

ANSO QUARTERLY DATA REPORT

-Q.3 2008-

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Non-Governmental Organizations have been involved in **71 security incidents** in this third quarter. This contrasts to 29 in the first and 44 in the second to indicate a consistent escalation over the year.

Throughout July, August and September NGOs have reported the **highest incident rates** since ANSO records began in 2002.

The quarter's NGO incidents bring the 2008 totals to 146 and so already surpass the 2007 full year total of 135 with 3 months still left to run⁽¹⁾.

Of the total NGO incidents this year 33% have been attributed to Armed Criminal Groups (ACG) leaving 67% attributed to Armed Opposition Groups (AOG) or those working on their behalf. This also stands in contrast to previous year's data, where criminal incidents were more common ⁽²⁾, and confirms that the volume of total **incidents caused by AOG has been expanding**.

The volume of serious incidents has also been increasing with 51% this quarter classified as "Extremely Serious" including 18 armed assaults, 45 staff abducted and 11 fatalities.

These figures bring the NGO year to date totals to **28 fatalities** ⁽³⁾ and **72 abducted**.

Approximately 75% of NGO fatalities, including all 5 internationals, can be attributed to AOG this year, up from just 53% in 2007.

While it would be easy to interpret this surge as 'active targeting', ANSO believes it is instead the result of a rapidly expanding conflict simply overlapping with the considerable NGO footprint, especially at the rural level. Within this report ANSO is advising NGOs to prepare for a **multi-polar security environment** by strongly reinforcing their independence and moving away from political & military actors.

In conflict monitoring ANSO has continued to track **unprecedented levels of violence** across the country.

Many South and East districts have arrived at **saturation point** with little territory remaining for AOG to take while the Central region, especially Wardak, Logar and Ghazni, deteriorated to the extent of becoming 'no-go'. AOG are conservatively estimated to be active in over 35% of the country, or approximately 145 of 398 districts, and still counting.

Nic Lee, ANSO Director, Kabul, October 2008

1. 2006 Full Year Total was 105

2. In 2007 61% (84) of total was attributed to ACG with 39% (53) of total attributed to AOG

3. 5 International and 23 National

1. THE IMPACT OF CONFLICT & CRIMINALITY ON NON- GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (NGO)

1.1 GENERAL NGO TRENDS

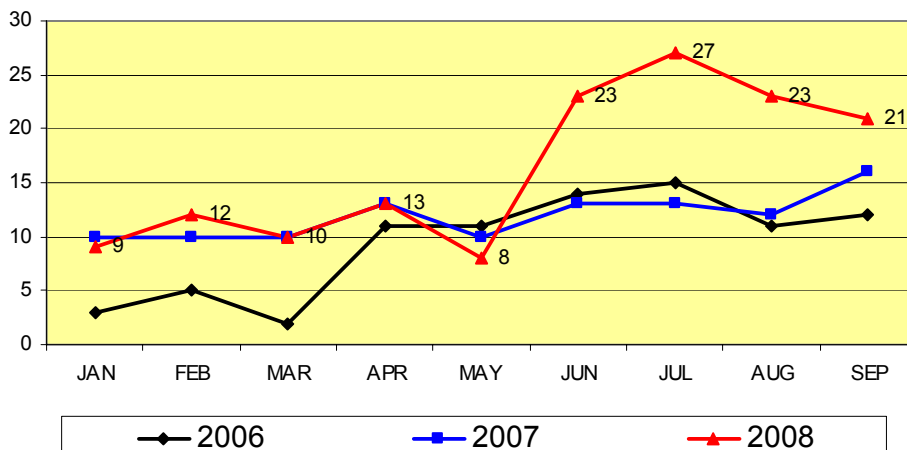
These 3 charts show total monthly NGO incident rates since 2006 (right) the 2008 monthly rate disaggregated by perpetrator (below) and a comparison of causes for 2007 to 2008 (below right).

The first chart illustrates clearly just how anomalous the last quarter has been in breaking an approximately 19 month even stretch.

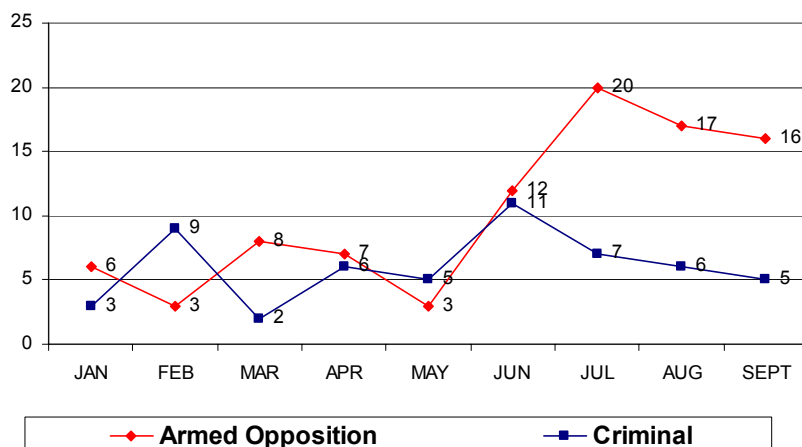
The next three graphs go on to demonstrate that it is exclusively an escalation in NGO / AOG contact that is driving this growth. They show that the percentage of all NGO incidents that can be attributed to AOG has **almost doubled** from 39% in 2007 to 67% this year with 3-months left to run. This will not come as a surprise to avid ANSO readers (see Q.4, 2007) although the escalating fatalities occurring as a result of these contacts was not considered inevitable. The rate at which the conflict is expanding (in velocity and geography) makes further NGO contact imminent and the evidence of the last quarter at least is that **NGO staff can and will be killed or injured** if they are not quick enough to get out of the way.

Stable criminal rates are a good sign and indicate that NGO strategies have had some impact in reducing vulnerability in this area although the trend is also impacted by changes in classification with more 'crimes' being reported as being AOG directed.

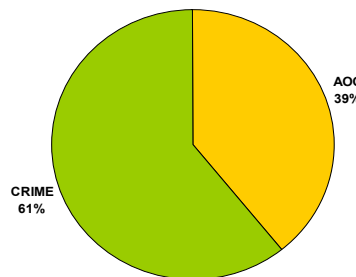
TOTAL MONTHLY NGO INCIDENTS - 2006 TO 2008



