general conclusions can be applied but some more specific information relevant to government officials and employees was presented: Giustozzi stated that, in Kabul, colonels of the army and the police have been targeted as well as commanders of security services, but that in the south, officials of all ranks were targeted.

In addition, reports are presented in Section 2.1.2 ANSF of intimidation and targeted violence against ANSF members in several cities in Afghanistan, including attacks on their headquarters: Lashkar Gah (Helmand), Ghazni, Sharan (Paktika), Gardez (Khost), Khost (Khost), Pul-e Alam (Logar), Jalalabad (Nangarhar), Mehterlam (Laghman), Kunduz and Kabul. In Kandahar City, there is a very high number of incidents against ANSF staff. It is important to note that ANSF members are addressed by the violence used in complex attacks in city centres, as explained in Section 1.1.9 Attacks on district centres, provincial capitals and Kabul. Evidence of intimidation and targeting of ANSF members by insurgents was found in all regions of Afghanistan (south, south-east, east, centre, north-east, north-west and west).

Possibilities to escape intimidation and targeting

Reference is made to Section 1.5 Victims' reactions for an analysis of the possibilities to escape threats. The general conclusions can be applied and some more specific information relevant for government officials and employees is presented: in 2012, a local contact in the south-east explained that the Taliban would certainly not be satisfied with the stepping down from their job in the case of someone who worked for the ANSF. A staff member of an international development agency also stated that defecting would not be sufficient for the Taliban in the case of ANSF members, who would have to change sides to satisfy the Taliban. ANSO provided the example of the targeting of CIPs by insurgents throughout 2012 and considered the possibility that some might defect back to the insurgency due to the targeting.

CONCLUSIONS

High-ranking ANSF officials face a real risk of being intimidated or targeted by insurgents in all parts of Afghanistan. Low-ranking members face a low risk of being intimidated or targeted in the safer areas in Afghanistan which are not under the insurgents' control, unless there are specific individual circumstances that increase the risk. They also might be targeted by complex attacks in several other cities, including Kabul.

ANSF members might face continued targeting by insurgents even after stepping down from their position.

If a low-ranking ANSF member quits his activity and can flee and resettle in a safer area, he could normally escape targeting by insurgents, unless there are specific individual circumstances which would preclude this possibility.

2.1.3 Government supporters, collaborators and contractors

From 2005 onwards, insurgents attacked civilians who were perceived to be cooperating with the Afghan Government [296]. According to Giustozzi, the Taliban also target, threaten, abduct or kill family members of government collaborators in order to put pressure on them [297]. ANSO noted that the direct targeting of civilians working for the government was happening frequently [298].

Regularly travelling into administrative centres, provincial capitals or to Kabul can be a reason for insurgents to become suspicious about collaboration with the government [299] The Taliban have pronounced death sentences in their courts for government collaborators [300].

The UN reported targeted killings of government supporters in 2011 and 2012 [301].

On 2 May 2012, the Taliban stated in their annual statement on the inception of their 'Al Farooq' spring operation that those associated with Ministries of Defence, Interior and Intelligence and all those who work against the Mujahideen are primary targets [302].

Government supporters, collaborators and contractors — episodes in 2012

SOUTH	A food supplier of the ANP was killed by an IED planted at his residence in Tirin Kot District [303]. Insurgents abducted six civilians in Dek Yah (Ghazni) District, on the accusation of working for the government [304]. Insurgents killed five local farmers in Helmand on the accusation of having accepted fertilisers and other agricultural support from a government programme. ANSO considered this as a remarkably broad interpretation of 'collaboration with the government' [305].
SOUTH-EAST	A local butcher was targeted with an IED in Khost City. The butcher was a contractor to the ANP [306]. Insurgents attacked the house of an interpreter working for the ANP Gardez District (Paktya) [307]. Insurgents killed a civilian in Sar Hawza (Paktika) on the allegation of working for the government [308].
EAST	Insurgents stopped and looted trucks in Pech valley (Kunar) at an illegal checkpoint. The trucks were a privately contracted food supply convoy bringing food supplies to the ANP in Nuristan [309]. Insurgents attacked a construction company working on a government project in Kot District (Nangarhar): there were no casualties [310]. Insurgents shot and killed a civilian in Alisheng (Laghman) after the man threatened to inform the ANSF about plans to plant an IED near his house [311].

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[296] Franco, C., 'Islamic militant insurgency in Afghanistan experiencing "Iraqization"', *Eurasianet*, 8 November 2005 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/46f2580dc.html) (accessed 28 June 2012); UNAMA, *Today's Afghan Headlines — Articles*, 24 January 2011 (source: Weesa Daily) (http://unama.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?ctl=Details&tabid=12329&mid=15870&ItemID=34215) (accessed 19 September 2012); UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 25.

[297] Giustozzi, A., 'Afghanistan: Human Rights and Security Situation', *Landinfo*, 9 September 2011 (http://www.landinfo.no/asset/1745/1/1745_1.pdf) (accessed 5 March 2012), p. 10.

[298] UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 9 August 2012), p. 10.

[299] Reuter, C., Younus, B., 'The return of the Taliban in Andar District: Ghazni', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 113–115; Van Bijlert, M., 'Unruly commanders and violent power struggles', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 162.

[300] Van Bijlert, M., 'Unruly commanders and violent power struggles', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 168.

[301] UNAMA and UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), *Afghanistan — Annual Report 2011 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, February 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/4f2fa7572.pdf) (accessed 16 July 2012), p. 4; UN Human Rights Council, *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the human rights situation in Afghanistan and technical assistance achievements in the field of human rights*, A/HRC/19/47, 18 January 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4f391a772.html) (accessed 24 July 2012), p. 6; UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 16.

[302] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), pp. 1 and 20.

[303] UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

[304] UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

[305] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 6 October 2012), p. 21.

[306] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 15.

[307] UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

[308] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), p. 18.

[309] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 9 August 2012), p. 16.

[310] UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

[311] UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 17.

NORTH-EAST	An insurgent broke into the private residences of two former Jihadi commanders and searched for weapons. The commanders returned during the burglary and engaged in a firefight with the insurgent. Both commanders were not really part of pro-government militias (PGM), but they were known to cooperate with the government. According to the ANSO, this illustrated the strong presence of the insurgents in the area and their willingness to directly challenge significant targets ([312]). Insurgents killed two daily labourers working on the construction of a police checkpoint in Sar-i Pul District (Sar-i Pul) ([313]). Insurgents abducted two engineers working on a government project in Muqur B District (Badghis): they were released after the intervention of local elders ([314]).
WEST	Insurgents attacked several ANSF supply convoys in Farah with IEDs ([315]). Insurgents murdered one civilian in Farah City and another in the district of Khaki Safid (Farah) for their association with the government ([316]). A person was stopped at an illegal insurgent checkpoint in Badghis and abducted on the allegation of having connections with the government ([317]).

2.1.3.1 Pro-government militia (PGM) or anti-Taliban militia members

According to Human Rights Watch, the Afghan Government has reactivated several irregular armed groups to respond to the deteriorating security situation, especially in the north of Afghanistan. Powerful local figures and communities have also created hundreds of small militias in different parts of Afghanistan. Since 2001, many of these groups and militias have been included in several local defence programmes or initiatives by the government and international forces and have, thus, received official status. Examples of such initiatives are: the Afghan National Auxiliary Police (programme 2006–08), Community Defence Forces (programme to organise local protection for the elections in 2009), Community Defence Initiative/Local Defence Initiative (programme 2009–10), Afghan Local Police (from 2010 onwards, the Afghan Local Police have been part of the Afghan National Police) and the Interim Security for Critical Infrastructure (US Military programme from 2010 onwards). According to HRW, such militias were a magnet for insurgent attacks ([318]).

Giustozzi and Reuter reported that the Taliban conducted a targeted assassination campaign against proactive militia leaders in the north of Afghanistan in the first half of 2010 ([319]).

ANSO considered the possibility of the systematic targeting of Critical Infrastructure Protection (CIP) ([320]) fighters by insurgents in order to convince others to switch sides. CIP members were a main target of the insurgents with several attacks on them during 2012 ([321]).

In spring 2012, hundreds of local residents in Andar (Ghazni) took up the arms in an uprising against the Taliban. This led to clashes in which Taliban fighters were killed ([322]). The Taliban retaliated against the people and targeted

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([312]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 9 August 2012), p. 11.

([313]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 9 August 2012), p. 10.

([314]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([315]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), p. 10.

([316]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 March 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 10.

([317]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 6 October 2012), p. 13.

([318]) Human Rights Watch (HRW), *Just Don't Call It a Militia — Impunity, Militias, and the 'Afghan Local Police'*, September 2011 (http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/afghanistan0911webwcover_0.pdf) (accessed 30 September 2012), pp. 1–25; Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken (Netherlands), Directie Consulaire Zaken en Migratiebeleid, Afdeling Migratie en Asiel (http://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten-en-publicaties/ambtsberichten/2012/07/05/afghanistan-2012-07-04.html) July 2012, pp. 17, 19, 21–22 and 35.

([319]) Giustozzi, A., Reuter, C., *The Insurgents of the Afghan North*, Afghanistan Analysts Network, April 2011 (http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/AAN-2011-Northern-Insurgents.pdf) (accessed 28 March 2012), p. 26.

([320]) The 'Critical Infrastructure Protection' is a security division mainly operated by tribal militias and armed individuals. They are used for the protection of NATO infrastructure and projects.

([321]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 9; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), p. 6; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 8.

([322]) Maftoon, S., *Andar residents up in arms against Taliban*, Pajhwok Afghan News, 21 May 2012 (http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2012/05/21/andar-residents-arms-against-taliban) (accessed 4 September 2012); Maftoon, S., 'Andar residents kill 2 Taliban', *Pajhwok Afghan News*, 2 June 2012 (http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2012/06/02/andar-residents-kill-2-taliban) (accessed 4 September 2012); UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 20; Sadaf Shinwari, 'Anti-Taliban public uprising started in Logar province', *Khaama Press*, 30 August 2012 (http://www.khaama.com/anti-taliban-public-uprising-started-in-logar-province-164/) (accessed 24 September 2012).

community leaders who supported the uprising ([323]). Emal Habib analysed in two blogs on the website of the Afghanistan Analysts Network how the government was involved in a popular uprising against the Taliban in Ghazni, how an 'arbakai' fought with the Taliban and how similar uprisings in neighbouring districts in Ghazni failed ([324]). The uprising in Andar was followed by similar events in other areas of Afghanistan ([325]).

Pro-government militia or anti-Taliban militia members — episodes in 2012

NORTH-EAST	Insurgents killed a PGM commander with a BBIED in Kishim (Badakhshan). Several persons around him were wounded ([326]).
NORTH-WEST	An IED detonated outside a mosque in the district of Dawlatabad (Faryab), reportedly targeting a CIP commander and an RCIED detonated targeting another CIP commander, also in Dawlatabad: there were no victims in these attacks ([327]). Insurgents attacked several CIPs in Jawzjan. A former Jihadi commander was killed in such an attack in the district centre of Darzab (Jawzjan) ([328]). Insurgents attacked members of a local defence initiative (LDI) in Sar-e Pul District ([329]). A CIP checkpoint was attacked by insurgents in Qush Tepa (Jawzjan). CIP fighters were attacked by local insurgents in Qush Tepa and Darzab (Jawzjan). A local commander was killed by two gunmen in Aqcha: the commander had started to work for the government and intended to create a PGM ([330]). A CIP checkpoint was attacked by insurgents in Bilchiragh (Faryab) ([331]). Residences of PGM fighters were attacked in Chimtal (Balkh). CIP units — which are mainly manned by Afghan fighters and tribal militias — were attacked by insurgents on several occasions in Balkh. In June 2012, insurgents assassinated two CIP members in their private residence ([332]).

2.1.3.2 Tribal elders, local leaders and clerics

The UN Special Rapporteur, Philip Alston, mentioned the intimidation and targeting of elders perceived to be cooperating with the government and of mullahs who participated in *Ulema* councils advising the government by the Taliban ([333]). Hadi Marifat stated that, mainly from 2008 onwards, many people with influence (tribal elders, clerics, etc.) supporting the government have been targeted by the Taliban. They at least tried to chase them away

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([323]) Maftoon, S., 'Andar residents up in arms against Taliban', *Pajhwok Afghan News*, 21 May 2012 (http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2012/05/21/andar-residents-arms-against-taliban) (accessed 4 September 2012); Maftoon, S., 'Andar residents kill 2 Taliban', *Pajhwok Afghan News*, 2 June 2012 (http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2012/06/02/andar-residents-kill-2-taliban) (accessed 4 September 2012).
UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 20; Sadaf Shinwari, 'Anti-Taliban public uprising started in Logar province', *Khaama Press*, 30 August 2012 (http://www.khaama.com/anti-taliban-public-uprising-started-in-logar-province-164/) (accessed 24 September 2012); Ariana News, *Attempt failed to assassinate ex-Ghazni governor*, 25 August 2012 (http://ariananews.af/regional/attempt-failed-to-assassinate-ex-ghazni-governor/) (accessed 25 September 2012); Sajad, 'Taliban kill 5 abducted Afghan civilians in Ghazni province', *Khaama Press*, 31 August 2012 (http://www.khaama.com/taliban-kill-5-abducted-afghan-civilians-in-ghazni-province-744/) (accessed 24 September 2012); Ariana News, *Uprising members kill 20 Taliban in Ghazni*, 24 September 2012 (http://ariananews.af/regional/uprising-members-kill-20-taliban-in-ghazni/) (accessed 25 September 2012).

([324]) Habib, E., *AAN Reportage (2): The Andar Uprising - Has the Tide Already Turned?*, AAN (blog) (http://aan-afghanistan.com/index.asp?id=2969) (accessed 3 October 2012); Habib, E., *AAN Reportage: Who fights whom in the Andar Uprising?*, AAN (blog), 10 August 2012 (http://aan-afghanistan.com/index.asp?id=2916) (accessed 3 October 2012).

([325]) Ariana News, *Public Uprising against the Taliban in Kandahar*, 25 August 2012 (http://ariananews.af/regional/public-uprising-against-the-taliban-in-kandahar/) (accessed 25 September 2012); Sadaf Shinwari, 'Anti-Taliban public uprising started in Logar province', *Khaama Press*, 30 August 2012 (http://www.khaama.com/anti-taliban-public-uprising-started-in-logar-province-164/) (accessed 24 September 2012); Tolonews, *Kapisa Residents take fight to the Taliban*, 4 September 2012 (http://tolonews.com/en/afghanistan/7448-kapisa-residents-take-fight-to-the-taliban-) (accessed 24 September 2012).

([326]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 7.

([327]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 9 August 2012), p. 9.

([328]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), p. 8.

([329]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 6.

([330]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 9; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), p. 6; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 8.

([331]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), p. 8.

([332]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 10.

([333]) UN Human Rights Council, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Philip Alston – Addendum: MISSION TO AFGHANISTAN*, A/HRC/11/2/Add.4, 6 May 2009 (http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G09/131/17/PDF/G0913117.pdf?OpenElement) (accessed 16 July 2012), p. 16.

from their area of influence, but they also killed many of them. According to Marifat, at least 600 elders, clerics and influential people have been killed ([334]). UNAMA and AIHRC documented the killing of at least 42 tribal elders killed across Afghanistan in 2010, but stated that this figure is probably under-reported ([335]).

In 2004 and 2005, several mullahs were killed in Ghazni by the Taliban after accusations of spying or cooperating with the government. They were killed while travelling or after being taken from their home or mosque. In 2006, an influential mujahideen commander and tribal elder in Andar (Ghazni), Qari Baba, was killed by the Taliban in an ambush. The Taliban commander, Mullah Farooq, explained that Baba was eliminated because he wanted to protect the road construction and he was an opponent of the Taliban ([336]). In 2007 and 2008, the Taliban killed several high-profile pro-government community or tribal leaders: Mullah Naqibullah, Bacha Khan, Malim Akbar Khakrezwal, Abdul Hakim Jan and Habibullah Jan ([337]). Several other examples in Uruzgan and the south-east were found ([338]).

According to Thomas Ruttig, an NGO with good contacts in south-east Afghanistan recorded an increase in contact between the Taliban and tribal elders in October 2007. He mentioned that the elders were increasingly intimidated and this caused many of them to move into urban centres ([339]). Thomas Coghlan explained, in his analysis of the insurgency in Helmand, that the Taliban had always been very harsh towards tribal elders who expressed a pro-government sentiment. They harassed, beat or kidnapped them. According to Coghlan, the Taliban have been more prudent in killing elders. The reason for this was probably that the Taliban needed the support of the population and killing their leaders might cause disgruntlement ([340]). Martine van Bijlert explained, in her analysis of the Taliban in Uruzgan, that they limited the freedom of movement of local leaders whose loyalties to the Taliban were considered dubious. This could have been by way of house arrest or when all routes out of the local leader's area passed through Taliban territory. Such isolated leaders had to be very careful and limit visits to administrative centres and other suspicious places. Local leaders were beaten or killed by the Taliban. Such leaders were forced to move away from their area of origin, but even leaders who were living in relatively safe areas were regularly contacted by the Taliban who tried to persuade them with treats or appeals to Islam to change sides ([341]).

The UN also reported targeted killings of tribal elders, community and religious leaders in 2011 and 2012 ([342]).

In December 2011, ANSO explained that community leaders had been frequently targeted by assassins on motorcycles (SAF attacks) in an effort by the insurgents to intimidate the local community and jeopardise the government's efforts to improve governance in the area ([343]). According to Giustozzi, the Taliban also target, threaten, abduct or kill family members of tribal or local leaders in order to put pressure on them ([344]). The US Department of State reported in its 2011 Religious Freedom Report that religious leaders were targeted by insurgents for their links to the government or their particular interpretations of Islam ([345]).

([334])   Marifat, H., interview via Skype, 16 September 2012, 13.15–14.15.

