



**UN Department of Safety and Security, Afghanistan
Security Situation Report, Week 38,
17- 23 September 2010**

JOINT SECURITY ANALYSIS

The number of security incidents experienced a dramatic increase over the previous week. This increase included primarily armed clashes, IED incidents and stand-off attacks, and was witnessed in all regions. At a close look, the massive increase is due to an unprecedented peak of security incidents recorded on Election Day 18 September, with incidents falling back to the September average of 65 per day afterwards. Incidents were more widely spread than compared to last year's Election Day on 20 August 2009, but remained within the year-on-year growth span predicted by UNDSS-A. As last year, no spectacular attacks were recorded on 18 September, as the insurgents primarily targeted the population in order to achieve a low voter turn-out. Kunduz recorded the highest numbers in the NER on Election Day, while Baghlan has emerged as the AGE centre of focus afterwards. In the NR, Faryab accounted for the majority of incidents, followed by Balkh; Badghis recorded the bulk of the security incidents in the WR. The south to east belt accounted for the majority of the overall incidents, with a slight change to the regional dynamics with the SER recording nearly double the number of incidents as the SR, followed by the ER. Kandahar and Uruzgan accounted for the majority of incidents in the SR, while lack of visibility and under-reporting from Hilmand Province continues to result in many of the incidents in the SR remaining unaccounted for. Ghazni recorded the highest numbers in the SER, followed by Khost. Kunar and Nangarhar were in the lead, recording the bulk of the incidents in the ER.

While the process of consolidation of incidents is ongoing and figures for Election Day are yet to be fully finalized, Election Day security incidents figures are estimated as approximately 490 incidents, compared to 299 in 2009 – an increase of 64%. This corresponds to the average year-on-year growth of 54% recorded between 2009 and 2010 and is in line with projections.¹ More than half of these incidents were recorded in seven provinces, respectively Nangarhar, Ghazni, Kunar, Kunduz, Paktya, Kandahar and Faryab, with the SER and ER regions being the violence focus of both AGE and factional players. Lower numbers recorded in the SR are likely to be attributable to underreporting. As during last year, the largest number of incidents recorded on Election Day were stand-off attacks, in contrast to last year followed closely by armed clashes. In terms of casualties, the total number of civilian casualties as reported by UNAMA Human Rights Unit seems to be consistent with last year's Election Day, showing that the conflict-induced mortality amongst a civilian population is not directly linked to the number of security incidents. The civilian population chose to limit their movement and therefore escape attack.

No incident affected the UN directly, and very few directly affected the aid community. In Chahar Asyab District of Kabul Province seven national staff of a local NGO, also a UN implementing partner, involved in demining activities were kidnapped from a project site; all were later released unharmed. In another development the NGO workers abducted in the NR, Faryab Province on 28 August were also released unharmed. During the Election Day a rocket impacted on an INGO clinic in Saydabad District causing minor damage. Lower exposure and security measures in place are assessed to have successfully mitigated incident occurrences.

In the lead up to Election Day insurgent asymmetric actions against the population remained high and focused on elections related targets. Assassinations dropped significantly with four individuals killed compared to 23 during the previous week. Abduction and intimidation incidents further increased primarily against elections related targets. At least 26 victims were abducted in the NER, NR, WR, SR, ER and CR compared to 14 last week, these include three IEC staff members abducted in Chimtal District of Balkh Province on Election Day. Details on this incident are still sketchy and the fate of the three unclear. In addition another 50 voters (alleged as supporters of a candidate) travelling on a bus in

¹ UNDSS-A, Assessment of Strategic Security Issues Afghanistan 2010, dated 8 May 2010 and UNDSS-A, Half Year review of Strategic Security Issues, dated 14 September 2010.

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Panjwayi District of Kandahar Province were detained and released after the closure of the polling centres. Intimidation incidents increased from 27 to 29, types remained in line with previous reporting. Although the majority appears to be originating from AGE, inter-candidate rivalries are likely to have increasingly contributed to the incidents.

Two suicide attacks were recorded during the week. One unsuccessful attack occurred on the Election Day in Kapisa, where an attacker with a BBIED detonated near a polling centre after being challenged by ANSF, killing the attacker only. On 20 September, an SVBIED detonated near an IM convoy in the ER. While there was no damage to the IM convoy, the attacker was killed and the passengers of a passing by civilian vehicle suffered severe injuries. Despite the high levels of threat reporting only one failed suicide attack occurred on the Election Day, suggesting the possibility of identified insurgent cells having been unable to execute their plans. Suicide attack threat reporting maintains elevated levels and the possibility of such attacks in the post-election phase cannot be ruled out.