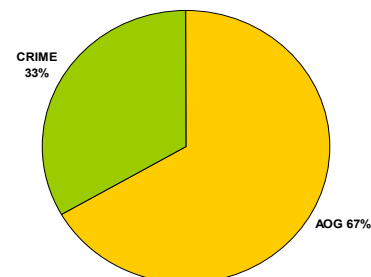
NGO INCIDENTS - 2008



CAUSE OF NGO INCIDENTS - 2007

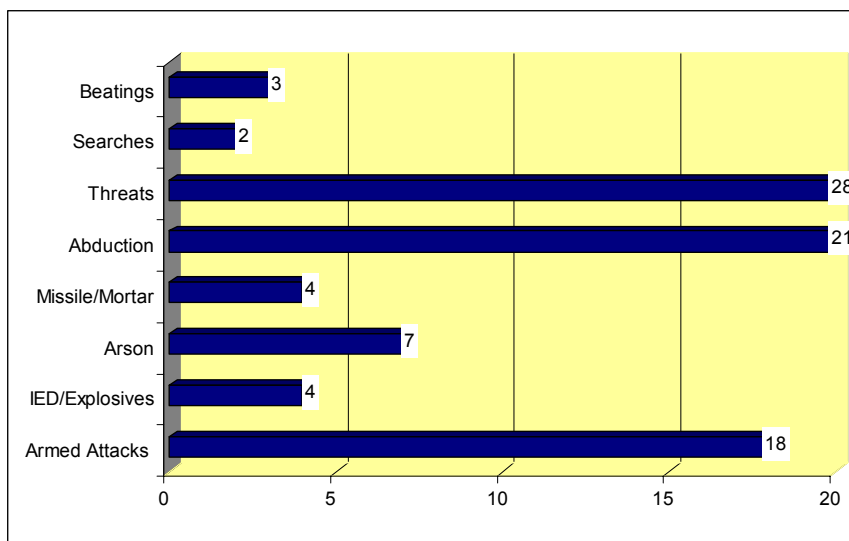


CAUSE OF NGO INCIDENTS - 2008



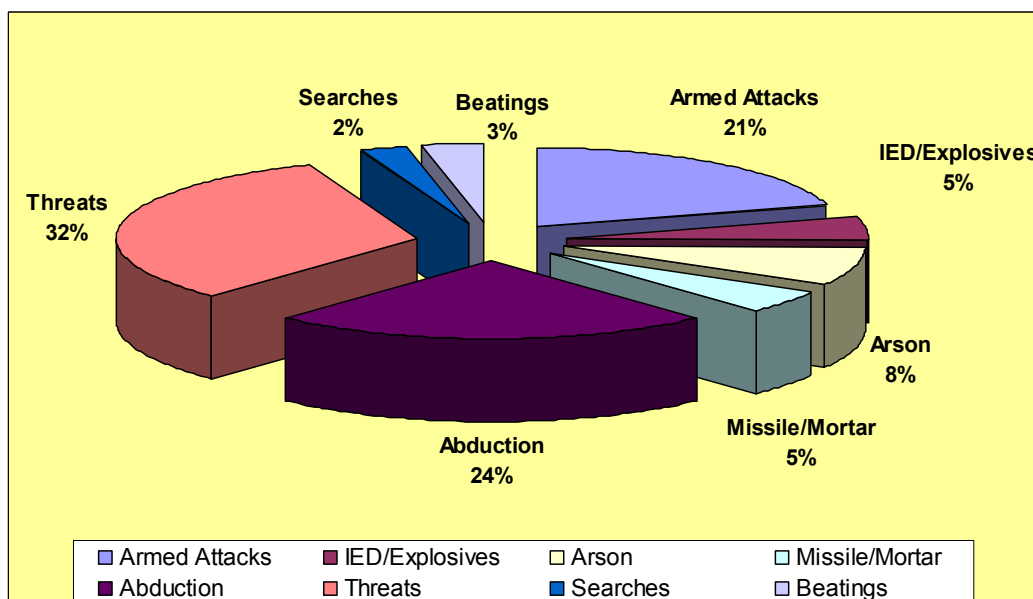
1.2 NATURE OF AOG ATTACKS AGAINST NGO

Chart shows the number of different types of AOG incidents against NGO to date (right) as well as their percentage of the whole (below) The 18 armed attacks have left 28 dead (12 attacks for 15 dead in 2007) and the 21 abduction incidents account for 56 persons abducted (14 cases/66 persons 2007). There have been escalations in the use of more serious weapons, such as IED and Missiles, against NGO offices and vehicles. Verbal and written threats are still prevalent (15 received in 2007) and increasingly coming as a precursor to actual violent activity. Thankfully, staff beating/mutilation (as is often witnessed in suspected IMF informants) remains rare and has yet to emerge as a significant threat to the NGO community.



As alarming as these figures are ANSO is still reluctant to support the idea that NGO are being **directly targeted** for their own views or activities rather than for being mistakenly associated to the broader military/political effort. In our view an almost textbook “blurred line” scenario has developed which is compounded by the fact that NGO are practically the only visible (and accessible) organizations at the village level. A retraction of NGO staff from these areas would undoubtedly result in a dropping incident rate and AOG would move on to whomever else was available.

Effectively communicating, **and enacting**, NGO independence from **all other sectors** must now stand as the #1 security strategy as we move deeper in to a multi-polar security environment



1.3 NATURE OF CRIMES (ACG) AGAINST NGO

Chart shows the types and volumes of criminal incidents targeting NGO for 2008 to date (right) as well as the percentages of the whole (below).

As expected, **armed robbery remains the #1 crime** accounting for 72% of the total, up from 61% for 2007.

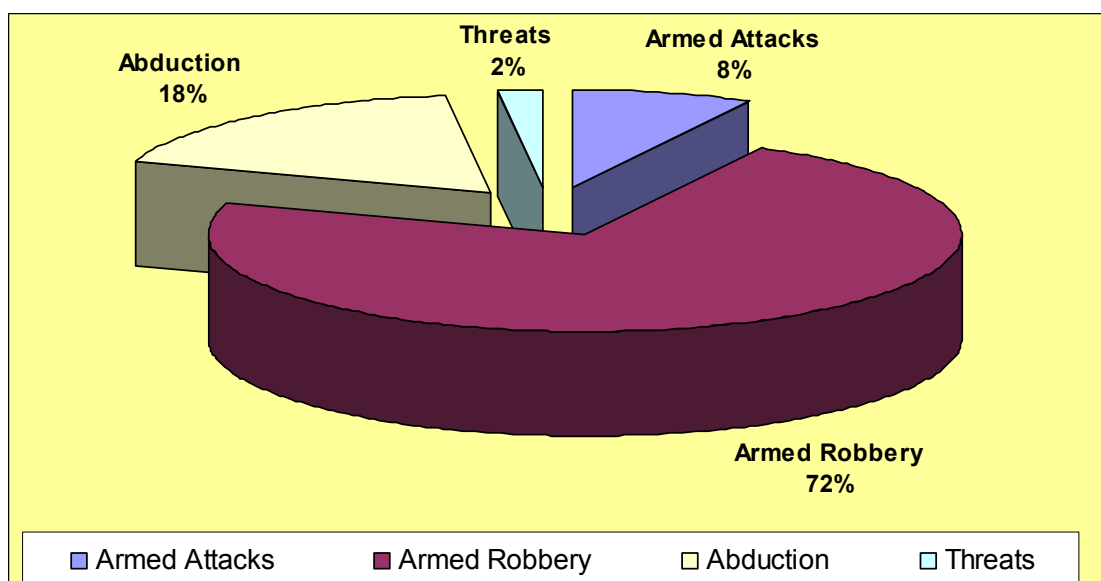
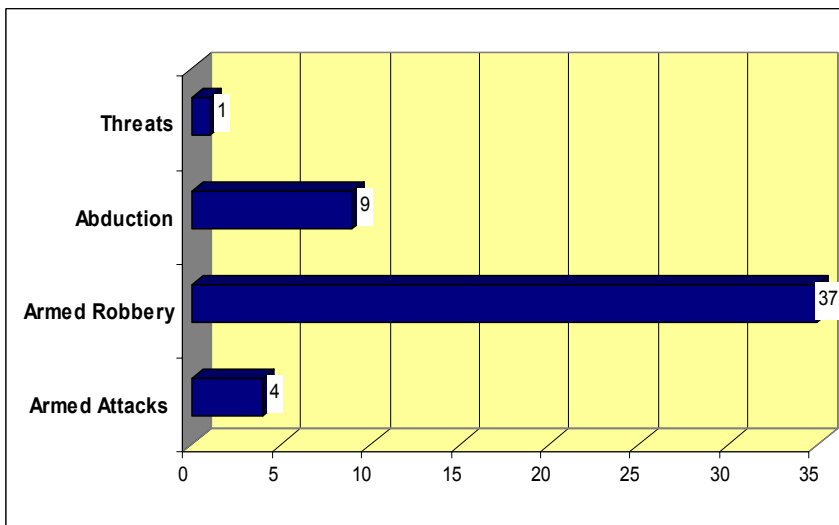
Approximately 42% of robberies occur on the road, 40% at home/office and the remaining 18% fail or are aborted. In most cases there is

little evidence that the target is known to be an NGO. This is especially applicable to those robberies which occur on remote roads where NGO are caught simply because they have the only vehicles on the road. There is a growing concern regarding the ability of ACG to recognize NGO workers as **potentially valuable abduction targets** and many road robbers have made extensive searches of people and vehicles. Identity "sterilization" remains the most effective means of addressing this.

