



# Afghanistan Security situation update

Country of Origin  
Information Report

September 2021





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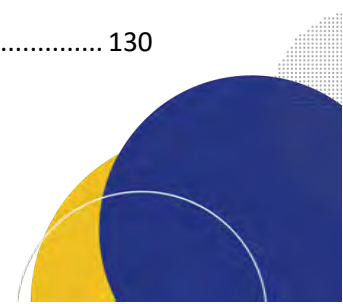
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It must be noted that the review carried out by the mentioned departments, experts or organisations contributes to the overall quality of the report but does not necessarily imply their formal endorsement of the final report, which is the full responsibility of EASO.

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## Disclaimer

This report was written according to the EASO COI Report Methodology (2019).<sup>1</sup> The report is based on carefully selected sources of information. All sources used are referenced.

The information contained in this report has been researched, evaluated and analysed with utmost care. However, this document does not claim to be exhaustive. If a particular event, person or organisation is not mentioned in the report, this does not mean that the event has not taken place or that the person or organisation does not exist.

Furthermore, this report is not conclusive as to the determination or merit of any particular application for international protection. Terminology used should not be regarded as indicative of a particular legal position.

'Refugee', 'risk' and similar terminology are used as generic terminology and not in the legal sense as applied in the EU Asylum Acquis, the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees.

Neither EASO nor any person acting on its behalf may be held responsible for the use which may be made of the information contained in this report.

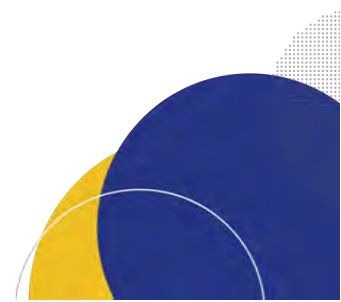
The drafting of this report was finalised on 31 August 2021. Any event taking place after this date is not included in this report. More information on the reference period for this report can be found in the [Methodology](#) section of the Introduction.

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<sup>1</sup> The 2019 EASO COI Report Methodology can be downloaded from the EASO COI Portal, [url](#)

## Glossary and abbreviations

AAN	Afghanistan Analysts Network
ACAA	Afghanistan Civil Aviation Authority
ACLED	Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project
ANDSF	Afghan National Defense and Security Forces
ANSF	Afghan National Security Forces
AP	Associated Press
AQ	Al Qaida
DW	Deutsche Welle
ETIM	Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement
HCNR	High Council for National Reconciliation
IDPs	Internally Displaced People
IEDs	Improvised explosive devices
IMU	Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan
ISKP	Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant-Khorasan Province
KIB	Khatiba Imam al-Bukhari
LWJ	Long War Journal
NDS	National Directorate of Security
NRF	National Resistance Front
NSOCC-A	NATO's Special Operations Component Command-Afghanistan
RTA	Radio Television Afghanistan
RSF	Reporters Without Borders
SIGAR	Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction
SIV	Special Immigration Visa
TTP	Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
USIP	US Institute of Peace
WHO	World Health Organization



# Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide security related information relevant for international protection status determination. The report contains information on the general security situation in Afghanistan, as well as information on security related events on regional, provincial, or even district level. The terms of reference can be found in [Annex 2](#).

## Methodology

This report was drafted by an external Country of Origin Information (COI) expert, Ms Elizabeth Williams, as mentioned in the [Acknowledgements](#) section. This report is produced in line with the EASO COI Report Methodology (2019)<sup>2</sup> and the EASO COI Writing and Referencing Style Guide (2019).<sup>3</sup>

## Reference period

The initial reference period for this report covered 1 March to 13 August 2021. After the drafting of the report was finalised, the Taliban took *de facto* control of most parts of Afghanistan. Because of the significant nature of the take-over, having an impact on the content of this report, EASO complemented the report with information on developments taking place until 31 August 2021. As regards the regional description at province level, covered in chapter 2, the reference period is 1 March to 13 August 2021, except for the following topics, on which information was included covering the period until 31 August: territorial control, information on attacks on healthcare, airport information and displacement data. Furthermore, it should be noted that the illustrative incidents by province outlined in chapter 2 in general do not include events after 5 August as few sources provided such an overview and due to time constraints.

