



Australian Government
Refugee Review Tribunal

Country Advice

Afghanistan

Afghanistan – AFG38997 – Kabul – Pro-Western Individuals – Selling Western Goods – Fundamentalist Groups – Security Situation

18 August 2011

1. Please provide any evidence of the targeting for harm by Islamic fundamentalists or individuals identified as pro-Western or as selling Western-style goods in Afghanistan and Kabul in particular.

Both individuals perceived to be pro-Western and businesses providing Western-style goods and services, particularly for the expatriate community, continue to be targeted by fundamentalist Islamic elements in Afghanistan, including in Kabul.

Sources report attacks on foreigners and individuals in Kabul who are perceived to be associated with the international community, including the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO)-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). In July 2011, provincial governor and presidential adviser, Jan Mohammad Kahn, was killed by two gunmen at his home in Kabul. A parliamentarian was also killed in the attack. Kahn was known to have ties to the United States (US) and was thought to be working with the US on military night raids. A fellow of the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington has suggested that the assassination may have been “the Taliban’s way of sending a message to the US”.¹

Further afield, on 6 August 2011, 38 people, including eight Afghans, were killed when an ISAF helicopter was brought down in Wardak province, west of Kabul. Witnesses and the Taliban claim that the helicopter was brought down by insurgent fire. The incident followed two separate attacks in which an additional four ISAF soldiers were killed.² In early April 2011, 17 people affiliated with the United Nations (UN), including UN workers and security guards, were killed in northern Mazar-e Sharif and Kandahar during protests against the burning of a Koran by an American Pastor Wayne Sapp. The Taliban denied responsibility for the attacks.³

Also at the national level, the UN Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA) reported that throughout 2010, “[p]ersons and relatives of persons perceived to be supportive of the Government of Afghanistan and/or international military forces... were targeted and killed.”

¹ ‘Senior Karzai aide killed in Kabul attack’ 2011, Al Jazeera, 17 July

<http://english.aljazeera.net/news/asia/2011/07/2011717171459321200.html> – Accessed 4 August 2011 – Attachment 1

² ‘US probes Afghanistan special forces helicopter crash’ 2011, *BBC News*, 7 August

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-14435854> – Accessed 8 August 2011 – Attachment 2

³ ‘Afghanistan: Deadly Kandahar protest at Koran burning’ 2011, *BBC News*, 2 April

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/mobile/world-south-asia-12944851> – Attachment 3

Aid workers and international NGO workers were also targeted for killings, abductions and intimidation.⁴

The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) has also stated that Afghan nationals working for “some UN agencies or international and local non-governmental organizations reportedly face intimidation, attacks, abduction and death at the hands of the Taliban and other armed anti-Government groups, particularly in areas where these groups are active”. Politically and criminally motivated abductions of NGO staff by anti-Government forces are reportedly commonplace, and increased “significantly” during 2010.⁵

In February 2009, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) advised that according to its sources, returnees were more likely to be accused of spying for foreign troops, and would not be safe in areas controlled by anti-government elements (AGEs) as “they would be targeted primarily as a result of their residence in a western country.” DFAT’s sources tended to describe attacks affecting returnees in light of other factors such as robbery, pre-existing family enmity and suicide bombings.⁶ As discussed in the response to Question 2, Kabul city is not an area which is considered to be under AGE control.

Women who are involved in the entertainment industry have also been at risk of being threatened by radical elements. Mozdah Jamalzadah is a talk show host who is highly likely to be perceived as pro-Western: Jamalzadah was raised in Canada, wears Western-inspired clothing, and is popularly known as ‘the Afghan Oprah’.^{7 8} In a February 2011 interview, Jamalzadah described herself as a target living under virtual house-arrest. Jamalzadah did not specify who is targeting her, but stated that she is aware of “many threats”.⁹ A Canadian news website states that Mozhdah has had a “flood” of death threats and travels with armed guards.¹⁰

In 2005, another female television host, Shaima Rezayee, was shot and killed in her Kabul home. Rezayee wore jeans, and aired videos of Western and other foreign film clips. She was dismissed from her job following criticism from religious leaders and a statement that her program was “anti-Islamic” from Afghanistan’s Council of Ulema^{11 12} (a government-