Armed attacks (basically what would be classified as Assault or Attempted Homicide elsewhere) is thankfully down from 19% in 2007 to just 8% this year.

Criminal abductions, mostly for ransom, remain a major concern although there has been some downturn in the number of people abducted with the 9 incidents in 2007 accounting for 22 persons while this years 9 only account for 15 persons. There are of course 3-months left to catch up.

AOG presence and a deteriorating criminal environment remain closely associated.



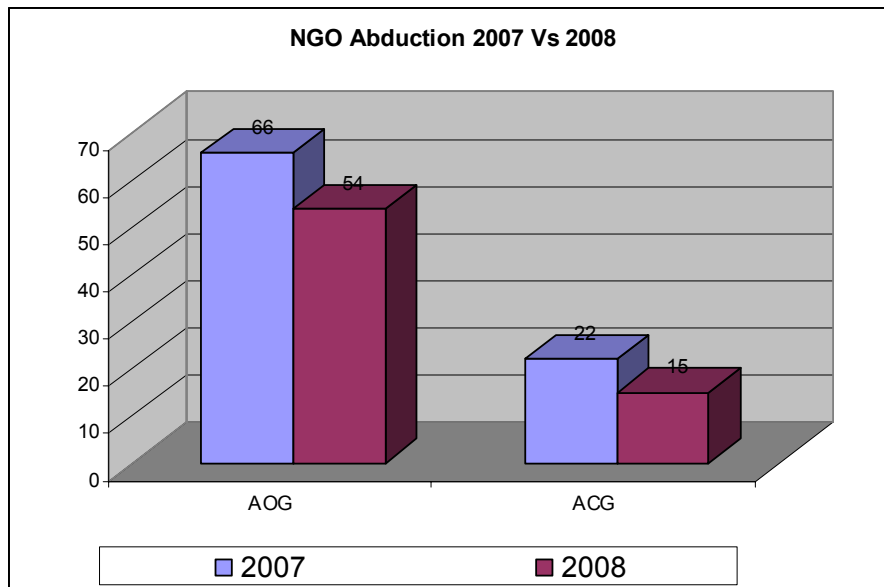
1.4 NGO ABDUCTIONS

Chart compares number of NGO staff abducted by both ACG and AOG for 2007 and 2008.

Total abductions for 2008 are 72 just slightly less than the 88 for 2007 but a few months left to run.

The last quarter of 2007 saw only 5 additional NGO abductions so it is reasonable to assume the same this year (as NGO movement drops dramatically Oct-Dec) and therefore that the abduction rate will not vary significantly.

However, it is worth remembering that **2007 was the worst kidnap year on record** so keeping pace can barely be seen as a positive development especially given that NGO have already taken measures to reduce their exposure.



The ratio of criminal to AOG related abductions remains steady (roughly 25%/75% respectively) although it is clear that AOG are more frequently 'out-sourcing' abductions to local criminal gangs and this is anticipated to be an ongoing (and escalating) trend.

Abduction has remained largely **targeted towards Afghan nationals** who account for >90% of the total. This reflects their accessibility, especially on secondary roadways. Three (3) of 68 Afghan NGO workers abducted have been killed in captivity.

Of the 4 NGO international staff abducted this year 2 have been killed in captivity. There are no apparent relations between the 4 cases and neither murder offers any solid evidence of possible future trends.

Despite the developments mentioned above, generally the 'modus operandi' of NGO kidnap has remained consistent and most contain the following elements:

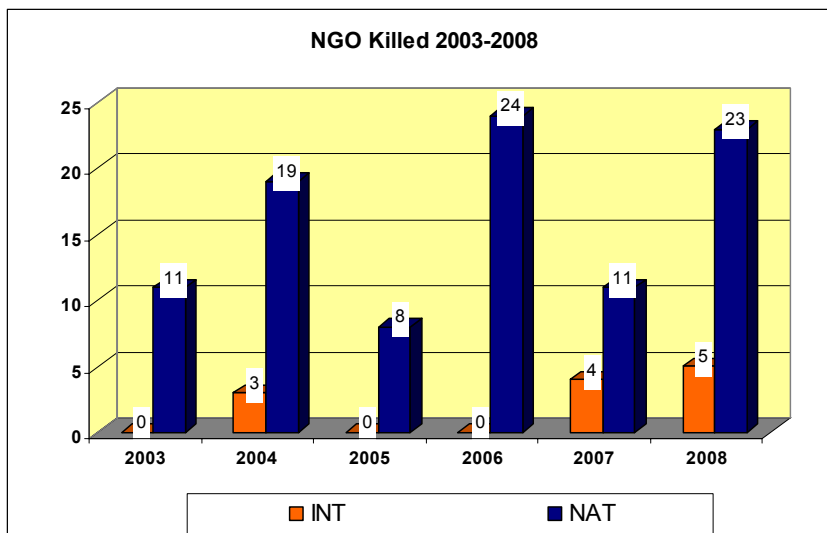
- Individuals are identified as NGO workers **while in transit** (either directly or accidentally)
- Abductees are **relocated multiple times** and often walked long distances
- Primary contact is with abductees **family** and most demands go towards them
- **Ransom is most often paid** or local authorities will intervene with alternative offers (exchange)
- Over 95% of all NGO abductees are **returned home safely** after 6-8 weeks in captivity

Abduction has been very lucrative with those involved gaining political, economic and military advantage. It also appears to be becoming more sophisticated with advance surveillance, an increasing use of "insiders" to guide and support the operation and more complex out-sourcing to criminals. In light of such it is likely to remain a significant threat.

