



## UN Department of Safety and Security, Afghanistan Security Situation Report, Week 33, 13 – 19 August 2010

### JOINT WEEKLY SECURITY ANALYSIS

Countrywide security incidents slightly increased compared to the previous week. While most of the regions recorded fairly consistent numbers the dynamics in the SR and SER changed significantly. The SR experienced a significant drop in incident numbers mostly attributable to a significant reduction in IED incidents. Lower incident levels are not uncommon in the SR during the Ramadan period with both armed clashes and IED incidents dropping; such dynamic might also be related to the temporary relocation of foreign fighters outside the country for the observance of the fasting month. Trends in the SER continue to follow unprecedented patterns with incidents continuing to increase, to the point the region, after a short break of three weeks, is again recording higher numbers than the traditionally volatile SR. In the SER insurgents activities doubled in Gardez District of Paktya Province and the province itself recorded a threefold increase, while the neighbouring Paktika Province recorded almost a twofold increase. Countrywide the majority of the incidents are initiated by insurgents and those related to armed conflict continue to account for the bulk of incidents, with armed clashes and IEDs attacks scoring more than two thirds of the total. Following the initial statement published on the 15 August, the Taliban, later the same day released a follow up on the critical statement on the UNAMA Human Rights Report on Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, suggesting forming a joint committee to investigate civilian casualties. Both statements were commented in the Taliban monthly magazine *Al Somood* published on the 17 August. Further assessments on this matter are ongoing.

Although incidents affecting the wider aid community remain low, they have increased to five compared to four of last week. The in the WR an INGO convoy returning to Chaghcharan was shot at on its way back from distributing food, in addition an email threatening INGO staff members has been distributed to a number individuals in Hirat City; in the SER a UN IP was killed and another two wounded while defusing a mine. Two separate traffic accidents in the WR resulted in the arrest of UN national staff member, later released and in the hospitalization of another. In another instance an INGO national doctor, an election's candidate and their driver were abducted along the Puli Khumri-Kunduz road while travelling in a private vehicle. The INGO national staff members have since been released, while the election candidate is still in captivity. While the motive of the abduction is not yet clear, the release of the INGO members might indicate that they were not part of the original plan.

Asymmetric attacks targeting the population increased. Intimidation incidents doubled with 15 incidents reported countrywide, six abductions involving 12 individuals, and 29 individuals assassinated. AGE intimidation efforts increased significantly throughout the country, these include set up of illegal check posts, forced collection of illegal taxation, night letters and warning messages. In Balk Province – Kinshindih and Chahar Bolak Districts – during night time a large group of insurgents entered the villages and demanded the population to pay "usher"; in the WR night letters warning the population of Chishti Sharif District to withdraw children from school and local GoA employees to quit their jobs were distributed by AGE; in the SR, Tirin Kot Province, insurgents blew up a girl's school, in a number of Districts of Paktya Province locals were warned not to vote for the upcoming elections otherwise they would have their fingers cut and in Alasay District of Kapisa Province insurgents set ablaze the house of a local resident. Ten ANSF officers, 15 civilians, three GoA employees were assassinated countrywide. These include a tribal elder, for his alleged involvement with INGOs implementing humanitarian projects and two District Shura members, all in the SR. Following last week stoning of a woman in the WR another similar incident of extra judicial execution was recorded in the NER where a young couple was stoned to death for adultery. Insurgents also attempted to assassinate another two individuals in the SR. Overall intimidation, abduction and assassinations levels remain high and continue to undermine support for the GoA and the wider aid community throughout the country.

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The only suicide attack was recorded in the SR where the Daman CoP was killed in a SVBIED attack against his convoy travelling along the airport road in Kandahar. In the explosion at least another civilian was killed and a number of ANSF officers wounded. While lower than the average of three attacks per week the type and location are in line with current trends. The SR and Kandahar Province suicide attacks records continued to record the highest scores countrywide.

Incidents related to the upcoming Parliamentary Elections have doubled compared to last week. The majority of the occurrences were intimidation of the local population, candidates and elections officials. The most significant incidents relate to the abduction of three candidates and one election campaigner in the NER and NR. In addition two candidate's convoys and one ANSF convoy returning from a polling station were attacked.

### **RISK ANALYSIS**

High levels of threat reporting continue, and spectacular attacks in major urban centres remain probable. The highest risk to the United Nations in Afghanistan taking into account mitigating measures is exposure to direct suicide and complex suicide attacks in work, residence or travel situations. The second highest risk is targeting by IED of UN compounds or of UN staff working in government premises. Collateral damage as a result of such attacks against other entities remains a significant concern. Abduction of UN staff for political or criminal motives remains a significant risk, in particular in areas where the use of armoured vehicles is not yet widespread and new insurgent groups start operating. Abuse by local power holders is also rated as a high risk.