The Taliban's anti-UN rhetoric continued. In an article published on their Pashto, Dari and English websites on 23 September, the Taliban portrayed UNAMA as an entity involved in conducting the elections together with the US and the Government of Afghanistan, stating that the people of Afghanistan sided with the Taliban by not participating in the elections. The Taliban on 14 September on the occasion of 9/11 accused the UN Security Council of violating international law by "sanctifying" the invasion of Afghanistan by coalition forces without "asking for any kind of proof linking any attacks on foreign nations by the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan". The Taliban spokesman had also criticized the UNAMA Human Rights Unit's report on Civilian Casualties on 1 September 2010. The rhetoric remains in line with trends observed in the second half 2010 and is not openly threatening attacks. Rather this latest statement is a continuation of propaganda that continues to be assessed as the Taliban leadership's consent to their followers to view the UN as a target of opportunity, but not as a priority target. Eight virulent anti-UN statements had been issued by the Taliban in October 2009 in rapid succession prior to the attack against Bakhtar Guesthouse. It is expected that the controversy surrounding the elections will lead to more anti-UN statements as the UN's profile rises.

RISK ANALYSIS

High levels of terrorist and insurgents threat reporting continue with those related to the UN in Afghanistan on the rise. Spectacular terrorist 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. Perceptions of the UN's role in Afghanistan's electoral process can result in a higher threat profile against the organization.

Significant Events Since the End of the Reporting Period

On 24 September, Balkh Province, Dehdadi District, Mazar-Shiberghan Road, about 10 km from Mazar City, a SVBIED targeted an IM convoy. As at the time one minibus was in the vicinity, one child was killed and 28 civilians injured (14 women, five men and nine children). No casualties were caused to IM.

NORTH EASTERN REGION

The security situation remained unstable. Kunduz Province and some districts of Takhar and Baghlan Provinces which witnessed volatile incidents on E Day remain unstable while Badakhshan Province has returned to relative calm.

Analysis of the Week's Events

There was the expected significant increase with 98 incidents reported as compared to 32 in the last reporting period. Of this total, 71 were reported on E day and 20 in the post election period. The vast majority was linked to AGE attempts to disrupt the election and included the full spectrum of armed attacks, stand-off attacks and IEDs. However, the most prevalent were stand-off attacks involving use of BM 1 rockets and mortars. On E day, Kunduz experienced 31 incidents including 14 stand-off attacks and 12 armed clashes, Baghlan recorded 21 including 11 stand-off attacks and seven clashes. Takhar recorded 13 incidents including five stand-off attacks and eight clashes. While Kunduz was the focus of E day violence, in the post election period Baghlan has recorded 10 of the 20 incidents followed by seven in Kunduz, two in Takhar and one in Badakhshan.

In Kunduz, there is a tense calm after the election. Even though there was no major IM/ANSF operation since the beginning of Ramadan, pressure was maintained on AGE through Special Forces operations and air strikes. However, despite IM operations, AGE were still able to stockpile munitions and launch several armed and stand-off attacks in Imam Sahib, Aliabad, Archi and Chahar Dara. A significant volume of rockets and mortars also fell on Kunduz City. While the attacks were greater than during the Presidential election of 2009, the effect was not significantly greater. Many in the security forces and the population expected attacks and therefore the shock effect was lost. The IM Special Forces operations have had devastating effect, destabilizing the AGE and there is an expectation of reprisal attacks targeting IM/ANSF, pro-government militia and even government officials. While the long awaited Fall offensive is still in the planning stages, any relaxation of pressure by the Special Forces will lead to a resurgence in AGE activity. While the civilian casualty figures were relatively light on E day, there was the disturbing incident on 19 Sep in which six children were killed by unexploded ordnance fired by AGE the previous day.

Following the election, the focus of security forces has swung to Baghlan where AGE retain the capability to interdict traffic on the main highways linking Pul-i-Khumri to Kunduz and Mazar-e-Sheriff with significant presence in Dand-i-Ghori, Dand-e-Shahabuddin, Burka and Old Baghlan. The situation in Dand-e-Shahabuddin has further deteriorated following fighting that started on the eve of the election and involving AGE and the local Arbaki. Reportedly, the Arbaki Commander and several members of the militia were killed, the group defeated and left in disarray. IM/ANSF attempts to stabilize and contain the situation involve reconstituting a local militia to fight the surging AGE. This unfolding situation will continue to have implications for traffic movement on the Pul-i-Khumri to Kunduz highway. The reported desertions of at least 22 ANP from posts in Dehana-e-Ghori District also does not bode well for the security of that district and travel on the Pul-i-Khumri to Mazar highway while within Pul-i-Khumri there are post election tensions which could be exploited to create social unrest.

In Takhar, an attack on the Taloqan prison prior to the election was contained but not before the escape of at least eight AGE. While this placed an added strain on the ANSF, AGE attacks were mostly centred on the northern districts of Darqad, Yangi Qala and Khwaja Baha-u-din. Since the election there have been two intimidation incidents targeting pro-government militia in Yangi Qala and Darqad.

In Badakhshan, the situation has returned to relative calm and even with election incidents the total this week did not surpass last week's 10 incidents. While there was significant AGE disruption in Tagab on Election Day, three demonstrations on E Day were related to disenfranchisement on account of insufficient ballot papers.