1.5 NGO FATALITIES - VOLUME & LOCATION

Tables show the total NGO national and international staff deaths since 2003 (right) the provinces of NGO deaths in 2008 to date (below) and the percentage of NGO deaths caused by various parties for 2007 & 2008 compared (below right)

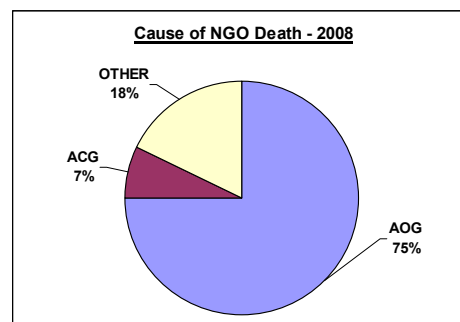
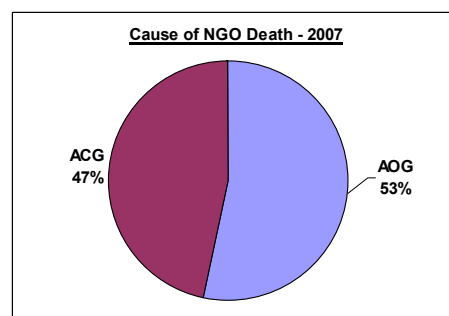
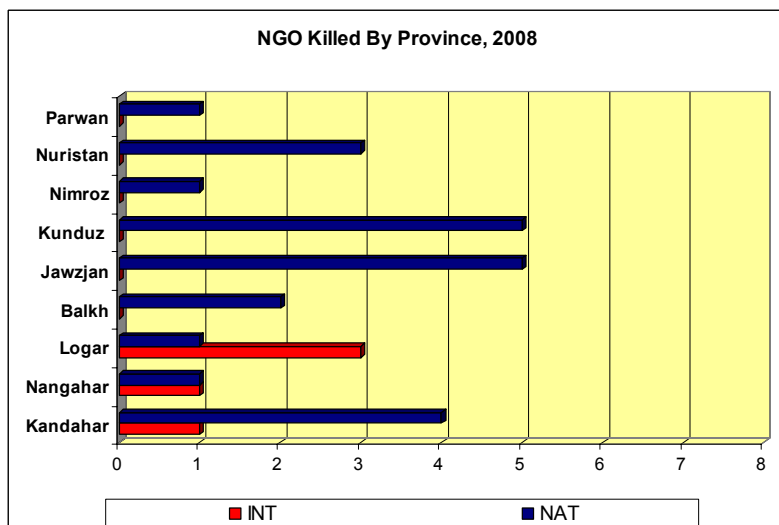
The overall volume (right) provides little to work with being apparently consistent with the last 6 years other than a notable increase in International staff fatalities. The lack of important data, such as NGO staff per-capita and changes in security posture, make analyzing gross figures more or less irrelevant.



The “causes” pie-graphs however provide a clear indication of a **major change in NGO vulnerability** to being killed by Armed Opposition Groups with the percentage of the whole leaping from 53% in 2007 to 75% for 2008. There is a corresponding, although more dramatic, decrease in the criminal causes (down from 47% to just 7%) and the introduction of an entirely new element, being deaths at the hands of International Military Forces or ANA/ANP (from 0%-18%). All of these developments are reliable metrics of the shift from ‘ambient violence’ to actual war as more actors get drawn in to the gravity of the conflict.

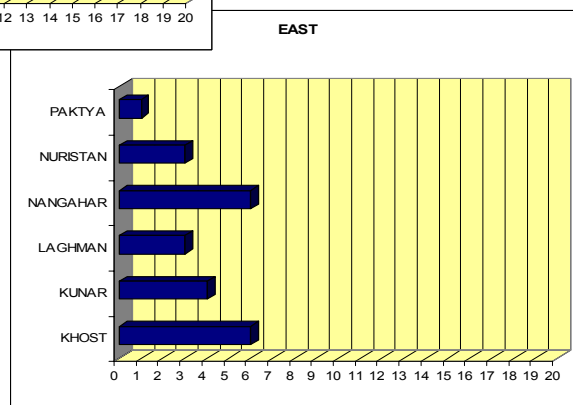
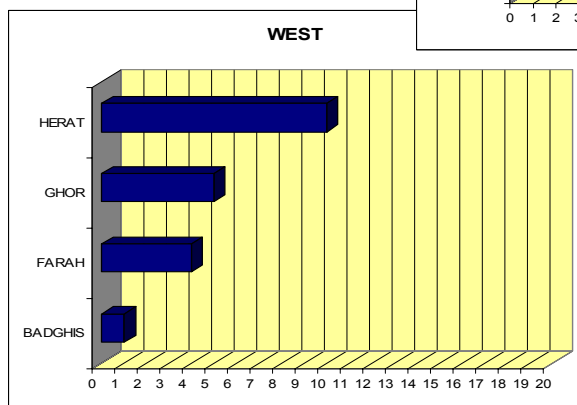
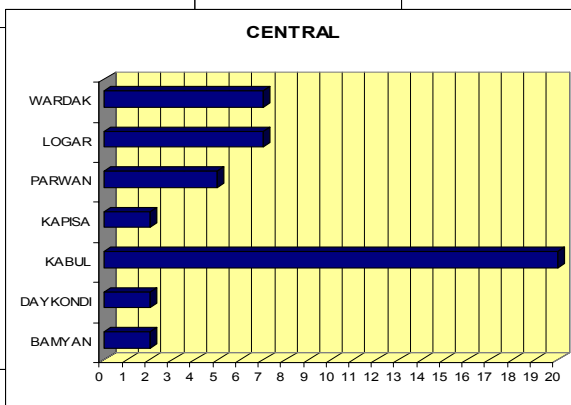
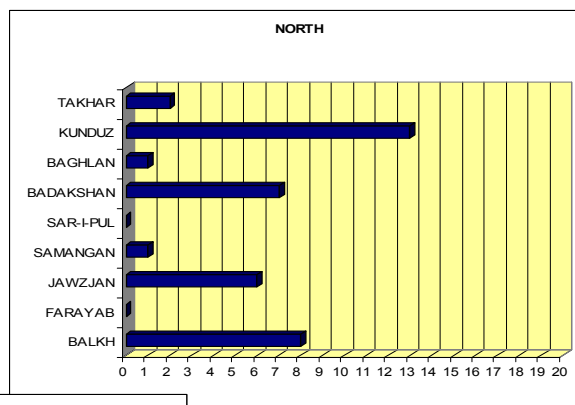
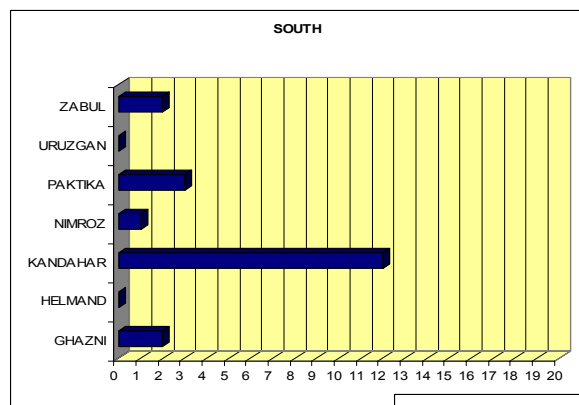
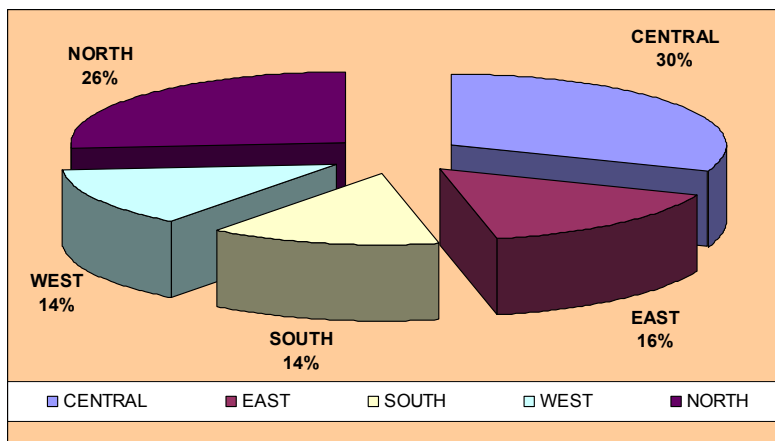
The location of NGO deaths (below) again indicate that the North by far sees the highest rates (with Kunduz, Balkh and Jawzjan alone accounting for close to 50% of total) despite the lowest rates of AOG activity. This has to be associated with the per-capita density of NGO in the area as well as their relatively low security posture compared with staff in other regions. It is disappointing to note that many NGO staff still go on ‘holidays’ in the North despite consistent double figure fatalities.