⁴ United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan 2011, *Afghanistan Annual Report 2010 Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, March, p. iii

<http://unama.unmissions.org/Portals/UNAMA/human%20rights/March%20PoC%20Annual%20Report%20Final.pdf> – Accessed 31 March 2011 – Attachment 4

⁵ United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees 2010, *UNHCR Eligibility Guidelines for Assessing the International Protection Needs of Asylum-Seekers from Afghanistan*, 17 December, p. 12–13

<http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4d0b55c92.html> – Accessed 31 March 2011 – Attachment 5

⁶ DIAC Country Information Service 2009, *Country Information Report No. 09/14 – CIS Request No. AFG9509; Situation for Hazaras in Ghazni, Uruzgan and Dai Kundi Provinces*, 3 February – Attachment 6

⁷ ‘Connect the World’ 2011, *CNN*, CNN Transcripts website, 17 February

<http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/1102/17/ctw.01.html> – Accessed 8 August 2011 – Attachment 7

⁸ Macdonald, N. 2010, ‘Mozhdah: The Oprah of Afghanistan’, *Macleans.ca* website, 17 December

<http://www2.macleans.ca/2010/12/17/the-oprah-of-afghanistan/> – Accessed 8 August 2011 – Attachment 8

⁹ ‘Connect the World’ 2011, *CNN*, CNN Transcripts website, 17 February

<http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/1102/17/ctw.01.html> – Accessed 8 August 2011 – Attachment 7

¹⁰ Macdonald, N. 2010, ‘Mozhdah: The Oprah of Afghanistan’, *Macleans.ca* website, 17 December

<http://www2.macleans.ca/2010/12/17/the-oprah-of-afghanistan/> – Accessed 8 August 2011 – Attachment 8

¹¹ Macdonald, N. 2010, ‘Mozhdah: The Oprah of Afghanistan’, *Macleans.ca* website, 17 December

<http://www2.macleans.ca/2010/12/17/the-oprah-of-afghanistan/> – Accessed 8 August 2011 – Attachment 8

¹² United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization 2005, ‘UNESCO Condemns Murder of Afghan Music Presenter Shaima Rezayee’ UNESCO website, 23 May http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL_ID=19150&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html – Accessed 9 August 2011 – Attachment 9

sponsored advisory body of 3,000 mullah from across the country).¹³ No reports were located identifying the killer or killers, however, it is suspected that her murder may have been an honour killing.¹⁴ The *New Yorker* reports that a male music television host was also assaulted – the report does not specify by whom – and later granted asylum in Sweden.¹⁵ The owner of Tolo TV, which has aired western music clips and Afghanistan’s first soap opera, is known to be “pro-American” and has been accused of spying for the west. Reports do not state who the accusers are.¹⁶

Businesses providing Western-style goods and services have been attacked by fundamentalists in Kabul. Recent examples include the following:

- *BBC News* reported that, in late June 2011, the Intercontinental Hotel was attacked by gunmen and, four suicide bombers. The hotel is frequented by Westerners, and the attack occurred prior to a conference regarding the transfer of power from ISAF to Afghan security forces. The Taliban claimed responsibility.¹⁷
- On 14 February 2011, two armed guards were killed in a suicide attack outside the Safi Landmark hotel in central Kabul.¹⁸ The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack,¹⁹ however the Jamestown Foundation states that the Haqqani network was found to be responsible.²⁰
- On 21 May 2011, insurgents attacked a military hospital in Kabul. The Taliban claimed responsibility, stating that “foreign trainers and Afghan doctors who work with them” were the primary targets.²¹
- On 28 January 2011, nine people were killed in a suicide attack in a Kabul supermarket popular with foreign workers. The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack, which reportedly targeted the head of private security company, Blackwater. According to the Afghanistan NGO Safety Office, the Haqqani network was also likely involved.^{22 23 24}

¹³ Nakamura, D. & Partlow, J. 2010, ‘Afghan government struggling to keep support of Islamic council’, *The Washington Post*, 12 September

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wpdyn/content/article/2010/09/10/AR2010091003451.html> – Accessed 16 August 2011 – Attachment 44

¹⁴ Macdonald, N. 2010, ‘Mozhdah: The Oprah of Afghanistan’, *Macleans.ca* website, 17 December

