

Kunar Security Update and Ex-Army Personnel Situation under Taliban

Request:

- What is the current situation in the province of Kunar?
- What is the situation of former army personnel under the Taliban regime?

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DISCLAIMER:

This answer was prepared after extensive research of public domain and other documents. It does not pretend in any way to be conclusive about the correctness of an individual asylum application. All documents found have been included in the answer.

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1. SOURCES

All sources were accessed between May 16th and May 24th, 2024.

In grey, highlighted points concerning some minorities/communities/ethnicities—in case they apply to your client's case—are highlighted.

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2. SECURITY SITUATION

A. CGRS point of view

CGRS, Afghanistan: new policy, 2 March 2022.

“Suspension of assessment of subsidiary protection status is no longer applicable

In August 2021, a temporary suspension of decisions (link previous web report) was decided for applicants from Afghanistan.[...] Therefore, the temporary suspension of the assessment of subsidiary protection status is lifted. The CGRS can again take a decision for all applications. [...]

The CGRS is aware that the situation in this country is extremely problematic. It is clear that many people need protection. This is not necessarily the case for everyone. An individual assessment remains necessary. [...]

Granting refugee status

Due to the assumption of power by the Taliban, the **situation for many Afghans has clearly deteriorated. Many people risk being persecuted.** They can count on refugee status.

This involves many different profiles such as journalists, human rights activists, political opponents and critics of the Taliban, **people occupying certain functions under the previous government**, staff members of the previous foreign military troops or foreign organisations, certain minorities, LGBT people and other people who go against the conservative of religious norms and values, minors without a network, women, family members of certain profiles at risk...

Granting subsidiary protection status

Therefore, subsidiary protection status will no longer be granted because of the security situation. [...] In general, subsidiary protection status will not be granted because of the socio-economic or humanitarian circumstances in Afghanistan.”

B. General situation in Afghanistan

United Nations General Assembly, Situation of human rights in Afghanistan Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan, A/HRC/55/80, 23 February 2024.

“Two and a half years after the Taliban seized control over the territory of Afghanistan, **human rights continue to worsen.** [...] The level of suffering caused not only by the ongoing desperate humanitarian situation but also by gross, widespread and, in some cases, systematic violations of human rights is unacceptable.

[about the situation of minorities] After August 2021, the situation has worsened, and the Special Rapporteur remains concerned **that minorities are at heightened risk of human rights violations with intensified tensions between different communities, each often claiming to be disadvantaged and the subject of attacks.** Crimes committed against ethnic and religious minorities by various actors, discriminatory policies and practices, the ambiguity about the continuation of previous practices,

ambiguous land reform decisions and reduced representation in politics and the de facto government, among others, have led to further marginalization. [...]

If your client is from an ethnic and religious minority, such as a Shia Muslim of Hazara ethnicity. It might be worth checking p9 of the Report, as several attacks have been described.

Civic space continued to shrink inside Afghanistan with the Taliban continuing to arbitrarily arrest and detain persons critical of their policies and leadership, in some cases raising questions of enforced disappearance. The Taliban stated in August 2023 that anyone, including journalists, acting against national interests and religion would be arrested. The Special Rapporteur expresses his utmost concern about the collapse of civic space. Together with other mandate holders, he called upon the Taliban to stop the arbitrary arrest and detention of individuals on the basis of their opinions. [...]

79. The radical disruptions to the legal architecture of Afghanistan since August 2021, including the suspension of the Constitution and laws, as well as the inconsistent enforcement of laws and the lack of transparency and clarity about law-making processes, have put at risk the principle of legal certainty, the bedrock of the rule of law. 80. Those changes have also compromised international due process obligations, including, inter alia, the presumption of innocence, independence of the judiciary and the right to legal defence.

81. The Taliban has continued to subject persons to corporal punishment in public, often involving groups, in violation of the prohibition of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. For instance, UNAMA refers to an incident on 16 August 2023, a group of 19 persons (2 women and 17 men) were publicly flogged in a sports stadium in Sar-e Pul. Similarly, on 17 September 2023 in Zabul, a group of nine people (including one woman and eight men) were flogged, in another sports stadium. [...]

The Special Rapporteur has been alerted to extrajudicial killings, ill-treatment and torture of former security personnel and government officials. The prevailing lack of accountability for those grave violations and the rampant impunity pose serious doubts about the commitment or capability of the de facto authorities to enforce the rule of law and bring the culprits to justice. The Special Rapporteur asserts that the situation requires the urgent and comprehensive attention of the international community. He calls for immediate measures to safeguard the victims and hold those responsible accountable, ensuring that the international human rights commitments of Afghanistan are actively upheld and enforced. [...]"

Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), 62nd Quarterly Report To The United States Congress, 30 January 2024.

The following table is a non-exhaustive list of examples in which SIGAR determined whether the situation has been getting Better or Worse.

	Acute food insecurity is predicted to affect 15.8 million people by March 2024, an increase of 500,000 from 2023.
	The UN says the estimated number of people in need of humanitarian assistance has decreased from 28.3 million in 2023 to 23.7 million in 2024.
	UNAMA documented 10 extrajudicial killings of former government officials and former ANDSF this quarter, adding to the 112 killings already recorded since January 2022.
	The Armed Conflict and Location Event Data project—a nonprofit organization—recorded 1,622 security incident related fatalities in Afghanistan in 2023, compared to 4,240 in 2022.

SIGAR-Commissioned Assessment of Afghanistan’s Security Situation, 09 April 2024.

“Half of the participants¹ said the security situation has not improved and over half do not feel safer since March 2023. Nearly two-thirds of the participants said increased poverty and general crime (robberies and kidnappings) were the greatest risk to their personal safety and the most serious security threat, with

¹ Details on the person interviewed: “This quarter, SIGAR commissioned an informal assessment of Afghan views about the security situation in Afghanistan. Forty-four individuals (36 men and eight women) were interviewed across 14 provinces: Badakhshan, Balkh, Helmand, Herat, Kabul, Kandahar, Kapisa, Khost, Kunar, Kunduz, Nangarhar, Paktiya, Parwan, and Panjshir. These individuals were employed and/or had an active role in society, were considered knowledgeable and aware of the security situation, had at least a high school education, and were not affiliated with the Taliban or other militant organizations. The assessment covered topics ranging from general safety and security in Afghanistan to the recruitment practices of militant organizations.”

others naming **ISIS-K** and the **presence of foreign fighters**, **women's security**, and **potential arrests by the Taliban** as the greatest threats. One participant in Paktiya said, "Although the security situation has improved, the lives of those who worked in the security sector in the previous government are not safe."