All five international deaths have been attributed to AOG and this is reflected in the areas in which they occurred.



1.6 LOCATION OF NGO ATTACKS/INCIDENTS

Tables shows the percentage of total NGO incidents occurring in each region (*right*) as well as per province within the region (below). The expansion of conflict to new areas this year is evident in the growth of the Central Region “slice” from 18% in Q.1 to 30% in Q.3 although it is only slightly up on the 26% for all of 2007. The volume of incidents in the East Region has dropped (from 22% for all 2007) as NGO have shifted staff and resources out of the area. It is notable that NGO incidents have occurred in 29 of the 34 provinces indicating the unusually large ‘footprint’ of the NGO community. The density of NGOs in Kabul is reflected in figures for that city which include crime.



2. CONFLICT TRENDS & ANALYSIS

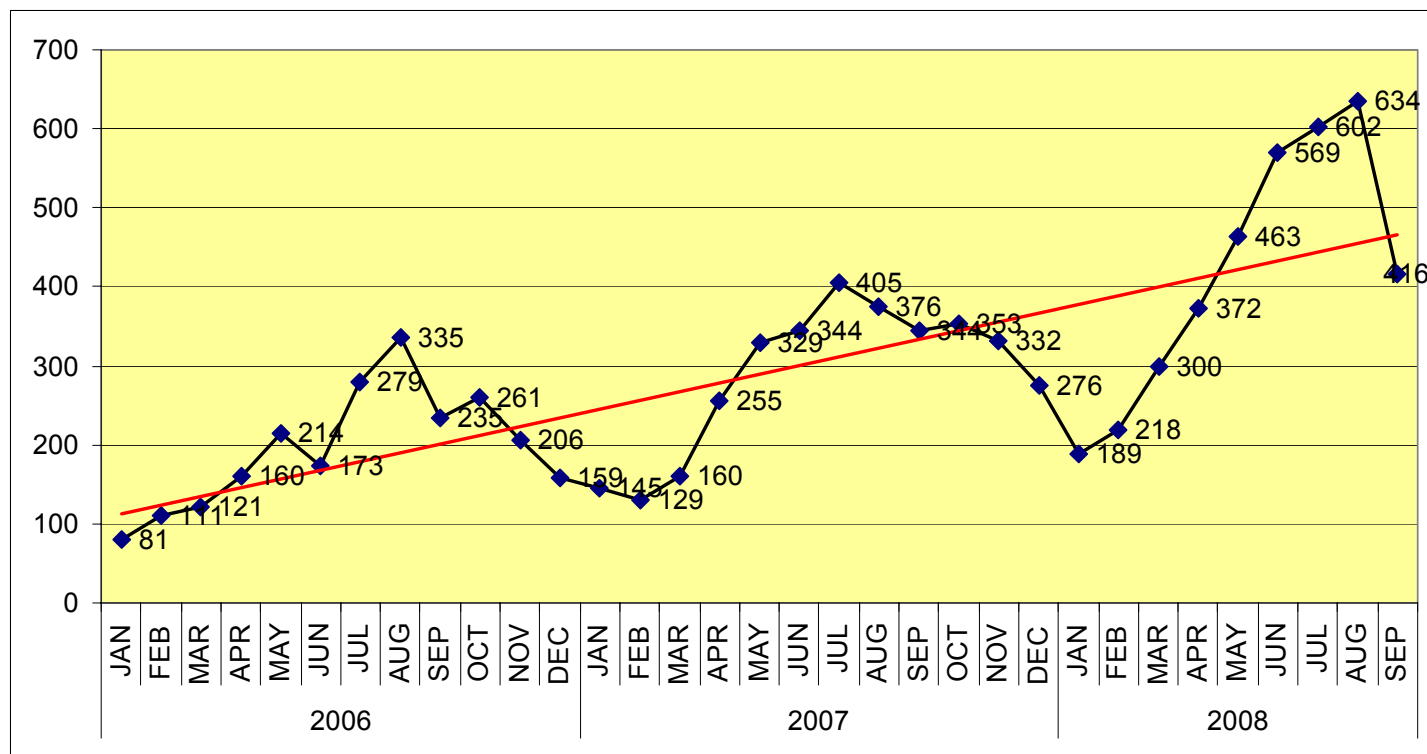
2.1 AOG INITIATED ATTACKS

Table shows the number of attacks⁽¹⁾ initiated by AOG per months since reliable ANSO records began⁽²⁾.

It demonstrates an averaged increase of nearly 400% over the 33 month period with each month of 2008 seeing between 30%-50% growth over 2007. It is generally acknowledged that the AOG campaign was launched in late 2005 and so analysis further back from that point is not significant.

Also important to note is the shortening “winter lull” and the much faster “pick-up” following it. Compare for example the smooth and consistent growth Jan-Jul 2008 with the more erratic “stop-start” of 2006 when the campaign was getting started. None of these facts come as surprises given the basic understanding of an escalating national war. Growth remains concentrated in rural areas where AOG are successfully exploiting social fractures, influencing local strong-men and co-opting organized crime. This causes the expansion to disproportionately impact the NGO community who are often the only internationally funded entities in the villages.

As ANSO has noted previously, there does not appear to be any structure or force able to effectively respond to this growth and NGO will be well advised to **prepare for a multi-polar security environment** in which liaison and negotiations for access with all conflicting parties will become required.



1. Includes only close range (Small arms, RPG, grenade), indirect fire (IED, missile, mortar) and suicide attacks (SVBIED/SBBIED) attributed to AOG.

2. This figure should not be compared to the UNDSS “Security Incident” figures which is generally broader and contains criminal as well as AOG and IMF initiated incidents. ANSO figures are for AOG attacks only and also where we considered AOG initiated.