([335])   UNAMA and AIHRC, *Afghanistan — Annual Report 2010 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, March 2011 (http://unama.unmissions.org/Portals/ UNAMA/human%20rights/March%20PoC%20Annual%20Report%20Final.pdf) (accessed 30 September 2012), p. 12.

([336])   Reuter, C., Younus, B., 'The return of the Taliban in Andar District: Ghazni', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 104, 107, 110, 114–117.

([337])   Smith, G., 'What Kandahar's Taliban say', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 192.

([338])   Van Bijlert, M., 'Unruly commanders and violent power struggles', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 162, 164, 171–172; Ruttig, T., 'Loya Paktia's Insurgency (I) The Haqqani network as an autonomous entity', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 72.

([339])   Ruttig, T., 'Loya Paktia's Insurgency (I) The Haqqani network as an autonomous entity', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 70.

([340])   Coghlan, T., 'The Taliban in Helmand: An Oral History', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 140–141.

([341])   Van Bijlert, M., 'Unruly commanders and violent power struggles', in: Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 162, 164, 171.

([342])   UN Human Rights Council, *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan and on the achievements of technical assistance in the field of human rights*, A/HRC/16/67, 19 January 2011 (http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G11/103/31/ PDF/G1110331.pdf?OpenElement) (accessed 16 July 2012); UN Human Rights Council, *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the human rights situation in Afghanistan and technical assistance achievements in the field of human rights*, A/HRC/19/47, 18 January 2012 (http://www. unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4f391a772.html) (accessed 24 July 2012), p. 6; UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 16.

([343])   ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 December 2011) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2011.html) (accessed 7 August 2012), p. 13.

([344])   Giustozzi, A., 'Afghanistan: Human Rights and Security Situation', *Landinfo*, 9 September 2011 (http://www.landinfo.no/asset/1745/1/1745_1.pdf) (accessed 5 March 2012), p. 12.

([345])   US Department of State, *International Religious Freedom Report for 2011, Afghanistan*, 30 July 2012 (http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/193129. pdf) (accessed 14 August 2012), p. 12.

In May 2012, ANSO reported on how insurgents compete with the ALP for landownership and community influence. They use the targeting of influential community members to intimidate ([346]). According to an article in the *Los Angeles Times*, the Taliban and other insurgent groups have long targeted community leaders in Afghanistan but, in July 2012 there was a spate of targeted assassinations and attempted assassinations on these public figures ([347]).

Tribal elders, local leaders and clerics — episodes in 2012

SOUTH	In the first half of 2012, several tribal elders were killed by insurgents in Uruzgan ([348]). A tribal leader was killed by insurgents in Kandahar City ([349]). Insurgents on a motorcycle shot and killed a tribal elder in Tirin Kot District (Uruzgan) ([350]). An insurgent tried to attack a compound in Uruzgan where district tribal elders were having a meeting: the attacker was killed by the ANP ([351]). Insurgents killed a tribal elder and his son in Garmsir District ([352]). In Qalat District (Zabul), two insurgents on a motorcycle shot and killed a tribal elder ([353]). An insurgent assassinated a mullah in Kandahar City on the accusation that he was working for the government ([354]). Insurgents attempted a targeted killing with an RCIED against an influential local tribal leader in Zabul who had been explicitly supporting the ALP initiative: the leader was slightly injured and one of his bodyguards was killed ([355]).
SOUTH-EAST	A grenade was thrown into the house of a tribal elder in Khost City (Khost) ([356]).
EAST	Taliban gunned down a tribal elder in Laghman ([357]). Insurgents killed an influential village elder in the district of Alma ([358]). Insurgents assassinated the son of a community elder in Nangarhar who was accused of cooperation with the government ([359]). A magnetic IED detonated on the car of a local elder in Surkh Rod District (Nangarhar), Haji Majdoor, killing him: ANSO called it a targeted killing.
	In Lal Pur District, insurgents killed a tribal elder, Abdul Wakil, who was known to be a government supporter. Insurgents abducted a tribal leader in Achin District (Nangarhar), Malak Ismail, but he was released soon after. Insurgents detonated an RCIED in front of the house of a local elder in Sherzad District (Nangarhar), when he arrived home: the blast killed the elder and wounded a couple of his family members. In the district of Khugyani (Nangarhar), insurgents attacked the vehicle of a tribal elder, killing the elder and his wife: four others were wounded. Another attack on the vehicle of a tribal elder in the district of Chaparhar (Nangarhar). In this attack, insurgents killed the elder and his daughter while his wife was wounded ([360]). In September 2012, the Taliban warned local mullahs in Nangarhar not to perform funerals on government security officials: local officials confirmed that local mullahs no longer attended or recited prayers at government security officials' funerals ([361]). In Nari District (Kunar), insurgents killed two local elders on the accusation of assisting the government ([362]).

([346]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/store/files/The%20ANSO%20Report%20%2816–31%20May%202012%29.pdf) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 12.

([347]) King, L., 'In Afghanistan, targeted attacks on leaders an ominous trend', *Los Angeles Times*, 31 July 2012 (http://www.afghanistannewscenter.com/news/2012/july/jul312012.html#a3) (accessed 25 September 2012).

([348]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 19; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([349]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([350]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 March 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 19.

([351]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 21.

([352]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([353]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 19.

([354]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 21.

([355]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 6 October 2012), p. 21.

([356]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 15; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([357]) UNAMA, *Today's Afghan Headlines – Articles*, 27 February 2012 (*Source: Hewad Daily*) (http://unama.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?ctl=Details&tabid=12329&mid=15870&ItemID=33913) (accessed 24 September 2012).

([358]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([359]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 13.

([360]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 13; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([361]) Ariana News, Taliban warns Nangarhar Mullahs not to perform funeral prayers on government security forces, 9 September 2012 (http://ariananews.af/regional/taliban-warns-nangarhar-mullahs-not-to-perform-funeral-prayers-on-government-security-forces/) (accessed 25 September 2012).

([362]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

CENTRE	Insurgents shot and wounded a village elder in the district of Mir Bacha Kot (Kabul) [363].
NORTH-EAST	A community elder was killed in Kunduz city by insurgents [364]. A local community elder was abducted and killed by insurgents in Warduj District (Badakhshan) [365].
NORTH-WEST	Insurgents threw a grenade in the house of a Mawlawi in Maymana District (Faryab): it did not explode [366]. Insurgents killed a cleric in the district of Qaysar (Faryab) [367]. Insurgents killed a village mullah in the district of Murgajik (Jawzjan) [368]. Insurgents killed a religious student and wounded another in an attack in Almar (Faryab) [369]. Insurgents detonated an IED close to a mosque in a location where a *shura* of elders and NGO staff just had concluded in Chimtal (Balkh). The IED killed a village elder and a militia member and wounded at least four others. The ANSO suggested that this might have been an attempt by insurgents to intimidate locals [370]. A mullah was killed in a mosque in Jawzjan [371].
WEST	Insurgents killed a local elder in the district of Pusht Kot (Farah): two attackers on motorcycles shot him, it was thought that he had been assassinated over an accusation of cooperation with the government [372]. The car of a local elder was hit by an IED in Shindand. The elder and an ANP officer were wounded [373]. An exogenous insurgent killed a community leader in Obe (Herat) on the charge of collusion with the government [374]. Insurgents opened fire on a group of tribal elders who were on their way to a community meeting in Shindand (Herat): three were killed and one was wounded in the attack [375]. Insurgents assassinated the son of a community elder who was accused of cooperation with the government in Badghis [376].

2.1.3.3 Defectors from the insurgents' ranks

ANSO reported that insurgents want to deter the communities from engaging in the Afghan Peace and Reconciliation Programme (APRP) and from joining the ALP project [377].

In January 2012, insurgents attacked the home of an insurgent who surrendered to the government [378]. Taliban members who joined the peace process in Baghlan complained that they received threats from their leaders in Pakistan to rejoin the Taliban [379]. The Taliban killed a reintegrated Taliban commander together with two of his associates in Jawzjan [380]. In May 2012, there were two security incidents in Badakhshan caused by insurgents that targeted insurgents joining the APRP [381].

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[363] UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

[364] UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

[365] UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

[366] UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

[367] UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

[368] UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

[369] UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

[370] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 9; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

[371] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 6 October 2012), p. 10.

[372] UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 9 August 2012), p. 14.

[373] UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

[374] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 10.

[375] UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 17.

[376] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 12.

[377] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 12.

[378] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 9 August 2012), p. 9.

[379] UNAMA, *Today's Afghan Headlines — Articles,* 15 January 2012 (*Source:* Ariana TV) (http://unama.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?ctl=Details&tabid=12329&mid=15870&ItemID=33949) (accessed 18 September 2012).

[380] UNAMA, *Today's Afghan Headlines – Articles*, 17 April 2012 (*Source: Daily Afghanistan*) (http://unama.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?ctl=Details&tabid=12329&mid=15870&ItemID=33871) (accessed 24 September 2012).

[381] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 5.

Summary — Government supporters, collaborators and contractors

Afghans collaborating with or supporting the government have been subject to intimidation, attack, killing, abduction and death sentences by Taliban courts. The Taliban also target, threaten, abduct or kill family members of government collaborators in order to put pressure.

In this profile, there are civilians alleged to have links to, or support, the government and contractors (e.g. suppliers to the ANP and construction workers). An extreme example was found of five local farmers who were killed by the Taliban in Helmand on the accusation of having accepted fertilisers and other agricultural support from a government programme.

Furthermore, commanders of anti-Taliban militias or pro-government militias were targeted. Tribal elders, community leaders and clerics who were perceived to be supportive of the government have been largely intimidated and targeted. They were often the target of SAF attacks conducted by insurgents on motorcycles. The threats led to displacement of elders and hundreds of them have been killed during the years of insurgency. A last category resorting under this profile are the insurgents defecting from the insurgents' ranks.

An indication of the current development of this situation can be found in anecdotal evidence of 2012. In the approximately 70 documented episodes of 2012, which are far from exhaustive, the following figures are present.

In the south, at least 12 episodes of targeting of government supporters or collaborators by insurgents were documented. Two of the episodes were in Kandahar city and one in Tirin Kot City (Uruzgan). In the south-east, at least four episodes were documented: two of the episodes were in Khost city. In the east, at least 17 episodes were documented. In the centre, at least one episode was documented. In the north-east, at least six episodes were documented and one of them was in Kunduz City. In the north-west, at least 21 episodes were documented. In the west, at least nine episodes were documented and one of them was in Farah City.

In all regions, at least 16 of the episodes concerned targeting by insurgents of civilians with alleged links to the government; 15 of pro-government militia commanders or members; 28 of tribal elders or local leaders; seven of pro-government clerics and five of defecting insurgents.

In at least eight episodes, the victims were targeted when off duty or in their private residence. In at least six episodes, it was reported that relatives of the government supporter were targeted.

Analysis — Intimidation and targeting of government supporters, collaborators and contractors

Several sources reported on an intensive campaign of intimidation and targeting of government supporters or collaborators conducted by insurgents. At least 70 episodes in 2012 have been documented in this report. This figure cannot be seen as exhaustive and no conclusions can be drawn from it on the frequency of the incidents. It is an illustrative list which provides an indication of the trends in 2012: it indicates that the targeting of these profiles continues.

Evidence was presented of the direct targeting of relatives. The victims were also regularly targeted while acting in a private capacity or at home. It was reported that several victims were tried and sentenced by Taliban courts. Such features of the targeting provide indications of the tracking down of individual victims by insurgents.

There are low-profile persons (e.g. regular civilians linked to the government, local contractors such as food suppliers) and high profiles (e.g. tribal elders, religious leaders and commanders) among the targeted. What is important is how the profiles are perceived by the actors of the targeting, which are the insurgents. Ahmad Quraishi indicated, for example, that the Taliban fear the influence of tribal leaders more than they fear low-ranking government employees (see Section 1.4.2 Cities v rural areas).

Regional differences

Reference is made to Section 1.4 Regional differences for an analysis of regional differences. The general conclusions can be applied and some more specific information relevant to government supporters, collaborators and contractors is presented in that section. Philip Alston explained that, in the south, the Taliban was apt to kill elders who had previously collaborated with the government and foreign troops in areas newly under their control. In areas under

the sustained control of the Taliban, victims have more often been suspected spies. Giustozzi and Reuter provided an example of how the Taliban threatened elders or eliminated those who resisted them in Chahar Dara (Kunduz) before taking full control of the district. Van Bijlert stated that even leaders who were living in relatively safe areas were regularly threatened by the Taliban (see Section 2.1.3.2 Tribal elders, local leaders and clerics).

In addition, reports are presented in Section 2.1.3 Government supporters, collaborators and contractors of intimidation and targeted violence against government officials and employees in the cities of Kandahar, Tirin Kot (Uruzgan), Khost, Kunduz and Farah. Evidence of intimidation and targeting of government supporters, collaborators and contractors by insurgents was found in all regions of Afghanistan (south, south-east, east, centre, north-east, north-west and west).

Possibilities to escape intimidation and targeting

Reference is made to Section 1.5 Victims' reactions for an analysis of the possibilities to escape threats. The general conclusions can be applied and some more specific information relevant for government supporters, collaborators and contractors is presented in that section. A local contact in south-east Afghanistan made it clear that the Taliban would not be satisfied with the targeted victim quitting the job if he worked for the ANSF. Regarding persons who were involved in military opposition against the insurgents, for example PGM members or people contracted to ANSF, the conclusion for ANSF members should be applied (see analysis in Section 2.1.2 Afghanistan's National Security Forces). This is confirmed by ANSO's fear that fighters of CIP units might defect back to the insurgency due to the targeting by insurgents (see Section 1.5 Victims' reactions), because ANSO did not fear that they would simply quit. A political analyst stated that the risk for someone who quits his activity depends on the circumstances. It could be necessary to join the Taliban, or at least contact them. But the person could then still face targeting. This risk is confined to areas in the easy reach of the Taliban.

CONCLUSIONS

High-profile persons face a real risk of being intimidated or targeted by insurgents in all parts of Afghanistan. In general, low profiles also face a real risk of being intimidated or targeted in areas which are under insurgents' sustained control or strong influence, but not much risk in safer areas in Afghanistan which are not under the insurgents' control, for example the cities of Kabul, Herat and Mazar. However, individual and specific circumstances might lead to an increased risk.

For low-profile persons, it is possible to escape insurgents' threats by stopping an activity or quitting a job, unless there are specific individual circumstances that could lead to continued targeting. An example of these circumstances could be involvement in military opposition against the insurgents, for example PGM members or contractors to ANSF.

If a low-profile person were to quit his activity, can flee and resettle in a safer area, he can normally escape intimidation or targeting by insurgents, unless there were specific individual circumstances which would preclude this possibility.

2.2 Afghans working for international military forces, organisations, NGOs and Afghan NGOs

The Taliban stated, on 2 May 2012, in their annual statement on the inception of their 'Al Farooq' spring operation that the primary target of their operation will be 'foreign invaders, their advisers, their contractors and members of all associated military, intelligence and auxiliary departments' ([382]).

According to Antonio Giustozzi, contracting for the IMF or western aid agencies is one of the most important employment sources; the insurgents' prohibition of such employment has a serious impact on job opportunities for Afghans. Most Afghans ignore the prohibition at their peril: executions of contractors usually happen after warnings to stop the activity ([383]).

2.2.1 International Military Forces

In 2005, insurgents started attacking civilians who were perceived to be cooperating with the US military. Farmers in Khost reported that PKR 15 000 Pakistani rupees (USD 250) were offered to kill civilians working with the US Army ([384]). In 2007, the Haqqani network targeted an Indian company working on the Gardez-Khost Road. The company was a subcontractor to the US Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) and Haqqani intended to destabilise the roadwork with attacks. Furthermore, construction sites for secondary roads to the district centres and the workers working on them were attacked ([385]). According to Thomas Ruttig, Afghans reported night letters in Paktia and Khost in 2008 in which the killing of interpreters for the US Troops was described as 'Islamic' ([386]). In 2009, Graeme Smith stated that the Taliban targeted English-speaking interpreters in Kandahar province and possibly also their relatives ([387]). The UN Special Rapporteur, Philip Alston, mentioned the intimidation and targeting of drivers supplying food to foreign troops by the Taliban ([388]). ANSO explained that in Kandahar and Helmand, locals associated with the IMF were primary targets of SAF attacks from insurgents on motorcycles ([389]).

The UNHCR explained to the Danish Immigration Service that all people who are seen to support the IMF are at risk of being targeted by the Taliban. Interpreters, local drivers of contracting companies and all blue-collar employees going in and out of bases or PRTs are at risk of intimidation by the Taliban. The IOM confirmed that people working for the IMF are at risk. The IOM pointed to the fact that this risk involves the family members of these people as well. Other organisations confirmed this information to the Danish Immigration Service ([390]). Sources reported that insurgents made use of illegal checkpoints to look for Afghans with links to the IMF ([391]). In 2011 and 2012, the UN reported targeted killings of people who were perceived by insurgents to be collaborating with, or supporting, the

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([382]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), pp. 1 and 20.

([383]) Giustozzi, A., 'Afghanistan: Human Rights and Security Situation', *Landinfo*, 9 September 2011 (http://www.landinfo.no/asset/1745/1/1745_1.pdf) (accessed 5 March 2012), p. 7.

([384]) Franco, C., 'Islamic militant insurgency in Afghanistan experiencing "Iraqization"', *Eurasianet*, 8 November 2005 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/46f2580dc.html) (accessed 28 June 2012).

([385]) Ruttig, T., 'Loya Paktia's Insurgency (I) The Haqqani network as an autonomous entity', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 70–71.

([386]) Ruttig, T., 'Loya Paktia's Insurgency (I) The Haqqani network as an autonomous entity', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, Columbia University Press, New York, 2009, p. 71.

([387]) Smith, G., 'What Kandahar's Taliban say', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 192.

([388]) UN Human Rights Council, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Philip Alston — Addendum: MISSION TO AFGHANISTAN*, A/HRC/11/2/Add.4, 6 May 2009 (http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G09/131/17/PDF/G0913117.pdf?OpenElement) (accessed 16 July 2012), p. 16.