United Nations General Assembly, *The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security: report of the Secretary-General, A/78/789*, 28 February 2024.

"Between 1 November 2023 and 10 January 2024, the **number of conflict-related security incidents increased** in comparison to the same period in 2022–2023. The United Nations recorded 1,508 security-related incidents, a 38 per cent increase from the 1,090 incidents recorded during the same period in 2022–2023. The **increase was largely due to a rise in the number of incidents related to narcotics** from 102 to 263 [...] **Armed clashes** occurred at a frequency similar to that during the same period in 2022 – 2023, decreasing from 61 to 60 incidents. [...] The **Afghanistan Freedom Front continued its campaign of assassinations and small-scale attacks against the de facto security forces**, conducting at least 24 verified attacks between 1 November 2023 and 10 January 2024.

[...] **tensions between Afghanistan and Pakistan** over the presence of Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) members on Afghan territory continued, **leading to multiple security incidents on the border**.

[...] The **illicit accumulation and diversion of small arms, light weapons, ammunition and explosives remain a security concern**. The de facto security forces reported seizures of firearms in 17 provinces of Afghanistan, compared with 14 provinces in the previous reporting period.

[...] **Attacks using improvised explosive devices** caused at least 84 **civilian casualties** between 10 November 2023 and 4 February 2024 (11 killed, 73 wounded).

[...] Between October and December 2023, **unexploded ordnance continued to kill and wound civilians**, primarily children, causing at least 67 casualties (15 killed, 52 wounded).

[...] The de facto authorities continue to implement **corporal punishment in public places**."

Action on Armes Violence (AOAV), *Explosive Violence Monitor: 2023*, 19 April 2024.

[*about use of explosive weapons by non – state actors*] "most occurred in Afghanistan, with 229 civilian deaths and injuries recorded across 11 incidents in the country

For the first time in six years, Afghanistan was not the worst impacted country for reported civilian harm from IEDs [*Improvised Explosive Devices*]. Recorded incidents of IED attacks in the country fell by 56% last year, from 68 to 30, and civilian casualties by 75%, from 1,121 to 275 (83 killed). Both the recorded use of and harm from IEDs in the country reached the lowest levels in AOAV's records. As with overall patterns of harm from explosive weapons use in Afghanistan, however, this is likely an under-reporting, due to the challenges of access and information sharing under Taliban rule."

In Afghanistan, in 2023:

- the level of civilians harmed by IEDs was 275 casualties
- the level of civilians harmed by suicide bombings was 183 casualties

ACLED, *Access on the 23 May 2024*, <https://acleddata.com/conflict-index/>.

The 50 most violent countries and their rates of change are listed below:

Rank	Country	Index Level	Change Category	Change in Ranking
25	Afghanistan	High	Consistently concerning	-12

EUAA - European Union Agency for Asylum: *Country Guidance: Afghanistan, May 2024*.

"[...] **most security events involving ISKP continued to be recorded in Kabul, Kunar, and Nangarhar** [...] The **primary targets of ISKP have been Taliban fighters** [...] **against certain ethno-religious groups**, in particular the **Shia Hazara community**. [...]

Whole **Salafist communities** in the 38 provinces of **Kunar** and Nangarhar were subjected to night raids, disappearances, summary executions and detentions of men and sometimes boys, even if they had no relation to ISKP [...] The Taliban's efforts to restrain ISKP has impacted the situation of the Salafist communities in Nangarhar and Kunar. Most attacks were recorded in October and November 2021, including killings, beheadings, mutilation, and torture. Recorded cases have decreased since, but the topic is severely underreported and single cases of violations have continued to be reported [...]

here were also instances of targeted violence against the **Ahmadiyya community** in November and December 2021. 28 members of the Ahmadiyya community were reportedly detained by the Taliban in Kabul in November and December 2021, falsely accused of being members of ISKP[...]

The provinces where most security incidents were recorded in the reporting period between 1 July 2022 and 12 January 2024 included Kabul (245), Takhar (177), Panjshir (154), Badakhshan (107), Baghlan (107), Kandahar (93), Nangarhar (90), Parwan (79), Balkh (68), Kapisa (65), Herat (54), Kunar (51), Ghazni (50), and Helmand (48).”

Level of indiscriminate violence in Afghanistan (based on information up to 12 January 2024) → **There is currently no real risk for a civilian to be personally affected by indiscriminate violence within the meaning of Article 15(c) QD.**

In the remaining provinces of Afghanistan (including ...Kunar...) it is assessed that there is currently **no real risk for a civilian to be personally affected by indiscriminate violence within the meaning of Article 15(c) QD.** This may be because the criteria for an armed conflict within the meaning of this provision are not met, because no indiscriminate violence is taking place, or because the level of indiscriminate violence is so low, that in general there would be no real risk for a civilian to be affected by it.

C. Situation in the province of Kunar (Lar Kalai - district of Marawera)

ACCORD – Austrian Centre for Country of Origin & Asylum Research and Documentation: Afghanistan, first quarter 2024: Update on incidents according to the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED), 8 May 2024.

Period: first quarter of 2024

“In Kunar, 10 incidents killing 5 people were reported. The following locations were among the affected: Asad Abad, Badel, Chamiyaray, Chinar, Chowam, Sar Kani, Sawkai.”

ACLED Explorer, Access on the 23 May 2024, <https://acleddata.com/explorer/>.

The following paragraph reflects the exploration of the Database of ACLED.