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### **Significant Incidents after the end of the reporting period**

On 20 August, Hilmand Province, Sangin District, Sangin Valley, Hayder Abad Village, at 0300 hrs, AGE attacked PSC check posts guarding a Sangin road construction project. The clash lasted for 15 hours. 47 PSC armed guards were killed and 39 others were wounded while reportedly 86 AGE were killed. 10 road construction roller machines were burned and 20 different types of vehicles were confiscated by AGE.

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### **NORTH EASTERN REGION**

The security situation in the North East Region remained unstable except for Badakhshan Province which is relatively calm and stable.

### **Analysis of the Week's Events**

Incident levels were fairly consistent with 25 recorded as compared to 23 last week. The majority of the incidents, eight were reported in Kunduz with seven in Badakhshan, six in Takhar and four in Baghlan. Even though the IM have reduced large scale offensive operations during the period of Ramadan, some momentum was maintained with Special Forces raids and the air strike in Kunduz. Else where, particularly in Takhar there was an increase in incidents due to growing AGE and weak government presence in this province. In 21 or 84% of all incidents AGE were involved.

During the period, three election related incidents were recorded, with one abduction perpetrated by AGE and an intimidation and one confrontation initiated by competing candidates. In Baghlan-e-Jadid District, Baghlan Province three Afghans were abducted. Two of them, a medical worker of an INGO and a taxi driver were released, however, the third person said to be a candidate from Imam Saheb in Kunduz Province remains in captivity. Two other incidents occurred in Badakhshan. In Yumgan DAC, supporters of two candidates clashed resulting in one person being seriously injured and hospitalized. Supporters of a candidate were beaten and arrested in Kufab District on orders of the District Manager, who is related to another candidate.

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In Kunduz Province, the security situation remains tense with threat warnings of suicide bombers in the city and an attack on Kunduz jail. Reporting continue to suggest the growing presence of foreign fighters in areas such as Chahar Dara and Gortepa including Uzbeks, Tajiks, Chechens and Arabs. The presence of these mentors is reflective of the increased focus on the Northeast Region and Kunduz in particular. Recent reports of the disciplining of Taliban commanders suggest that Mawlawi Roshan and Alauddin in Torbaqash, Kunduz were disarmed and Mawlawi Shamusddin in Chahar Dara was “suspended” of his command. This might be interpreted as an attempt by Taliban to grow/groom a more radicalized set of leaders that will be more responsive to their financial and material supporters. The recent trial and death sentence carried out by stoning in Dasht-e-Archi against a young couple, with family and community support, is indicative of Taliban appropriating traditional forms of “justice” and conflict resolution. Arguably, over the next weeks of reduced IM operations AGE are likely to build combat power in preparation for the Election and the period beyond corresponding with the Fall offensive. The ceding of a CP to AGE in Yangareq Village, Qala-e-Zal by the pro-government militia and ANP after weeks of intense pressure reflects a growing concern over a possible waning of support for the militias in the midst of increasing AGE pressure. IM/ANSF plans to resume offensive operations in the week prior to the election may be a little too late to guarantee a safe environment for E Day.

In Baghlan, following another failed operation in the Tawheed series, insecurity continues particularly in Baghlan-e-Jadid, affecting the LOC between Baghlan and Kunduz and Baghlan and Pul-i-Khumri. Again this week there was another abduction and IED incident.

It has been assessed that after Kunduz, Takhar may be the next major security challenge for IM/ANSF. While there has always been significant AGE activity in Darqad and the beyond the Koocha Districts in the North West, there is increasing evidence of similar deterioration in the South West with influences from Burka District, Baghlan now affecting Ishkamesh and beyond to Bangi. Similarly influences from Dasht-e-Archi, Kunduz are being reflected in Khwaja Ghar.

In Badakhshan there is an increased threat of IEDs in Faizabad City. Concerns remain over threat reporting of an AGE build up in Kishem with a possible plan to disrupt election activities and beyond by interdicting movement on LOC through Kishem that link Faizabad to Kunduz. The reports of infiltrations through Kuran-wa-Menjan remain un-assessed though there is a suggestion of plans to influence south eastern Provinces of Zibak and Wardoj.

### **Description of the Week’s Significant Events**

#### **Attack/Armed Clash**

Nine armed clashes were reported; three in Kunduz, five in Takhar and one in Baghlan. Significant incidents in Kunduz involved Special Forces operations in Qara Yatim in which a foot patrol made contact and had a prolonged engagement with AGE. IM Special Forces conducted a raid in Kunduz City, Andarabi Village in which six AGE were killed and four others were arrested. Also in Kunduz, an AGE attack combining the use of stand-off and small arms on the Aliabad DAC resulted in the death of the ANP counter terrorism chief. Clashes in Takhar are reflective of growing AGE presence and increased insecurity particularly in Yangi Qala, Ishkamesh and Khawaja Baha-u-din.

#### **Stand-Off Attack**

There were two stand-off attacks. In Nahrin District, Baghlan, AGE fired rockets at the DAC which caused no damage or injury while in Darayem, Badakhshan three RPGs were fired at an ANP convoy but missed their target.