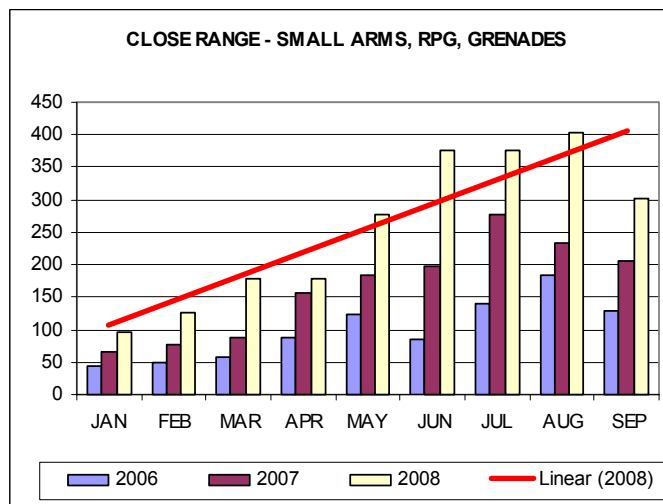
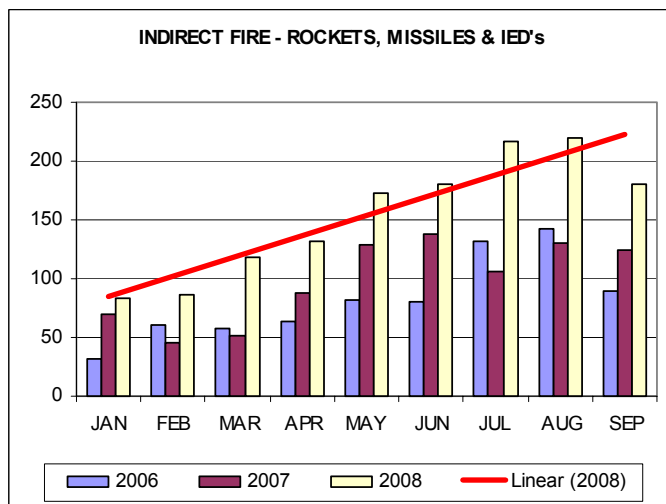
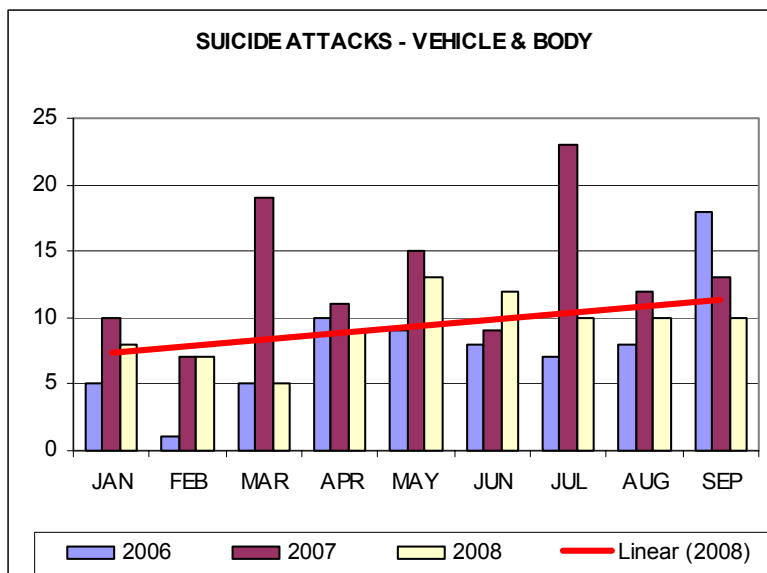
2.2 AOG ATTACK COMPOSITION

The three charts show the same data as 2.1 but disaggregated over time in to three attack categories ANSO uses (see chart headings for description).

They demonstrate that conventional means of warfare, such as small arms/ RPG engagements, have been the main drivers of the conflict expansion with over 400% increase in these types of engagements between January and August of 2008 alone.

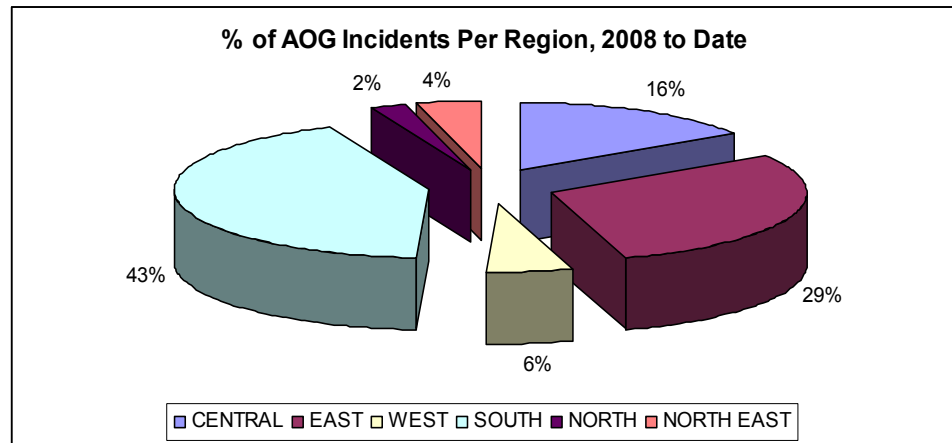
Conversely they show that the mainstay of “asymmetric warfare”, the suicide bombing, has only been lightly deployed this year with 84 compared to 119 by Q.3 of 2007 and no significant growth within the year either. (See 2.4 for more on this data)

This is important to note as many respectable commentators paint the growing conflict as being led by fanatical outsiders committed to “terror tactics”. This analysis would not seem to be borne out by the facts which instead present a primarily indigenous attrition campaign with occasional “special forces” suicide operations.



2.3 CONFLICT AREAS

These graphs show the percentage of AOG activity in 2008 occurring per geographic region (*right*) a comparison of 2008 monthly regional trends (*below*) and an annual comparison for each region in isolation (*next page*)

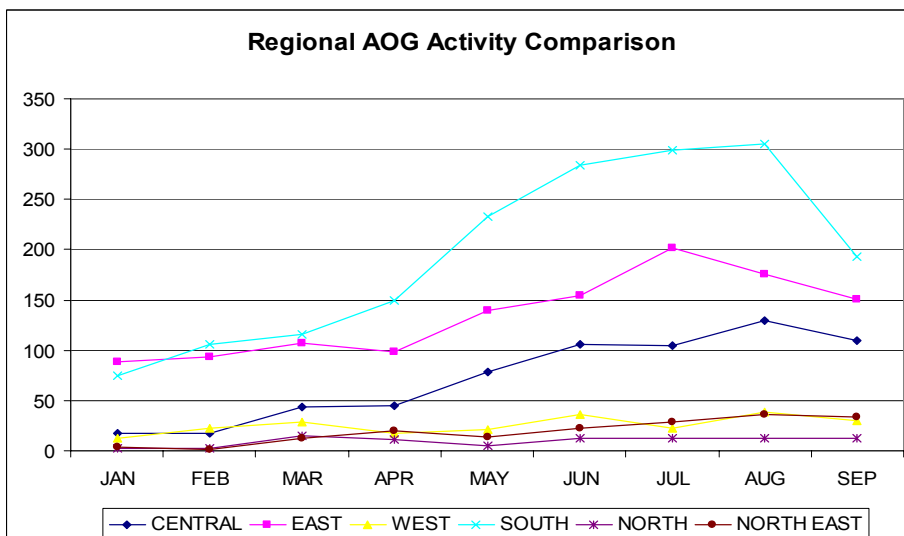


They demonstrate that South and East regions have remained the epicenters of conflict with steady (and sometimes momentous) escalations within 2008. The South alone accounts for a full 43% of all AOG associated attacks up from 36% of all 2007 attacks and is trending close to 50% higher than its closest competitor.

The often claimed success by US forces in the Eastern Region appear to have some credibility with the regions share of incidents dropping from 38% in 2007 to 29% this year. This is also demonstrated in the manner in which the trend line (below) has moved away from the South line while for most of 2007 these two lines were at parity. The lack of reliable reporting from the Eastern area must also be taken in to consideration in this trend however.

The Central region has also seen some notable growth with 16% of attacks so far (up from 14% for all 2007) which is compounded by the fact that the 'whole pie' is much larger this year than last. The rise of the Central regional can also be seen in the chart below as it joins the East and South in the 100+ incidents per month club.