Period: 20 May 2023 to 17 May 2024

Location: Province of Kunar

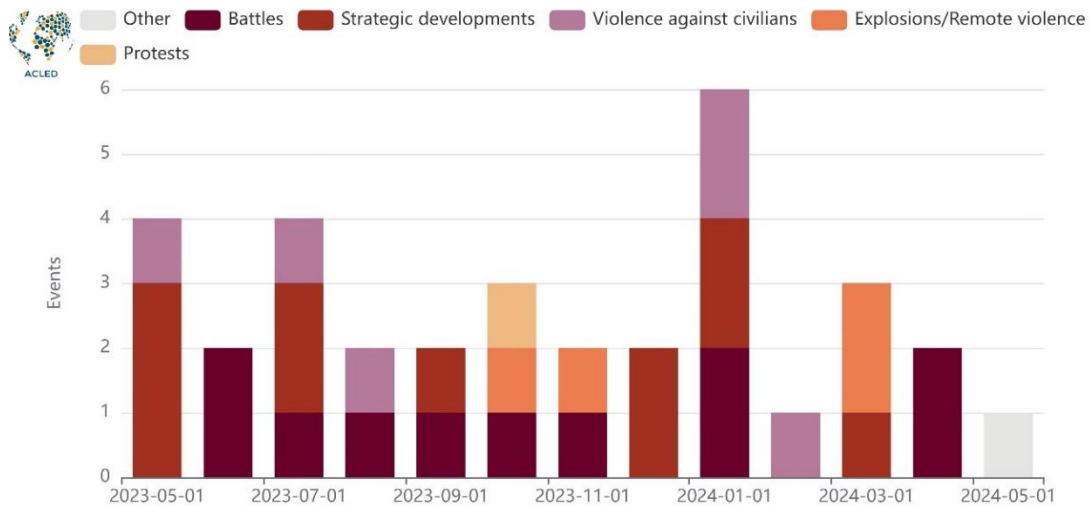
Total Event	32
<i>With civilians</i>	6
<i>With non-civilians</i>	26

The type of events taken into consideration with the data are the following:

Battles	11
Strategic developments	9
Violence against civilians	6
Explosions/Remote violence	4
Riots	1
Protests	1

The number of fatalities by type of events:

Battles	12
Strategic developments	1
Violence against civilians	8
Explosions/Remote violence	0
Riots	0
Protests	0
Total	21



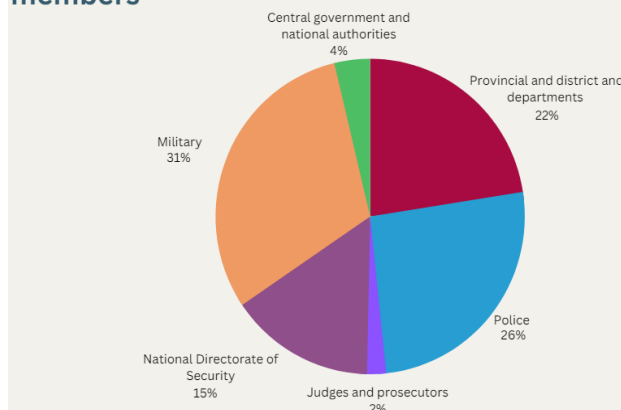
3. SITUATION FORMER-ARMY PERSONNEL

United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) A barrier to securing peace: Human rights violations against former government officials and former armed force members in Afghanistan: 15 August 2021 – 30 June 2023.

“Following their takeover of Afghanistan on 15 August 2021, the de facto authorities announced what they termed a “general amnesty” for former officials of the government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and former members of the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF).² In the almost two years since, senior de facto officials have repeatedly, publicly, expressed their commitment to the general amnesty, calling for it to be upheld and for breaches to be investigated and for those found responsible to be punished. During this period, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) has recorded credible reports of hundreds of human rights violations – including extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests and detentions and torture and ill-treatment – carried out by the de facto authorities against former government officials and ANDSF members.[...]

To date, the de facto authorities have not publicly released any written text or guidance setting out the scope of the general amnesty. Therefore, the background in this section is based on public comments made by the Taliban Leader and other members of the de facto authorities.

Human rights violations against former government officials and ANDSF members



UNAMA has documented at least 800 human rights violations³ against former government officials and ANDSF members between the Taliban takeover on 15 August 2021 and 30 June 2023.

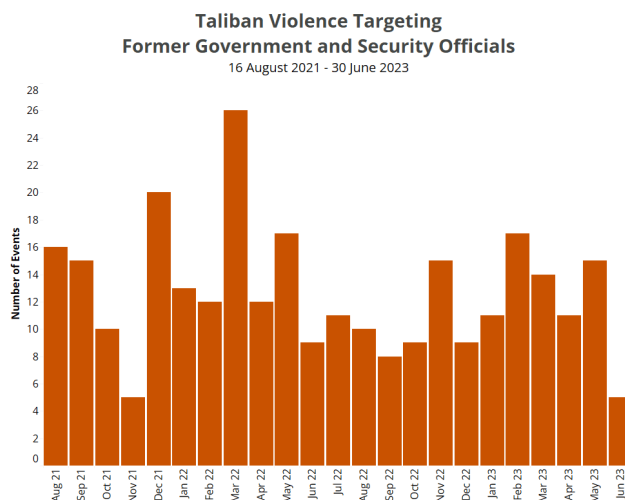
Human rights violations against former government officials and ANDSF members have been recorded across all 34 provinces. [...] The majority of violations took place in the four months following the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan (15 August 2021 – 31 December 2021), with UNAMA recording almost half of all extrajudicial killings of former government officials and ANDSF members during this period. Despite this, human rights violations have continued beyond this initial period, with 70 extrajudicial killings recorded between 1 January and 31

² Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) is an umbrella term used to refer to the security forces of the former government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and includes: Afghan Border Force, Afghan Local Police, Afghan National Army, Afghan Air Force, Afghan National Police, Afghan National Civil Order Force, Afghan Special Forces, Afghan Territorial Army (also referred to as the Afghan National Army – Territorial Force), and the National Directorate of Security.

³ “Human rights violations” in this section refers to credible reports of extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests and detentions, enforced disappearances, torture and ill-treatment and threats.

December 2022. [...] UNAMA has documented at least 14 instances of enforced disappearance of former government officials and ANDSF members. [...] UNAMA has documented more than 424 arbitrary arrests and detentions of former government officials and ANDSF members since the Taliban takeover. [...] More than 144 instances of torture and ill treatment of former government officials and ANDSF members by de facto security force members have been documented since 15 August 2021, including beatings with pipes, cables, verbal threats and abuse.”