#### **Air Strike**

IM attacked AGE who were travelling in a private truck from the air. At least 11 persons were killed and nine injured.

#### **IED Detonated/Discovered**

There were four IED incidents including three detonations and one discovery. In Baghlan-e-Jadid District, Baghlan Province an ANA vehicle was struck by a RCIED. An officer and four soldiers were injured. In

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Khanabad District, Kunduz a RCIED was detonated against passing pro-government militia. Two militiamen were seriously injured and in Qala I Zal District, Kunduz a bicycle borne IED detonated in a market injuring four locals including three children. In Yaftal-e-Sufila District, Badakhshan, a RCIED planted on the main road was discovered and defused.

### **Assassination**

AGE in Mulai Quli Village, Dasht-e-Archi District, Kunduz condemned a young couple to death by stoning after an alleged adulterous relationship.

### **Abduction**

Two incidents were reported. In Yangi Qala District, Takhar AGE established a CP and captured an ANP officer and an ANA soldier. In Baghlan-e-Jadid District, Baghlan Province three Afghans were abducted. Two of them were released, however, the third person said to be a WJ candidate from Imam Saheb remain in captivity.

### **Crime**

Two persons were shot to death by an unknown armed group in Zibak District, Badakhshan.

### **Arrest**

In Zakhil Village, Kunduz City, during an IM search operation seven suspected AGE were arrested. In Yumgan District, Badakhshan, a local Mulla was arrested on suspicion of involvement with AGE.

### **Intimidation**

It was reported that on the orders of the District Manager of Kufab District, Badakhshan, campaigners for an election candidate were beaten and some arrested in the district.

### **Demonstration**

Following the arrest of a Mulla in Yumgan DAC, Badakhshan, a group of about 100 persons demonstrated in front of the ANP HQ for his release.

### **Confrontation/Dispute**

In Yumgan DAC, Badakhshan, supporters of two candidates for the parliamentary election had a physical altercation.

## **NORTHERN REGION**

The security situation in the Northern Region remained calm and stable during the week.

### **Analysis of the Week's Events**

The region experienced a minor increase in the number of security related incidents however due to the national holiday this office might not have received the information about the incidents in remote areas. 19 incidents were reported during the week compared to 17 on the previous week however majority of the incidents, 15, were related to AGE activities. Four security incidents were election-related, including two intimidation and two abduction incidents – all initiated by AGE.

Eight armed clashes occurred in the region. AGE continued to target ANSF and IM in Faryab, Jawzjan and Balkh Provinces. Significant of those are the attacks against IM/ANSF in Balkh Province, Chahar Bolak and Chintal Districts as the security situation in the named districts continues to affect also the security situation along the Mazar-Shiberghan Highway. On 16 August, early evening hours, in Chahar Bolak District, the insurgents attacked the IM mobile observation team, which was on its way to Shiberghan. This incident shows that AGE in the area are becoming more courageous as direct attacks on the IM in a day light on the main road are quite unusual in the region and for quite some time the AGE groups operating in Balkh Province have avoided the direct confrontation with IM.

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The number of IED related incidents remained consistent with the previous week. Three IED related incidents were reported in the region, all occurred in Faryab Province's relatively volatile Ghormach and Qaysar Districts. In both IED detonated incidents the civilians, who did not have any direct affiliation with neither government nor the upcoming elections, were affected. In first IED explosion a local man, who was on his way to the farm, was killed and in second incident an IED detonated against the tractor leaving two civilians injured. The second incident took place in Abgarmak Village of Ghormach District, where few days later ANP discovered one more IED, which was later on safely defused by IM EOD Team.

Insurgents continued to intimidate the local population in Balkh Province. On two separate occasions AGE entered the villages in Chahar Bolak and Kishindih Districts and demanded local population to pay the Islamic tithes (*ushr*) as well as not to participate in the upcoming elections. These incidents are coupled with the reports about AGE movements in various locations of Chahar Bolak District at night and the ANP's limited capability to take any proactive action in order to limit the insurgents' movements or conduct any significant activities to hamper the AGE.

Two abductions were reported during the week and both were related to the upcoming elections. On 14 August, DFC of IEC was abducted in Kohistanat District of Sari Pul Province, which has recently seen the increase in the number of AGE. Few days later a political campaigner of one of the candidates was abducted in Shirin Tagab District, Faryab Province. The faith and whereabouts of both abductees remains unknown and the region is expected to witness further election related security incidents within next few weeks.

In the overall analysis, there is no significant change in the general trend, frequency and or pattern of AGE acts of hostility including the target profile. None of the reported incidents of this week is expected to affect the general security situation in the region. The UN programme delivery in Qush Tepa, Dara-i-Sufi Payin and Bala, Kishindih, Sayyad, Darzab and the rural areas of Balkh, Chimtal, Chahar Bolak, the eastern parts of Sholgara Districts of Jawzjan, Sari Pul and Balkh Provinces continue to be hampered due to the active presence of various AGE/IAG networks.