<http://www2.macleans.ca/2010/12/17/the-oprah-of-afghanistan/> – Accessed 8 August 2011 – Attachment 8

¹⁵ Auletta, K. 2010, ‘The Networker’, *New Yorker*, Volume 86, Issue 19, 5 July – Attachment 10

¹⁶ Auletta, K. 2010, ‘The Networker’, *New Yorker*, Volume 86, Issue 19, 5 July – Attachment 10

¹⁷ Sarwary, B. 2011, ‘Kabul’s Intercontinental Hotel attacked by gunmen’, *BBC News*, 29 June

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-13947169> – Accessed 4 August 2011 – Attachment 11

¹⁸ Afghanistan NGO Safety Office 2011, ‘The ANSO Report’, Issue 67, 1-15 February – Accessed 1 April 2011 – Attachment 12

¹⁹ Peter, T. 2011, ‘Kabul suicide attack: does uptick in violence signal a fresh Taliban campaign?’, *Christian Science Monitor*, 14 February <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Asia-South-Central/2011/0214/Kabul-suicide-attack-does-uptick-in-violence-signal-a-fresh-Taliban-campaign> – Accessed 24 May 2011 – Attachment 13

²⁰ Jamestown Foundation 2011, *Terrorism Monitor, Volume IX, Issue 31*, 4 August, UNHCR Refworld website <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4e3b9f272.html> – Accessed 10 August 2011 – Attachment 14

²¹ United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan 2011, *Midyear Report 2011 – Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, July, p. 14

<http://unama.unmissions.org/Portals/UNAMA/Documents/2011%20Midyear%20POC.pdf> – Accessed 4 August 2011 – Attachment 15

²² Peter, T. 2011, ‘Kabul suicide attack: does uptick in violence signal a fresh Taliban campaign?’, *Christian Science Monitor*, 14 February <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Asia-South-Central/2011/0214/Kabul-suicide-attack-does-uptick-in-violence-signal-a-fresh-Taliban-campaign> – Accessed 24 May 2011 – Attachment 13

- In August 2010, two suicide bombers attacked a compound used by foreigners in Central Kabul. Five Afghans were killed.²⁵

Recent reports suggest that western-style goods are popular with Kabul residents. The international presence, and subsequent increases in population and wealth in Kabul over the past ten years, has reportedly led to an “explosion of conspicuous consumption”. Popular western-style items sold in Kabul include energy drinks, cars such as BMWs and Hummers, and flat screen televisions.²⁶ Skinny jeans, western haircuts and Che Guevara t-shirts are also popular amongst the young and affluent.^{27 28} Bush Bazaar, a market named after the former US president, sells Western goods and is frequented by locals. Products such as American food rations and military uniforms often arrive at the bazaar via the black market.^{29 30} No information was located to suggest that insurgent attacks against Bush Bazaar or other Kabul stores are conducted purely on the grounds that they sell western goods.

There are, however, reports of music stores being attacked outside of Kabul. In April 2011, two people were injured when insurgents bombed a CD shop in Nangarhar. According to the Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR), at least 15 other stores across Nangarhar had previously been targeted in what was thought to be a campaign by insurgents who regard music as un-Islamic. A further eight stores had reportedly closed as their owners were afraid of Taliban reprisals. The Taliban has denied the attacks. The IWPR describes these stores as selling movies, Pashtun music, and Koranic recitals. It is plausible, therefore, that outlets for western music may also be targeted.³¹

Revealing bridal dresses are also reported to be popular amongst Kabul brides.³² In April 2011, *The Guardian* reported that a draft bill was under consideration by Afghanistan’s

²³ ‘Taliban supermarket attack kills nine, but misses American target’ 2011, *The Age*, 30 January <http://www.theage.com.au/world/taliban-supermarket-attack-kills-nine-but-misses-american-target-20110129-1a90d.html> – Accessed 1 April 2011 – Attachment 16

²⁴ ‘Timeline – Major attacks in the Afghan capital’, 2011, *Reuters*, 29 June <http://in.reuters.com/article/2011/06/29/idINIndia-57975920110629> – Accessed 4 August 2011 – Attachment 17