ACLED and APW Two Years Of Repression: Mapping Taliban Violence Targeting Civilians in Afghanistan, 11 August 2023.



Human Rights Watch, Afghanistan: Taliban Kill, ‘Disappear’ Ex-Officials Raids Target Former Police, Intelligence Officers, 30 November 2021.

“ [Human rights watch] documents the killing or disappearance of 47 former members of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) – military personnel, police, intelligence service members, and militia – who had surrendered to or were apprehended by Taliban forces between August 15 and October 31 [2021]. [...] The Taliban leadership has directed members of surrendering security force units to register to receive a letter guaranteeing their safety. However, Taliban forces have used these screenings to detain and summarily execute or forcibly disappear people within days after they register, leaving their bodies for their relatives or communities to find.

The Taliban have also been able to access employment records that the former government left behind, using them to identify people for arrest and execution. [...]The Taliban have also carried out abusive search operations, including night raids, to apprehend and, at times, forcibly disappear suspected former officials.”

United Nations General Assembly, The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security: report of the Secretary-General, A/78/789, 28 February 2024.

[...] The de facto authorities continue to reiterate their publicly stated commitment to the general amnesty decree for former government officials and Afghan National Defence and Security Forces members. On 31 December, the de facto Ministry of Defence stressed in a press conference the “full commitment” to the decree, denying any violations of the amnesty and stating that cases had been investigated by courts and found to be a result of personal enmity. During the reporting period, UNAMA documented at least five extrajudicial killings and seven arbitrary arrests of former government officials and members of the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces. UNAMA also recorded 2 extrajudicial killings, 17 arbitrary arrests and detentions and 2 instances of torture and ill-treatment of individuals accused of affiliation with the National Resistance Front and ISIL-K”

European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA), Country of Origin Information Report, Afghanistan – Country Focus, 05 December 2023.

“According to International Crisis Group, the sporadic nature of the reprisals and their relatively low numbers suggest that the Taliban have not had a ‘nationwide policy to hunt down all former government officials’. This information was confirmed by the international journalist who stated that if the Taliban had

carried out an orchestrated revenge campaign to kill former soldiers, the number of deaths would be much higher.⁴[...]

The cases documented by Rawadari included the Taliban torturing and subsequently killing a woman married to a former soldier that had left Afghanistan. Another case concerned the Taliban's enforced disappearance and subsequent killing of a person that was affiliated to a former soldier, as well as the imprisonment of one of his family members. Moreover, the Taliban detained a former NDS member together with one of his family members, a 17-year old boy in Panjsher Province who refused to disclose his father's whereabouts (a former security official), and the father of a former security official who had left Afghanistan.⁵

The Taliban has been creating a national de facto military and has recruited its own members as well as former members of the Afghan security forces who had served the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.⁶An international analyst confirmed this information but added that the number of recruited former security force personnel has been limited and generally concerned specialists.⁷

[EUAA - European Union Agency for Asylum: Country Guidance: Afghanistan, May 2024.](#)

“After the takeover, the Taliban issued an amnesty for all who fought against them. The content of the amnesty has not been available beyond general reference to its existence, including from senior Taliban officials, leading to uncertainties around the temporal scope and consequences for breaching it. Sources suggest that the Taliban do not have any policy in place of targeting former Afghan security forces.

Nevertheless, there have been continuous claims of Taliban members breaching the amnesty and subjecting former ANDSF members and their relatives to human right violations across the country, including killings, enforced disappearance, and torture. Although the Taliban have called upon their members to respect the amnesty, there is limited information on individuals facing any consequences for breaching it. Despite the fact that certain elements have been identified as possibly playing a role in the targeting, such as ‘revenge culture’, personal disputes, and retaliation following the conflict, it is not possible to discern any clear patterns on who is being targeted among former government personnel and who is not. Sources emphasised that it has been hard to discern motives behind the killings, and that people may be targeted due to personal disputes. The Taliban have also claimed that violations of the amnesty have taken place due to personal animosities. One source further reported that the most important thing for the Taliban is that individuals are loyal to them today, rather than their allegiances from before the takeover. Available data over killings and ill-treatments include victims who held different positions within the former government's security forces. The Taliban's practices towards former officials have been ‘inconsistent’, ‘ad hoc’ and a ‘mixture of contradictory policies’. On one hand, some former security personnel have been able to work in the Taliban's de facto forces, return from abroad through the Taliban's return commission, and stage open protests against the non-payment of pensions. On the other hand, some former security personnel have been living in hiding since the takeover, while killings and various forms of ill-treatment have occurred. Moreover, single sources have suggested that some killings have been carried out with the ‘tacit approval’ of senior Taliban commanders, and that Taliban operations against resistance groups and the ISKP might in fact be a way to target former ANDSF members. As of 30 June 2023, according to UNAMA, since the takeover the de facto authorities had committed at least 800 cases of human rights violations against former civilian and military personnel. Violations recorded included 218 killings, 14 instances of enforced disappearance, 424 arbitrary arrests and detentions, 144 instances of torture, and multiple threats. Most cases took place in the 4 months immediately following the takeover in 2021, however killings and other human rights violations have continued in 2022 and 2023. In 2022, the NGO Safety and Risk Mitigation Organization (SMRO) recorded 76 killings and 57 detentions of former security forces, while an increase was noted in 2023 with 27 killings and 55 detentions recorded in the first quarter alone. In the second quarter of 2023, SMRO logged

⁴ International journalist, online interview, 3 October 2023.

⁵ Rawadari, Human Rights Situation in Afghanistan, August 2023, https://rawadari.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/RW_AFGHumanRights2023_English.pdf, pp. 4, 11–12, 14–18

⁶ Reuters, Taliban aim to boost Afghan security forces, anti-aircraft capacity -army chief, 12 April 2023, <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/taliban-aim-boost-afghan-security-forces-anti-aircraft-capacity-army-chief-2023-04-12/>.

⁷ International analyst, interview 8–9 June 2023, and email communication, 10 October 2023.