### **Description of the Week's Significant Events**

#### **Attack/Armed Clash**

Eight armed clashes were reported in Faryab, Balkh and Jawzjan Provinces.

#### **IED Detonated/Discovered**

In total, three IED incidents were reported, all in Faryab Province. One civilian was killed and two injured in two IED detonated incidents.

#### **Abduction**

Two abductions took place in Sari Pul and Faryab Province. Both incidents are related to the upcoming elections.

#### **Intimidation**

Three incidents were reported in Balkh and Sari Pul Province. Two of them were directly related to AGE and one is assessed to be criminally or personally motivated.

## **WESTERN REGION**

The security situation in Western Region remained stable.

### **Analysis of the Week's Events:**

The overall incident levels in the region remained consistent for the third consecutive week with 32 incident reports during the period under review. Of these, fifteen reports came from Hirat Province, representing a significant increase for the province as compared to the previous week's eight incident reports. All other provinces recorded a decrease in security incidents though Farah remained the province with the highest

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potential for instability. No election-related incidents were reported, though one local IEC staff in Ghor Province was killed in a confrontation between two illegal armed groups, as he was related to one side.

There were six armed clashes reported as compared to four reported during the the previous week; Hirat Province recorded three, Badghis two and Ghor one. Farah Province recorded a Stand-Off Attack when AGE fired two 107 mm rockets which impacted in the vicinity of the Bakwa District Centre. Most of the attacks were initiated by the AGE with the IM/ANSF - GoA being their primary targets. In terms of casualties five AGE were killed and seven wounded with no casualty recorded by the IM/ANSF. Two PSC personnel were killed and 13 wounded when the IM logistics convoy they were escorting on the Hirat - Qala-I-Naw road was attacked by AGE with RPG and SAF. Continuing attacks on these major roads negatively impacts on the road missions of the UN/ Aid Community thereby affecting programme delivery.

IED detonations also increased with majority recorded in Farah Province numbering four and two in Hirat Province. One ANP was killed and another wounded in Farah Province as result of the IED strike whilst in Hirat Province, Shindand District, six local civilians were killed and two wounded when their private vehicle struck an IED. Two IED discoveries were reported in Farah and Ghor Provinces. Of importance is the IED find in Ghor Province, Pasaband District, which consisted of three IEDs in a cluster, demonstrating a technique familiar in the more volatile and adjoining SR. The reported migration of fighters from the SR to the bordering districts might have led to a trtransfer of technology.

Assassination remained consistent as compared to last week. A government employee and a local civilian were killed by AGE in Farah Province, Gulistan District Centre. Incidents of intimidation continue to rise with all three reported cases occurring in Hirat Province. Crime related incidents also increased from one to three during the week under review.

ANSF apprehended AGE in five different incidents with the most significant being the arrest of nine AGE who were in a process of exhuming the mortal remains an AGE who was killed in an armed clash. In total 15 suspected AGE were arrested in Hirat Province alone during the week under review. The desertion of nine ANP from their Post on the main route from Qalayi Naw to Bala Murghab with all their equipment, arms and ammunition marred the successes achieved by the ANSF during the week under review and shows the limited control over the main road enjoyed by ANSF.

The AGE activity are likely to remain focused on Kushki Kuhna, Kushk and Chesti Sharif of Hirat Province; Bala Murghab and Muqur B Districts of Badghis; Du Layna – Charsada route in Ghor Province. Generic threats reporting of possible AGE intent continue throughout the region with the likelihood of a suicide attack in Farah City assessed as medium likelihood.

### **Description of the Week's Significant Events**

#### **Attack/Armed Clash**

Six armed clashes were reported. The AGE initiated four whilst the IM/ ANSF took them on twice. Hirat Province recorded three, two in Badghis and one in Ghor Province. On 18 August three people were killed in a clash between local IAGs (Abdul Basir and Nadir) in Shahrak District of Ghor. One of the four victims was a civil education worker for the IEC.

#### **Stand-Off Attack**

One stand off attack was recorded in Farah Province, Bakwa District. Two 107 mm rockets were fired towards the District Centre.

#### **IED Detonated/Discovered**

Six IED detonated; four in Farah and two in Hirat Province. Significantly, one ANP was killed and another wounded when their vehicle struck a roadside IED in Bakwa District whilst in Hirat Province, Shindand District, Zeerkor Valley six local civilians were killed and two wounded when their vehicle struck an IED. There were two incidents of IED find in Ghor and Farah Provinces.

#### **Assassination**

A government employee and a local civilian were killed by AGE in Farah Province, Gulistan District.

**Crime**

Three crime related incidents were recorded in Chaghcharan and Du Layna Districts of Farah Province and Qala-I-Kah of Farah Province respectively.

**Arrest**

Five incidents of arrests were reported in Hirat Province.

**Intimidation**

Three incidents of intimidation were reported in Hirat Province attributable to the AGE.