([389]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 December 2011) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2011.html) (accessed 7 August 2012), p. 13.

([390]) Danish Immigration Service (DIS), *Afghanistan — Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process — Report from Danish Immigration Service's fact finding mission to Kabul, Afghanistan — 25 February to 4 March 2012*, May 2012 (http://www.nyidanmark.dk/NR/rdonlyres/3FD55632-770B-48B6-935C-827E83C18AD8/0/FFMrapportenAFGHANISTAN2012Final.pdf) (accessed 31 May 2012), p. 17.

([391]) UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), pp. 25–26; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 9; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), pp. 6, 8; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), p. 7; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), pp. 16, 18, 21.

IMF ([392]). The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs explained that during its reporting period (September 2011–June 2012), people assisting the IMF or working for them, had to fear retaliation by insurgents. Interpreters, drivers and contractors were mentioned as examples ([393]).

International Military Forces — episodes in 2012

SOUTH	The Taliban ambushed an IMF-contracted fuel supply convoy and torched six trucks ([394]). Insurgents killed local contractors working for the IMF in Kandahar City and Arghandab District ([395]). An Afghan interpreter working for the IMF in Kandahar died in an IED attack on the patrol in which he was participating. Insurgents attacked IMF-contracted supply trucks in Helmand, Kandahar and Zabul with direct attacks, IEDs or magnetic IEDs, killing several civilian drivers and other people ([396]).
SOUTH-EAST	In the first half of 2012, insurgents attacked several private IMF-contracted supply trucks in the provinces of Khost, Logar and Paktika with IEDs, 'sticky' or magnetic IEDs and direct attacks. The attacks happened also in provincial capitals ([397]). Furthermore, three local contractors working for foreign troops at the military base in Barak-i Barak (Logar) were attacked by insurgents: one was killed, the other two were wounded ([398]). A local IMF contractor was abducted by insurgents in Barak-i Barak (Logar) ([399]). Insurgents attacked the private residence of an interpreter working at the Police Training Centre in Gardez District (Paktya): the interpreter was not hurt ([400]). Insurgents killed a civilian in Sar Hawza (Paktika) on the allegation of having supported the IMF ([401]). In Tani District (Khost), insurgents planted an IED next to the house of a local interpreter for the IMF: the detonation caused no casualties ([402]).
EAST	Insurgents left night letters to the local population in Surkh Rod District (Nangarhar) with the instruction to stop working for the foreign troops ([403]). Insurgents distributed night letters to locals in Alisheng District (Laghman) with the instruction to stop supporting the foreign troops ([404]). Insurgents distributed night letters in Behsud (Nangarhar), urging the locals to stop working for and supporting the IMF ([405]). An IED detonated next to a mosque and near the house of a mullah (known as 'PRT Mullah') who had been targeted several times before on the accusation of cooperation with the IMF ([406]). An IED detonated against an IMF-contracted supply truck in Mehterlam District: the truck overturned and was set on fire by insurgents ([407]).

([392]) UNAMA and UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), *Afghanistan — Annual Report 2011 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, February 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/4f2fa7572.pdf) (accessed 16 July 2012), p. 4; UN Human Rights Council, *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the human rights situation in Afghanistan and technical assistance achievements in the field of human rights*, A/HRC/19/47, 18 January 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4f391a772.html) (accessed 24 July 2012), p. 6; UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 16.

([393]) Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken (Netherlands), Directie Consulaire Zaken en Migratiebeleid, Afdeling Migratie en Asiel, *Algemeen Ambtsbericht Afghanistan*, July 2012 (http://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten-en-publicaties/ambtsberichten/2012/07/05/afghanistan-2012-07-04.html) (accessed 23 July 2012), p. 35.

([394]) UNAMA, *Today's Afghan Headlines — Articles*, 4 April 2012 (*Source:* Daily Afghanistan) (http://unama.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?ctl=Details&tabid=12329&mid=15870&ItemID=33882) (accessed 24 September 2012).

([395]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([396]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 17; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 18; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([397]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 10; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 2; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([398]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([399]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), p. 2.

([400]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (*16–30 April 2012*) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 15.

([401]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), p. 18; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([402]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([403]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([404]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([405]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 14.

([406]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 13.

([407]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

CENTRE	Insurgents attacked several IMF-contracted supply trucks in Wardak and Parwan, killing, injuring and abducting several drivers [408].
NORTH-EAST	Insurgents attacked several trucks of private contractors carrying supplies for the IMF on the Pul-e Khumri-Kabul road in Baghlan: at least one of the drivers was killed. ANSO clarified that convoys of trucks supplying the IMF are under regular attack, but almost all attacks happened between 17.00 and 09.00 [409].
NORTH-WEST	ANSO noted that the direct targeting of civilians working for the IMF frequently happened in Sar-e Pul and most often to drivers of fuel supply trucks [410]. In July 2012, more than 20 trucks exploded in a parking area in Samangan. Some vehicles were carrying supplies for NATO and others commercial goods for local shopkeepers: two drivers were injured. The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack that happened before dawn [411].
WEST	A village elder was killed by insurgents because he accepted funds from foreign troops to repair a local mosque in the district of Murghab (Badghis) [412]. An NDS employee in the provincial capital of Ghor (Chaghcharan) received a letter threatening his two brothers who were assumed to be working for the PRT: the letter criticised the PRT and threatened to kill the brothers if they didn't resign from their presumed PRT jobs. In reality, the two brothers of the NDS employee were working for an international organisation and for an international governmental organisation, and not for the PRT. However, there were doubts about the authenticity of the letter and it's possible that it was not written by an insurgent group [413].
	Furthermore, insurgents attacked several IMF supply convoys in Herat and Farah with IEDs or direct attacks [414]. Insurgents threw a grenade into the private residence of an NGO employee after they had warned him to stop working for the IMF [415].

Summary — Afghan civilians working for the IMF

Afghans collaborating with the IMF are a proclaimed target of the Taliban and other insurgent groups. This is a large target group, since the IMF and foreign aid are the most important source of employment in Afghanistan. The economic situation of the country forces many Afghans to ignore the risk of being targeted by insurgents.

Road construction companies contracted to the IMF, interpreters, contractors, drivers of IMF supply trucks and people frequenting PRT or IMF bases were victims of intimidation by night letters, killings, IED attacks or SAF attacks by motorcyclists. Relatives of these people have been targeted as well by insurgents. Insurgents set up illegal checkpoints to look for people with links to the IMF.

An indication of the current development of this situation can be found in anecdotal evidence of 2012. In the documented episodes of 2012, which are far from exhaustive, the following figures are present.

In the south, more than seven episodes of targeting of IMF supporters or collaborators by insurgents were documented. One episode was in Kandahar city. In the south-east, more than eight episodes were documented and several attacks on IMF suppliers were referred to which occurred in the capitals of the south-eastern provinces as well. In the east,

[408] UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 3; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), p. 3; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 4; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 3.

[409] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), p. 7; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 12; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

[410] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 9 August 2012), p. 10.

[411] Barat, M., '20 NATO supply tankers torched in Samangan', *Pajhwok Afghan News*, 18 July 2012 (http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2012/07/18/20-nato-supply-tankers-torched-samangan) (accessed 1 August 2012).

[412] UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

[413] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 11.

[414] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 9 August 2012), p. 12; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 10; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), pp. 9–10.

[415] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 6 October 2012), p. 12.

more than four episodes were documented. In the centre, several episodes of attacks on IMF supply convoys or trucks were documented. In the north-east, regular attacks on IMF supply convoys or trucks were documented. In the north-west, frequent attacks on IMF supply convoys or trucks were documented. In the west, at least two episodes of targeting IMF collaborators and several attacks on IMF supply convoys or trucks were documented.

In all regions, many episodes of targeting IMF contractors and, mostly, supply convoys or trucks were documented; there were three episodes involving Afghan interpreters.

In at least four episodes, the victims were targeted while off duty or at home.

Analysis — Intimidation and targeting of Afghan civilians working for IMF

The information presents a widespread and intensive targeting of people working for, or collaborating with, the IMF by insurgents, including several episodes from 2012. This list of episodes cannot be seen as exhaustive and no conclusions can be drawn from it on the frequency of the incidents. It is an illustrative list which provides an indication of the trends in 2012. It indicates that the targeting of these profiles continues. The use of checkpoints by insurgents in order to identify people with links to the IMF, targeting them in their private residences or when off duty and the targeting of relatives are indications that the victims are being individually tracked down by the insurgents.

Regional differences

Reference is made to Section 1.4 Regional differences for an analysis of regional differences. The general conclusions can be applied and some more specific information relevant for people working for the IMF is presented in that section. An independent policy research organisation stated that Afghans associated with the IMF do not run a high risk of being targeted if their workplace is Kabul. However, if their workplace is outside of Kabul, there is a high risk for them regardless of the kind of job or position they hold. The UNHCR stated that all Afghans who are associated with foreigners could be at risk in Kabul or other parts of the country. However, according to the UNHCR, the risk is higher outside Kabul. A local contact in south-east Afghanistan explained that the targeting of someone working for the IMF will be more important to the Taliban compared to the targeting of a cook or a cleaner working for an NGO, which happens more frequently in peripheral and insecure areas.

In addition, reports are presented in Section 2.2.1 International Military Forces of intimidation and targeted violence against government officials and employees in the cities of Kandahar and the capitals of the south-eastern provinces. Evidence of intimidation and targeting of government supporters, collaborators and contractors by insurgents was found in all regions of Afghanistan (south, south-east, east, centre, north-east, north-west and west).

Possibilities to escape the intimidation and targeting

Reference is made to Section 1.5 Victims' reactions for an analysis of the possibilities to escape threats. The general conclusions can be applied and some more specific information relevant for people working for the IMF is presented in that section. A local contact in the south-east stated that the Taliban would not be satisfied with a targeted victim quitting his job if he worked for the ISAF. Regarding persons who were involved in military opposition against the insurgents, for example people contracted to the IMF, the conclusion for ANSF members or contractors and PGM members should be applied (see analysis in Section 2.1.2 Afghanistan's National Security Forces and Section 2.1.3 Government supporters, collaborators and contractors). A political analyst stated that the risk to someone who quits his activity depends upon the circumstances. For an interpreter, it would be, for example, necessary to join the Taliban, or at least contact them. But the person could still face targeting. This risk is confined to areas in the easy reach of the Taliban.

CONCLUSIONS

People working for the IMF face a real risk of being intimidated or targeted by insurgents in all parts of Afghanistan, but the risk is lower in the city of Kabul. However, individual and specific circumstances might lead to an increased risk.

For people working for the IMF, it might not be sufficient to simply quit their job or stop their activity in order to escape the intimidation and targeting by the insurgents.

If a person working for the IMF quits his activity and can flee and resettle in a safer area, he can normally escape intimidation or targeting by insurgents, unless there are specific individual circumstances which would preclude this possibility.

2.2.2 International organisations, companies, NGOs and Afghan NGOs

In the provinces of Khost, Paktia and Paktika, night letters have been distributed in order to intimidate civilians working for international actors. The security situation further deteriorated in the summer of 2008. Locals warned relatives working for NGOs not come to the area and UN staff moved family members to safer areas. Thomas Ruttig referred to a UN official who explained that the Haqqani network 'researches international organisations in the South-East' [416].

The AIHRC mentioned to the Danish Immigration Service that people travelling on ID cards from international organisations or NGOs were at risk when stopped at insurgents' checkpoints and might even be killed. The IOM advises its local staff not to wear signs or carry documents related to their organisation when they travel outside Kabul. The CPAU advises NGOs to travel low profile, to have their local staff (who speak the local languages) make the trip and not to carry satellite phones or cell phones holding contact information [417].

According to Hadi Marifat, the Taliban supreme council defined a policy allowing certain organisations to operate in Afghanistan, but also targeted others that are perceived as their enemies [418].

2.2.2.1 International and Afghan NGOs

The UN Special Rapporteur, Philip Alston, mentioned the intimidation and targeting of NGO staff by the Taliban. He gave night letters threatening NGO workers in Kandahar as an example [419].

In August 2003, the Taliban attacked a car with four workers of the Afghan Red Crescent Society in Andar, Ghazni. The Taliban in Ghazni prohibited the people from working for NGOs. Abductions of NGO staff intensified in 2007 and according to Christophe Reuter and Borhan Younus, the province turned into the most dangerous kidnapping area in Afghanistan. For example, the Taliban stopped a de-miners' bus near Ghazni city and kidnapped 18 workers of the Afghan mine clearance organisation, OMAR: they were later released [420]. In 2008, the Taliban's Zabul Commission in Quetta ordered the release of three Afghan employees of the Red Crescent of Afghanistan, who were abducted near the border between Zabul and Ghazni [421]. In 2009, Graeme Smith stated that the Taliban targeted local Afghan aid workers in Kandahar province and possibly also their relatives [422]. A woman working for an international NGO in a southern province received a night letter (April 2010) from insurgents threatening her [423]. In 2010, foreign insurgents executed a group of international and national NGO staff in Kuran Wa Munjan (Badakhshan) [424].

In 2011, Giustozzi and Reuter stated that the Taliban no longer oppose NGO activities. Evidence was found in Jawzjan and Sar-e Pul where they collected a 20 % tax on aid projects. They referred to Nick Lee, Director of the Afghan NGO Safety Office (ANSO), who stated in September 2010: "The Taliban don't have a clear anti-NGO agenda." Occasionally, local communities stepped up to protect NGO activities and this sometimes caused the Taliban to refrain from further targeting the NGO workers. According to Giustozzi and Reuter, attacks on NGOs seemed to be related to their funding. The Taliban strongly opposed USAID-funded projects [425].

The ANSO Quarterly Data Report Q2 (January–June 2012) mentioned a drop in NGO-related incidents and stated that the assessment that NGO security incidents were mostly due to circumstantial exposure, rather than political

[416] Ruttig, T., 'Loya Paktia's Insurgency (I) The Haqqani network as an autonomous entity', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 71–72.

[417] Danish Immigration Service (DIS), *Afghanistan — Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process — Report from Danish Immigration Service's fact finding mission to Kabul, Afghanistan — 25 February to 4 March 2012*, May 2012 (http://www.nyidanmark.dk/NR/rdonlyres/3FD55632-770B-48B6-935C-827E83C18AD8/0/FFMrapportenAFGHANISTAN2012Final.pdf) (accessed 31 May 2012), p. 19.

[418] Marifat, H., interview via Skype, 16 September 2012, 13.15–14.15.

[419] UN Human Rights Council, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Philip Alston – Addendum: MISSION TO AFGHANISTAN*, A/HRC/11/2/Add.4, 6 May 2009 (http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G09/131/17/PDF/G0913117.pdf?OpenElement) (accessed 16 July 2012), p. 16.

[420] Reuter, C., Younus, B., 'The return of the Taliban in Andar District: Ghazni', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 104, 110, 114–117.

[421] Zabulwal, A. A., 'Taliban in Zabul: A witness' account', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 184.

[422] Smith, G., 'What Kandahar's Taliban say', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 192.

[423] HRW, *The 'Ten-Dollar Talib' and Women's Rights Afghan Women and the Risks of Reintegration and Reconciliation*, July 2010 (http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/afghanistan0710webwcover.pdf) (accessed 25 September 2012), p. 25; HRW, *The 'Ten-Dollar Talib' and Women's Rights Afghan Women and the Risks of Reintegration and Reconciliation*, July 2010 (http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/afghanistan0710webwcover.pdf) (accessed 25 September 2012), pp. 8–13.

[424] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 5.

[425] Giustozzi, A., Reuter, C., *The Insurgents of the Afghan North*, Afghanistan Analysts Network, April 2011 (http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/AAN-2011-Northern-Insurgents.pdf) (accessed 28 March 2012), pp. 8–9.

targeting by insurgents ([426]). In June 2012, ANSO stated that there was a general acceptance of NGOs at field level in most regions of Afghanistan ([427]). This was illustrated by insurgents' night letters in Nangarhar encouraging NGOs' work in the area and ensuring that their safety would be protected by the insurgents ([428]). ANSO confirmed the regression in its 2012 Q3 report and concluded that 'the decisions to harm NGO staff purposefully were context-specific and did not reflect systemic or routine targeting' ([429]).

The CPAU explained to the Danish Immigration Service that people working for NGOs might be at risk and especially those working on US-funded projects or for US organisations, those with political activities or cooperating with the IMF for development work. Some of the sources consulted in the fact-finding mission of the Danish Immigration Service stated that NGO employees are not normally at risk. It was indicated, for example, that the trend in insurgents' attacks was more towards targeting government and security staff and less towards the international NGOs. It was also mentioned that some NGOs were able to work in the Afghan field based on agreements with the local community ([430]).

UNOCHA indicated high risks for humanitarian workers due to the conflict in Afghanistan: '54 incidents of direct and indirect violence on aid workers, their assets and facilities were reported in 17 provinces across the country from January to May 2012' ([431]).

Thomas Ruttig explained: "The Taliban sees themselves as the legitimate government. They installed parallel government structures in most provinces. In some areas under their control, NGOs need to register with the Taliban, who cooperate with those who do not challenge them, are not perceived as linked (or funded) by foreign military forces and work on their conditions. (These can be different from area to area, and might include employing personnel linked with the Taliban.) In this way, NGOs are able to operate in these areas and Afghan NGOs are more often allowed than international NGOs. NGOs who do not comply with the Taliban's demands could be targeted, usually with threats to comply with Taliban 'policy' before violence is used. NGOs cooperating with the military, or funded by it, will not be allowed and would certainly be at risk of being targeted" ([432]).

A political analyst based in Kabul stated: "There is a decrease in targeting of NGOs or NGO workers. This is the change in the Taliban's tactics: they want to win the public's minds. Before, they attacked everything that enhanced development. Now NGOs are often allowed to operate, but there can still be danger. The Taliban cannot always assess whether an NGO is partisan or not and in these cases they might be targeted. NGOs that contact the Taliban can be allowed to operate by them" ([433]).