It should be noted that due to the fast developments in Afghanistan, and the limited time available to publish this update, the additional information on events taking place after 13 August 2021 has not been reviewed by the departments mentioned in the [Acknowledgements](#) section but has undergone an internal review by EASO.

## Sources

For data on **civilian casualties**, the main source used in this report is the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). UNAMA uses for their reports on Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict in Afghanistan a robust methodology to verify reported incidents by corroborating and cross-checking incidents, conducting on-site investigations, and consulting a broad range of credible and reliable sources. For verification of each incident involving a civilian casualty, UNAMA requires at least three different and independent sources. Unverified incidents are not included in its reporting.<sup>4</sup> According to analysts, this stringent verification standard also means ‘there may be many more casualties than UNAMA is able to confirm.’<sup>5</sup>

In addition, to illustrate examples of incidents which caused civilian casualties in some provinces, information from New York Times’ Afghan War Casualty Report was used, among other media sources. The Afghan War Casualty Report is a weekly and monthly bulletin compiling ‘all significant security

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<sup>2</sup> EASO, EASO Country of Origin Information (COI) Report Methodology, June 2019, [url](#)

<sup>3</sup> EASO, Writing and Referencing Guide for EASO Country of Origin Information (COI) Reports, June 2019, [url](#)

<sup>4</sup> UNAMA’s full description of their methodology can be found at: UNAMA, Afghanistan Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict Annual Report 2018, 24 February 2019, [url](#), pp. i-ii

<sup>5</sup> Bjelica, J. and Ruttig, T., UNAMA Mid-Year Report 2017: Number of civilian casualties still at “record level”, 18 July 2017, [url](#)



incidents confirmed by New York Times reporters throughout Afghanistan'. The New York Times clarifies 'the report includes government claims of insurgent casualty figures, but in most cases these cannot be independently verified by The Times. Similarly, the reports do not include Taliban claims for their attacks on the government unless they can be verified.'<sup>6</sup>

For data on **violent incidents**, publicly available curated datasets from the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED) have been used.

ACLED is a project collecting, analysing and mapping information on 'the dates, actors, locations, fatalities, and types of all reported political violence and protest events across Africa, the Middle East, Latin America & the Caribbean, East Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, Central Asia & the Caucasus, Europe, and the United States of America'.<sup>7</sup> Its methodology applied for coding and monitoring of the data is explained in details in its Codebook and in a specific methodology for Afghanistan.<sup>8</sup> As ACLED points out, the reader should, however, be aware of some limitations in the data. These limitations are:

'that most of the data is gathered based on publicly available, secondary reports. This means that the data is in part a reflection of the coverage and reporting priorities of media and international organisations. One of the effects of this is that it may under-estimate the volume of events of non-strategic importance (for example, low-level communal conflict, or events in very isolated areas). We work to address this possibility by triangulating data sources to include humanitarian and international organisation reports, rather than media alone; and by conducting ground-truthing exercises in which we present data to local organisations and partners to assess its validity among people working directly in conflict-affected contexts.'<sup>9</sup>

Therefore, ACLED's figures in this report are to be considered as an estimate and indication of trends in violence over a given period of time.