²⁵ ‘Timeline – Major attacks in the Afghan capital’, 2011, *Reuters*, 29 June <http://in.reuters.com/article/2011/06/29/idINIndia-57975920110629> – Accessed 4 August 2011 – Attachment 17

²⁶ ‘Afghans enjoy a new prosperity but fear for a future without the coalition’ 2011, *The Observer*, 5 June – Attachment 19

²⁷ Arbabzadah, N. 2011, ‘Kabul street style: a new generation is quietly reviving the Afghan capital’s urban fashion culture’, *The Guardian UK*, 7 August <http://www.guardian.co.uk/lifeandstyle/2011/aug/07/kabul-street-style> – Accessed 8 August 2011 – Attachment 20

²⁸ Doherty, B. & Geraghty, K. 2011, ‘Kabul: the best of times, the worst of times’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 July <http://www.smh.com.au/world/kabul-the-best-of-times-the-worst-of-times-20110729-1i42f.html> – Accessed 8 August 2011 – Attachment 21

²⁹ Lawrence, Q. 2011, ‘Afghans Divided On When U.S. Troops Should Leave’, National Public Radio, 23 June <http://www.npr.org/2011/06/23/137360742/afghans-divided-on-when-u-s-troops-should-leave> – Accessed 9 August 2011 – Attachment 22

³⁰ Boone, J. 2009, ‘Afghanistan: Kabul shoppers offered US goods in the Bush Bazaar’, *The Guardian*, 5 May <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/may/05/afghanistan-outlook> – Accessed 8 August 2011 – Attachment 23

³¹ ‘Music Shops Silenced in Nangarhar’ 2011, Institute for War and Peace Reporting website, 4 April – Attachment 18

³² Boone, J. 2011, ‘Afghan government plans crackdown on revealing wedding dresses’, 1 April, *The Guardian*, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/apr/01/afghan-revealing-wedding-dresses> – Accessed 4 April 2011, Attachment 24 ³³ Boone, J. 2011, ‘Afghan government plans crackdown on revealing wedding dresses’, 1 April, *The Guardian*, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/apr/01/afghan-revealing-wedding-dresses> – Accessed 4 April 2011, Attachment 24 ³⁴ Boone, J. 2011, ‘Afghan government plans crackdown on revealing wedding dresses’, 1 April, *The Guardian*, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/apr/01/afghan-revealing-wedding-dresses> – Accessed 4 April 2011, Attachment 24 ³⁵ Sieff, K. 2011, ‘Afghan government seeks to ban costly weddings’ *The Washington*

government which would regulate weddings, including the style of bridal dresses. Under the proposed legislation, “garments contrary to Islamic sharia” would be banned. Businesses dealing in garments which are “semi-naked, naked, transparent, or tight in a way that reveals part of the woman’s body” would face fines and possible closure. Committees would monitor weddings to ensure parties complied with legislation, including the requirement for modest attire.³³ Whilst no reports were located of attacks on bridal stores, one store owner cited pressure from the Taliban as a possible reason behind the proposed legislation.³⁴ In July 2011, the bill was reportedly being “reviewed by lawmakers”.³⁵ At the time of writing, no reports were located to confirm the status of the bill.

2. Please provide evidence of what state protection the Afghan government is currently able to provide in Kabul, including the operations of the Afghan police and international forces.

Sources report that protection is more available in Kabul than in other areas of Afghanistan, but is nevertheless limited. Nationally, state protection is said to be compromised by corruption, ineffective governance, a culture of impunity, a weak rule of law and a widespread reliance on traditional dispute resolution.³⁶

The city of Kabul is said to be relatively secure compared with other areas of Afghanistan, including the wider Kabul province.³⁷ On 14 August 2011, *BBC News* reported that militants had stormed a provincial governor’s compound in Parwan, killing at least 19 people. Parwan is located an hour’s drive north-west of Kabul, and is “usually relatively peaceful”. The Taliban, who claimed responsibility for the attack, have recently attacked well-protected sites or figures.³⁸

Post, 16 July http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/afghan-government-seeks-to-ban-costly-weddings/2011/07/11/gIQAMufnGI_story.html – Accessed 8 August 2011 – Attachment 25