2 instances of rape, 15 killings and 35 detentions of former security forces personnel in multiple provinces. The Taliban also declared that they wanted former Afghan National Army (ANA) personnel to join their ranks and launched campaigns to recruit former ANDSF personnel. Although some former ANDSF members did join the Taliban ranks, it was reported that these efforts were of little success due to fear of retribution. Many former personnel remained in hiding or left the country. Efforts were made by Taliban members to track down former security officials through local informants, registration campaigns of former ANDSF personnel and possibly the use of former governments databases. In February 2022, the Taliban began to conduct house-to-house searches in different parts of the country which, according to some sources, also focused on finding former government employees and members of ANDSF.

Do the acts qualify as persecution under Article 9 QD?

Acts reported to be committed against individuals under this profile are of such severe nature that they amount to persecution (e.g. summary executions, torture, enforced disappearances).



What is the level of risk of persecution (well-founded fear)?

For applicants who were members of the security institutions of the former government, well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated.

Family members may also have a well-founded fear of persecution, for example in the context of the Taliban searching for the individual they are related to.



Are the reasons for persecution falling within Article 10 QD (nexus)?

Available information indicates that persecution of this profile is highly likely to be for reasons of (imputed) political opinion.

Rawadari, Afghanistan Human Rights Situation Report 2023, March 2024.



Rawadari, Human Rights Situation In Afghanistan: Mid-year Report 1 January to 30 June 2023.

“Targeted killings of former government employees Among the individuals who have been killed and injured in targeted and extrajudicial incidents during the first six months of 2023, 55 were former government employees, including both civilian and military personnel. Out of this group, 54 were killed, and 1 person was injured. The victims include 45 former military personnel and 10 other individuals who worked in various civilian departments of the previous government. [...]

The findings of this report illustrate that during the first six months of 2023, at least 222 individuals, including 23 women have been arbitrarily and unlawfully detained by the Taliban in 16 provinces. The detained individuals include former government employees (both civilian and military), members of the previous “People’s Uprising” forces, human rights activists, journalists, prominent tribal figures, and critics and opponents of the Taliban. [...] Based on the information obtained, out of the total 222 individuals who were arbitrarily and unlawfully detained by the Taliban during the first six months of 2023, at least 73 of them are former government employees and their family members, comprising 47 military personnel, 5 employees of civil departments of the previous government, and 21 relatives and family members of former government employees. [...]

During the nearly two years of Taliban rule in Afghanistan and due to security challenges and threats, thousands of individuals who worked in various military and civilian sectors of the previous government have left the country. Those who have been unable to escape or have chosen to stay in Afghanistan are now exposed to various forms of harassment, detention, torture, and even killings. For example, on 10 February 2023, the Taliban detained a former army commando in Panjshir province. He had no affiliation with any faction after the fall of the Republic, and the Taliban arrested him solely based on his past

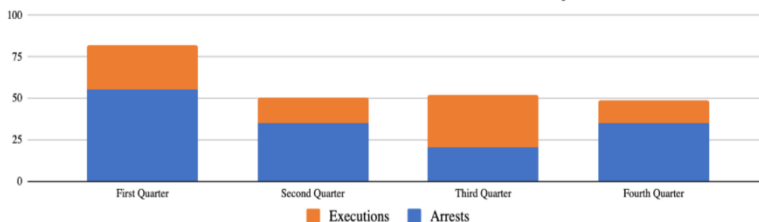
activities. [...] As mentioned above, the Taliban have even detained and imprisoned relatives of former military personnel.”

Safety and Risk Mitigation Organization (SRMO), Annual Report 2023: State of Human Rights Defenders in Afghanistan, March 2024.

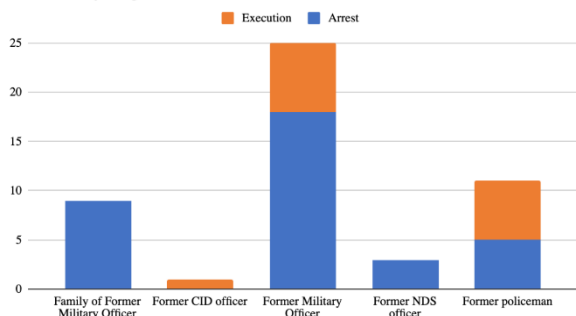
“A key theme in the human rights environment since August 2021 has been the killing, detention, torture and disappearance of hundreds of former members of the security forces. Despite a general amnesty declaration stating that former government officials and former members of the armed forces should not be subject to reprisals,

killings and arrests of such individuals have continued for more than two years. In 2023, SRMO documented 233 total incidents against former security forces – 145 cases of arrests (some of which amount to enforced disappearances) and 88 cases of extrajudicial executions.

2023 Arrests and executions of Former Security Forces



Incidents by target

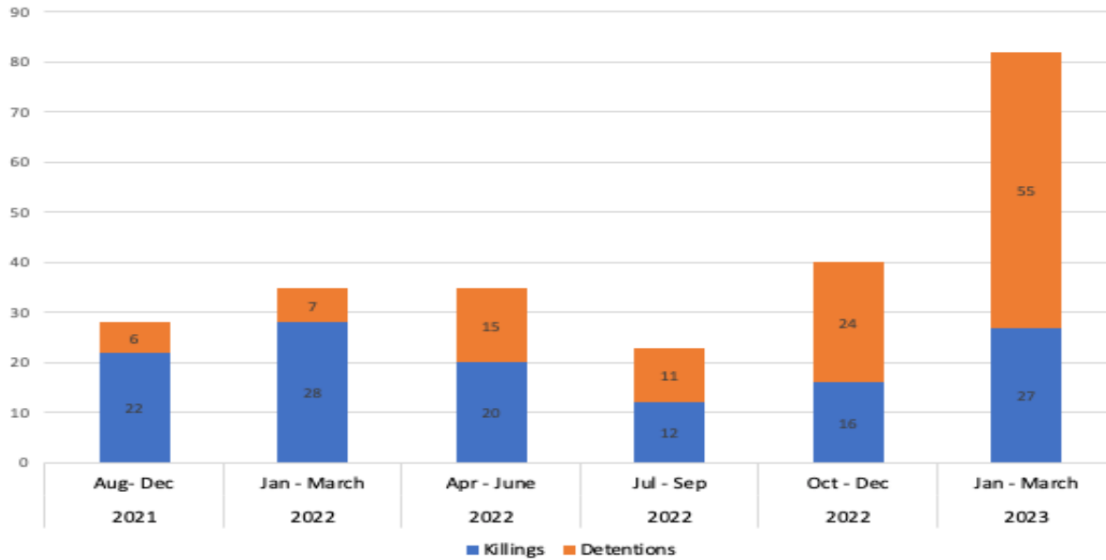


Victims of these reprisals include former army soldiers, intelligence officials, police, and guards and interpreters for international military forces. Family members of the above were also targeted. [...] Many former security forces who were arrested were subjected to torture while in Taliban custody.