Description of the Week's Significant Events

Attack/Armed Clash

There were 36 armed clashes with 29 recorded on E Day. Twelve were reported in Kunduz and seven in Baghlan. In Kunduz Province, fighting was reported in Kunduz, Aliabad, Archi, Imam Sahib and Chahar Dara Districts, while in Baghlan, there was fighting in Dushi, Baghlan-e-Jadid, Burka and Pul-i-Khumri. In Kunduz, eight AGE were killed and 14 wounded in Imam Sahib, in Chahar Dara three AGE were killed and in Archi two were killed and four wounded. In Baghlan Province, Pul-i-Khumri District, AGE attacked

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a private car resulting in three civilians being wounded. Also significant was the attack on the Prison in Takhar on 17 Sep in which eight prisoners including two AGE escaped.

Stand-Off Attack

There were 34 stand-off attacks with 30 recorded on E Day. The majority were recorded in Kunduz, 14 followed by Baghlan with 11. In Kunduz, Kunduz City was the target of most of the attacks which originated from Chahar Dara. At least four persons including three children were injured and one person died as a result of attacks. In Takhar, one civilian was killed and two others injured by a mortar bomb that was reportedly fired by ANSF. In Baghlan, one civilian was killed and two others injured in separate attacks.

Air Strike

There were two air strikes. On 18 Sep, an IM air strike and Special Forces operation targeted AGE in Gortepa, Kunduz City. Seven AGE were killed. On 20 Sep, an IM air strike and Special Forces operation in Lala Maidan Village, Aliabad District, Kunduz resulted in five AGE killed and two arrested.

IED Detonated/Discovered

There were seven IED incidents. This included three detonations reported on E Day. On E day in Kunduz Province, Kunduz City, an IED detonated in the washroom of a high school, a second was detonated in close proximity to a PC resulting in one casualty and a third was detonated against a passing ANP convoy. Subsequent to the election, there were four other incidents in Kunduz Province; in Khanabad District against ANP escorting ballot material, against an ANP convoy on the Kunduz to Taloqan highway and two other discoveries.

Mine/UXO Incident

On 19 Sep, unexploded ordnance fired by AGE on E Day detonated in Aliabad District, Kunduz Province killing six children.

Abduction

On 19 Sep, Baghlan Province, Khenjan District, AGE stopped an ANP vehicle transporting an officer from Ghor Province. The officer was released but the Ranger vehicle with driver, one AK-47 rifle and a pistol were taken.

Arrest

Five arrests were reported including two on E Day. Significant were the IM Special Forces operation on 21 Sep in Gortepa, Kunduz City in which a TB spiritual leader was arrested and the IM operation on 21 Sep in Baghlan Jadid District, Baghlan in which eight AGE were arrested.

Intimidation

There were four incidents. Significant were two in Takhar Province in which the house of a pro-government militia commander was set on fire and the intimidation of relatives of members of pro-government militia.

Demonstration

There were four demonstrations including three on E day. While three demonstrations in Darwaz-e-Bala, Yawan and Jurm Districts in Badakhshan were related to inadequate ballot papers, on 22 Sep around 200 persons supported by PM candidates demonstrated in Pul-i-Khumri District, Baghlan calling for the disqualification of other candidates accused of fraud.

Confrontation/Dispute

There were three incidents including two on E Day. On 23 Sep there was a clash between supporters of two candidates during Peace Day celebration in Faizabad City.

Other

On 22 Sep, in Dehana-e-Ghori District, Baghlan, it was reported that 22 ANP including two officers had deserted their posts.

NORTHERN REGION

The security situation in the Northern region saw some instability in the period leading up to the Election Day. After the elections it then returned to the more stable state of calm for the rest of the reporting period.

Analysis of the Week's Events

During the week 80 security incidents were reported; out of them 77 were related to AGE activities however as expected the majority of the incidents occurred on the Election Day. It is important to note that most of the incidents occurred on Election Day in areas where AGE activity already exists. The most volatile Province during the reporting period was Faryab, which had 44 incidents, followed by Balkh with 24, Jawzjan six, Sari Pul five and Samangan with one incident.

39 armed clashes were reported during the week in all provinces. A high number of attacks were carried out by AGE against the polling centres/sites on the Election Day, this resulted in the closure or temporary closure of polling centres. The most significant armed clash was considered to be the attack on a truck transporting election materials in Chimtal District of Balkh Province on 18 September. As a result of this incident, three IEC staff and three ANP were reportedly abducted by AGE. On 19 September the bodies of the ANP were found, however the IEC staff (despite the wrong information that was circulated in the media) are still alive and held in captivity by the Taliban Shadow Governor of the Chimtal District.

The security situation along Mazar-Shiberghan Highway, especially the section of the road passing Chahar Bolak District of Balkh Province, remains a concern. On 18 September, the AGE opened fire on the civilian vehicles travelling on the main road. Reportedly one truck was hit by an RPG and few smaller vehicles by small arms fire. This incident happened in the evening, when there are fewer vehicles on the road, as apposed to the incident on 23 September when two attacks on Mazar-Shiberghan Highway were carried out in a broad daylight, at about 0900hrs and 1600hrs, while the road is relatively busy. In the first incident, AGE attacked commercial trucks transporting IM supplies and in the second incident, the AGE carried out an attack against the convoy of the Chief of Police of Jawzjan Province. No casualties were reported in any of the incidents. Owing to the continued attacks and no indications of immediate improvement of the security situation along the ring road, especially in Chahar Bolak District of Balkh Province, UN movements along this road will continue to be restricted.