2.2.2.2 International organisations

A UN staff member active in the field in Afghanistan explained in 2010 that the UN is not always seen by insurgents as a neutral international body, but as a political institution that sides with their enemies ([434]). A political analyst in Kabul stated the following about the UN: "The Taliban does not state explicitly that they are a target or enemy. There are some problems and attacks on UN compounds happened, but these are random cases and do not reflect systematic targeting of UN staff, the national staff are particularly safe. The Taliban sees the UN as a possible partner for later, in order to negotiate with the international community" ([435]).

On 31 October 2011, insurgents carried out an attack against the UNHCR compound and an Afghan NGO compound in Kandahar City which included an IED attack and small arms fire. Several local staff members were killed and

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([426]) Afghan NGO Safety Office (ANSO), *Quarterly Data Report,* Q2 2012, July 2012 (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012crs.html) (accessed 24 July 2012), p. 15.

([427]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 6 October 2012), p. 1.

([428]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 6 October 2012), p. 14.

([429]) ANSO, *Quarterly Data Report Q.3 2012*, October 2012 (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012crs.html) (accessed 10 November 2012), p. 4.

([430]) Danish Immigration Service (DIS), *Afghanistan — Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process — Report from Danish Immigration Service's fact finding mission to Kabul, Afghanistan — 25 February to 4 March 2012*, May 2012 (http://www.nyidanmark.dk/NR/rdonlyres/3FD55632-770B-48B6-935C-827E83C18AD8/0/FFMrapportenAFGHANISTAN2012Final.pdf) (accessed 31 May 2012), p., 19, 20–24.

([431]) UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), *Mid-Year Review of the Consolidated Appeal for Afghanistan 2012*, 20 July 2012 (http://unocha.org/cap/appeals/mid-year-review-consolidated-appeal-afghanistan-2012) (accessed 24 September 2012), pp. 2, 15.

([432]) Ruttig, T., interview via Skype, 17 October 2012, 11.00–12.00, and e-mail correspondence, 9 November 2012.

([433]) Political analyst based in Kabul, interview via Skype, 18 October 2012, and e-mail correspondence, 15 November 2012.

([434]) Conversations with UN Staff member active in the field in Afghanistan, February–June 2010.

([435]) Political analyst based in Kabul, interview via Skype, 18 October 2012, and e-mail correspondence, 15 November 2012.

injured ([436]). The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs mentioned targeted attacks by insurgents on the UN for its reporting period (September 2011–June 2012) ([437]). The UN reported, in September 2012, attacks on, and threats to, its staff or implementing partners ([438]).

Several organisations confirmed to the Danish Immigration Service that people associated with, or employed by, international organisations are at risk of being targeted by the Taliban. They might receive night letters or threatening phone calls, they are approached in mosques or in the street by insurgents telling them to quit their job and are sometimes killed ([439]).

2.2.2.3 Foreign companies

In 2005, the Taliban attacked a USAID contractor, Chemonics International, active in agricultural redevelopment in Helmand: five employees were killed ([440]).

The IOM explained to the Danish Immigration Service that Afghan contractors working for American, British or Indian companies could be targeted by the Taliban. Several organisations confirmed to the Danish Immigration Service that people associated with or employed by international companies are at risk of being targeted by the Taliban. They might receive night letters or threatening phone calls, they are approached in mosques or in the street by insurgents telling them to quit their job and several have been killed ([441]).

Episodes in 2012

SOUTH	Insurgents abducted a local staff member of a de-mining organisation in Lashkar Gah City (Helmand) ([442]). Insurgents abducted a local staff member of an international NGO in Nawa-i Barakzai District (Helmand) ([443]). The police warned a UN staff member in Kandahar City of insurgents' threat because of his support during security operations ([444]). A grenade was thrown into the office of an international NGO in Tirin Kot city (Uruzgan), but it did not explode ([445]). A civilian contractor working for an international organisation conducting a survey of poppy fields was killed by an IED in Zhari District (Kandahar) ([446]). Insurgents killed the brother of a UN national staff member in Kandahar City ([447]).
SOUTH-EAST	In January 2012, an IED detonated against the wall of a Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) building in Khost District (Khost). Around 3 months later, another IED detonated in the same MSF office and wounded three people. A third IED detonated on a bicycle parked against the same office and wounded two people. In the same period, an IRC (International Red Cross) vehicle was attacked on the Sabari and Bak District road: one person was wounded. An NGO driver was abducted with his vehicle in Barak-e Barak (Logar): he was released on the same day and the car returned after the intervention of elders ([448]).

([436]) UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, *Travel advice by country — Afghanistan*, updated: 18 September 2012 (still current at 7 October 2012) (http://www. fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/travel-advice-by-country/asia-oceania/afghanistan) (accessed 7 October 2012); N Human Rights Council, *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the human rights situation in Afghanistan and technical assistance achievements in the field of human rights*, A/HRC/19/47, 18 January 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4f391a772.html) (accessed 24 July 2012), p. 7.

([437]) Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken (Netherlands), Directie Consulaire Zaken en Migratiebeleid, Afdeling Migratie en Asiel, *Algemeen Ambtsbericht Afghanistan*, July 2012 (http://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten-en-publicaties/ambtsberichten/2012/07/05/afghanistan-2012-07-04.html) (accessed 23 July 2012), p. 35.

([438]) UN General Assembly Security Council, *The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security — Report of the Secretary-General*, 13 September 2012 (http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/N1249929.pdf) (accessed 10 November 2012), pp. 4–5.

([439]) Danish Immigration Service (DIS), *Afghanistan — Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process — Report from Danish Immigration Service's fact finding mission to Kabul, Afghanistan — 25 February to 4 March 2012*, May 2012 (http://www.nyidanmark.dk/NR/rdonlyres/3FD55632-770B-48B6-935C-827E83C18AD8/0/FFMrapportenAFGHANISTAN2012Final.pdf) (accessed 31 May 2012), p., 19, 20–24.

([440]) Rashid, A., *Descent into Chaos: The United States and the Failure of Nation Building in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia*, 2008, p. 323.

([441]) Danish Immigration Service (DIS), *Afghanistan — Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process — Report from Danish Immigration Service's fact finding mission to Kabul, Afghanistan — 25 February to 4 March 2012*, May 2012 (http://www.nyidanmark.dk/NR/rdonlyres/3FD55632-770B-48B6-935C-827E83C18AD8/0/FFMrapportenAFGHANISTAN2012Final.pdf) (accessed 31 May 2012), p., 19, 20–24.

([442]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([443]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([444]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([445]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([446]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 17; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 18.

([447]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([448]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

EAST	A UNDP staff member in Jalalabad city (Nangarhar) was threatened by phone. The insurgents ordered her to quit her job. A night letter was posted by insurgents at the home of a UN employee in Jalalabad City. A local staff of the NGO Health Net International was shot and wounded by insurgents in the district of Khugyani (Nangarhar) (449). Insurgents kidnapped six staff members of a local de-mining NGO (Mine Clearance Planning Agency (MCAP) in Kuz Kunar (Nangarhar)). All were released (450). Insurgents approached a road construction company working on an international organisation project along the main road Mehterlam to Qarghayi (Laghman) with a warning to stop the work: they assaulted some workers and destroyed some heavy machines. The work continued and the insurgents returned and opened fire on the workers, there were no injuries, but a clear escalation of the warning was given (451). An NGO office was attacked by insurgents in Alisheng District (Laghman) (452). A national staff member of an international NGO was abducted by insurgents in Pech Valley (Kunar): he was released after the intervention of local elders (453).
CENTRE	A suicide attacker entered a grocery shop in Kabul frequented by internationals. Although most victims of the attack were Afghans, the Taliban claimed responsibility. According to the ANSO, the target must have been perceived as legitimate because of the international customers frequenting the shop (454).
	A UN contractor in Parwan received a threatening night letter demanding that he stop work and leave the area (455). Insurgents attacked a humanitarian supply convoy from the UN World Food Programme on the road in Parwan, bringing food to Bamyan: two or three trucks were set on fire, but no drivers were harmed (456). A driver for an NGO was approached by two (unarmed) men on a motorcycle on Daraluman Road in Kabul City: the men warned him not to work for a foreign organisation (457). Taliban killed five men in Jalrez (Wardak) on the allegation of working for foreigners. In August 2012, the Taliban killed four Afghans working for a western security company in the same district in Wardak (458).
NORTH-EAST	UNAMA mentioned at the beginning of 2012 to the Danish Immigration Service that on a Taliban-controlled radio station in Kunduz, the names of people who worked for international organisations were disclosed (459). Insurgents abducted an employee of an international construction company in Imam Sahib (Kunduz) (460). Five NGO staff members, two international women and three national men, were abducted on the road between Fayzabad and Raghistan Districts (Badakhshan): the abduction was believed to be conducted by locals with links to insurgents and to criminal elements (461). The UNAMA compound in Taluqan city (Takhar) was attacked by insurgents: there were no casualties (462).
NORTH-WEST	A daily wage contractor of a UN agency was abducted in Sar-e Pul District (Sar-e Pul) by insurgents: he was released after intermediation by tribal elders (463). An armed group tried

(449) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 9 August 2012), p. 15.

(450) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), p. 13.

(451) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), p. 14; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

(452) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

(453) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

(454) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 January 2011) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2011.html) (accessed 7 August 2012), p. 2.

(455) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

(456) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 5; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

(457) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 1.

(458) The Asian Age, *Taliban execute four Afghans 'for Western links'* (*Source:* AFP, 1 August 2012 (http://www.asianage.com/international/taliban-execute-four-afghans-western-links-898) (accessed 25 September 2012).

(459) Danish Immigration Service (DIS), *Afghanistan — Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process — Report from Danish Immigration Service's fact finding mission to Kabul, Afghanistan — 25 February to 4 March 2012*, May 2012 (http://www.nyidanmark.dk/NR/rdonlyres/3FD55632-770B-48B6-935C-827E83C18AD8/0/FFMrapportenAFGHANISTAN2012Final.pdf) (accessed 31 May 2012), p. 19.

(460) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

(461) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 5.

(462) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

(463) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

	to abduct five workers from an Afghan private construction company in Mardyan (Jawzjan). The company was working on a project for an international organisation. The workers managed to escape, but one was hurt during the shooting. According to ANSO, the armed group was believed to be a criminal element with links to insurgents ([464]). Insurgents attacked a compound of an international NGO in Shortepa District (Balkh): there were no casualties ([465]). Insurgents attacked a private construction company building a bridge in Balkh for an international organisation ([466]). Insurgents stopped and detained truck drivers with their vehicles contracted to the UN in Jawzjan: they were released because they were locals and well known in the community ([467]). Insurgents made phone calls to an international NGO in Balkh to demand that females would no longer be employed and that taxes would be paid to the insurgents ([468]).
WEST	Three national staff members of a de-mining NGO were abducted by insurgents in Ghorian District (Herat): they were released after the intervention of elders ([469]). Insurgents intercepted food supply trucks contracted to the UN in Adraskan (Herat): they were taken to Shindand (Herat) where the drivers were released ([470]). Local trucks carrying UN goods were stopped by insurgents at an illegal checkpoint in Farsi District (Herat) and one of the trucks was confiscated ([471]). Furthermore, insurgents attacked a UN compound in Guzara District (Herat): there were no casualties ([472]). Also in Herat, eight national staff members of an international NGO were stopped by insurgents who questioned them and told them to stop working for foreigners: the insurgents left when local villagers came and supported their work ([473]). Insurgents abducted a female staff member of an Afghan NGO together with her son in Ghor: she was also released ([474]). A UN employee in Chaghcharan District (Ghor) received a threatening letter from insurgents ordering him to quit his job: a couple of days later, he received a threatening phone call. Two Afghan employees of an international NGO were abducted in Ghor, but released the same day after the intervention of elders ([475]). Insurgents abducted an ALP member and a de-miner working for a UN project in Muqur District (Badghis): both were released after the intervention of local elders. In Qala-i Naw City (Badghis), a UN staff member received a night letter threatening him to quit his job or face the consequence ([476]). A person was stopped at an illegal insurgent checkpoint in Badghis and abducted on the allegation of having relations with an international organisation ([477]).

Summary — Afghans working for international organisations, companies, NGOs and Afghan NGOs

Several sources reported the intimidation and targeting of people working for international organisations, companies and NGOs by insurgents. One source explained that the Taliban defined a policy towards these kinds of organisations, allowing some of them to operate.

In the past, several sources reported intimidation and targeting of NGO staff by way of night letters, attacks, abductions and executions. Relatives of NGO workers have also been targeted. In 2011 and 2012, sources stated

([464]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 9.

([465]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([466]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 9.

([467]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), pp. 10; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([468]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 6 October 2012), p. 7.

([469]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 10.

([470]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 13; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([471]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([472]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([473]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 6 October 2012), p. 11.

([474]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([475]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([476]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([477]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 6 October 2012), p. 13.

the Taliban no longer oppose NGO activities.Evidence was found of the Taliban collecting a tax on NGO projects, which indicates that they allowed them to operate. ANSO reported a regression in NGO related incidents in 2012 and stated that there was a general acceptance of NGOs at field level in most regions of Afghanistan.

In 2012, sources still reported on intimidation and targeting of NGO staff; for example, UNOCHA indicated high risks for humanitarian workers due to the conflict in Afghanistan. But several sources indicated that these incidents were mostly due to circumstances and not due to insurgents opposing NGOs as such. Examples of such circumstances include: funding by USAID or US organisations, which the Taliban strongly opposed; NGO activities perceived by insurgents as political; cooperation with the IMF. Thomas Ruttig explained that the Taliban required NGOs to register with them and work on their conditions. In this way, NGOs are able to operate in these areas and Afghan NGOs are more often allowed to do so than international NGOs. NGOs who do not comply with the Taliban's demands could be targeted, usually with threats to comply with Taliban 'policy' before violence is used.

Several sources reported the intimidation and targeting of UN staff and people working for foreign companies by insurgents.

An indication of the current development of this situation can be found in anecdotal evidence of 2012. In the approximately 47 documented episodes of 2012, which are far from exhaustive, the following figures are present

In the south, at least six episodes of the targeting of Afghans working for international organisations, foreign companies or NGOs by insurgents were documented. Two of the episodes were in Kandahar city, one in the city of Tirin Kot and one in the city of Lashkar Gah (Helmand). In the south-east, at least five episodes were documented. In the east, at least seven episodes were documented, of which two were in the city of Jalalabad (Nangarhar). In the centre, at least six episodes were documented: two of these episodes were in Kabul city. In the north-east, at least four episodes were documented and one of them was in Taluqan city (Takhar). In the north-west, at least six episodes were documented. In the west, at least 13 episodes were documented and one of them was in Qala-i Naw (Badghis).

In all regions, at least 17 of the episodes concerned targeting by insurgents of civilians working for, or contracted to, NGOs; in at least 20, the targeting of the UN, other international organisations or their contractors; in at least three, targeting of demining organisations; four of construction companies contracted to international organisations; three episodes involved the targeting of Afghan civilians collaborating with foreigners.

In at least two episodes, it was reported that relatives of the contractor or staff member were targeted.

In the documented episodes on the targeting of NGO staff, four people were wounded but nobody was killed. Three of the episodes mentioned only threats; six were attacks and eight concerned abductions. In six of these episodes concerning abductions, the release of the victims was reported.

Analysis — Intimidation and targeting of NGO staff, UN staff and people working for foreign companies

ANSO, Giustozzi, Reuter, Ruttig and a political analyst reported that the Taliban no longer opposes NGOs as such. The numbers of incidents targeting NGOs are decreasing. They make agreements with them and allow NGOs to operate if they comply with their demands, for example by registering, paying taxes, not cooperating with the IMF or even employing a Taliban liaison person. There are still incidents of intimidation and targeting of NGO staff, but these are driven by circumstances and not by insurgents' opposition of NGOs as such. Examples of such circumstances are funding by US organisations, cooperation with the IMF, perceived 'political' or 'partisan' activities or not complying with the Taliban's demands. Ruttig explained that Afghan NGOs were more readily accepted by the Taliban.

ANSO is an important source for this issue, because they are specialised in monitoring security developments in order to give advice to NGOs operating in the field. The incidents referred to by UNOCHA are not necessarily targeted actions or actions conducted by insurgents. Nevertheless, incidents of intimidating and targeting NGO workers still happen. Evidence is present in the documented episodes of 2012. However, it is remarkable that in the approximately 17 documented episodes on the targeting of NGO staff, only four people were wounded and nobody was killed. Three of the episodes mentioned only threats; six of them were attacks and eight concerned abductions. In six of these episodes concerning abductions, the release of the victims was reported. Compared to other profiles, such as ANSF or government employees, this is a remarkably 'soft' approach by the insurgents, which can be explained by the statements of Giustozzi, Reuter and ANSO.

Several sources reported that UN staff or employees of other international organisations were targeted by insurgents. Also employees of foreign companies might be targeted by insurgents. One source mentioned that this is especially the case for American, British or Indian companies.

Regional differences

Reference is made to Section 1.4 Regional differences for an analysis of regional differences. The general conclusions can be applied and some more specific information relevant for international organisations, companies, NGOs and Afghan NGOs is presented in that section. A local contact in south-east Afghanistan confirmed that the targeting of a cook or a cleaner working for an NGO will be less at stake for the Taliban and happens more frequently in peripheral and insecure areas. Some sources stated that there is no risk for NGO staff in Kabul.

In addition, reports are presented in Section 2.2.2 International organisations, companies, NGOs and Afghan NGOs of intimidation and targeted violence against government officials and employees in the cities of Kandahar, Tirin Kot (Uruzgan), Lashkar Gah (Helmand), Jalalabad (Nangarhar), Kabul, Taluqan city (Takhar) and Qala-i Naw (Badghis). Evidence of intimidation and targeting of NGO staff, UN staff and people working for foreign companies by insurgents was found in all regions of Afghanistan (south, south-east, east, centre, north-east, north-west and west).