³³ Boone, J. 2011, ‘Afghan government plans crackdown on revealing wedding dresses’, 1 April, *The Guardian*, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/apr/01/afghan-revealing-wedding-dresses> – Accessed 4 April 2011, Attachment 24 ³⁴ Boone, J. 2011, ‘Afghan government plans crackdown on revealing wedding dresses’, 1 April, *The Guardian*, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/apr/01/afghan-revealing-wedding-dresses> – Accessed 4 April 2011, Attachment 24 ³⁵ Sieff, K. 2011, ‘Afghan government seeks to ban costly weddings’ *The Washington Post*, 16 July http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/afghan-government-seeks-to-ban-costly-weddings/2011/07/11/gIQAMufnGI_story.html – Accessed 8 August 2011 – Attachment 25

³⁴ Boone, J. 2011, ‘Afghan government plans crackdown on revealing wedding dresses’, 1 April, *The Guardian*, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/apr/01/afghan-revealing-wedding-dresses> – Accessed 4 April 2011, Attachment 24 ³⁵ Sieff, K. 2011, ‘Afghan government seeks to ban costly weddings’ *The Washington Post*, 16 July http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/afghan-government-seeks-to-ban-costly-weddings/2011/07/11/gIQAMufnGI_story.html – Accessed 8 August 2011 – Attachment 25

³⁵ Sieff, K. 2011, ‘Afghan government seeks to ban costly weddings’ *The Washington Post*, 16 July http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/afghan-government-seeks-to-ban-costly-weddings/2011/07/11/gIQAMufnGI_story.html – Accessed 8 August 2011 – Attachment 25

³⁶ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees 2010, *UNHCR Eligibility Guidelines for Assessing the International Protection Needs of Asylum-Seekers From Afghanistan*, 17 December – Attachment 5

³⁶ UK Home Office 2011, *Operational Guidance Note: Afghanistan*, March, p. 3 – Attachment 27

³⁷ Cunningham, E. 2011, ‘Spate of Kabul suicide bombs blamed on nearby valley’, *The National*, 17 February <http://www.thenational.ae/news/worldwide/south-asia/spate-of-kabul-suicide-bombs-blamed-on-nearby-valley?pageCount=0> – Accessed 24 May 2011 – Attachment 26

³⁸ ‘Afghanistan: Many die in assault on governor’s compound’ 2011, *BBC News*, 14 August <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-14520520> – Accessed 16 August 2011 – Attachment 45

The *Sydney Morning Herald* states that in recent years, Afghans have moved to Kabul city seeking safety, and adds that taxes are not collected outside of Kabul due to insecurity and a lack of functioning bureaucracy.³⁹

In March 2011, the UK Home Office reported that Kabul has largely been insulated from the worst of the violence witnessed in Afghanistan over the last decade, and was comparatively well-protected:

The U.S. military and Afghan security officials claimed to have killed or captured hundreds of would-be assailants around Kabul during 2010, significantly blunting the effectiveness of insurgent forces looking to target the capital. A series of checkpoints known as the 'Ring of Steel' has been erected around Kabul's perimeter to provide the capital with an extra layer of protection.⁴⁰

The Afghan National Army (ANA) has lead responsibility for security in Kabul province, while in most of the rest of the country, security responsibility is still deferred to international forces.⁴¹ The ANA continues to receive support from US Special Forces in Kabul.^{42 43} According to the UK Home Office, the capability of Afghan security forces in Kabul has improved in recent years. The police force responsible for Kabul had grown from 5,000 to 18,000 officers, and the Afghan army had established a division of 7,000 soldiers to help protect the capital.⁴⁴

According to Jane's Sentinel, police have reportedly been able to represent the authority of the central government within the main cities, despite being largely ineffective in rural areas.⁴⁵ According to the US Department of State (USDOS), Afghanistan's formal justice system is relatively strong in urban centres.⁴⁶ Additionally, UK Home Office reported that authorities in Kabul, including the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO)-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) are, in general, willing to offer protection to citizens.⁴⁷ In 2009, it was reported that 50 police officers in Kabul had been made responsible for human rights reporting, including on internal police matters.⁴⁸

Also in March 2011, the IWPR stated that Kabul had experienced a 17 per cent reduction in serious crimes over the previous six months. The head of criminal investigations within the