The sustainable placement of AOG operations to Wardak, Logar, Ghazni and outlying districts of Kabul over the course of 2008 can be seen as major successes for AOG and will likely portend a more rapid and serious escalation in conflict in and around Kabul in the coming year.



Other regions (West, North and North East) have grown also but not out of proportion with last year (7%/2%/3% respectively).

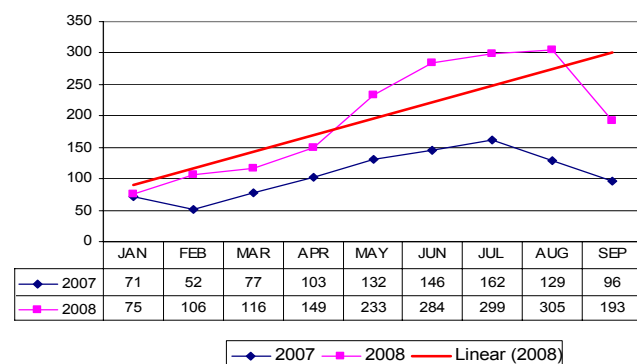
2.3 CONFLICT AREAS (*continued*)

These 5 charts show the AOG incidents rates (and average Trend Line in red) for each of the 5 ANSO regions. Growth in all areas is visible demonstrating the reach of the conflict across the country. It is notable that 3 of the charts (South, East and now Central) are operating at the +100 incidents per month range providing clear evidence of the spread of significant fighting to new areas in the Central Region.

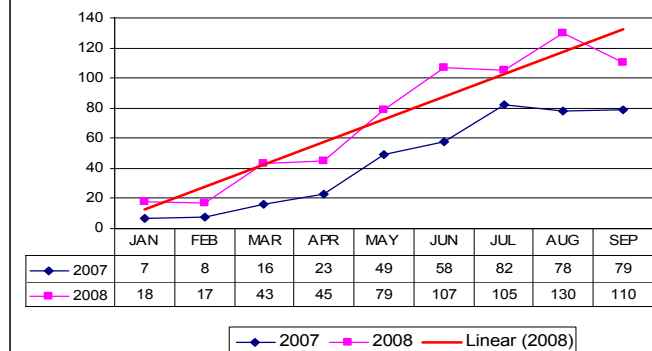
As noted on the prior page, activity in the West, North and North East has seen some sporadic escalation within 2008 but has not increased significantly, nor consistently, over the same period last year. Instead the areas seem more vulnerable to occasional spikes in clashes followed by a return to more "normal" levels.

AOG Activity Trackers for each province individually are available to NGO in ANSO Bi-Weekly Report.

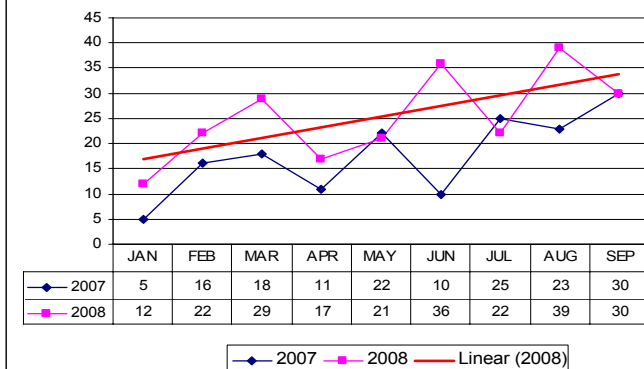
SOUTH - AOG Activity Trend



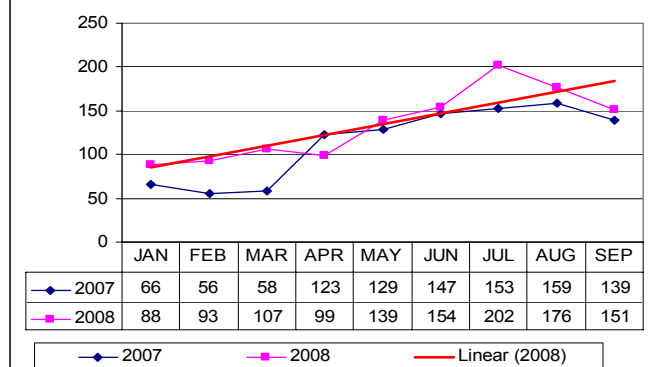
CENTRAL - AOG Activity Trend



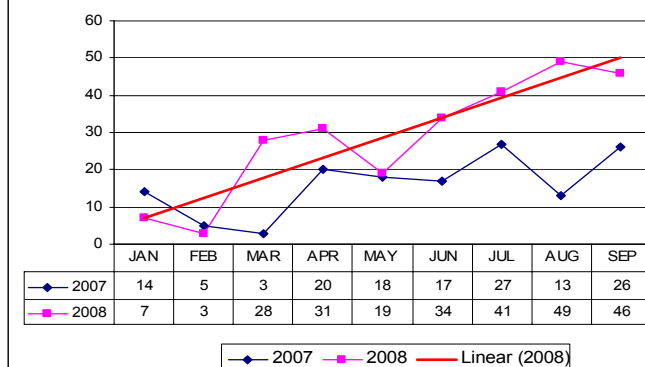
WEST - AOG Activity Trend



EAST-AOG Activity Trend



NORTH - AOG Activity Trend

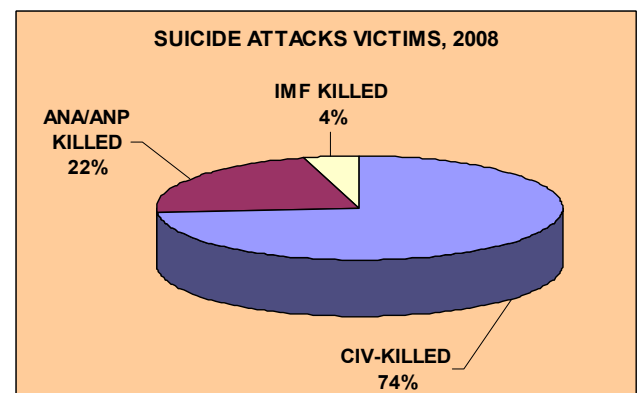
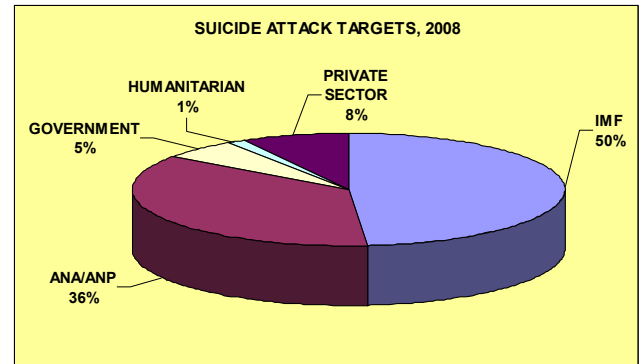


2.4 SUICIDE BOMBINGS

Charts shows the targets and victims of suicide attacks for 2008 (right) as well as casualty yield trends amongst civilians (below).

Although there have been **fewer actual detonations** than last year (84 to date Vs. 119 by Q.3 2007) when the number of preventions and detections are added the “attempted” rate remains constant indicating that it has been improvements in ANP/ANA capacity to stop attacks that is really impacting the figures.