For Afghanistan, ACLED covers political violence and protest spanning from January 2017 to the present. Each week, ACLED researches and reviews about 60 sources in English and Dari/Farsi on political violence in Afghanistan and collects the information into a database.<sup>10</sup>

ACLED codes security incidents as follows:

- 'Battles': 'a violent interaction between two politically organized armed groups at a particular time and location.' 'Battles can occur between armed and organised state, non-state, and external groups, and in any combination therein.' Sub-events of battles are 'armed clash', 'government regains territory' and 'non-state actor overtakes territory'. The sub-event type 'Armed clash' occurs when 'armed, organized groups engage in a battle, and no reports indicate a change in territorial control'.
- 'Violence against civilians': 'violent events where an organised armed group deliberately inflicts violence upon unarmed non-combatants'. 'Violence against civilians includes attempts at inflicting harm (e.g., beating, shooting, torture, rape, mutilation, etc.) or forcibly disappearing (e.g., kidnapping and disappearances) civilian actors.' The following sub-event types are associated with the violence against civilians event type: 'Sexual violence', 'Attack', and 'Abduction/forced disappearance'.
- 'Explosions/remote violence': 'one-sided violent events in which the tool for engaging in conflict creates asymmetry by taking away the ability of the target to respond.' They include:

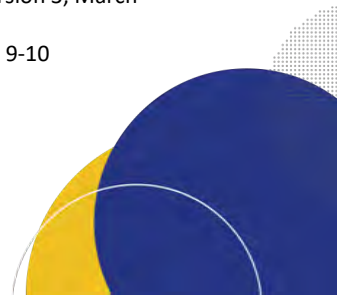
<sup>6</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>7</sup> ACLED, About Acled, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>8</sup> ACLED Codebook, n.d., [url](#); ACLED methodology and coding decisions around the conflict in Afghanistan, version 3, March 2020, [url](#)

<sup>9</sup> ACLED, Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) Guide for Media Users, January 2015, [url](#), pp. 9-10

<sup>10</sup> ACLED, Methodology and Coding Decisions around the Conflict in Afghanistan, (Version 3) March 2020, [url](#)



Chemical weapon', 'Air/drone strike', 'Suicide bomb', 'Shelling/artillery/missile attack', 'Remote explosive/landmine/IED', and 'Grenade'.

- 'Riots': are a violent demonstration, often involving a spontaneous action by unorganised, unaffiliated members of society. They include 'violent demonstrations', 'mob violence'.
- 'Protests': 'public demonstration in which the participants do not engage in violence, though violence may be used against them.' It includes 'peaceful protests', 'protests with intervention', 'excessive force against protesters'.
- 'Strategic developments': 'contextually important information regarding the activities of violent groups that is not itself recorded as political violence, yet may trigger future events or contribute to political dynamics within and across states.' It includes 'agreements', 'changes to group/activity', 'non-violent transfers of territory', 'arrests'.<sup>11</sup>

EASO provided analytical graphs on security incidents based on publicly available ACLED data. For the purpose of this report, only the following types of events were included as violent incidents in the analysis of the security situation in Afghanistan: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians. The reference period for the ACLED data is from 1 March to 30 July 2021 and EASO downloaded the ACLED curated data files on Central Asia and the Caucasus, including Afghanistan, on 5 August 2021 ([url](#)). ACLED identified in its 2019 Codebook<sup>12</sup> three codes for the geo-precision of events:

'If the report notes a particular town, and coordinates are available for that town, the highest precision level "1" is recorded. If the source material notes that activity took place in a small part of a region, and notes a general area, a town with georeferenced coordinates to represent that area is chosen and the geo-precision code will note "2" for "part of region". If activity occurs near a town or a city, this same precision code is employed. If a larger region is mentioned, the closest natural location noted in reporting (like "border area", "forest" or "sea", among others) is chosen to represent the region – or a provincial capital is used if no other information at all is available – and is noted with precision level "3". No ACLED event is associated with the "country" as the smallest location unit available.'

In the provincial chapters of this report, the EASO analytical graphs holding the breakdown of incidents per administrative unit level 2 (districts) do not include the incidents with code 3, as ACLED has no information about the location of these incidents within the province.