The number of IED incidents increased remarkably during the week. In total 11 IEDs detonated and three were discovered; however local civilians were the main casualties - 12 civilians were killed in comparison to three ANP and one AGE and 10 civilians were injured compared to one IM and three ANSF. The most dramatic incident happened in the eve of the elections in Balkh District of Balkh Province. A donkey cart filled with nine civilians, who were on their way to a cotton field, were hit by an IED. As a result of the explosion three women and five children were killed. It is highly likely that not all the IEDs planted by AGE to negatively impact the elections have either detonated or been discovered during the week and therefore a higher number of IED incidents are likely to occur on the following weeks.

In addition to the IEC staff abduction, three more cases of abduction were reported in the Region. In all cases AGE had abducted either civilians, who were on their way to vote/had voted, or who had assisted in the conduct of the elections in some way. The fate of an international road construction worker, who was abducted in Faryab Province a few weeks ago, remains unknown. On a more positive note, the NGO workers, who were abducted in Faryab Province by AGE on 28 August, were released unharmed on 19 September.

In the overall analysis, there is no significant change in the general trend, frequency and pattern of AGE acts of hostility including the target profile. 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

39 armed clashes were reported during the week. 22 armed clashes occurred in Faryab, 12 in Balkh, two each in Sari Pul and Jawzjan, and one in Samangan Province.

Stand-Off Attack

Nine stand-off attacks were recorded in the region, 7 on E-day

IED Detonated/Discovered

11 IEDs detonated and three were discovered. Six IEDs detonated in Balkh, four in Faryab and one in Jawzjan Province.

Assassination

In Chimtal District of Balkh Province, three IEC staff and three ANP were reportedly abducted by AGE. On 19 September the bodies of the ANP were found. It appears that the IEC staff are still alive and held in captivity by the Taliban Shadow Governor of Chimtal District.

Abduction

Four incidents of abduction were recorded. In addition to the abduction of IEC staff, on 18 September AGE abducted civilians in Sari Pul Province, Sayyad District, who were on the way to vote and in Faryab Province, Ghormach District, three civilians were abducted by AGE for their participation on the elections. In Jawzjan Province, Darzab District, one of the village representatives was abducted by AGE on 22 September because the mentioned representative had supported the elections.

Intimidation

Five intimidations were reported in Faryab and one in Sari Pul Province. All were related to the elections.

WESTERN REGION

The security situation in WR remained unstable.

Analysis of the Week's Events

The region witnessed a drastic increase on the number of security related incidents. A total of 107 incidents were recorded during the week compared to 46 in the previous reporting period accounting for 132% increase. The rise in incident level is attributable to the WJ elections held on September 18, 2010. The nature and geographic distribution of the incidents were consistent with those of the previous weeks. Out of the reported incidents, 80 were AGE related; mainly carried out to disrupt the Parliamentary elections.

Armed clashes significantly increased accounting for 31 incidents; 16 in Badghis, seven in Hirat, seven in Ghor and one in Farah. All armed clashes were initiated by AGE with primary targets being Polling Centres, ANSF CPs and convoys transporting election materials. Of note was an armed attack on IM mobile patrol team in Chaghcharan City of Ghor injuring two IM and one civilian. The perpetrator managed to escape from the scene.

IED detonations significantly rose to 23 incidents, 18 of which were reported in Hirat Province; the other five incidents in Farah and Ghor Provinces. Seven ANA were killed in three IED detonations in Kushk District of Hirat Province and, three civilians in Farah and Badghis Provinces. A total of seven IEDs were discovered and defused. The IED attacks were planned to deter participation in the Elections and also against ANSF convoys transporting election materials.

Asymmetric tactics by AGE intensified just before the Elections Day. There were seven abductions including abduction of IEC staff members and election observers in Badghis. A candidate was also

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abducted in Hirat Province. The Taliban warned the local communities not to turn out for voting and threatened to cut off their inked fingers. There were unconfirmed finger-cutting reports.

Various threat reports received suggested possible attacks on GoA, ANSF, IM and International Organizations including the UNAMA office in Hirat. The reporting was mainly generic and lacking details. The insurgent's intent and capability to conduct attacks in the Region however remains elevated.

The main threats to UN staff are assessed as: direct loss in complex attacks, suicide and IED attacks; collateral damage due to close proximity to IED, suicide attacks and; abduction for political or criminal motives.

Generally, there is no change in the general trend, frequency and pattern of AGE tactics and targeting. It's projected that the level of security would intensify in the coming weeks, with likely factional tensions related to the release of preliminary results of the elections.

Description of the Week's Significant Events

Attack/Armed Clash

31 incidents were reported, 16 in Badghis, seven in Hirat, seven in Ghor and one in Farah. All armed clashes were initiated by AGE with primary targets being Polling Centres, ANSF CPs and convoys transporting election materials. There was an armed attack on IM mobile patrol team in Chaghcharan City of Ghor injuring two IM and one civilian. The perpetrator managed to escape from the scene.