Possibilities to escape intimidation and targeting

Reference is made to Section 1.5 Victims' reactions for an analysis of the possibilities to escape threats. The general conclusions can be applied and some more specific information relevant for international organisations, companies, NGOs and Afghan NGOs is presented in that section. According to a staff member of an international development agency in Afghanistan it would be possible for NGO employees to escape a threat if they would quit their job and leave the province.

CONCLUSIONS

There is evidence that the targeting of NGOs is decreasing and Afghan NGO workers are no longer systematically targeted by insurgents. There might be targeting however, if certain circumstances are present: for example, working in US-funded or for US organisations, activities which are perceived by insurgents to be political, and cooperation with the IMF. Afghan UN staff members or Afghan employees of other international organisations are at risk of being targeted by insurgents. This is also the case for employees of foreign companies, especially if the companies are American, British or Indian. The risk of being intimidated or targeted is low for these profiles in the cities of Kabul, Mazar and Herat, unless there are specific circumstances which could increase the risk.

The individual circumstances of the case determine whether the Taliban would further target or threaten a person after he quitted his job or stopped activities.

If an Afghan civilian working for an NGO, international organisation or foreign company quits his activity and can flee and resettle in a safer area, he can normally escape intimidation or targeting by insurgents, unless there are specific individual circumstances which would preclude this possibility.

2.3 Spies

Thomas Coghlan explained that spying on behalf of the government is widespread among the population. People use mobile phones to inform the IMF and Afghan Government about Taliban movements: the Taliban were paranoid about this. A commander interviewed in Lashkar Gah in 2008 explained how they executed two spies by shooting them in the head with 16 bullets each. Another anecdote from his side was about the wife of a spy who alerted them that her husband had a machine for contacting foreigners: he was also killed by the Taliban. The commander explained that the British gave coats with mirrors sewn into them to their spies. The spies also drop a tiny piece of metal on the roof of houses: this gives a signal to pilots so they can bomb it. The Taliban maintained secret networks in villages in order to identify potential spies. A Senator from Garmser explained in an interview in 2008 that the Taliban had an internal security institute called 'The Commission', which had been beheading those accused of spying ([478]). This was also the case for Zabul ([479]). Martine van Bijlert referred to cases in which Taliban judges pronounced death sentences

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([478]) Coghlan, T., 'The Taliban in Helmand: An Oral History', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 133, 142.

([479]) Zabulwal, A. A., 'Taliban in Zabul: A witness' account', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 184.

for alleged spies in Dehrawud (Uruzgan) ([480]). Christophe Reuter and Borhan Younus explained that, in Ghazni, the fear of the accusation of spying contributed to the popular support of the Taliban. One could easily be called a spy, for example if one treated the Taliban in an unfriendly or strange way ([481]). In 2010, a 7-year-old boy was hanged in the district of Sangin (Helmand) by the Taliban because his family resisted the insurgents in their area. The father and grandfather of the boy were tired of the intimidation and the violence attracted by the insurgents. They demanded that the insurgents stop using village compounds to stage ambushes and they refused to sell machine guns to the Taliban fighters: both men had been denounced by the Taliban as spies for the US or the IMF ([482]).

In 2010, UNAMA and the AIHRC documented at least 84 civilians as having been executed on the accusation of spying, but stated that this figure is probably under-reported ([483]). In 2012, the UN also reported targeted killings of people who were accused by insurgents of spying for the government or the IMF ([484]). The UN and Giustozzi reported the sentencing of alleged spies by the Taliban judiciary in areas under their control ([485]).

According to the UN Special Rapporteur, Philip Alston, spies were mostly identified by circumstantial evidence, for example the possession of US dollars. Locals witnessed that even speaking to foreigners might lead to the suspicion of spying ([486]). According to Giustozzi, even if local civilians were careful not to take sides in the conflict, they could still be accused of being a spy ([487]).

Spies — episodes in 2012

SOUTH	In August 2012, the Taliban beheaded a 14-year-old boy in Zherai District (Kandahar) on the accusation of espionage for the government ([488]).
SOUTH-EAST	In May 2012, a local was abducted by insurgents in Bak District (Khost) on the accusation of spying for ISAF/ANSF ([489]).
EAST	Insurgents abducted seven villagers in Marawara District (Kunar) for providing information to foreign troops that led to an airstrike ([490]). A woman was killed by insurgents in Mehterlam (Laghman) on the accusation of spying for the IMF/ANSF ([491]). Another female was killed by insurgents in Bati Kot (Nangarhar) on the accusation of spying for the IMF/ANSF ([492]).
NORTH-WEST	A Taliban court convicted a local teenager of spying for the ANSF and cut his ear off as punishment in Badghis ([493]). The Taliban executed a woman and a boy on the accusation of spying for the government and foreign troops in the district of Pashtun Kot (Faryab) ([494]). Insurgents abducted three locals in the district of Pashtun Kot (Faryab) on accusation of

([480]) Van Bijlert, M., 'Unruly commanders and violent power struggles', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 168.

([481]) Reuter, C., Younus, B., 'The return of the Taliban in Andar District: Ghazni', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 107, 109–110.

([482]) Farmer, B., 'Life under the Taliban: how a boy of seven was hanged to punish his family', *The Telegraph*, 12 June 2010 (http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/afghanistan/7823404/Life-under-the-Taliban-how-a-boy-of-seven-was-hanged-to-punish-his-family.html#) (accessed 31 July 2012).

([483]) UNAMA and AIHRC, *Afghanistan — Annual Report 2010 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, March 2011 (http://unama.unmissions.org/Portals/UNAMA/human%20rights/March%20PoC%20Annual%20Report%20Final.pdf) (accessed 30 September 2012), p. 12.

([484]) UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 16.

([485]) Giustozzi, A., 'Afghanistan: Human Rights and Security Situation', *Landinfo*, 9 September 2011 (http://www.landinfo.no/asset/1745/1/1745_1.pdf) (accessed 5 March 2012), pp. 10–13; UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), pp. 20–23.

([486]) UN Human Rights Council, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Philip Alston — Addendum: MISSION TO AFGHANISTAN*, A/HRC/11/2/Add.4, 6 May 2009 (http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G09/131/17/PDF/G0913117.pdf?OpenElement) (accessed 16 July 2012), pp. 16–17.

([487]) Giustozzi, A., 'Afghanistan: Human Rights and Security Situation', *Landinfo*, 9 September 2011 (http://www.landinfo.no/asset/1745/1/1745_1.pdf) (accessed 5 March 2012), p. 10.

([488]) Sajad, *Taliban behead 12 years old Afghan boy in Kandahar*, Khaama Press, 31 August 2012 (http://www.khaama.com/taliban-behead-12-years-old-afghan-boy-in-kandahar-743/) (accessed 24 September 2012).

([489]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([490]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([491]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([492]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([493]) UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 24.

([494]) UNAMA, *Today's Afghan Headlines — Articles*, 1 April 2012 (*Source*: Ariana TV) (http://unama.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?ctl=Details&tabid=12329&mid=15870&ItemID=33886) (accessed 24 September 2012); UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

	spying for the IMF. Insurgents publicly executed a local in the same district on accusation of spying for the IMF ([495]). Insurgents ambushed and killed a local elder in Almar (Faryab) on the accusation of being a spy for the IMF: the insurgents linked him to an IMF operation in the area. In Shirin Tagab (Faryab), another local was killed on the accusation of spying for the IMF ([496]).
WEST	In June 2012, insurgents killed a civilian in Bala Buluk District (Farah) on the accusation of spying for the government ([497]).

Summary — Spies

Several sources describe the Taliban hunt for spies. The accusation of spying can lead to abduction or killing. The Taliban have established courts in areas under their control in which judges pronounced punishments for alleged spies, including mutilation and execution. Some executions happened in public and mutilation of the corpse was also practiced.

· In the 12 documented episodes of 2012, which are far from exhaustive, the following figures are present.
· In the south, one episode of the targeting of alleged spies was documented. In the south-east, one episode was documented. In the east, three episodes were documented. In the north-west, six episodes were documented. In the west, at least one episode was documented. One episode was in Mehterlam City (Laghman), but none of the other episodes happened in a capital.
· Three of the 12 episodes concerned abduction. In 8 of the 12 episodes, the victims were killed and in one episode, mutilated.

Analysis — Targeting of spies

The Taliban use the accusation of being a spy against civilians and this can lead to severe punishment. The documented episodes show a very high percentage of cases in which the victim was killed. Together with the use of public executions and mutilation, this provides an indication of the intensity of the targeting, which is very high. Several sources reported how easily the accusation of being a spy was often made.

Regional differences

Reference is made to Section 1.4 Regional differences for an analysis of regional differences. The general conclusions can be applied and some more specific information relevant for government officials and employees is presented in that section. The UN Special Rapporteur explained that, in the south, the Taliban are apt to kill elders who had previously collaborated with the government and foreign troops in areas newly under their control. In areas under the sustained control of the Taliban, victims have more often been suspected spies. In areas under Taliban control, spies are sentenced in Taliban courts (see Section 1.1.6 Taliban courts and death sentences).

Possibilities to escape intimidation and targeting

The accusation or conviction leading to the label of being a spy is less reversible than, for example, taking up a position or doing a job which can be left. Once an Afghan has this label, it is not possible to reverse it.

Reference is made to Section 1.5 Victims' reactions for an analysis of the possibilities to escape threats.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Civilians accused by the Taliban of being a spy face a high risk of being targeted in areas under the sustained control of the Taliban, which will very often result in the death of the victim. This risk is low in the cities of Kabul, Herat and Mazar. However, individual and specific circumstances might lead to an increased risk.
2. If a low-profile civilian accused of being a spy can flee and resettle in a safer area, he can normally escape targeting by insurgents, unless there are specific individual circumstances which would preclude this possibility.

([495]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([496]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 7; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([497]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

2.4 Journalists, media and Human Rights Activists

2.4.1 Journalists and media staff

According to Joanna Nathan ([498]), reporters have been kidnapped and killed by the Taliban while seeking interviews with Taliban figures. In 2007, for example, a local journalist and his driver were killed in Helmand by the Taliban, while their Italian colleague was released ([499]).

In a series of attacks on journalists, reporters and media staff, the sources were not able to identify the actor in the violence and, in several cases, it was most likely not the work of insurgents ([500]). In one case, the source did not specify whether the attack was targeted ([501]).

Thomas Ruttig stated the following: "If you're a journalist investigating or reporting on political or sensitive issues, you might be targeted by all kind of power players, including the Taliban. But the Taliban do not see all journalists as political opponents and when they don't see you as opposing them or as pro-government, they can allow you to operate. The Taliban are interested in having positive media coverage" ([502]).

Journalists and media staff — episodes in 2012

SOUTH-EAST	In January 2012, the residence of a national reporter of Khost TV was attacked by insurgents in Khost District (Khost province) ([503]).
EAST	In February 2012, insurgents abducted a local journalist in the district of Surkh Rod (Nangarhar). He was later released after the intervention by elders ([504]).
CENTRE	In June 2012, insurgents abducted two relatives of a local journalist in Nirk District (Wardak) ([505]).

2.4.2 Human rights activists

2.4.2.1 Women's rights activists

In 2010, Human Rights Watch (HRW) explained that women's freedom was reduced and their rights were restricted in the areas under the control of insurgents. According to HRW, the Taliban targets women in a wide range of professions and at all levels. They threatened and attacked female provincial councillors, police officers, teachers, health workers, social workers and lawyers. Women who are active in political life face intimidation and attacks. This has prevented them from continuing their political work, from defending the rights of all women and girls and this could deter a future generation of female politicians ([506]).

([498]) Joanna Nathan has lived and worked in South Asia since 2001. She has experience in communications and journalism. Since May 2005, she has worked for the International Crisis Group in Afghanistan.

([499]) Nathan, J., 'Reading the Taliban', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 27.

([500]) AFJC, *Jafar Wafa — the reporter of radio 'Kala Goosh' of Noorestan*, 12 November 2012 (http://afjc.af/english/index.php/killed/259-jafar-wafa-the-reporter-of-radio-kala-goosh-of-noorestan.html) (accessed 19 September 2012); UNAMA, *Today's Afghan Headlines — Articles*, 24 January 2012 (*Source: Hasht-e Subh Daily*) (http://unama.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?ctl=Details&tabid=12329&mid=15870&ItemID=33940) (accessed 19 September 2012); AFJC, *Sadem Khan Bahadorzoi — the editor in chief of Melma private radio*, 22 February 2012 (http://afjc.af/english/index.php/murdered/287-sadem-khan-bahadorzoi-the-editor-in-chief-of-melma-private-radio.html) (accessed 19 September 2012); UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012; AFJC, *Press TV cameraman comes under acid attack in Kabul*, 12 February 2012 (http://afjc.af/english/index.php/af-media-news/central-provinces/kabul/283-press-tv-cameraman-comes-under-acid-attack-in-kabul.html) (accessed 19 September 2012); AFJC, *Mohammad Rafiq Azizi — Editor in Chief of Andisha-e Motalem monthly*, 30 May 2011 (http://afjc.af/english/index.php/killed/257-mohammad-rafiq-azizi-editor-in-chief-of-andisha-e-motalem-monthly.html) (accessed 19 September 2012); AFJC, *Abdul Hadi Hamdard — Helmand radio presenter and producer*, 12 July 2012 (http://afjc.af/english/index.php/killed/322-abdul-hadi-hamdard-helmand-radio-presenter-and-producer.html) (accessed 19 September 2012); Maftoon, S., *Radio Journalist's House attacked in Ghazni*, Pajhwok Afghan News, 13 September 2012 (https://www.cimicweb.org/cmo/afg/Documents/News/PAJHWOK%20-%20RadioJournalistHouseAttacked.pdf) (accessed 25 September 2012).

([501]) AFJC, *Syed Farhad Taqaddusi — Press TV cameraman*, 20 September 2012 (http://afjc.af/english/index.php/killed/258-syed-farhad-taqaddusi-press-tv-cameraman.html) (accessed 19 September 2012).

([502]) Ruttig, T., interview via Skype, 17 October 2012, 11.00–12.00, and e-mail correspondence, 9 November 2012.

([503]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([504]) UNHCR, Security Incidents List (January–June 2012), July 2012.

([505]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([506]) HRW, *The 'Ten-Dollar Talib' and Women's Rights Afghan Women and the Risks of Reintegration and Reconciliation*, July 2010 (http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/afghanistan0710webwcover.pdf) (accessed 25 September 2012), pp. 24, 33.

In 2006, the head of the Kandahar department for women's affairs, Safia Ama Jan, was killed by the Taliban ([507]). In 2010, a female *shura* member in a central province was threatened by night letters and forced to quit her job ([508]). In January 2012, a lecturer at the Kabul University and human rights activist, Hamida Barmaki, was killed in a suicide attack in Kabul together with her husband and three children ([509]). In July 2012, the Women's Affairs Director of Laghman was killed together with her spouse in an IED attack ([510]). In March 2012, insurgents attacked the compound of a political party associated with a local female politician in Pusht Rod (Farah) ([511]).

Hadi Marifat referred to the case of a women's rights activist in Kandahar who was the daughter of a murdered mayor. She had a very low-profile activity for women: a small-scale business in handicraft. She had to leave the country in 2012 because of Taliban threats. According to Marifat, the Taliban are very harsh towards women because of their view on moral values. Even low-profile women's rights activists can be at risk ([512]).

Thomas Ruttig stated the following: "We've recently seen a couple of high-profile cases. Female police officers, people working at the offices of women's affairs and so on, have been targeted. This group is seriously at risk of being targeted at different levels, but not only by the Taliban. Conservative parts of the Afghan population perceive it as immoral for women to go out working" ([513]).

A political analyst based in Kabul stated: "The Taliban are reluctant to attack women, because the Pashtunwali state that they cannot be touched. We have to look at the individual cases. The Taliban might target someone who is outspoken in opposition against them or their values, but they would then claim responsibility for the attack. There are not many cases of such targeting by the Taliban. In the recent cases in Kabul or Parwan, for example, the Taliban was not the actor" ([514]).

Summary — targeting of journalists, media and human rights activists

In the documented episodes of targeting journalists and media staff, on the one hand, and of women's rights activists on the other hand, it is often unclear who the actor in the targeting was. In some cases, the sources mentioned explicitly that insurgents targeted the victim.

Human Rights Watch and Hadi Marifat stated that the Taliban threatened and targeted women's rights activists.

2.5 Educational staff and students

Giustozzi and Franco concluded that hostility and suspicion towards state education became widespread among the Taliban after 2001. In 2006, the Taliban leadership had launched a campaign of violence against schools, teachers and students. Attacks against them were authorised by the code of conduct (*Lahya*) for boys' schools not following the Taliban's curriculum and for all girls' schools. The *Lahya* prescribed a procedure of first issuing a warning against the school or teacher, then a physical beating and finally the killing of the teacher and burning of the school. The reasons for targeting education by the insurgents were ideological and political; girls' education is especially ideologically unacceptable to many conservative Taliban an education was seen as a symbol of government, pro-government proselytism or the work of foreigners. According to Giustozzi and Franco, the Taliban changed their policy between 2006 and 2011, partly because the campaign did not achieve much support among the population. Since 2007, schools started reopening based on agreements with the Taliban: they had to adopt the Taliban's schoolbooks, curriculum and to hire religious teachers linked to the Taliban. In 2009, the Taliban removed the authorisation for attacks on education from the *Lahya*. In 2011, Mullah Omar issued a decree instructing insurgents not to attack schools and intimidate schoolchildren. The Taliban largely ceased attacks on schools. However, incidents still happened, but

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([507]) BBC News, *Female Afghan politician Hanifa Safi killed*, 13 July 2012 (http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-18832391) (accessed 17 July 2012).