**Other**

A UN vehicle was involved in a RTA in Hirat City injuring a local civilian. The UN driver was apprehended and detained at the Traffic Police Unit for five hours and was released after intervention by UNDSS/ family members of the injured. Another UN staff member was involved in a RTA in Chaghcharan District, Ghor Province and has since been relocated to Hirat for further medical attention.

**SOUTHERN REGION**

The security situation in the Southern Region remains volatile. The residual risk to both UN national and international staff is assessed as Very High.

**Analysis of the Week's Events**

The reporting period saw a second successive decrease in the number of security incidents in SR, with a total of 114 incidents reported, compared to the 130 incidents recorded during the past period; representing a decrease of approximately 12%. Much of the decrease was a result of decreased IED incidents in Kandahar, Hilmand, Zabul and Nimroz Provinces.

The incident pattern remained similar to that of the previous week with Kandahar and Hilmand Provinces being the main areas of AGE activity. However, this week Kandahar Province recorded the greatest activity with 50 incidents while Hilmand recorded 43 and Uruzgan Province 11 incidents. Zabul Province experienced eight incidents while Nimroz Province recorded two incidents. In Hilmand Province, Nahri Sarraj, Nad Ali, Sangin and Marja Districts saw the highest activity, while in Kandahar Province, Zhari District remained the most active followed by Maiwand District.

Although the number of AGE initiated attacks/clashes decreased to 38 from 44, the vast majority took place in Hilmand and Kandahar Provinces. Of the 44 armed attacks/clashes reported during the week, 19 occurred in Hilmand while 17 occurred in Kandahar. Most of these attacks were sporadic and were centred on the Nad Ali, Nahri Sarraj and Marja Districts of Hilmand Province and Zhari District of Kandahar Province; directed at IM/ANSF, but with limited success. There were also a number of armed attacks in Uruzgan Province targeting IM/ANSF patrols and a road construction company.

Four attacks on IM aircrafts with SAF and RPG were recorded in Nad Ali, Sangin and Nahri Sarraj Districts of Hilmand Province. These attacks occurred on 14 and 16 August with no casualties or substantial damages reported. It is assessed that there is a continuing air threat from SAF, RPG and, to a lesser degree, from SAM/MANPADs. UN air operations need to take this into account and consider different routing and approach procedures, specifically for Hilmand Province but also in other areas of SR.

A total of 31 IED incidents including 19 detonations were recorded in the region, representing a 46% decrease as compared to the previous week. AGE continued to target IM/ANSF patrols and convoys, PSC vehicles, civilians and GoA officials. Majority of the reported IED incidents occurred in Hilmand and Kandahar Provinces, the two most insecure areas of the region. Perhaps one of the most significant IED incidents that occurred during the week was the IED attack in Spin Boldak District of Kandahar Province against a member of the Provincial Council, killing him and injuring two of his security officers.

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Stand-off attacks were recorded in all provinces except Zabul Province; in all cases there were no significant effects. A suicide attack targeting an ANP convoy in Daman District of Kandahar Province was one of the significant events in the Region. The incident occurred on 18 August, when a SVBIED detonated against an ANP convoy near Tarnak Bridge, on highway 4 (KAF road); the CoP Daman District, the bomber and one civilian were killed while five ANP officers and 10 civilians were injured. This attack followed several threat warnings particularly relating to AGE deploying a number of VBIEDs on Highway 4 and Kandahar City to target IM, ANSF, and government officials.

Assassination, abduction and intimidation incidents targeting government employees, ANSF and the civilian population significantly increased. Most significantly, targeted killings increased from five to 15 people assassinated, with incidents reported in all provinces except Uruzgan Province. In Kandahar one tribal elder, two civilians and six ANP officers were assassinated, while a District Shura member and a civilian were killed in Hilmand. In Zabul, the province director of border and tribal affairs was killed along with his wife, while an ANP officer was killed in Nimroz. Coupled with these assassinations was the abduction of an ANP officer in Khakrez District of Kandahar Province. AGE had blown up a girls' school in Tirin Kot District of Uruzgan and hurled a hand grenade into a "for profit" organization local staff member's residence in Kandahar city. AGE also placed a night letter in a mosque in Kandahar city, threatening a UN national staff member to quit his job or face dire consequences. All these are believed to be designed for maximum intimidation purposes.

The likelihood of an incident taking place and involving UN staff is very likely with expected impact assessed as critical (i.e. involving death or serious injury). All UN activities must be considered and deemed critical to program delivery before they take place.

### **Description of the Week's Significant Events**

#### **Suicide Attack**

One SVBIED detonation occurred in Daman District of Kandahar Province.

#### **Attack/Armed Clash**

There were 38 reported armed clashes/attacks over the period.

#### **Stand-Off Attack**

Four stand-off attacks were reported during the week.

#### **IED Detonated/Discovered**

A total of 31 IED incidents as compared to 58 the previous week, including 19 detonations.

#### **Assassination**

Nine incidents were recorded during the week with 15 people killed.

#### **Abduction**

One incident was reported during the period.