Safety and Risk Mitigation Organization Civic Space Quarterly Report January – March 2023.

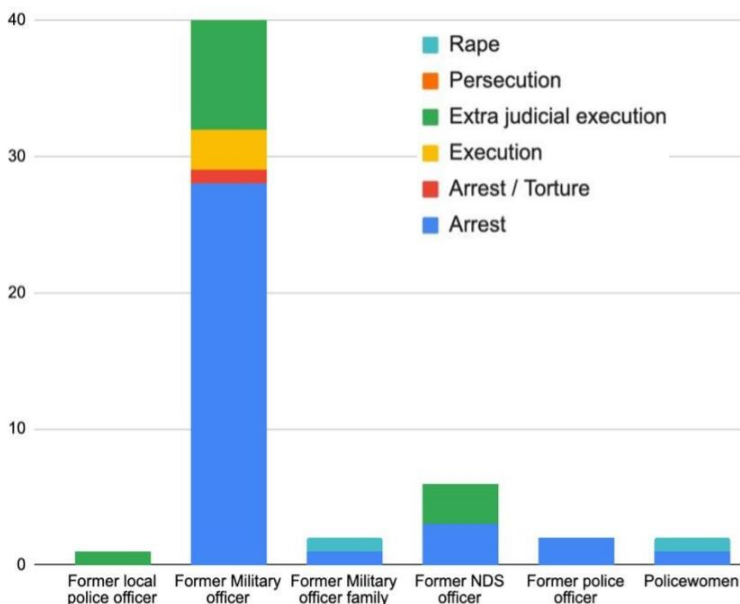
“Attacks on people who worked for the army, intelligence services and various police forces that were set up under the previous government continued over the last quarter. 27 killings of former security force personnel or their close relatives by the Taliban were logged in SRMO’s database between January and March (up from 16 during the previous reporting period). A further 55 former security force personnel were detained (more than double the 24 detentions reported between October and December), making a mockery of the Taliban’s supposed ‘general amnesty’ for people who worked under the former government. Many of those detained are effectively disappeared, with relatives having no idea where they are being held or if they are still alive. Many families only get news of their loved ones when their bodies are returned to them, often with signs of brutal torture. The Taliban claim that ‘revenge’ killings of people who worked for the police or army under the previous government is not a centrally directed policy and is not being condoned by the Taliban leadership. However, while they have made some arrests of Taliban soldiers responsible for revenge attacks, they have made no concerted effort to stamp out the practice. Killings of this type continue to be reported on a weekly basis and the table below illustrates how the numbers have surged over the last 6 months.

Incidents against former security forces



Safety and Risk Mitigation Organization Civic Space Quarterly Report April – June 2023.

Incidents targeting former security forces



- 1 former judge was killed and 3 officials from the former government were detained (including a former provincial council chief, a former military prosecutor and a former mayor)

- 15 former members of the security forces were killed and a further 35 detained.

• **Nearly two years on, detentions and killings continue to be reported on a weekly basis.** Many cases have involved individuals who fled Afghanistan after August 2021 but then returned for funerals, weddings or to arrange documentation. Between April and June, 35 former security personnel were detained (including 3 women) and 15 were killed (including 1 woman). Six relatives of former security personnel were also detained, while another was raped.

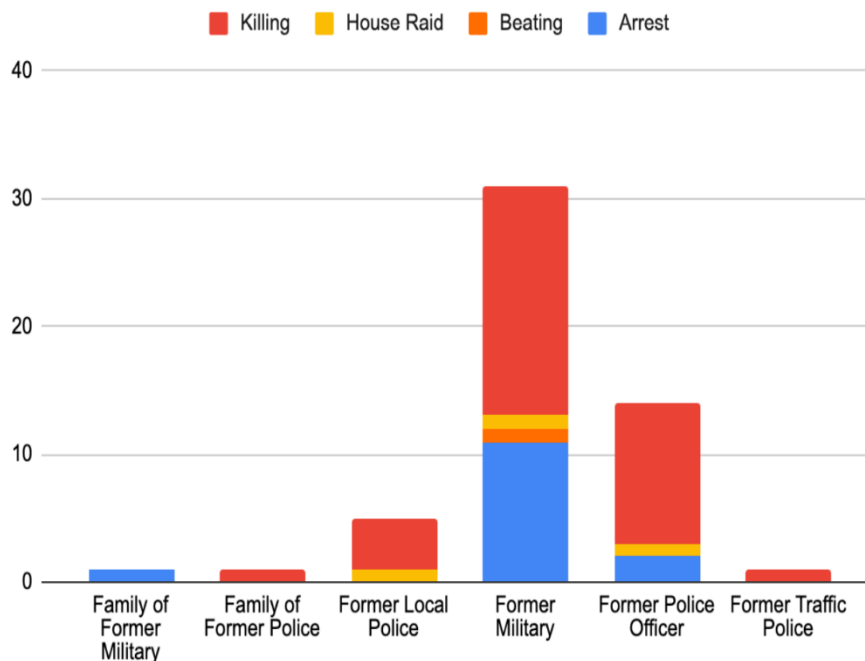
Safety and Risk Mitigation Organization Civic Space Quarterly Report July – September 2023.

- 32 former members of the security forces were killed (compared to 15 between April and June) and a further 20 detained (compared to 35 between April and June).

A selection of cases documented during the quarter included:

- In Nangarhar Province, a former military soldier's body was found on 03 July. He had been in the city for a party, his main residency in Kunar Province.
- Taliban arrested a former military soldier in Ghor Province, 06 July. The former security officer had an amnesty letter from the Taliban, but he was kept in detention for three days. He was released under bail. He showed signs of have been tortured.
- A former local police officer was executed on 23 July in Laghman Province. He was killed inside his house. The Taliban fled the area after the incident.