([508]) HRW, *The 'Ten-Dollar Talib' and Women's Rights Afghan Women and the Risks of Reintegration and Reconciliation*, July 2010 (http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/afghanistan0710webwcover.pdf) (accessed 25 September 2012), p. 32.

([509]) UNAMA, *Today's Afghan Headlines — Articles*, 30 January 2012 (*Source:* Tolo TV) (http://unama.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?ctl=Details&tabid=12329&mid=15870&ItemID=34210) (accessed 19 September 2012).

([510]) Hashemi, A. M., *Women's affairs director killed in bomb attack*, Pajhwok Afghan News, 13 July 2012 (http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2012/07/13/women%E2%80%99s-affairs-director-killed-bomb-attack) (accessed 23 August 2012).

([511]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 March 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 10.

([512]) Marifat, H., interview via Skype, 16 September 2012, 13.15–14.15.

([513]) Ruttig, T., interview via Skype, 17 October 2012, 11.00–12.00, and e-mail correspondence, 9 November 2012.

([514]) Political analyst based in Kabul, interview via Skype, 18 October 2012, and e-mail correspondence, 15 November 2012.

may have been due to flaws in the command and control system of the Taliban, to Pakistani Jihadists and to specific accusations towards educational staff (e.g. cooperation with the government). So, the Taliban's policy changed from an all-out violent campaign against state schools to controlling state education and, occasionally, specific targeting for specific reasons. Looking back to 2001, the developments in the insurgency cost the lives of hundreds of teachers, educational staff and students in Afghanistan ([515]).

According to Christophe Reuter and Borhan Younus, two different Taliban groups in Andar District (Ghazni) had different approaches towards education in 2007. One group, active in central Andar, allowed schools to remain open. The other group, active in the east and south of Andar, closed schools and warned teachers not to return to their jobs. In 2008, the schools were allowed to operate again. But when the district chief spread provocation towards the Taliban via the radio, Taliban commander Mullah Farooq started threatening schools and directors again. His demand was to stop the radio broadcasts ([516]). According to Thomas Ruttig, Afghans reported night letters in Paktia and Khost in 2008 in which teachers were warned that if they continued their work, they might get hurt. In mid 2008, all schools were closed in the district of Katawaz (also known as Zarghun Shar, Paktika), because the Taliban told schoolteachers not to accept government money and to hold lessons in private houses ([517]).

In 2009, the UN Special Rapporteur, Philip Alston, mentioned the intimidation and targeting of teachers and students attending school (especially girls) by the Taliban ([518]). Joanna Nathan mentioned in 2009 a large-scale Taliban campaign against teachers and schools in the previous years. Night letters have been used to make threats, which were also fulfilled ([519]). In Helmand, there have been acid attacks on schoolgirls ([520]). According to Philip Alston, a witness in Kunar mentioned a Taliban night letter justifying attacks on local schools ([521]).

In 2010, HRW explained that girls' education was proportionally more targeted by the Taliban and other insurgents than boys' education. HRW reported on incidents in several areas of Afghanistan from 2008 until 2010: threats by phone or night letter to female teachers, girls' schools or students; attacks on, and killings of, teachers in girls' education; attacks on girls' schools; acid attacks on girls attending school; etc. ([522]). In 2010, incidents took place in girls' schools in Kunduz and Sar-e Pul: mostly, what happened was the release of poisoned gas in the classrooms ([523]). UNAMA and the AIHRC documented at least 21 students, teachers or educational officials killed across Afghanistan in 2010, but stated that this figure is probably under-reported ([524]).

The UN also reported targeted killings by insurgents of teachers in 2011 ([525]). In their study on the insurgency in the north of Afghanistan, published in April 2011, Giustozzi and Reuter reported that the Taliban established commissions for education in some areas, intended to bring government or NGO education under their control. Representatives of the Taliban education commissions would check, for example, that teachers and students showed up on time. The

([515]) Giustozzi, A., Franco, C, *The Battle for the schools — The Taliban and State Education*, Afghanistan Analysts Network, August 2011 (http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/2011TalebanEducation.pdf) (accessed 31 July 2012).
Giustozzi, A., 'Afghanistan: Human Rights and Security Situation', *Landinfo*, 9 September 2011 (http://www.landinfo.no/asset/1745/1/1745_1.pdf) (accessed 5 March 2012), p. 6.

([516]) Reuter, C., Younus, B., 'The return of the Taliban in Andar District: Ghazni', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 104, 110, 114–117.

([517]) Ruttig, T., 'Loya Paktia's Insurgency (I) The Haqqani network as an autonomous entity', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, Columbia University Press, New York, 2009. Thomas Ruttig is co-director and co-founder of the Afghanistan Analysts Network (http://aan-afghanistan.com/index.asp?id=49), pp. 71 and 84.

([518]) UN Human Rights Council, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Philip Alston – Addendum: MISSION TO AFGHANISTAN*, A/HRC/11/2/Add.4, 6 May 2009 (http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G09/131/17/PDF/G0913117.pdf?OpenElement) (accessed 16 July 2012), p. 16.

([519]) Nathan, J., 'Reading the Taliban', in: Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, Columbia University Press, New York, 2009, p. 34.

([520]) Farmer, B., 'Life under the Taliban: how a boy of seven was hanged to punish his family', *The Telegraph*, 12 June 2010 (http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/afghanistan/7823404/Life-under-the-Taliban-how-a-boy-of-seven-was-hanged-to-punish-his-family.html#) (accessed 31 July 2012).

([521]) UN Human Rights Council, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Philip Alston — Addendum: MISSION TO AFGHANISTAN*, A/HRC/11/2/Add.4, 6 May 2009 (http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G09/131/17/PDF/G0913117.pdf?OpenElement) (accessed 16 July 2012), pp. 16–17.

([522]) HRW, *The 'Ten-Dollar Talib' and Women's Rights Afghan Women and the Risks of Reintegration and Reconciliation*, July 2010 (http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/afghanistan0710webwcover.pdf) (accessed 25 September 2012), pp. 26–33.

([523]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 11.

([524]) UNAMA and AIHRC, *Afghanistan — Annual Report 2010 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, March 2011 (http://unama.unmissions.org/Portals/UNAMA/human%20rights/March%20PoC%20Annual%20Report%20Final.pdf) (accessed 30 September 2012), p. 12.

([525]) UN Human Rights Council, *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan and on the achievements of technical assistance in the field of human rights*, A/HRC/16/67, 19 January 2011 (http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G11/103/31/PDF/G1110331.pdf?OpenElement) (accessed 16 July 2012), p. 5; UNAMA and UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), *Afghanistan — Annual Report 2011 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, February 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/4f2fa7572.pdf) (accessed 16 July 2012), p. 4; UN Human Rights Council, *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the human rights situation in Afghanistan and technical assistance achievements in the field of human rights*, A/HRC/19/47, 18 January 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4f391a772.html) (accessed 24 July 2012), p. 6.

Taliban even declared that education was an exception on their proclaimed prohibition to work for the government. However, there was a difference between boys' and girls' education: the latter remained banned and opposed by the Taliban ([526]).

ANSO stated, in May 2012, that the systematic targeting of educational facilities had not appeared in the north of Afghanistan ([527]).

UNAMA reported on Taliban public statements supportive of education and denying responsibility for certain attacks. UNAMA assessed that attacks on education were often caused by underlying local political agendas and circumstances and not by the Taliban's position regarding education. UNAMA explained that communities in Afghanistan reported to them that insurgents allowed education and effectively controlled many schools and the content of education in the areas where they operate. In some areas, a specific Taliban representative is even appointed to monitor the conduct of teachers and influence the curriculum taught in schools. The insurgents also opened new schools, shut down schools and restricted girls' access to schools. UNAMA reported on agreements between the Ministry of Education or local officials and the Taliban regarding the control of education. UNAMA verified 34 incidents against schools in the first half of 2012, which was an increase compared with the same period in 2011. The incidents included armed attacks, occupation and burning of schools, targeted killings, intimidation of staff and closure of schools, especially girls' schools. In addition to these 34 incidents, there was an increase in allegations of poisonings, by way of contamination via drinking water or the release of substances in the air, often in girls' schools. However, in none of the cases was there real evidence of poisoning present. According to UNAMA's investigations, toxicological evidence even contradicts poisoning by insurgents, which is often claimed by the community or government ([528]).

In 2012, UNAMA reported the closure of all girls' schools in two districts of the province of Kapisa. It concerned areas under government control or under partial insurgent influence. UNAMA assessed this as an example that the restriction of girls' education might stem from a wider sentiment than only the insurgent groups, like the conservative communities ([529]).

UNAMA reported to have received a Taliban Directive on education which was released in two provinces, but is believed by UNAMA to have been released in several other provinces as well. In the directive, the Taliban demanded changes in the curriculum which were defined in detail. They also demanded music classes to be removed and girls' education to be restricted. They demanded a distinction between regular war and Jihad, suicide and martyrdom and the inequality of religions in the curriculum. The Taliban have made explicit public statements on the need to change the curriculum in line with this directive. At the time of UNAMA's reporting, there were no documented acts of violence towards educational staff refusing to implement the change of the curriculum in line with the directive ([530]).

In mid 2012, UNOCHA indicated that attacks on educational personnel are a serious concern. According to UNOCHA: 'Fear and hysteria around possible poisoning of school children in several provinces led to concern that families would remove their kids from schools amidst fears of armed opposition groups targeting schools. Similarly, the scourge of active conflict in, around, or near schools — including school occupation — remains common in rural areas.' The conflict in Afghanistan is a primary challenge for education: 'Incidents in the first quarter included attacks on education personnel, including the killing of five and injuring of 10 Department of Education (DoE) staff in Paktika Province on 8 May. Schools were burnt in Baharak District, Badakhshan Province on 6 June, and more than 700 students were allegedly poisoned in seven incidents in Takhar Province. In May, nearly 400 boys were reportedly poisoned in Ismail Khan Mandokhil District of south-eastern Khost Province and 31 girls were reportedly poisoned at the Shirin Hazara girls' high school in Fuladi valley, Bamyan Province. Of the 36,000 students who should attend schools in southern Ghazni Province, about half have yielded to the threat from the insurgents' ([531]).

According to Hadi Marifat, the Taliban are still heavily targeting education, especially in the South. Marifat explained that the ongoing movement of uprisings against the Taliban by local communities might inflict more attacks on

([526]) Giustozzi, A., Reuter, C., *The Insurgents of the Afghan North*, Afghanistan Analysts Network, April 2011 (http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/AAN-2011-Northern-Insurgents.pdf) (accessed 28 March 2012), pp. 19–20.

([527]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), p. 4.

([528]) UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), pp. 30–34.

([529]) UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 32.

([530]) UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012)2012, pp. 33–34.

([531]) UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), *Mid-Year Review of the Consolidated Appeal for Afghanistan 2012*, 20 July 2012 (http://unocha.org/cap/appeals/mid-year-review-consolidated-appeal-afghanistan-2012) (accessed 24 September 2012), pp. 2, 30, 52.

education by the Taliban. According to Marifat, several analysts stated in the past years that education was no longer targeted by the Taliban but other analysts did not agree with this. He explained that there were deals between the Taliban and the government on education in, for example, Paktya, Paktika and Wardak, but these deals sometimes did not last forever ([532]).

Thomas Ruttig explained: "There are still attacks on teachers and schools. Not all of them can be attributed to the Taliban. This has to be assessed case by case. The general trend is a decrease in the targeting of education, but teachers, for example, are still targeted when they do not obey the demands of the Taliban. This does not always result in the killing of the teacher. It will start with intimidation which will often be followed by displacement" ([533]).

A political analyst explained: "There has been a sharp decrease in attacks by the Taliban on education. Before they shut down schools in order to disturb public services, but they have changed this strategy since 2009. They now want to make sure that education is not anti-Taliban and that it is in line with their ideology. They still target schools that are used as a political platform against the Taliban or as recruiting tool for the government. In areas in Zabul and Kandahar, for example, the local commanders can decide which schools are harmful for the Taliban and shut them down. There are still schools closed and the Taliban often deny the responsibility for it. The local people usually know who had been behind the attacks which are now in fact no longer happening, or very rarely happening. The only threat that could still be seen in few areas is closure of schools, but not attacking them militarily" ([534]).

Educational staff and students — episodes in 2012

SOUTH	Insurgents on motorcycles attacked a local school in Nahri Seraj District (Helmand). Two students were wounded in the attack ([535]). A schoolteacher was killed in Tirin Kot City (Uruzgan) ([536]).
	In March 2012, local education officials declared that 65 schools in Ghazni were still closed owing to security issues ([537]). The Head of the Education Department for the district of Waghaz (Ghazni) was abducted ([538]). In April 2012, 120 schools were closed in Ghazni owing to insurgent threats. Insurgents reacted to a prohibition by the government on the use of motorcycles. Many schools were closed in the provincial capital, Andar and Deh Yak. No schools were closed in Jaghuri, Ajristan and Malistan, because — according to ANSO — the insurgents' presence was very weak in these districts ([539]). According to ANSO reporting, in May 2012, approximately 15 % of the schools in the province remained closed. According to ANSO, there were no reports of attacks on schools that had reopened, which might indicate a change in approach by the insurgents. ANSO assessed this as a step back by the insurgents' leadership, since the government ban on motorcycles had not been lifted ([540]). However, the UNHCR and UNAMA did make reports on attacks; in May 2012, insurgents attacked a high school in Ghazni City: three students were wounded. In Giro District, a civilian was shot by insurgents in a dispute over the closure of a school ([541]). UNAMA explained that these attacks were to be seen in the context of the conflict about the motorcycle ban and not as targeting education as such ([542]).
SOUTH-EAST	Insurgents assassinated a senior official of the Department of Education travelling to the city of Khost ([543]). A primary school for boys was set ablaze by insurgents in Barmal (Paktika)

([532]) Marifat, H., interview via Skype, 16 September 2012, 13.15–14.15.

([533]) Ruttig, T., interview via Skype, 17 October 2012, 11.00–12.00, and e-mail correspondence, 9 November 2012.

([534]) Political analyst based in Kabul, interview via Skype, 18 October 2012, and e-mail correspondence, 15 November 2012.

([535]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([536]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([537]) UNAMA, *Today's Afghan Headlines — Articles* (*Source: Arman-e Milli Daily*), 24 March 2012 (http://unama.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?ctl=Details&tabid= 12329&mid=15870&ItemID=33891) (accessed 24 September 2012).

([538]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([539]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 20; Mirwais Himmat, *Taliban shut schools after govt ban bikes*, Pajhwok Afghan News, 19 April 2012 (http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2012/04/19/taliban-shut-schools-after-govt-ban-bikes) (accessed 11 November 2012).

([540]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 17.

([541]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([542]) UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/ country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 31.

([543]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 March 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 16; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

and the local high school of Sabari District (Khost) was burned down ([544]). Haqqani fighters attacked a delegation of provincial Education Department officials, which was visiting schools in Urgun (Paktika). The attackers killed five officials and injured three others ([545]). Insurgents attacked the private residence of a schoolteacher in Khost: the ANP intervened during the attack ([546]). Insurgents poisoned a water supply in a local school in Tere Zoyi (Khost), causing 391 students to be hospitalised ([547]). Insurgents shut down a school in Logar and they killed a teacher in Muhammad Agha District (Logar) ([548]).

EAST	UNAMA explained that insurgents closed several schools in Nangarhar after a night raid with several arrests and threatened the authorities not to reopen them. Some attacks on schools were related to this conflict in which insurgents used the schools to put pressure on the authorities and were not targeting education as such ([549]). An armed group set fire to a girls' school in Chaparhar (Nangarhar) ([550]). A couple of months later, this happened again in the same district ([551]). Insurgents also set fire to a girls' school in Khugyani (Nangarhar) ([552]). An IED detonated near the Mia Omar High School in the city of Jalalabad (Nangarhar) ([553]). A school in Chaparhar District (Nangarhar) was destroyed by explosives ([554]). A local security guard of a girls' school in Rodat (Nangarhar) was wounded in an attack ([555]).
	Members of the provincial council of Nuristan reported that teachers had been threatened with death by the Taliban in the province ([556]). The Principal of a local high school for boys was abducted in Kamdesh District (Nuristan). Furthermore, a boys' schoolteacher was abducted in Alingar (Laghman) by insurgents ([557]). In Khas Kunar (Kunar), insurgents abducted a clerk of a high school ([558]).
CENTRE	Night letters at a local school in Maydan Shar Centre (Wardak) warned children not to attend school ([559]). Two local teachers were abducted by insurgents in Shinwari (Parwan): they were released after negotiations with local elders ([560]). Insurgents threw a grenade into a primary school in Kabul City. Three pupils and one teacher were wounded. A number of school girls from the Ekhaqia School in Kabul City were found unconscious and hospitalised after inhaling 'poisoned gas' ([561]). Thirty female students fell ill and were hospitalised for unknown reasons in Bamyan Centre ([562]). In the summer of 2012, the Taliban threatened schools in the district of Nijrab (Kapisa) ([563]).

([544]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([545]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 20; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), p. 18; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([546]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 14.

([547]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([548]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 4; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([549]) UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 31.

([550]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 9.

([551]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), p. 12; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012; UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 31.

([552]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 16.

([553]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 January 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 9 August 2012), p. 15.

([554]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([555]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([556]) UNAMA, *Today's Afghan Headlines — Articles*, 7 April 2012 (source: Daily Afghanistan) (http://unama.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?ctl=Details&tabid=12329&mid=15870&ItemID=33880) (accessed 24 September 2012).

([557]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 16.

([558]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 17; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([559]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([560]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), p. 2.

([561]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([562]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([563]) Tolonews, *Kapisa Residents take fight to the Taliban*, 4 September 2012 (http://tolonews.com/en/afghanistan/7448-kapisa-residents-take-fight-to-the-taliban-) (accessed 24 September 2012).