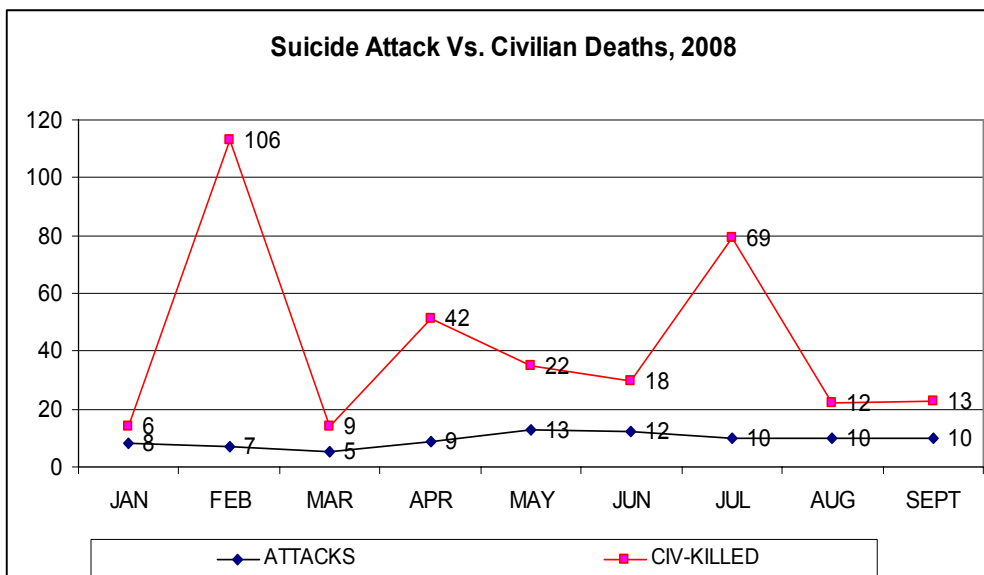
IMF forces remain the primary target of such attacks with 50% directed towards them (up from 42% for 2007). Suicide attacks against the Private Sector (generally construction companies & PSC) are up from 5% in 2007 to 8% this year which, combined with the first attack actually targeting a humanitarian (UN) convoy, indicate a possible change in application of this weapon towards softer targets. To date NGO have not been targeted with suicide attacks mostly likely as a result of their no weapons & non-armored status.



Despite more than 85% of such attacks being directed at military forces it is Afghan civilians who continue to bear the brunt with close to **75% of the fatalities**. The trend line chart (below) demonstrates that civilian casualty yields per device have often exceeded 5 (or even 10) to 1 device. Similar charts for ANP/ANA and IMF casualties (not shown) suggest that the ratio rarely reaches above a straight 1:1 and is often much less with only the bomber and civilians being killed. Much of this civilian casualty

trend can be attributed to just a handful of attacks which skew the data with high fatalities (the dog-fight bomb, Indian Embassy etc).

However other contributing factors include the changes in deployment of vehicle borne devices (which by nature carry more powerful explosives) and the ability of body-borne attacker to successfully penetrate civilian areas.



2.5 CONFLICT RELATED CASUALTIES

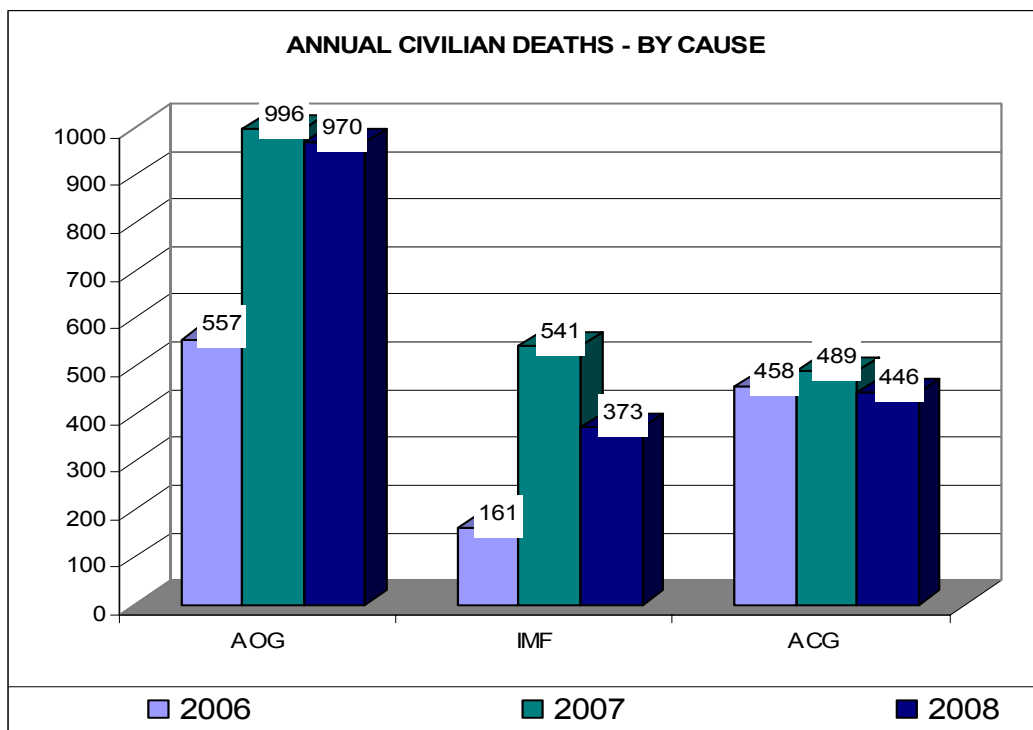
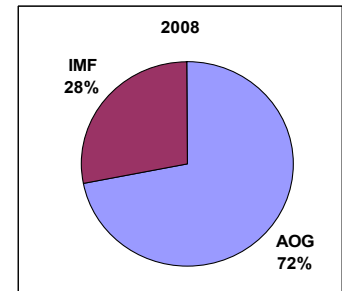
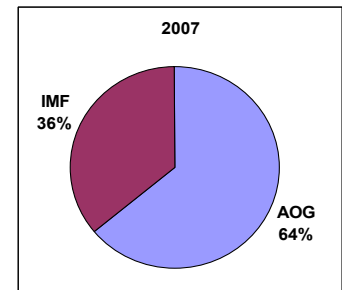
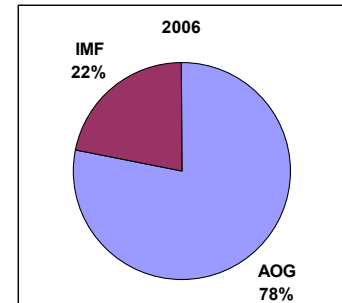
These charts show the fluctuations in % of civilian casualties caused by both parties to the conflict (right) and three years of total annual casualties (below) caused by both parties plus criminal homicide.

The three pie-graphs show that International Military Forces (IMF) have decreased their 'share' of casualties over the 2007 period although are still in escalation over the longer period (this is reinforced by the actual death figures below). This is important to NGO (more so than the more numerous AOG rate) as it can directly impair local communities views of "the international community" and thus undermine NGO acceptance in areas of work.

The IMF use of air-power combined with an AOG propensity towards fighting from civilian areas would suggest that there will be little change in this dynamic for the short term.

The criminal death statistics have remained reasonably stable for three years with about 25% of the total civilian deaths ANSO has recorded (up from just 24% for all of 2007).

The threat, and impact, of routine criminal murder is often overlooked amidst the escalating conflict but these figures would suggest that it remains a significant threat to Afghan civilians with no downwards trend visible despite progress in law-enforcement programs.



REPORT END

For further information
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