- On 25 August, the 10-year-old son of a former commander of popular uprisings was hanged in Badakhshan province. The Taliban executed this boy as a consequence of the hostile relations that existed between their organization and his family.
- On 04 September, the house of a former military soldier was raided. The report states that a number of armed people attacked the house of Late Colonel Nazir Mohammad in Faizabad city last night. The attackers intended to kill the Colonel's son, but he succeeded to escaped.
- Two former military officers were executed by the Taliban in Balkh province. Both had renounced the military and were living a normal life. The reasons behind the execution are unknown.
- On 23 September, in Kabul Province, the Taliban arrested a former military officer. He is currently imprisoned in Gardez and it is suspected that he es being subjected to torture.



Former Security Forces Incidents

Date	Gender	Target	Perpetrator	Province	Incident Type	Number of victims
03/07/23	M	Former Military	Unknown	Nangarhar	Execution	1
06/07/23	M	Former Military	Taliban	Ghor	Arrest	1
06/07/23	M	Former Local Police	Taliban	Balkh	Execution	1
07/07/23	M	Former Military	Unknown	Ghor	Attack	1
10/07/23	M	Former Military	Taliban	Kandahar	Arrest	1
10/07/23	M	Former Military	Taliban	Kabul	Execution	1
10/07/23	M	Former Military	Unknown	Paktika	Execution	1
12/07/23	M	Former Military	Taliban	Kabul	Execution	1
16/07/23	M	Former Military	Taliban	Kabul	Execution	1
20/07/23	M	Former Military	Taliban	Badghis	Arrest	1
22/07/23	M	Former Military	Taliban	Kabul	Arrest	1
23/07/23	M	Former Military	Taliban	Panjshir	Arrest	1
23/07/23	M	Former Police Officer	Taliban	Laghman	Execution	1
24/07/23	M	Former Police Officer	Taliban	Kunduz	Execution	1
28/07/23	M	Former Police Officer	Taliban	Logar	Execution	1
30/07/23	M	Former Military Officer family	Taliban	Ghor	Arrest	1
06/08/23	M	Former Police Officer	Taliban	Badakhshan	Execution	1
08/08/23	M	Former Police Officer	Taliban	Suripul	Execution	1
08/08/23	M	Former local commander	Taliban	Nuristan	House raid	1
09/08/23	M	Former Military officer family	Taliban	Paktika	Arrest	1
12/08/23	M	Former Military Officer	Taliban	Balkh	Execution	1
13/08/23	M	Former Police Officer	Taliban	Ghor	House raid	1
14/08/23	M	Former Police Officer	Taliban	Panjshir	Execution	1

16/08/23	M	Former Traffic Police	Taliban	Ghor	Arrest	1
16/08/23	M	Former Military Officer	Taliban	Balkh	Execution	1
18/08/23	M	Former Military Officer	Unknown	Kapisa	Kill	1
22/08/23	M	Former Military Officer	Taliban	Parwan	Arrest	1
22/08/23	M	Former Police Officer	Taliban	Ghor	Arrest	1
26/08/23	M	Former Police Officer	Taliban	Logar	Execution	1
26/08/23	M	Former Military Officer	Taliban	Kabul	Execution	1
27/08/23	M	Former Military Officer	Taliban	Ghor	Arrest	1
04/09/23	M	Former Military Officer Family	Taliban	Badakhshan	House raid	1
07/09/23	M	Former Police Officer	Unknown	Balkh	Kill	1
07/09/23	M	Former NDS Officer	Taliban	Badakhshan	Arrest	1

SIGAR – Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, 30 July 2023.

“Between April 1 and June 8, 2023, members of the Taliban **reportedly attacked or disappeared at least 32 former ANDSF or government officials, according to ACLED**. The amnesty’s enforcement varied and went unheeded by some among the group’s rank and file, with lower-level Taliban members reportedly responsible for the reprisal attacks. State informed SIGAR **that there is little evidence that Taliban senior leaders directed such reprisals, though given their frequency, the senior leaders may be turning a blind eye to the practice**. Former ANDSF members and officials reported living in constant fear that Taliban members will detain, torture, or kill them. **Some remain in hiding** and many fled the country.”

Kabul Now, Taliban’s False Amnesty: The Fate of Former Military Officers Who Return to Afghanistan, 23 July 2023.

“**Despite a proclaimed amnesty and pledges to take action against those Taliban members for breaches, the group continues to carry out a violent campaign against former military and police forces, including targeting their family members, in what appear to be war crimes according to human rights watchdog.**[...]

[about the obtention of the promise Commission immunity card ...] many former members of the security forces are now skeptical of these promises of the Taliban’s Commission, saying **it would only apply to a handful of high-profile ex-officials who have close personal connections with the influential Taliban figures**. For many in the lower-to-middle level ranks, the Commission’s screenings mean to identify them to detain and torture them or summarily execute or forcibly disappear them within days of their registration, leaving their bodies for their relatives or communities to discover. Nonetheless, scores of other ex-military officers, particularly those in the lower ranks, have disappeared in silence, whose news never reached their family members or media.

Mohammad Nasir, who was deported by Iranian authorities via the Islam Qala border, revealed to me that the Iranian intelligence registers those refugees who face deportation, recording their personal information and background. And before these refugees are deported to Afghanistan, they share their details with the Taliban intelligence stationed at the border areas. **“Therefore, Taliban agents at the borders have already the details of those being deported to the country. Every individual has to go through biometric screening, and those whom the Taliban deem “unforgivable” or a “threat” are singled out and moved to a separate location.”** Nasir narrated. [...]

Since the fate and whereabouts of those identified and singled out at the border areas go under-reported, one could only guess that they were eventually detained, forcibly disappeared, or executed by the Taliban authorities because of their role in the previous government. [...]