On **territorial control by the Taliban** in Afghanistan, information collected and presented in a map by the Long War Journal (LWJ) was used in this report, alongside additional sources researched to the extent possible to corroborate the LWJ findings. One of these additional sources is Bilal Sarwary, an independent Afghan journalist based in Kabul, who was BBC correspondent on Afghanistan for more than thirteen years. Bilal Sarwary gives regular updates on the shifting frontlines on his Twitter account with information gathered from his sources in the field.<sup>13</sup>

The LWJ is a project by the non-profit policy institute the Foundation for Defense of Democracies (FDD).<sup>14</sup> The LWJ's Mapping Taliban Control in Afghanistan is based on open-source information, such as press reports and information provided by government agencies and the Taliban. The LWJ classifies the level of control as follows:

"Unconfirmed" district [...] has some level of claim-of-control made by the Taliban, but either has not yet been—or cannot be— independently verified by LWJ research. A "Contested" district may mean that the government may be in control of the district center, but little else, and the

<sup>11</sup> ACLED, Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) Codebook, October 2017, [url](#), pp. 7-14

<sup>12</sup> ACLED, Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) Codebook, 2019, [url](#), p. 29

<sup>13</sup> Sarwary, B., (@bsarwary), [Twitter], n.d., [url](#); Sarwary B., [LinkedIn], n.d., [url](#); Intercept (The), Bilal Sarwary, 8 January 2019, [url](#)

<sup>14</sup> LWJ, About us, n.d. [url](#)

Taliban controls large areas or all of the areas outside of the district center. A “Controlled” district may mean the Taliban is openly administering a district, providing services and security, and also running the local courts.’<sup>15</sup>

On **internal displacement**, the main source used is the ‘Internal Displacement due to Conflict’ data collection by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA). The UNOCHA data reported in the displacement sections was extracted on the ‘accessed date’ indicated in the Bibliography.

## Structure and use of the report

This report is an update of the [EASO COI Report Afghanistan - Security Situation \(June 2021\)](#). In the first part a [general description](#) is given on the security situation in Afghanistan which is then explained in greater detail in the second part, holding a [regional description](#) of geographic subdivisions (Kabul City and 34 provinces). While the report as such is not intended to be read as a whole, the updates on the situation in the different provinces under the regional description generally only cover the period until 13 August 2021, with the exception of topics related to territorial control, attacks on healthcare, airports and displacement data for which more updated information has been added. Therefore, it is indispensable to read the regional descriptions in conjunction with the general description, especially [chapter 1.1.1](#) and [chapter 1.4](#), for an understanding of the most recent developments until 31 August 2021, that have an impact on the situation in each province also.

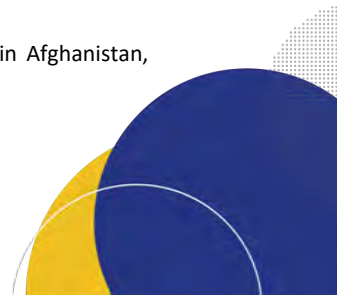
### Provinces and districts

The provincial chapters in this report are organised alphabetically and cover, where available, the latest information on the Taliban advance and territorial control and a description of the security situation in a province, including the armed actors active in the province. The chapters also include recent trends in the security situation describing the nature of the violence, targets, locations, and casualties within the timeframe from 1 March – 13 August 2021. However, in most cases the illustrative incidents by province do not include events after 5 August as few sources provided such an overview and due to time constraints. It is important to emphasise that recent security incidents described in these regional chapters should be always read as illustrations of trends in the security situation and not as an exhaustive list of incidents. Finally, conflict-induced displacements are described in a separate sub-section.