#### **Arrest**

A total of five air strikes reported, which resulted in at least 20 suspected AGE reported killed.

#### **Intimidation**

Three incidents were report in Kandahar and Uruzgan Provinces.

## **SOUTH EASTERN REGION**

The security situation in the South-Eastern Region remained volatile during the reporting period.

### **Analysis of the Week's Events**



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The SER security incident statistics registered a 50 percent increase in the number of security incidents with a total of 124 reported (including seven late reports), as compared to 82 incidents recorded during the week before. Such a significant increase was caused primarily by the latest developments in Paktya where the number of security incidents has tripled (31 incidents as compared to 10 the week before) – primarily due to a sharp increase of AGE attacks in the Gardez district of the province, and Paktika (26 incidents as compared to 14 during the preceding week) while Ghazni accounted for a total of 44 incidents (41 reports the week before) and 23 incident reports were received from Khost (17 during the previous week). The observed spike could be directly connected to the onset of Holy Month of Ramadan and follows the relative standstill during the preceding weeks of heavy rainfalls throughout the region. The current incident underreporting in the SER is estimated to be at a level of eight to ten incidents (mostly kinetic attacks by AGE targeting IM) per average day and comprises hit-and-run SAF/RPG attacks on IM convoys and facilities (four to five per average day), stand-off attacks on IM installations (two to three), and IED detonations targeting IM patrols (one to two per average day). The geographic distribution of the underreported incidents is believed to be in line with the incident breakdown by provinces.

The SER security environment remains largely AGE driven with 87 percent of the security incidents believed to be AGE initiated (82 percent last week). While certain fluctuations re the numbers of the incidents, types and modes of AGE attacks and their focus areas, and/or the operational successes of the IM/ANSF occur regularly, the general security situation does not seem to be improving with the AGE sustaining a high operational tempo despite the aggressively ongoing IM/ANSF counterinsurgency operations. Fully in line with the previously reported trends, the AGE tactics remained a variety of complex / armed / standoff / IED attacks targeting IM / ANSF / GoA facilities / supply convoys, road construction companies, local population as well as targets of opportunity, as well as the 'psychological warfare' aimed at depriving the GIRoA bodies and IM/ANSF of local population support. Reportedly, information was spread in the Gardez, Ahmadabad and Waza Zadran districts of Paktya on 16 August threatening local population not to vote during the upcoming parliamentary elections or have their fingers cut off otherwise.

Demolition of a Roshan cell transmitter tower by AGE on 13 August in Nadir Shah Kot Khost and the subsequent shutdown of company's services in the city of Khost (and some parts of the Khost province have further exacerbated the persisting cell communications problems in the SER.

The districts of Andar, Ghazni, Arjistan (increasingly), Qarabagh, and Muqur of the Ghazni province, the Khost (Matun), Tani, Bak, and Musa Khel districts of the Khost province, the Gardez and Zurmat districts of the Paktya province as well as the Yousuf Khel and Yahya Khel districts of the Paktika province were the most active during the reporting week.

A UN IP deminer was killed in Gardez Paktya on 17 August while two more were wounded in two separate incidents in Tani Khost on 15 and 17 August when the mines they were attempting to defuse detonated.

At least 78 people were killed, 53 wounded, and 17 arrested as a result the security incidents reported during last week in the SER (the number casualties is yet to be verified independently).

### **Description of the Week's Significant Events**

#### **Attack/Armed Clash**

A total of 47 armed clashes reported (24 last week), the majority of which remaining of the hit-and-run attacks aimed at harassing IM / ANSF / targets of opportunity.

#### **Stand-Off Attack**

A total of 20 incidents recorded – as compared to 14 during the preceding week, including the 14 August rocket attack on Camp Salerno in Khost (Matun) Khost, which resulted in three children, and one more civilian killed and two other locals injured following one of the rocket's impact in a nearby village.

#### **Air Strike**

A total of five air strikes reported (compared to four the week before).

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### **IED Discovered/Detonated**

A total of 27 incidents reported as compared to 29 the week before, including 13 detonations (10 last week).

### **Assassination**

At least seven such incidents reported (one the week before) – mostly in the Ghazni and Paktika provinces.

### **Confrontation/Dispute**

Nine locals were killed and twelve more were wounded following a land dispute-caused firefight between two local tribes in Mando Zayi Khost on 14 August.

### **Other**

The motives of the 19 August incident in Gardez Paktya, where a body of a local male stoned to death was found in the area where an IED attack on a PSC vehicle occurred the day before, are yet to be determined.

## **EASTERN REGION**

### **Analysis of the Week's Events**

The security situation in the Eastern Region remained volatile and is assessed to be the same in coming weeks.