These are the harrowing accounts of the fate of a handful of former members of security forces most of whom had returned to the country following the invitation of Taliban’s Commission of Liaison and Repatriation of Afghan Personalities. They had been pledged the rights to safety and protection by Taliban authorities, but little did they realize to be doomed to the false promises of peace and life in dignity. This comes amid mounting concerns over arbitrary arrests, summary executions, or forced disappearances of those affiliated with the previous government. **Hundreds of former military and police officers continue to be deported by neighboring countries to Afghanistan only to remain at the mercy of Taliban forces.**

[RFE/RL, 'They Call Us Infidels': Former Afghan Soldiers Still Live in Hiding to Avoid Taliban Retribution, 13 July 2022.](#) "Human rights groups have accused the Taliban of carrying out widespread revenge killings, enforced disappearances, and torture of former Afghan officials, security officers, and individuals who cooperated with the departed U.S.-led military presence in Afghanistan. That is despite the Taliban announcing a blanket amnesty when it took Kabul on August 15.

"We are still facing many threats," Suleiman, who did not reveal his real name for security reasons, told RFE/RL's Radio Azadi.

"People [in the Taliban-led government] describe officials and soldiers of the former Afghan government as supporters of a corrupt system," he added. **"Sometimes, they call us infidels."**

Suleiman's family is not alone. The families of thousands of Afghans affiliated with the toppled internationally backed government in Kabul and former security forces live in constant fear.[...]

Hamid, who served as an officer in the Afghan National Army for around 15 years, changes his location every month. "I received numerous threatening calls," Hamid, who did not want to use his real name for safety reasons, told Radio Azadi. **"They had accessed the databases of various government departments and found my personal information."** Hamid said the callers knew where he lived and where his children went to school."

4. RECENT INCIDENTS TOWARDS FORMER MEMBER OF THE MILITARY

[Hasht-E Subh, Former Soldier Succumbs in Baghlan a Day After Taliban Captivity Release, 29 April 2024.](#)

"Local sources have reported the third recorded incident of Taliban torture-induced killings in the country over the past three days. Sources have confirmed to the Hasht-e Subh Daily that a former army commander lost his life at his home in Husain Khel village, Nahrin district, Baghlan province, on Sunday night, April 28, just a day after his release from Taliban captivity.

Earlier, another former military officer, Naazir, lost his life on Friday, April 26, a year after being released from Taliban captivity, in Khwajah Mohammad Khel village, Jabal Saraj district, Parwan province.

On the same day, a member of the former government's local police forces also lost his life in Chobbkhsh village, Robot area, Bagram district, Parwan province, after being released from Taliban captivity."

[Hasht-E Subh, Deportation of Afghan Migrants from Iran: Former Government Soldiers Ensnared by the Taliban, 29 April 2024.](#)

"Some former government soldiers, who sought refuge in Iran following the downfall of the previous regime, assert that upon deportation from that country, they become targets of the Taliban. They allege that the Taliban subject many returning former government soldiers from Iran to interrogation, imprisonment, and even assassination. These soldiers stress that the Taliban disregard their leader's general amnesty decree and carry out "vengeful" activities. Former soldiers call upon international human rights organizations and the global community to intensify pressure on this faction due to their ongoing pursuit, detention, torture, humiliation, and even killings of former government soldiers and their families. [...] These former soldiers urge military rights advocacy organizations to support Afghan former soldiers with a systematic program and not remain silent against human rights violations, unlawful detentions, and massacres by the Taliban. Abdullah (pseudonym), another former army soldier, tells the Hasht-e Subh Daily, "There is a need for increased international pressure on the Taliban, and countries, especially American authorities, need to take serious action to stop the detention, torture, humiliation, abuse, and killing of former soldiers of Afghanistan." Former soldiers also demand oversight of Taliban prisons for the release of former soldiers from the clutches of this group."

[Hasht-E Subh, Former Afghan Soldier Passes Away After Release from Taliban Captivity in Parwan Province, 27 April 2024.](#)

Local sources in Parwan have reported the occurrence of the second death resulting from Taliban torture in a single day within the province. Sources confirmed on Saturday, April 27, that a member of the former government's local police forces died one day after the Taliban released him from a prison in Parwan province. According to sources, the Taliban detained the former military member who had recently been deported from Iran last week, and after subjecting him to a night of torture, they released him. Identified as Fawad, he lost his life on Friday, April 26, in the village of "Chobbakhsh" in the Rabat area of the

Bagram district. Sources indicate that the Taliban handed Fawad over to his family one day before his death, while he was in critical condition.

Meanwhile, another former military member lost his life one year after being released from a Taliban prison in Parwan. This former military member, named Naazir, also passed away on Friday, April 26, in the village of “Khawaja Mohammad Khel” within the jurisdiction of Jabal al-Siraj district in the province. Naazir had become paralyzed due to torture months after his release from Taliban captivity.”

For further examples of security/police/soldiers/commanders from the previous Republic era, see this article, which includes many examples from 2024. I copied/pasted only the cases of the cases that seemed “regular/ordinary” soldiers.

Hasht-E Subh, Violating Prophet Muhammad’s Tradition of General Amnesty: Taliban Fighters Systematically Target Former Soldiers, Police Officers, and Officials, 20 April 2024.

- The Taliban forces shot dead two former soldiers in the Kūh-e Chehel Dokhtaran area of Kabul on January 16.
- On the same day, former national security soldier Mohammad Yasir was mysteriously shot dead in Dah village of Baharak district, Badakhshan province.
- The Taliban arrested two soldiers of the former government, Abdul Azim and Golestan, both residents of Panjshir province, in Kabul on January 20.
- The body of Sardar Mohammad, a former Afghan soldier, was discovered two months after his arrest by the Taliban.
- On January 24, the Taliban arrested Obaidullah, a former soldier, in Kabul city.
- On February 4, it emerged that the Taliban militants killed a former soldier of the previous government in the Imam Sahib district of Kunduz province
- February 4, saying that the Taliban took a former soldier named Saja out of his house in Saadullah village and shot him dead in Sayed Khel district of Parwan province.
- On February 8, the Taliban fighters killed a former government soldier named Shafiq in the Dand Wa Patan district of Paktia province. Shafiq served as a soldier in the second border battalion of Paktia province during the previous government of Afghanistan.
- On the same day, Reza, a former soldier who had served in the police headquarters of Daykundi province, was arrested by the Taliban fighters in the Jalrez district of Maidan Wardak province.
- Paigah News Agency released a report on February 17, saying that the Afghan Taliban fighters abducted the families of three former soldiers in the village of Mian Shahr, located in the Khost district of Baghlan province.