Stand-Off Attack

Eight incidents were recorded. Four in Farah Province, three in Badghis Province and one in Hirat Province. All attacks were conducted by AGE targeting Polling Centres, ANSF CPs and DAC in Badghis. One civilian killed and another two were wounded in the attacks.

Air Strike

One incident was recorded in Farah Province targeting an AGE commander. No casualty was reported.

IED Detonated /Discovered

23 incidents were reported, 18 incidents in Hirat Province and the other five incidents in Farah and Ghor provinces. Seven ANA were killed in three IED detonations in Kushk District of Hirat Province and three other civilians killed in Farah and Badghis Provinces. A total of seven IEDs were discovered and defused. The IED attacks were planned to attack the Polling Centres to deter the turnout in the Elections Day and ANSF convoys transporting election materials.

Cache

Three incidents were reported in Ghor and Hirat provinces.

Abduction

Seven incidents were recorded. A candidate for the parliamentary elections along with his supporters in Adraskan of Hirat Province, nine IEC employees along with other eight community elders and three election observers in Badghis Province. Of note, IEC employees and elders were released unharmed.

Crime

Two incidents were reported one each in Hirat and Ghor provinces.

Arrest

Two incidents were recorded one each in Farah and Ghor provinces.

Intimidation

12 incidents were recorded. Six in Hirat Province, five in Badghis Province and one in Farah Province. Taliban distributed night letters and posted night letters on walls of different premises and orally warned locals not to take part in the elections.

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Confrontation/Dispute

Three incidents of dispute were recorded, two in Ghor and one in Farah.

Information

Five incidents of information were recorded including the reintegration of Taliban groups in Qala-e-Now of Badghis Province and Farah City. Of positive note was the release of a candidate for the parliamentary elections along with one of his supporters.

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

A total of 136 security incidents were recorded during the reporting period. The increase of 53% from the 89 incidents of the previous week is linked to the incident spike on the day of the parliamentary elections on September 18. Security incidents in Helmand province continue to be underreported, as comparisons with IM figures show. This is the case in general, but also in regards to the Election Day incidents.

According to received reports Kandahar and Uruzgan provinces have been the most active in the past week, with 58 and 37 incidents respectively. The 10 incidents reported from Helmand are clearly not a correct representation of the security situation in the province.

Final statistics for security incidents on Election day are not yet available, as many incident reports have not been channelled to DSS in SR. Analyzing the available information it appears that the number of incidents in 2010 was comparable or slightly higher than those during the presidential election in 2009. There have been fewer rocket attacks into urban centers in SR. Specifically in Kandahar the number of rockets impacting in the city area was lower than in 2009. The number of IED incidents within Kandahar City was also lower than in the previous year. This can be attributed to the increased presence of IM and ANSF in the town and the measures under Operation Hamkari, which pushed out and improved the security perimeter around the city. The number of security incidents on Election Day has to be seen against the backdrop of a general increase in incidents in 2010 versus 2009. The overall low turnout in SR is seen as linked to a mix of voter apathy and security fears. AGE led a campaign of threats and intimidation prior to the election that may have discouraged many to attend the polls. On Election Day itself AGE did not conduct any spectacular attack in SR. The majority of the attacks caused few casualties and seemed to have been aimed at reinforcing the intimidation campaign, rather than causing actual disruption of the process. The most noteworthy security incidents in SR on Election Day were an IED attack against the convoy of the Governor of Kandahar Province between Kandahar City and Dand District Center and the abduction of some 50 supporters of a candidate, who were detained on their way to the polling station in Panjwayi District. The fact that these individuals were released unharmed after the polls closed points at possible involvement of a rival candidate.

Numerous reports of electoral fraud are reportedly being received by ECC and other entities in SR. Although it is not expected that these issues could lead to violence between the candidates, threats and intimidation against IEC and ECC staff are possible. Shortfalls in the election process and questions about the credibility of the results will be exploited by AGE propaganda and increase their recruiting potential.

IM/ANSF operations in Arghandab District have increased, involving heavy artillery bombardments and air strikes close to the boundary with Kandahar City. IM operations in Zhari and Panjwayi districts are expected to increase in pace soon.

The current decrease in assassination in Kandahar City is assessed as a result of the very strong security force presence on streets of the city during the election period. There have also been some operations

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against alleged assassination cells in town. It remains to be seen whether the relaxation of the security measures post election will lead to a re-start of the assassination campaign by AGE.

The crash of an IM Chinook helicopter in Zabul Province, killing nine IM soldiers, led to the largest number of IM casualties in a helicopter crash in Afghanistan since 2005, when another Chinook crashed in Kunar Province, killing 16 US soldiers. The cause of the incident has not been disclosed by IM; AGE claimed to shoot the aircraft down, however such claims are often false.

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

Attack/Armed Clash

There were 35 reported armed clashes/attacks over the period.

Stand-Off Attack

28 stand-off attacks were reported during the week, the bulk of which occurred on election day. It should be noted that the rockets used in the majority of these attacks are area weapons with little accuracy against specific targets when fired as single projectiles from improvised firing positions. This explains the low casualty rate in the stand-off attacks.