A total of 97 security incidents were recorded during the reporting period representing a 7% decrease from the 105 incidents for the past period. In spite of the observation of holy month of Ramadan the tempo of activity in the region had been maintained for the fifth successive week with an approximate daily average of 14 incidents as recorded for the 'fighting season' before Ramadan. This average is however expected to reduce further with Ramadan progressing into the third week as has been the trend over the past few years. There was no incident directly related to elections

Armed Clash dropped by 25% but maintained its position as the prime incident type recorded for the week with 36 incidents from the 48 recorded in the past week; it accounted for 39% of the total occurrences. Out of the total, 28 (i.e. 78%) occurred in Kunar Province alone. Nangarhar and Laghman provinces recorded four each. AGE continued to conduct their audacious attacks reported in recent weeks as 17 of AGE attacks targeted static ANSF/IM bases and Ops. AGE attacks accounted for 75% of the total. The period saw intensified IM/ANSF initiated operations against the AGE, most of them occurring in the Pech Valley of Kunar Province, Surkh Rod District in Nangarhar Province and Mihtarlam District of Laghman Province resulting in substantial number of casualties to and arrest of the AGE. In ongoing IM/ANSF joint operations in Badpash, Galoch and Shahgulyan villages of Mihtarlam District in Laghman Province on 21 August, 21 AGE were killed and 20 were arrested, seven of whom attempted to escape disguised in Afghan ladies' Burkha; these included a prominent AGE commander. Several civilian casualties were caused during a number of the engagements between AGE and IM/ANSF. A total of 11 civilian casualties were recorded in connection with the clashes for the week.

IED incidents continued to be a major concern to UN AFPs as the incidents were recorded along the MSR used regularly by the UN and other international agencies. Although the increase in the incidents was slight i.e. 17%, the number of IED detonations increased by 50% and most occurred in Nangarhar Province, which did not record any IED discovery for the period. The most significant IED attack occurred in the Sepai area Bati Kot District, on 19 August, when a magnetic IED detonated against a fuel tanker truck on the main Jalalabad – Torkham road causing three private vehicles following the tanker to catch fire as well. Two locals sustained burns one of who died from his wounds. The incident prompted a protest by villagers who blocked the highway for three hours and denied access to fuel tankers. IED and armed attacks are expected to increase on the MSR in the coming weeks in view of the increased operational movement of the IM and ANSF between the provincial capital and the several DAC.

Stand-off attacks reduced slightly by 2 incidents for the second consecutive week. The trend of increased use of high number of ammunition continued; 18 rounds were fired in the six incidents. On 19 August, a

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local male was injured when one rocket impacted in a farm where he was working in Bihsud District, Nangarhar Province.

Reports were received on 16 August of infiltration of an unknown number of AGE including foreign fighters and suicide attackers into Mihtarlam District of Laghman Province and planning to conduct attacks on the Government officials and installations, in Badpash, Galoch and Shahgulyan villages. Related to this reported infiltration and subsequent high presence of AGE in the area, it is the record high number (i.e. 10) of intimidation cases reported in Laghman Province alone.

The current trend and intensity of security incidents in ER is expected to continue, and perhaps increase, into the next reporting period. This could impact on UN operations as a result of access restrictions to a number of districts, which may also affect urgent humanitarian missions to those in need.

### **Description of the Week's Significant Events**

#### **Attack/Armed Clash**

Thirty six incidents were reported, most of it occurring in Kunar Province; although civilian casualties were caused the number reduced slightly against the previous week.

#### **Stand-Off Attack**

Six incidents were reported and targeted at IM bases and ANP locations; however all the 18 rounds missed their targets and one round injured a local farmer.

#### **Air Strike**

Three air strikes were conducted by the IM; of note is the air strike in the Andower area of Badpash, Mihtarlam District of Laghman Province where a total of 14 males who were killed later turned out to be ANA soldiers who had been abducted and re-clothed by AGE.

#### **IED Detonated/Discovered**

Fourteen incidents were reported, twelve were detonations and two were discoveries.

#### **Abduction**

Two incidents were reported and targeted five ordinary civilians including a teacher.

#### **Crime**

Thirteen incidents were reported all occurred in Nangarhar Province except one which was recorded in Kunar Province.

#### **Arrest**

Three arrests were reported; this represents a drop from 9 incidents compared to the past week.

#### **Intimidation**

There were ten recorded incidents - nine of which were against local vehicles at AGE CPs and the last was a typical night letter issued by AGE. All occurred in Laghman Province.

#### **Demonstration**

Two incidents were reported one of which was violent, the other peaceful and both occurred in Nangarhar Province. The violent one was in connection with IM operations that caused civilian casualties. The protestors displayed the bodies on the Jalalabad – Kabul Highway as proof.

#### **Information**

Three pieces of information were reported. These were an update to an earlier report, a narcotics case and infiltration of AGE into Laghman Province.

#### **Other**

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Four incidents were recorded. These were either accidents or issues other than security but of little relevance concerning the ANP. One incident was the case of two ANP officers who abandoned their post for unknown reasons.

### **CENTRAL REGION**

The security situation in the Central Region remained unstable. While Wardak and Logar Provinces were volatile, there were signs increased instability in Parvan Province. Panjsher continued to be relatively calm. Kabul Province and Kabul City in became volatile and unpredictable.