NORTH-EAST	Some 150 female students became ill from contaminated water in the district of Rustaq (Takhar): the contaminant was not identified, but it was sure that the problem originated in the tanks of the school. Doctors and officials agreed that this was a case of poisoning ([564]). Some 53 female students were hospitalised for poisoning following the inhalation of 'polluted' air in a school in Taluqan city (Takhar). The same thing happened within a couple of days in the districts of Farkhar (35 female students), Khwaja Ghar (34 female students), Bangi (14 female students), Baharak (9 female students and the headmaster) and Rustaq (44 female students) ([565]). A girls' school was set on fire in Baharak District (Badakhshan) ([566]).
NORTH-WEST	Insurgents called the headmasters of two schools in Shortepa (Balkh) and ordered them to collect *ushr* ([567]). In Imam Yahiya's Girl School in Sar-e Pul District, 100 students were hospitalised after inhaling polluted air. The same thing happened in the Sarkahe (105 students) and the Rahmatabad (90 students) girls' schools in the same area ([568]). Insurgents attempted to attack an educational official visiting a school in Sar-e Pul, together with another government official. A guard was beaten, the officials' car set on fire, but the officials themselves managed to escape ([569]). Insurgents killed a schoolteacher in the district of Almar (Faryab) ([570]).
WEST	Insurgents set a boys' school ablaze in Murghab (Badghis) ([571]). A school bus from a private international school was attacked in Herat City: the driver was wounded ([572]).

Summary — Educational staff or students

Over the years, many sources have reported extensively on a proclaimed Taliban campaign of intimidation and violence against schools, principals and teachers, educational staff and teachers. According to several sources, girls' education has been especially targeted. There were also many cases of alleged poison attacks on girls' schools via the drinking water or gas in the air. There was no evidence that these cases were actual attacks and there was no proof that insurgents were involved. UNAMA indicated that hostility towards girls' education stems from a wider communal sentiment than just the insurgent groups.

UNAMA further reported a change in the Taliban's attitude towards education. They gradually tried to exert control over it and made agreements with education officials, rather than opposing it right out. Giustozzi and Franco also reported on these agreements and that the Taliban, in general, ceased attacks on education. However, all sources recognise that incidents still happen. The violent campaign appear to have changed into a more selective targeting of educational facilities and staff.

Examples are present in which the targeting of education is used by insurgents as a tool to put pressure on the government in conflicts which are not related to education. For example, in Ghazni, education was targeted by insurgents in a conflict with the authorities over a motorcycle ban and in Nangarhar (see Episodes in 2012), the general conflict between the insurgents and the government caused problems for the education as well.

An indication of the current development of this situation can be found in anecdotal evidence of 2012. In the approximately 38 documented episodes of 2012, which are far from exhaustive, the following figures are present.
· In the south, educational staff or students were targeted in at least seven episodes. One episode was in the city of Tirin Kot (Uruzgan) and two in Ghazni City. In the south-east, at least eight episodes were documented. In the east, at least 11 episodes were documented but, in two provinces, it concerned several schools targeted in a single episode. One episode was in the city of Jalalabad. In the centre, at least five episodes were documented.

([564]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 11; UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([565]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([566]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([567]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 4.

([568]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([569]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 6 October 2012), p. 6.

([570]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 6 October 2012), p. 9.

([571]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 March 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 10.

([572]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

One episode was in the city of Maydan Shar and two in Kabul City. In the north-east, at least one episode was documented. In the north-west, at least four episodes were documented. In the west, two episodes were documented of which one happened in Herat City.

· Furthermore, several cases of alleged poisoning of (mostly female) students in schools were documented in several areas, but mostly in the north-west and north-east. The common element was contaminants in drinking water or in the air, but the causes were often unclear as were the possible actors involved.

· At least five episodes concerned the targeting of girls' schools (allegations of poisoning not included).

Analysis — Intimidation and targeting of educational staff or students

Different sources have reported an intensive Taliban campaign against education in the past. More recently (2011–12) several sources (Giustozzi and Franco, Giustozzi and Reuter, UNAMA, Thomas Ruttig and a political analyst based in Kabul) reported that the Taliban's strategy shifted from an all-out violent campaign opposing all education towards making agreements with the authorities, attempts to control education and more selective targeting of schools and staff. The number of attacks decreased according to these sources. In 2012, ANSO reported that there was no systematic targeting of education by insurgents in the north of Afghanistan. All sources acknowledged that there were still incidents of intimidation and targeting education by insurgents. For example, UNAMA reported an increase of attacks in the first half of 2012, but also explained that they were often caused by underlying elements and not by Taliban opposition to education as such: the targeting of education was to put pressure on the authorities in the political struggle in Ghazni (motorcycle ban) and Nangarhar. It is important to note that in several examples or episodes, the sources did not specify the actor involved in the targeting. Sources such as UNAMA, Ruttig and a political analyst confirmed that several incidents were not attributed to the insurgents.

In 2012, UNOCHA expressed concerns about attacks on education in Afghanistan, but did not specify on the actors or the reasons for it.

Hadi Marifat did not agree: he stated that the Taliban still heavily targeted education and that the agreements with them did not always last. He referred to the south and the south-east as problematic.

Several sources explained that girls' education is more targeted by the Taliban than boys' education. Giustozzi and Franco explained that the Taliban ideologically oppose girls' education, while boys' education was more politically or strategically opposed. In 2012, UNAMA reported restrictions on girls' education demanded by the Taliban, but indicated that this position stems from a wider sentiment in the conservative communities in Afghanistan.

Regional differences

Reference is made to Section 1.4 Regional differences for an analysis of regional differences.

In addition, reports are presented in Section 2.5 Educational staff and students of intimidation and targeted violence against government officials and employees in the cities of Tirin Kot (Uruzgan), Ghazni, Jalalabad, Maydan Shar, Kabul and Herat. Evidence of intimidation and targeting of government supporters, collaborators and contractors by insurgents was found in all regions of Afghanistan (south, south-east, east, centre, north-east, north-west and west).

Possibilities to escape intimidation and targeting

Reference is made to Section 1.5 Victims' reactions for an analysis of the possibilities to escape threats.

Hadi Marifat assessed that people who stopped their activities, could escape the threat and be safe. Marifat gave the example of teachers.

Thomas Ruttig explained that teachers are still targeted when they do not obey the demands of the Taliban, but that this does not always result in the killing of the teacher. It will start with intimidation which will often be followed by displacement (see Section 2.5 Educational staff and students).

CONCLUSIONS

Insurgents no longer oppose education as such and do not target educational staff or students for the single reason of their involvement in education. However, there are still several circumstances in which educational staff or students might be targeted by insurgents, for example: situations of political struggle between the government and

the insurgents in which the insurgents hijack education in order to put pressure on the government; educational staff or schools not complying with Taliban's demands; schools which are perceived by the insurgents as a platform for government recruitment or proselytism; girls' education.

For low profiles (e.g. teachers) it is possible to escape insurgents' threats by quitting a job or obeying the Taliban's demands, unless there are specific individual circumstances that could lead to continued targeting. An example of these circumstances could be the accusation by the Taliban of spying or collaboration with the government.

If a low-profile person quits his activity and can flee the area and resettle in a safer area, he can normally escape intimidation or targeting by insurgents, unless there are specific individual circumstances which would preclude this possibility.

2.6 Medical staff

Giustozzi and Reuter reported in their study on the insurgency in the north of Afghanistan, published in April 2011, that the Taliban established commissions for health in some areas. Their intention was to bring government or NGO health facilities under their control. The Taliban declared that health was an exception to their proclaimed prohibition to work for the government [573].

In early 2012, insurgents distributed night letters in Paktika threatening health workers. In another night letter a few months later, insurgents exempted health workers from the prohibition to work for government institutions. UNAMA reported that insurgents opposed the construction of a hospital in Khost province because it was planned in an area under government control and, therefore, not accessible to insurgents [574].

UNAMA reported that insurgents in the east have allowed doctors employed by the Afghan Ministry of Health to travel to areas under their control to treat people [575].

In one case a government employee's involvement in a medical project helped get him released after abduction, because of the strong community support for this programme [576]. In another case, insurgents stopped a medical team in the district of Manogai (Kunar): they asked for identification and questioned them. During the event, the local community started calling the insurgents in order to confirm the identity and the activities of the medical team. The insurgents apologised and let the team go [577].

UNAMA reported that, according to residents in most areas, health facilities or activities have not been directly targeted by insurgents. Health workers interviewed by UNAMA explained that harassment or hindrance of their work on community visits mostly happened due to a lack of communication or miscommunication with insurgents in the communities. UNAMA assessed that insurgents have usually refrained from attacking health workers, but stated that incidents of capturing, harassing or injuring of health workers by insurgents have happened. According to Afghan residents, this mostly happened in an attempt by insurgents to generally deter local communities from working for government run facilities. Sometimes, health workers have been harassed at insurgents' checkpoints. According to UNAMA, insurgents also restricted the provision of healthcare by allowing only some organisations to operate in their area or by restricting the deployment of female staff [578].

A local source in south-east Afghanistan explained that different insurgent factions behave differently towards healthcare workers. In some cases, it can be the health worker's behaviour or past that elicits response from locals or insurgents. The contact stated that not all attacks on healthcare facilities or staff could be linked to insurgents and that, in many cases, factors such as criminality or personal disputes were involved and that there was no investigation [579].

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[573] Giustozzi, A., Reuter, C., *The Insurgents of the Afghan North*, Afghanistan Analysts Network, April 2011 (http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/AAN-2011-Northern-Insurgents.pdf) (accessed 28 March 2012), pp. 19–20.

[574] UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 29.

[575] UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), July 2012, p. 29.

[576] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 9.

[577] ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 14.

[578] UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), pp. 28–29.

[579] Local contact based in Khost, e-mail correspondence, 28 August 2012.

Hadi Marifat explained that medical staff members are at risk of being targeted by insurgents to a certain extent, but not as much as educational staff. According to Marifat, women are much more at risk than men ([580]). Thomas Ruttig explained that the general trend is a decrease in attacks on medical staff, but that there are still incidents. Not all of these incidents can be attributed to the Taliban. When medical staff do not obey the Taliban, they may be intimidated which will often result in displacement. It depends on the individual case. In one anecdote, the Taliban were happy to have a female nurse in the area, because she was the only one there to assist in childbirth ([581]). A political analyst based in Kabul stated: "In 2007, they did not allow the building of clinics, but now they often do. However, this strategy is not 100 % implemented. In some areas, the Taliban might perceive a doctor as a political activist and then they might target him" ([582]).

Medical staff — episodes in 2012

SOUTH	Insurgents fired mortars that hit the public clinic in Ghazni province. A woman and a child were wounded ([583]).
SOUTH-EAST	In the first months of 2012, an NGO-run clinic was attacked three times with an IED in Khost City. The third attack, which occurred in April, caused injuries to seven people ([584]). A male doctor was killed by insurgents in Nadir Shah Kot District (Khost) ([585]). An insurgent suicide attack targeted a hospital in Logar, killing 20 civilians and injuring 25 others ([586]).
EAST	Insurgents abducted two doctors in Manogai (Kunar). They were released after mediation by tribal elders ([587]). Insurgents attacked a NGO ambulance (Health Net International) which was called in during a fight between ANBP and Pakistani insurgents to evacuate wounded ANBP in Lal Pur (Nangarhar). Insurgents attacked a clinic of the same NGO in Hisarak District (Nangarhar) with mortar fire ([588]).
CENTRE	The Taliban carried out a suicide attack on a national army hospital in Kabul, killing six civilians and injuring 23 medical students ([589]). Insurgents carried out an RPG attack on a building used for the training of female nurses in Hisa-i Awal-i Kohistani (Kapisa): four students were injured ([590]). In the summer of 2012, the Taliban threatened clinics in Kapisa ([591]).
NORTH-EAST	Insurgents attacked a clinic of an international NGO in Yawand District (Badakhshan): there were no casualties ([592]). An IED blew up an NGO ambulance in Sar-e Pul District, killing four and wounding two ([593]).
WEST	Unknown armed men kidnapped and killed the head of the Shindand clinic (Herat) ([594]).

([580]) Marifat, H., interview via Skype, 16 September 2012, 13.15–14.15.

([581]) Ruttig, T., interview via Skype, 17 October 2012, 11.00–12.00, and e-mail correspondence, 9 November 2012.

([582]) Political analyst based in Kabul, interview via Skype, 18 October 2012, and e-mail correspondence, 15 November 2012.

([583]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([584]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 15.

([585]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([586]) UN Human Rights Council, *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the human rights situation in Afghanistan and technical assistance achievements in the field of human rights*, A/HRC/19/47, 18 January 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4f391a772.html) (accessed 24 July 2012), p. 7.

([587]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 17.

([588]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 13.
UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([589]) UN Human Rights Council, *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the human rights situation in Afghanistan and technical assistance achievements in the field of human rights*, A/HRC/19/47, 18 January 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4f391a772.html) (accessed 24 July 2012), p. 7.

([590]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), p. 3.

([591]) Tolonews, *Kapisa Residents take fight to the Taliban*, 4 September 2012 (http://tolonews.com/en/afghanistan/7448-kapisa-residents-take-fight-to-the-taliban-) (accessed 24 September 2012).

([592]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([593]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([594]) UNAMA, *Today's Afghan Headlines — Articles*, 1413 February 2012 (source: Daily Afghanistan) (http://unama.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?ctl=Details&tabid=12329&mid=15870&ItemID=33925) (accessed 24 September 2012).

Summary — medical staff

Several sources provided indications that insurgents allow healthcare staff to work and that they do not target healthcare as such. In some cases, other reasons were behind the intimidation and targeting of healthcare, for example a clinic being outside their control or misunderstandings. Two sources indicate that insurgent groups might be more restrictive towards female healthcare workers.

The UN United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights still mentioned nurses and doctors among the profiles which were victims of targeted killings in 2010, but did not refer to them in 2011 [595].

An indication of the current development of the targeting of medical staff can be found in anecdotal evidence of 2012. In the approximately 15 documented episodes of 2012, which are far from exhaustive, the following figures are present.

·   In the south, there was at least one episode documented. In the south-east, at least five episodes, of which three were in Khost City. In the east, three episodes. In the centre, at least three episodes of which one was in Kabul City, two in the north-east, and one in the west.

·   In total, nine episodes concerned targeting of clinics or hospitals; in four, health staff were the targets.

·   In at least 3 of the 15 episodes, it was not clear whether it was a targeted attack by insurgents. At least two attacks concerned ANSF targets. In one episode, female nurses were targeted.

2.7 Construction workers

According to Sébastien Trives [596], from 2005–06 onwards, the insurgents in the south-east succeeded in limiting the operational space of reconstruction efforts [597]. In 2005, the Taliban commander, Mullah Farooq, frequently attacked construction workers and the government forces protecting them on the road from Ghazni to Paktika. The attacks took place in areas under Farooq's control, outside the environment of Ghazni city [598]. In 2006, Taliban groups attacked the hydroelectric dam at Kajaki in Helmand [599]. In 2007, the Taliban planted a bomb in Andar (Ghazni) in order to target the guards of a road construction project [600]. In May 2008, the Haqqani network decreed a general ban on road construction in the Zurmat District in Paktia [601]. According to Abdul Awwal Zabulwal, the insurgency had succeeded by 2009 in limiting the operational space of reconstruction actors in Zabul province [602]: ANSO reported that, in the province of Kunar, irrigation projects had been an established target for insurgents for several years [603].

The UN reported targeted killings of construction workers in 2011 [604]. In Section 2.1.3 Government supporters, collaborator and contractors on the targeting of government supporters, Afghans collaborating with the IMF and international organisations, such as the UN, several examples were provided of the targeting of construction companies and workers who were working on projects funded by the government, IMF or the UN.

Hadi Marifat pointed at regional differences: in some regions, the Taliban allowed construction works, because they knew that it was benefiting the people, who they perceived as 'their people', for example in Pashtun areas such as

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[595]   Section 1.1.5 Targeted killings.

[596]   Sébastien Trives has a master⬚s degree in international relations and a diploma in European studies. He was head of the south-east regional office of UNAMA until the end of 2005 and previously worked as a country coordinator for Afghanistan with ACTED (Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development) and with the OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) Mission in Tajikistan.

[597]   Trives, S., 'Loya Paktia's Insurgency (II) Roots of the insurgency in the Southeast', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 93.

[598]   Reuter, C., Younus, B., 'The return of the Taliban in Andar District: Ghazni', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 106.

[599]   Coghlan, T., 'The Taliban in Helmand: An Oral History', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 129.

[600]   Reuter, C., Younus, B., 'The return of the Taliban in Andar District: Ghazni', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 116.

[601]   Ruttig, T., 'Loya Paktia's Insurgency (I) The Haqqani network as an autonomous entity', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 70–71.

[602]   Zabulwal, A. A., 'Taliban in Zabul: A witness' account', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 188.

[603]   ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 March 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 15.

[604]   UNAMA and UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), *Afghanistan — Annual Report 2011 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, February 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/4f2fa7572.pdf) (accessed 16 July 2012), p. 4; UN Human Rights Council, Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the human rights situation in Afghanistan and technical assistance achievements in the field of human rights, A/HRC/19/47, 18 January 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4f391a772.html) (accessed 24 July 2012), p. 6.

Kandahar. According to Marifat, they realise that they would lose popularity if they were to target all construction. But then in Ghazni, for example, where the US PRT funded road construction, they didn't succeed in finishing the project because of the Taliban threats ([605]).

Ahmad Quraishi stated that road construction workers may be in danger while working but are, in general, not individually targeted by the Taliban when they are not working ([606]).

A local contact in south-east Afghanistan agreed to some extent with the statement that construction workers may be at risk at the construction site and that the Taliban would not track them down while they are not working, but he added that it would depend on the nature of the job. If a worker were working for the IMF, then he could be more at risk when off duty ([607]).

According to a staff member of an international development agency in Afghanistan, there is a risk of being targeted by insurgents for construction workers while they are on the road, but the source added that many roads in Afghanistan are safe ([608]).