IED Detonated/Discovered

27 IED detonations were reported during the week.

14 IED discoveries were made. Most were defused by EOD teams.

Assassination

Three incidents were recorded during the week; a decrease compared to 6 reported the previous week.

SOUTH EASTERN REGION

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

Analysis of the Week's Events

The region experienced a 144% increase in the number of security incidents with 271 recorded as compared to 119 incidents the week before. That was primarily attributed to a sharp increase in the insurgent activity throughout the region on the Parliamentary Election Day. 128 incidents that occurred on polling day accounted for a 47% of a total number of incidents recorded in the region over the reporting period. The regional statistics also indicate a slight increase in the number of security incidents recorded on Parliamentary Election Day this year as compared to Presidential Elections last year.

Increases in the number of incidents were observed in all four provinces of the region. Altogether, Ghazni Province reported 97 incidents (37 the previous week), Paktya reported 50 incidents (21), Paktika recorded 55 incidents (39) and Khost Province recorded 67 incidents (22 the week before). Insurgents continued attacks on their regular targets such as ANSF/IM convoys, patrol units, CPs, military bases, local government administrations as well as on Election Polling Centres and Stations. However, a large presence of security forces on the ground combined with intensive search and combat operations significantly reduced the operational mobility of insurgents who, therefore, shifted to stand-off attacks the number of which significantly increased on Election Day, in particular.

IED, RPG/SAF attacks remained largely used by insurgents against both ANSF/IM mobile and static targets. In 46 IED detonations and 53 armed clashes six individuals were killed and 30 other wounded including several civilian casualties reported. Khost Province continued to contribute to the regional insecurity with the majority of IED related incidents. Ghazni Province kept a lead in the number of stand-

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off attacks with 64 incidents out of a total of 130 recorded in the region. DACs and ANSF/IM bases and camps remained the primary targets. Reportedly, five people were killed and 34 wounded as a result of stand-off attacks. Election process was affected with a number of attacks on polling stations in all provinces, particularly in Khost and Paktya with no casualties reported. Neither UN nor aid community were affected.

Description of the Week's Significant Events

Attack/Armed Clash

A total of 53 armed clashes reported (29 last week).

Stand-Off Attack

A total of 130 incidents recorded (30 during the previous week).

Air Strike

A total of five air strikes reported (three in Paktya and two in Paktika)

IED Detonated /Discovered

A total of 59 incidents reported as compared to 33 the week before, including 46 detonations.

Arrest

A total of 12 incidents reported. Most of them were elections related.

Intimidation

On 18 September, Ghazni Province, Nawur District, District Centre, daytime; a current parliamentary candidate is reported threatening and pressing locals to vote for him.

On 17 September, Ghazni Province, Giro District, Giro Centre, daytime; information received from local authorities is that, eleven DFCs were beaten by two Parliamentary candidates after refusing to stuff votes for them all were kept for 24 hours. After election

On 18 September, Paktya Province, Ahmadabad District, District Centre; daytime; an electoral observer reported pressing locals to vote for a certain parliamentary candidate.

EASTERN REGION

The security situation in the Eastern Region remained volatile and is assessed to be the same in coming weeks. In spite of the intensified AGE operations during the period, the security situation was less intense than envisaged because of the effective security arrangements put in place by IM and ANSF in the form of aerial, static and mobile ground patrols.

Analysis of the Week's Events

A total of 178 security incidents were recorded during the reporting period with an approximate daily average of 25 incidents; i.e. one incident per hour representing a 174% increase from the 65 incidents for the past period. Ninety-six (96) incidents were recorded on Election Day (18 Sep) only, and the majority were related to the elections. This spike occurred as assessed for the period of the parliamentary elections so a sharp drop is expected within the next couple of weeks as all parties 'wait and see' the outcome of the elections and the official response to the numerous complaints raised during the elections. The numbers are eventually expected to reduce to and be maintained at the levels recorded for the period before Ramadan in the coming weeks until the onset of the winter season.

Armed Clash was the predominant incident followed by IED incidents and rocket attacks. A total of 75 Armed Clashes were recorded which was a 257% increase over the 21 recorded in the week preceding the elections week. Kunar Province accounted for 41 attacks, Nangarhar, 25 while Laghman and Nuristan provinces recorded eight and one respectively.

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Nangarhar Province recorded 39 out of 46 IED incidents recorded in the entire region, 20 of which were detonations and mostly occurred on Elections Day. Most of these occurred along roads leading to or near polling centres in all major districts in all the provinces apart from Nuristan and were meant to dissuade prospective voters from casting their votes. The most significant IED attack occurred on 22 September where a primary and secondary attack resulted in the injury of six NDS officers and 12 civilians in Jalalabad City.

Stand-off attacks were 21 in all, the majority occurring in Kunar and Nangarhar provinces with 13 and six incidents respectively. Most of the attacks targeted polling stations, IM bases and District Administrative Centres and caused casualties and damages in few cases. In Kunar Province four civilians were killed and five others including an IEC staff and ANP officer were wounded, while one female was wounded when a rocket impacted on Hazratano Street, close to the former UNAMA Office in Zone 3 of Jalalabad City.