#### **Analysis of the Week's Events**

The reporting period saw the same level of incidents with 42 incidents reported as compared to 43 during the previous week. Wardak and Logar remained active with high level of criminality. Kabul City remained unpredictable due to the ethnic clashes between Hazara and Kuchi community allegedly over land dispute. There were no significant military operations conducted in the region during the period. While no incidents related directly to the elections were reported, the four demonstrations in Kabul probably served also to rally support for parliamentary candidates.

The number of Armed Clash decreased to 8 (10 in the last week) and were mainly related to AGE attacks against IM/ANSF. Most of the IED attacks were reported from Wardak Province, resulting in some casualties amongst ANA and destruction of a number of vehicles.

The reporting period was also marked with an increased number of assassinations in comparison to last week, Victims included a Provincial Council Member in Kabul and an AGE (HIG) Commander assassinated in Wardak by another AGE (Taliban) group.

Independence Day ceremony on 18 August was conducted with low profile within secure government facilities.

The next reporting period is likely experience the similar or comparatively lower level of insecurity mainly due to the Holy month of Ramadan.

#### **Description of the Week's Significant Events**

##### **Attack/Armed Clash**

There were 8 reported armed clashes/attacks over the period. Six of these were initiated by AGE against IM/ANP joint patrols, IM/ANA joint patrols, ANP Convoy and CP, and two were directed at Private Construction Company and PSC. At least four AGE were killed and one was injured. From ANP side – one killed, two injured. From ANA – three injured. During search operations ANA/IM seized three AK-47.

##### **Stand-Off Attack**

There were six stand-off attacks during the period. Three were directed at the Wardak DAC, two at the Logar DAC and IM base (Puli Alam), and one at Parwan IM base (Bagram). No reports of casualties were available.

##### **IED Detonated/Discovered**

There were five reports of IED detonations. At least one ANA soldier was killed in these incidents, whilst five vehicles belonging to ANP, IM, ANA and PSC sustained different level of damage in these attacks. There were two reports of IED discoveries. All the devices were subsequently defused by EOD teams.

##### **Mine and UXO**

One local was killed and one injured in an UXO incident.

##### **Assassination**

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During the week five cases of assassination were reported. On 15 August in Kabul (PD13), an unknown person shot dead a Provincial Council Member. On 16 August in Mar Khana area (Wardak), a HIG Commander was shot dead by Taliban.

### **Abduction**

There was one report of abduction during the week. An IM civilian contractor was abducted by AGE in Logar province.

### **Crime**

On 15 August, in Parwan, two local shopkeepers were killed by ANP after a verbal argument, one ANP was injured. On 17 August an unknown person shot dead a local male in Kabul.

### **Arrest**

Within the week three civilians were arrested in connection to abduction cases whilst two suspected AGE and three civilians were detained during search operations.

### **Intimidation**

There was one case of intimidation reported, when suspected AGE set a private house on fire (Dargi Dara village, Kapisa). However, no further details were available regarding this incident.

### **Demonstration**

Four demonstrations were reported during the week, one of which in Kabul (PD13) turned into severe clashes between Hazara and Kuchi people regarding land dispute. In these clashes two Hazara were killed, three Hazara and five Kuchi were injured. A number of shops and medical clinic were looted, provincial shelters and tents were burned. ANP while trying to stop these clashes also sustained some losses: one ANP was killed, 24 other ANP were injured.

### **Narcotic Incident**

During a search operation in Kapisa ANP seized a quantity of narcotics.

## **CENTRAL HIGHLANDS REGION**

The security situation in Central Highlands Region remained calm during the reporting period with the exception of Kajran District which raised security concerns due to a strong AGE presence in the neighboring Baghram and Gizab Districts of Helmand and Uruzgan Provinces in SR.

### **Analysis of the Week's Events:**

There was one security incident, a decrease compared to the five of the previous week. No AGE related incidents have been recorded; the only incident is related to narcotic. No incidents were reported in relation to the elections.

This poppy incident is a proof that CHR is not poppy free despite some statement; this poppy has been seized with the processing material in four different districts of Daikundi Province. Despite the lull of IAG and AGE activities in Kajran, the local security situation is still unstable due to both AGE and IAG presence and activities. In Bamyán, Shikari valley of Kahmard and Shibar Districts is still unstable areas due to the movement and activities of AGE. IM operations have not yet led to a dismantling of the AGE presence. UN accessibility in the rest of the region remains open for activities.

No major change in security related incident is expected for the next reporting period.

### **Description of the Week's Significant Events:**

#### **Narcotic Incident**

On 16 August, Daykundi Province, Nili Centre, at around 0930hrs; ANP anti narcotic unit in the presence of Government officials, UN representative and local media, incinerated approx 99kg of poppy and poppy

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processing equipment, Reportedly ANP previously had seized the poppy in Kajran, Kiti, Nili and Shahristan Districts of Daykundi Province

**END OF REPORT**

**EM/CP/ES**