A political analyst based in Kabul stated: "I agree that they are mostly at risk on the site. I'm not aware of any example in which a construction worker was attacked by insurgents because of his work while he was off duty. An exception might be that he was accused of spying or that there were other reasons for targeting him" ([609]).

Construction workers — episodes in 2012

SOUTH	Local residents of Panjway District (Kandahar) were forced by the Taliban to destroy newly constructed roads in the area. The new roads prevented the Taliban from easily installing roadside bombs ([610]).
CENTRE	According to local officials, the Taliban killed four road construction workers in Wardak ([611]).
NORTH-WEST	Insurgents detonated an IED against a construction vehicle of an Afghan construction company in Dawlatabad (Balkh) ([612]).
WEST	In 2012, ANSO reported that insurgents are trying to disrupt the construction of the so-called Ring Road in Badghis ([613]). Stone mine workers received direct threats via telephone from insurgents in Chishti Sharif (Herat) to stop their work ([614]). Three NGO staff members were stopped at an illegal insurgent checkpoint in Badghis and questioned: they told the insurgents that they worked for a private construction company and they were allowed to continue their journey ([615]).

([605]) Marifat, H., interview via Skype, 16 September 2012, 13.15–14.15.

([606]) Quraishi, A., Director of the Afghanistan Journalists Centre (http://afjc.af/english/) and correspondent of Pajhwok Afghan News (http://www.pajhwok.com/), e-mail correspondence, 10 September 2012.

([607]) Local contact based in Khost, e-mail correspondence, 28 August 2012.

([608]) Staff member of an international development agency in Afghanistan, interview and e-mail correspondence (by Austrian COI Researcher), 3–5 October 2012.

([609]) Political analyst based in Kabul, interview via Skype, 18 October 2012, and e-mail correspondence, 15 November 2012.

([610]) Sajad, *Taliban force villagers in Kandahar to destroy roads*, 24 August 2012 (http://www.khaama.com/taliban-force-villagers-in-kandahar-to-destroy-roads-737/) (accessed 25 September 2012).

([611]) UNAMA, *Today's Afghan Headlines – Articles*, 14 January 2012 (source: Daily Afghanistan) (http://unama.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?ctl=Details&tabid=12329&mid=15870&ItemID=33947) (accessed 18 September 2012).

([612]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 6.

([613]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 11.
ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 March 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 9.

([614]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 March 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 9.

([615]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 6 October 2012), p. 13.

Summary — construction workers

Sources reported several cases of intentionally limiting the space of construction actors by insurgents. They attacked the worksites, workers and materials on the site, and abducted workers or staff in different regions in Afghanistan. Examples are available of attacks on staff working on projects for the government, international organisations, US PRT contractors, foreign construction companies, on prestigious projects and on roadworks causing a tactical disadvantage for the insurgents. In other cases, construction was allowed by the insurgents for the benefit of the population.

Analysis — intimidation and targeting of construction workers

Ahmad Quraishi stated that construction workers might face targeting when they are on duty, but not when off duty. A political analyst in Kabul agreed with this. At least one episode is supportive of this statement: NGO employees told insurgents at an illegal checkpoint that they worked for a private construction company and they were allowed to continue their journey. A local contact in the south-east agreed with this to some extent but added that it could depend on the nature of the job and gave the example of IMF contractors. There was no evidence found of the tracking down of individual construction workers when they were off duty by insurgents.

CONCLUSIONS

Construction workers could face a risk of being targeted by insurgents while they are on duty or on site in different regions of Afghanistan.

When construction workers are off duty, they, in general, do not risk being targeted by insurgents because of their job, unless a circumstance increases the risk (e.g. working for an IMF contractor).

2.8 Truck drivers

In Section 2.1.2 Afghanistan's National Security Forces, Section 2.2.1 International Military Forces and Section 2.2.2 International organisations, companies, NGOs and Afghan NGOs, several examples are presented of the targeting of supply convoys or trucks contracted to the ANSF, IMF or the UN. Tariq Elias stated that truck drivers who transport supplies for the government or the IMF have been subject to abductions [616].

In 2007, the Taliban grew stronger in the province of Ghazni and increasingly targeted convoys of food and oil tankers [617]. In January 2011, the Taliban attacked two trucks carrying school furniture in Farah: a truck driver was killed [618].

Ahmad Quraishi stated that truck drivers may be in danger while working but are, in general, not individually targeted by the Taliban when they are not working [619].

A local contact in south-east Afghanistan agreed to some extent with the statement that truck drivers may be at risk while doing their job and that the Taliban would not track them down while they are not working, but he added that it would depend on the nature of the job. If a driver works for the IMF, then he could be more at risk when off duty [620]. Hadi Marifat agreed with this statement — that truck drivers supplying fuel and materials for the IMF might face a much higher risk than, for example, those carrying food for NGOs [621].

[616] Tariq Elias, M. O., 'The Resurgence of the Taliban in Kabul: Logar and Wardak', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, Columbia University Press, New York, 2009, pp. 52–53.

[617] Reuter, C., Younus, B., 'The return of the Taliban in Andar District: Ghazni', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 114.

[618] UNAMA, *Today's Afghan Headlines — Articles*, 17 January 2011 (*Source:* Herat (RTA) Headlines) (http://unama.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?ctl=Details&tabid=12329&mid=15870&ItemID=34231) (accessed 18 September 2012).

[619] Quraishi, A., Director of the Afghanistan Journalists Centre (http://afjc.af/english/) and correspondent of Pajhwok Afghan News (http://www.pajhwok.com/), e-mail correspondence, 10 September 2012.

[620] Local contact based in Khost, e-mail correspondence, 28 August 2012.

[621] Marifat, H., interview via Skype, 16 September 2012, 13.15–14.15.

According to a staff member of an international development agency in Afghanistan, there is a risk of being targeted by insurgents for truck drivers while they are on the road, but the source added that many roads in Afghanistan are safe ([622]).

A political analyst based in Kabul stated about truck drivers: "There would be a very high risk if the Taliban knew that they supplied the Americans. Then it's certainly possible that they would track them down at home if they are in areas easily accessible for the insurgents. They could live in the big cities, but not in the more remote areas. This risk would not be present for government or NGO drivers or, for example, drivers of VIPs, government suppliers or contractors" ([623]).

Truck drivers — episodes in 2012

SOUTH	An IED detonated against a water tanker in the district of Khash Rod (Nimroz), killing the driver ([624]).
CENTRE	A magnetic IED detonated on a fuel tanker on the Jalalabad Highway near Kabul ([625]). A magnetic IED detonated on a fuel tanker in Maydan Shar (Wardak): a civilian was hurt and two other fuel tankers caught fire as well ([626]). Two private trucks were attacked by insurgents in Kahmard (Bamyan): the attack caused no casualties ([627]). Insurgents attacked a supply convoy in Wardak, killing one driver and two guards ([628]).
NORTH-EAST	In the second half of June 2012, insurgents conducted nine attacks on fuel tankers in Baghlan, of which one was inside Pul-e Khumri City ([629]).
NORTH-WEST	An IED detonated against a civilian truck loaded with rocks in the district of Shortepa (Balkh): 10 minutes later, a second IED exploded, hitting the crowd gathered around the truck ([630]).
WEST	Insurgents attacked several supply convoys in Bakwa (Farah): seven fuel trucks were destroyed ([631]).

Summary — truck drivers

The transportation of supplies for the government, ANSF, IMF and the UN is under frequent attack by insurgents. Several sources indicated that truck drivers working for the contracting companies might face targeting while they are on the road, but not necessarily when they are off duty. Some sources agreed that truck drivers might face being tracked down off duty as well be insurgents in some circumstances, such as if they are working for the IMF.

Analysis — Intimidation and targeting of truck drivers

Truck drivers face the risk of being targeted when they are on the road. When they are off duty, no evidence is present that they would be targeted by insurgents because of their job. However, circumstances could increase this risk of being tracked down while off duty (e.g. truck drivers who work for the IMF).

([622]) Staff member of an international development agency in Afghanistan, interview and e-mail correspondence (by Austrian COI Researcher), 3–5 October 2012.

([623]) Political analyst based in Kabul, interview via Skype, 18 October 2012, and e-mail correspondence, 15 November 2012.

([624]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 March 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 20.

([625]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 1.

([626]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 30 July 2012), p. 3.

([627]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 May 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 29 September 2012), p. 4.

([628]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 6 October 2012), p. 2.

([629]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 6 October 2012), p. 10.

([630]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 1 August 2012), p. 4.

([631]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (1–15 April 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 12.

2.9 People violating the Taliban's moral code

In 2008, a night letter in Kunar instructed locals not to shave ([632]). In 2010, HRW reported that many women received night letters from the Taliban threatening them because they worked outside home and earned money, which they considered to be un-Islamic. HRW referred to the strict Taliban ideology on segregation of men and woman and on the control of women's movements as a reason for targeting them ([633]). UNAMA and the AIHRC reported on the targeting of shops with IEDs in the south-east of Afghanistan and in Nangarhar in 2010. Often, shops were targeted for selling music and sweets. The attacks also targeted barbers, ice cream shops, butchers and medicine shops. The attacks caused other shops to stop playing music ([634]).

Giustozzi and Reuter indicated in early 2011 that the Taliban were no longer applying the social decrees on un-Islamic behaviour from their oppressive rule until 2001, not even in areas under their influence, but they raised the question whether this was a tactical decision or a change in ideology ([635]).

UNAMA stated in mid 2012 that several sources reported that insurgents had harassed or killed people when they violated the Taliban's interpretation of rules of morality. It was, for example, reported that insurgents harass people regarding clothing and appearance ([636]).

Hadi Marifat stated that there are radical Taliban who are harsh on 'moral crimes', such as girls' education ([637]).

USCIRF reported that 'in October 2011, the Taliban released on its website a warning that any Afghan suspected of converting to Christianity will be targeted for death. In January 2012, a Taliban blog posted pictures of Christians being baptised, individual baptismal certificates, and worship times" ([638]).

People violating the Taliban's moral code — episodes in 2012

SOUTH	In August 2012, the Taliban beheaded 15 men and 2 women in a house in Helmand in an area which is under Taliban control. According to *Pajhwok Afghan News*, the men and women were celebrating Eid Ul Fitr with music and dance when the Taliban opened fire on them. After the shooting, they beheaded 17 people ([639]).
SOUTH-EAST	In June 2012, locals in Paktika received night letters forbidding people to wear revealing sportswear ([640]).
EAST	UNAMA reported that the Taliban have been threatening people in an area in Nangarhar not to play cricket, because this is against their interpretation of Islam ([641]). An IED detonated

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([632]) UN Human Rights Council, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Philip Alston — Addendum: MISSION TO AFGHANISTAN*, A/HRC/11/2/Add.4, 6 May 2009 (http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G09/131/17/PDF/G0913117.pdf?OpenElement) (accessed 16 July 2012), pp. 15–16.

([633]) HRW, *The 'Ten-Dollar Talib' and Women's Rights Afghan Women and the Risks of Reintegration and Reconciliation*, July 2010 (http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/afghanistan0710webwcover.pdf) (accessed 25 September 2012), pp. 25–29.

([634]) UNAMA and AIHRC, *Afghanistan — Annual Report 2010 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, March 2011 (http://unama.unmissions.org/Portals/UNAMA/human%20rights/March%20PoC%20Annual%20Report%20Final.pdf) (accessed 30 September 2012), p. 8.

([635]) Giustozzi, A., Reuter, C., *The Insurgents of the Afghan North*, Afghanistan Analysts Network, April 2011 (http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/AAN-2011-Northern-Insurgents.pdf) (accessed 28 March 2012), p. 14.

([636]) UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 28.

([637]) Marifat, H., interview via Skype, 16 September 2012, 13.15–14.15.

([638]) US Commission on International Religious Freedom, *Annual Report*, March 2012 (http://www.uscirf.gov/images/Annual%20Report%20of%20USCIRF%202012%282%29.pdf) (accessed 10 November 2012), p. 288.

([639]) Stanikzai, Z., '17 civilians found beheaded in Helmand', *Pajhwok Afghan News*, 27 August 2012 (http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2012/08/27/17-civilians-found-beheaded-helmand) (accessed 24 August 2012); Bowley, G., Richard, A. O. Jr, 'Attacks on Soldiers and Civilians Leave Dozens Dead in Afghanistan', *The New York Times*, 27 August 2012 (http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/28/world/asia/attacks-on-soldiers-and-civilians-leave-dozens-dead-in-afghanistan.html) (accessed 27 August 2012).

([640]) UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 27.

([641]) UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 28.

and wounded two people in a music shop in Jalalabad (Nangarhar). According to ANSO, two people were killed in this incident ([642]). Insurgents were looking for music cassettes in vehicles at illegal checkpoints on the main road of the district of Mandol (Nuristan) ([643]).

In Bargi Matal and Kamdesh (Nuristan), a new type of insurgent cadres appeared: the 'Tor Pushan'. They belong to a special security arm of the Taliban distinguished by black clothing and covered faces, resembling the Taliban's armed morality police in the 1990s. They reprimanded locals over issues such as appearance, cigarettes and chewing tobacco. According to ANSO, these developments give an indication of the Taliban moving towards social control, governance and political authority ([644]). Insurgents set up vehicle checkpoints on the main road in the district of Mandol (Nuristan). One of the things they looked for were music cassettes ([645]).

CENTRE	At the end of 2009, night letters were sent to a large number of homes in Kapisa threatening girls who call to radio stations and introduce themselves and make song requests. They were threatened with beheading or acid attack. The letter was signed by Hezb-e Islami ([646]). In May 2012, insurgents spread night letters in Shinwari District (Parwan) telling the local population to take down their TV antennas and to stop watching television ([647]). In June 2012, the Taliban attacked the Spozmai Restaurant at Qargha Lake in the province of Kabul, an area not under their control. The attackers opened fire on the guests killing 21 people and wounding 7 others. The Taliban claimed responsibility for their attack, stating that was a venue for non-moral behaviour which is against Islamic values ([648]).
NORTH-WEST	UNAMA reported an attack by 11 insurgents on a house in Balkh province where people were celebrating a wedding with music and dance: the insurgents opened fire on the guests, killing two and wounding three others ([649]).

Thomas Ruttig assessed the attack on the Spozmai restaurant thus: "That the Taliban tried to justify their attack by claiming that it was a venue of 'anti-Islamic' behaviour also shows that the old puritan tendency in their movement is alive and kicking, to which all kind of temporal amusement are anathema, especially if men and women are attending without being strictly separated. This approach is similar to that during the Taliban regime in the mid to late 1990s when the length of beards (for men) and the completeness of veil (for women) were more important than feeding the population" ([650]). Thomas Ruttig further explained: "Cracking down on what the Taliban perceive as 'moral crime' (music, TV, 'un-Islamic dress) is not as widespread as it was during their rule. But there are reports of it happening still relatively regularly. For the case in Helmand (Kajaki area, late August, attack on what was reported as a 'dance party'), we are not sure whether it was the Taliban, but most likely they were involved, together with locals, including family members of the attacked. There are still cases of it, like the targeting of music shops in eastern Afghanistan. This seems to be a local issue in the east, because it does not happen anywhere else. The Taliban are less strict on moral crimes like listening/playing music or watching television, for example, because this made them unpopular in the population and by the international community when they were in power. They seem to be aware of this and to have changed their policy on that. The pressure to be in accordance with rules of Islamic moral behaviour comes

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([642]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012; ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–30 June 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 6 October 2012), p. 13.

([643]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 March 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), pp. 14–15, 21.

([644]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 March 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), p. 13.

([645]) ANSO, *The ANSO Report* (16–31 March 2012) (http://www.ngosafety.org/2012.html) (accessed 2 August 2012), pp. 14–15, 21.

([646]) HRW, *The 'Ten-Dollar Talib' and Women's Rights Afghan Women and the Risks of Reintegration and Reconciliation*, July 2010 (http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/afghanistan0710webwcover.pdf) (accessed 25 September 2012), p. 26.

([647]) UNHCR, *Security Incidents List* (January–June 2012) (information collected from various sources and independently verified by UNHCR), July 2012.

([648]) UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 28.

([649]) UNAMA and OHCHR, *Afghanistan — Mid-Year Report 2012 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July 2012 (http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,,AFG,,502233982,0.html) (accessed 4 September 2012), p. 28.

([650]) Ruttig, T., *The attack in Kargha: Return of the Taleban Puritans?*, Afghanistan Analysts Network (blog) 23 June 2012 (http://aan-afghanistan.com/index.asp?id=2823) (accessed 27 September 2012).

from different parts. Also, in the government, there are people that are close to the moral values and religious interpretation of the Taliban. They also feel pressure to be more 'Islamic' (in competition with the Taliban) and there is a mutual influence in this" ([651]).

A political analyst based in Kabul stated: "Incidents are rare. In Helmand, nothing happened. Government sources claimed this, but there was no evidence found by researchers who went to the place. There were, for example, no funerals in the area briefly after the incident. In the Qargha attack, the Taliban said that Afghans hosted foreigners, women and facilitated the use of alcohol. That's why they attacked, but I don't think this is evidence that they are becoming stricter on moral issues. There are plenty of music shops, weddings, etc., in Taliban controlled areas, which they never targeted" ([652]).

Summary — Intimidation and targeting people who violate the Taliban's moral code

Sources reported intimidation by the Taliban against the population in order to make them obey moral values, for example: prohibitions on shaving, women working outdoors, selling music and sweets or girls' education.

Giustozzi and Reuter indicated in early 2011 that the Taliban were no longer applying the strict social decrees on un-Islamic behaviour, but they raised the question whether this was a tactical decision or a change in ideology.

However, the intimidation and targeting continued in 2012. Several insurgent groups made it clear that they do not intend to tolerate so-called un-Islamic behaviour, for example music and dance, sports and television. In some recent episodes, exceptional cruel attacks found place in, according to the insurgents, 'venues for non-moral behaviour which is against Islamic values'.

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[651] Ruttig, T., interview via Skype, 17 October 2012, 11.00–12.00, and e-mail correspondence, 9 November 2012.

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