Reports were received of infiltration of a large number (approximately 350) of AGE in small groups on the night of 22 September 2010, into areas of Chapa Dara District of Kunar Province. The groups commanded by known figures including the Taliban shadow Governor, his deputy and shadow Chief of Police, plan to conduct attacks against the DAC and CPs. Similar reports of mass AGE movement into Bati Kot and the districts bordering Afghanistan with Pakistan were received and these may be due to major IM/ANSF operations in the neighbouring Khogyani and Sherzad Districts. There were also reports of IED cells operating in Bati Kot District. These high presence activities of AGE in these areas will influence the security trends in Nangarhar and Kunar provinces in coming weeks.

There were no recorded incidents directed against humanitarian programme delivery agencies in the region during the reporting period.

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

Description of the Week's Significant Events

Suicide Attack

On 20 September, an SVBIED detonated near an IM convoy in the ER. While there was no damage to the IM convoy, the attacker was killed and the passengers of a passing by civilian vehicle suffered severe injuries.

Attack/Armed Clash

Seventy-five incidents were reported, most of them occurring in Kunar and Nangarhar provinces and related to the elections.

IED Detonated/Discovered

Forty-six incidents were reported, twenty-five were detonations and twenty-one were discoveries.

Stand-Off Attack

Twenty-one incidents were reported and targeted at various DAC, polling centres and IM bases; four deaths and five injuries were recorded.

Air Strike

Four air strikes were conducted by the IM resulting in the killing of 12 AGE including one senior commander and injury to five AGE.

Mine/UXO Incident

Two incidents were recorded; in one incident, a boy was injured when an UXO that he was handling detonated.

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Cache

The seizure of 51 bags of potassium nitrate was reported.

Abduction

Four incidents were reported and targeted four ordinary civilians and a Parliamentary Candidate who was released after six hours in captivity following intervention of local elders of the Shamsakhel Village in Alishing District, Laghman Province.

Crime

Four incidents were reported. One was a quarrel between two *Woulsi Jirga* candidates over a voting process which resulted in the temporary closure of a polling station by ANP in Laghman Province.

Arrest

Twelve arrests were reported; four involved voter fraud and the seizure of fake female ballot papers in Nangarhar Province.

Intimidation

Two incidents were recorded, one of which involved arson against a girls' school where classroom furniture and various books were completely destroyed by the fire by AGE.

Narcotic Incident

Two incidents were recorded and involved the seizure of large amounts of acid and opium.

Information

One piece of information was reported on the infiltration of AGE into Chapa Dara District.

CENTRAL REGION

The security situation in the region generally remained unstable. Kabul, Logar and Wardak Provinces maintained consistent levels of incidents and thus, jointly accounted for 83% of the overall number of reported incidents. In line with the regional incident pattern, Panjsher and Parwan continue to be relatively calm as amply manifested by their incident figures.

Analysis of the Week's Events

Whereas the security dynamics of the region is usually characterized by spikes and declines in incident figures, this week saw an unusual increase atypical of the region. In that, there were a total of 121 security related incidents reported this week in comparison with the 51 incidents recorded during the previous week. This represents well over a 200% of increase in the number of security related incidents. This capricious security climate is assessed to have been influenced by the ostensible surge in violence as witnessed in the days before and during the parliamentary elections. This development further validated threats allied to insurgents with respect to their earlier proclamation of resolve to discredit the electoral process. Insurgents have tried to assert themselves by means of an intensified campaign of voter dissuasion some of which inescapably resulted in casualties suffered by locals and Security Forces alike during the numerous armed clashes, IED and stand-off attacks. This campaign of violence and intimidation affected many people affiliated with the electoral process which includes election officials, voters, candidates and members of the Afghan National Security Forces who all had a fair share of the violence. Although insurgents remain culpable for most of the election related violence, other unscrupulous individuals and groups may have exploited this seemingly hostile situation in pursuit of individual political objectives in an increasingly charged and fractured political climate.

Incidents of assassination and abduction of ANSF personnel and locals for political or criminal motives continue to be reported. Noteworthy are the assassination of an ANP personnel in Wardak and Parwan in addition to the killing of two local employees of an IM base in Logar. There were also six abduction incidents recorded which takes account of six staff members of an NGO being an implementing partner of UN Agency and the subsequent confiscation of their demining equipment. The abductees were later

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released after been kept in captivity for a few days. In another development, there were two election-related demonstrations staged across the region. One anti-election protest was staged in Wardak but the one staged in front of the ECC Headquarters in Kabul by supporters of a parliamentary candidate in protest of a undisclosed cause. Like stand-off attacks and armed clashes, a significant increase in the number of IED discoveries and detonations was witnessed during the period under review. On a more positive note, a suicide bomber attempted to gain access into a polling centre in Nijrab District of Kapisa but was spotted by the ANP and shot at resulting in the sole death of the attacker.

There were a combined total of 63 incidents of stand-off and armed attacks against selected targets especially in Logar and Wardak. There were widespread rocket attacks on District Administrative Centres, polling centres and other high profile locations but with the usual imprecise nature of many rocket attacks, many off them missed their intended targets.