³⁹ Doherty, B. & Geraghty, K. 2011, 'Kabul: the best of times, the worst of times', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 July <http://www.smh.com.au/world/kabul-the-best-of-times-the-worst-of-times-20110729-1i42f.html> – Accessed 8 August 2011 – Attachment 21

⁴⁰ UK Home Office 2011, *Operational Guidance Note: Afghanistan*, March, p. 2 <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4d8b3a232.html> – Accessed 4 April 2011 – Attachment 27

⁴¹ Oxfam 2011, *No Time to Lose: Promoting the Accountability of the Afghan National Security Forces*, 10 May, p.7 <http://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/afghanistan-no-time-to-lose-20110510-en.pdf> – Accessed 8 August 2011 – Attachment 28

⁴² Katzman, K. 2011, 'Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy', Congressional Research Service, 15 April, p. 24, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/4db92b5b2.pdf> – Accessed 17 May 2011 – Attachment 29

⁴³ Nissenbaum, D. & Shukoor, H. 2010 'Afghan capital enjoys relative calm amid security crackdown', *McClatchy Newspapers*, 20 October <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2010/10/20/102338/afghan-capital-enjoys-relative.html> – Accessed 25 May 2011 – Attachment 30

⁴⁴ UK Home Office 2011, *Operational Guidance Note: Afghanistan*, March, p. 2 <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4d8b3a232.html> – Accessed 4 April 2011 – Attachment 27

⁴⁵ UK Home Office 2011, *Operational Guidance Note: Afghanistan*, March, p. 40 – Attachment 27

⁴⁶ US Department of State 2011, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2010 – Afghanistan*, 8 April, Section 1(e) – Attachment 45

⁴⁷ UK Home Office 2011, *Operational Guidance Note: Afghanistan*, March, p.3 – Attachment 27

⁴⁸ UK Home Office 2010, *Country of Origin Information Report: Afghanistan*, 5 November, p. 42 – Attachment 31

Kabul police attributed the reduction to improved information gathering, recruitment and training techniques, corruption-related suspensions, and new police powers to open fire on suspects who attempt to escape police. Female officers have also been recruited, allowing female suspects to be searched during house searches.⁴⁹

A March 2011 report by the United Nations Secretary-General states that Afghan security forces have been successful in limiting insurgent attacks in Kabul.⁵⁰ In July 2011, Afghan security forces uncovered plans to attack Kabul International Airport. It is thought that insurgents may have planned to take passengers hostage as part of the attack.⁵¹ Results from an Asia Foundation survey reported that 34 per cent of Central/Kabul respondents never feared for their personal safety, or for that of their families.⁵² However, the survey also reported that at 21 per cent, the Central/Kabul region has the highest proportion of respondents who state they have “no confidence at all in government law enforcement services”.⁵³

Despite the apparent improvements in the security situation in Kabul, the ability of Afghan authorities to provide adequate protection remains limited.⁵⁴ Nationally, “UNAMA documented 1,462 civilian deaths in the first six months of 2011, an increase of 15 per cent over the same period in 2010”.⁵⁵ DFAT travel advice, dated 1 May 2011, warns that serious terrorist attacks occur regularly in major Afghan cities including Kabul.⁵⁶ In 2011 thus far, there have been numerous cases of civilian casualties resulting from insurgent attacks in Kabul. Nine civilians were killed and 17 injured in an attack on the Intercontinental Hotel on 28 June 2011.⁵⁷ Six people were killed and twenty-three medical students were injured in a suicide attack on a military hospital in May 2011, despite the fact that the hospital was considered to be a well-guarded facility prior to the attack.^{58 59} An attack on the ‘Finest’

⁴⁹ Institute for War and Peace Reporting 2011, ‘Open Season for Kabul Police’, UNHCR Refworld, 14 March <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4d7f25492c.html> – Accessed 1 April 2011 – Attachment 32

⁵⁰ United Nations Security Council 2011, *Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security*, Reliefweb website, 9 March, p. 2 http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/94CABEE471231EBA49257855001B58CD-Full_Report.pdf – Accessed 23 May 2011 – Attachment 33