More post-election related protests may be seen in Kabul and other provinces in the coming days particularly when the declaration of results gradually begin. A real risk of sporadic violence in diverse provinces within the region essentially exists with a higher likelihood.

The post-election period remain critical and in line with earlier assessments, an upsurge in violence and other forms of intimidation targeting selected individuals including members of IC is a significant risk as the period continue to be marred with constant unpredictability and anxiety especially for candidates and their well-wishers.

Description of the Week's Significant Events

Suicide Attack

A suicide bomber with a BBIED attempted to gain access to the Qazi Abdul Jamil Shahid polling centre Nijrab District of Kapisa but was spotted and killed by ANP. The BBIED detonated killing only the attacker.

Attack/Armed Clash

There were 33 reported armed clashes/attacks during the week. All attacks were AGE initiated attacks against ANSF, polling centres. A total of six AGE were killed and five ANP were injured.

Stand-Off Attack

A total of 30 stand-off attacks mainly rockets launched towards polling centres and DACs. are on record during the period. Kabul recorded five, Logar 10, Kapisa one, Parwan two and Wardak also recorded 12. In all these attacks only one ANP was killed, two ANP and two ANA injured.

IED Detonated/Discovered

There were 13 incidents of IED detonations. A total of one ANP and twelve civilians were Killed and also one ANP, four IM and two civilians were wounded in all incidents combined. . There were seven reports of IED discoveries. All the devices were defused by EOD teams.

Cache

Five discoveries of cache were reported which included five hand grenades, eight rockets, 10 mortar bombs, 8000 AK 47 rounds, three AK47 rifles and two pistols.

Assassination

Three incidents of assassination were reported. One ANP Officer was shot dead in Saydabad District of Wardak by AGE, another ANP was shot dead in Shinwari District of Parwan and two local were also assassinated in Puli Alam District of Logar for working at an IM base.

Abduction

Six incidents of abduction were reported over the week. Wardak accounted for three, Logar two and Kabul one. In Kabul Char Asyab District, armed elements abducted six staff members of Mine Clearance Planning Agency, an implementing partner of a UN Agency and seized some demining equipment. The abductees were later released.

Crime

Four criminal incidents were reported. Unknown perpetrator/s threw a hand grenade into the vicinity of Masjid Imam Hussain PC without causing casualties. In Char Asyab District of Kabul gunmen shot dead a local, an unidentified corpse was discovered in Paghman District of Kabul and in PD9 Kabul City a male local was shot dead by a relative.

Arrest

There were three incidents of arrest. A total of six AGE were arrested and one AK 47 rifle, two hand grenades and an assortment of explosive material were confiscated.

Intimidation

Four intimidation incidents were reported. The two most significant are the IEC staff in Saydabad District of Wardak were warned in a night letter to refrain from taking part in the elections. And also the AGE in Tagab District of Kapisa warned locals not take part in the elections.

Demonstration

There two demonstrations during the week. One was an anti-election demonstration in Bomabi area, Chak District of Wardak Province. The other one was staged in Kabul in front of the ECC Headquarters. All demonstrations ended peacefully.

CENTRAL HIGHLANDS REGION

The security situation in Central Highlands Region remained calm during the reporting period with two incidents recorded compared to seven for the previous week, a slight decrease.

Analysis of the Week's Events

In Bamyan Province only one traffic accident related to IM was recorded

In Daikundi, there were two incidents, one AGE related. During election, some RPG shells were fired from neighbouring mountains against some polling stations in order to disrupt the election process in Nili, they impacted in open areas and had minimal effect on the election process. At Bamyan Centre in Bamyan Province on 20 September, approximately 700 locals staged a demonstration against the planned burning of the holy Koran in the USA; a growing anti American resentment is recorded in the region. Some counterfeited voters cards were seized in Nili by DFC, which in part confirmed the rumour of the circulation of fake voter's cards reportedly coming from Pakistan.

Description of the Week's Significant Events

Stand-Off Attack

On 18 September, Daykundi Province, Kajran District Centre, at around 1030 hrs; Six rockets (RPG 7 and mortar) launched from neighbouring mountains towards the polling stations in the DAC, missed their targets and impacted in an open area in the vicinity. No casualties reported.

Demonstration

On 20 September, Daykundi Province, Nili Centre, at about 14:00 hrs, a peaceful demonstration took place against the planned Quran burning ceremony in the US. Approximately 700 people protested, moving from Nili Bazaar area to the UN Office. They delivered a petition to UN office and ended the demonstration peacefully at 15:30 hrs

Crime

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On 18 September, Daykundi Province, Nili Center, Kohnadeh Polling centre, at around 1000 hrs; DFC discovered and seized some counterfeited voters' cards. Three suspected persons were detained by NDS for further investigation

Other

On 20 September, Bamyan Province, Bariki Shaheedan Village, around 1100hrs, an IM vehicle had a traffic accident with a motorcyclist. As a result, the motorcyclist sustained injury and was evacuated to Bamyan hospital.

On 19 September, Daykundi Province, Nili Centre Bazaar area, at 01:00 hrs reportedly a blaze destroyed two shops and partially damages another house. ANP is investigating the cause of fire.

END OF REPORT

GJP/CP