⁵¹ ‘Afghan security forces say foiled Kabul airport plot’ 2011, *Reuters*, 26 July <http://in.reuters.com/article/2011/07/26/idINIndia-58462020110726> – accessed 4 August 2011 – Attachment 34

⁵² The Asia Foundation 2010, *Afghanistan in 2010: A Survey of the Afghan People*, 9 November, p. 29 – Attachment 35

⁵³ The Asia Foundation 2010, *Afghanistan in 2010: A Survey of the Afghan People*, 9 November, p. 35 – Attachment 35

⁵⁴ UK Home Office 2011, *Operational Guidance Note: Afghanistan*, March, p. 2 – Attachment 27

⁵⁵ United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan 2011, ‘Midyear Report 2011 – Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict’, July, p. 14 <http://unama.unmissions.org/Portals/UNAMA/Documents/2011%20Midyear%20POC.pdf> – Accessed 4 August 2011 – Attachment 15

⁵⁶ Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) 2011, ‘Safety and Security’ in ‘Travel Advice: Afghanistan’, 1 May <http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/Afghanistan> – Accessed 17 May 2011 – Attachment 36

⁵⁷ United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan 2011, ‘Midyear Report 2011 – Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict’, July, p. 18 <http://unama.unmissions.org/Portals/UNAMA/Documents/2011%20Midyear%20POC.pdf> – Accessed 4 August 2011 – Attachment 15

⁵⁸ United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan 2011, ‘Midyear Report 2011 – Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict’, July, p. 18 <http://unama.unmissions.org/Portals/UNAMA/Documents/2011%20Midyear%20POC.pdf> – Accessed 4 August 2011 – Attachment 15

⁵⁹ King, L. 2011, ‘Afghan suicide blast leaves 6 dead; The attack on a well-guarded Kabul hospital raises new fears about security’, *Los Angeles Times*, 22 May – Attachment 37

supermarket in Kabul, which killed nine people and wounded 15, further indicated a “disconcerting level of Taliban surveillance even in Kabul”.^{60 61}

Both the Taliban and the Haqqani network have been linked to attacks in Kabul.^{62 63} According to the US Department of Defense, the Haqqani network is the most significant threat in the east of Afghanistan and continues its efforts to “expand its influence in Kabul and its environs in order to conduct attacks in the capital”.⁶⁴ A 10 February 2011 article from the *New York Times* reported that “[a] cell of suicide bombers active in Kabul was run for three years by a Taliban commander operating from the city’s main prison”.⁶⁵

The UK Home Office has clearly stated that single women or female heads of households in Kabul without male support networks do not have effective protection.⁶⁶ In 2010, the UNHCR reported that conservative elements, allegedly opposed to the education of girls in Kabul and other areas, had increased their attacks on schools, teachers and pupils.⁶⁷

ISAF and Afghan forces are themselves often the targets of attacks, and in the past 12 months, suicide bombers have attacked a range of targets including a Kabul police compound, a minibus carrying intelligence personnel, and a bus carrying Afghan army officers. Civilian casualties also occurred during these attacks.⁶⁸ In February 2011, a suicide bomber attacked a census office in Kabul while civilians waited to collect identity cards. The *New York Times* reported that the target was the local district Governor, whose office was next door to the census office, while a Taliban spokesperson claimed the aim was to derail a recruitment program for the Afghan Local Police.⁶⁹ Stores in Kabul have also illegally produced and sold military and police uniforms which had enabled a string of attacks by insurgents disguised as Afghan service personnel.⁷⁰

⁶⁰ United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan 2011, ‘Midyear Report 2011 – Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict’, July, p. 18 <http://unama.unmissions.org/Portals/UNAMA/Documents/2011%20Midyear%20POC.pdf> – Accessed 4 August 2011 – Attachment 15

⁶¹ ‘Taliban supermarket attack kills nine, but misses American target’ 2011, *The Age*, 30 January <http://www.theage.com.au/world/taliban-supermarket-attack-kills-nine-but-misses-american-target-20110129-1a90d.html> – Accessed 1 April 2011 – Attachment 16

⁶² Sahak, S. & Rivera, R. 2011, ‘Five Arrests In Attack On Hospital In Kabul’, *New York Times*, 23 May <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/24/world/asia/24afghanistan.html> – Accessed 24 May 2011 – Attachment 40

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