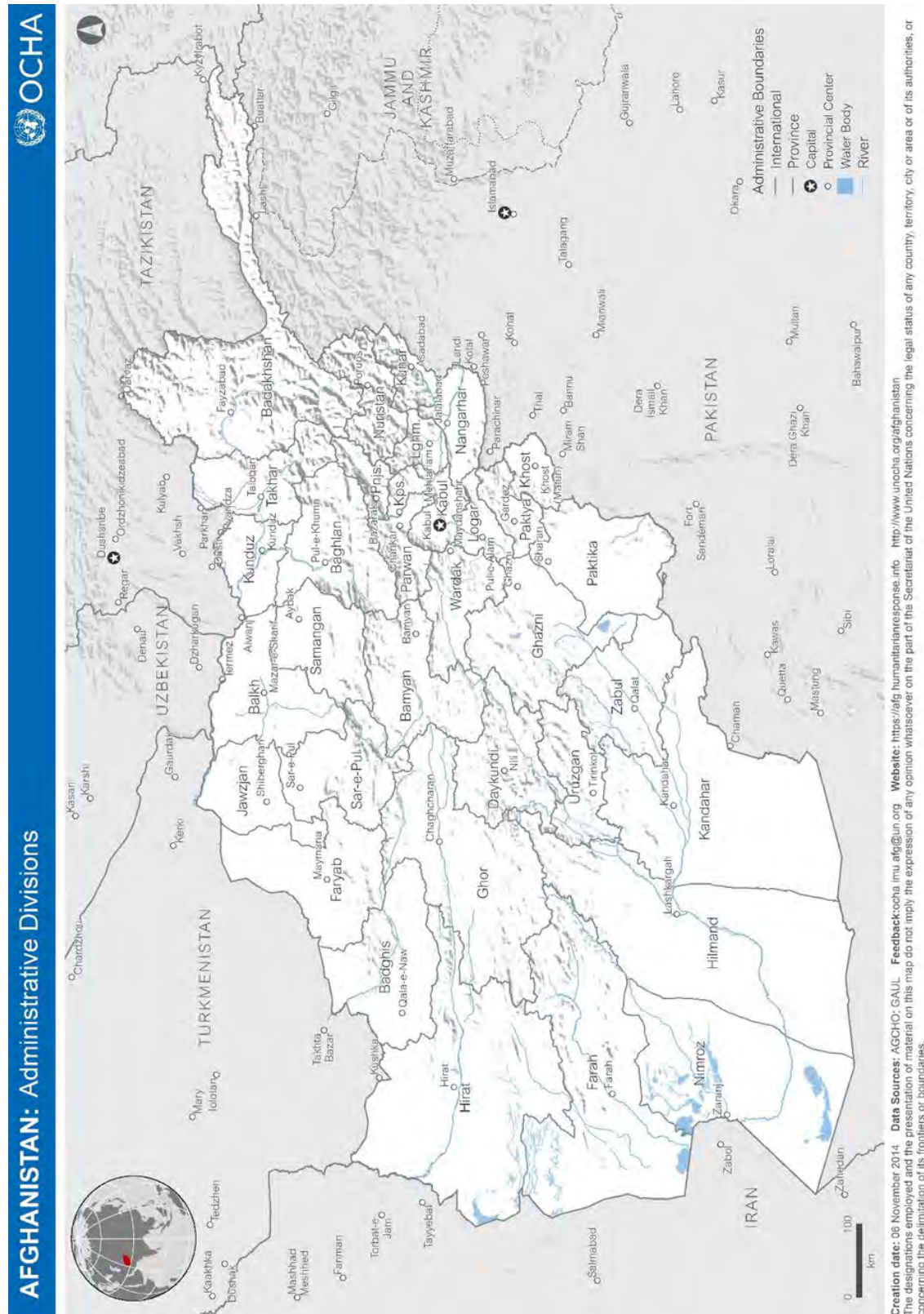
Both the general and regional sections provide information from various sources on the relevant elements and indicators. Information on an indicator as such should never be taken as conclusive but as indicative for protection assessment and is to be read together with all other indicators and information on the region (or province, district).

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<sup>15</sup> More information on the methodology used by LWJ can be found at: LWJ, Mapping Taliban Control in Afghanistan, Methodology, n.d., [url](#)



# Map



Map 1: Afghanistan - administrative divisions, source: UNOCHA<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - administrative divisions, January 2014, [url](#)



# 1. General description of the security situation

## 1.1 Taliban's take-over of Afghanistan following withdrawal of US and international forces (until 31 August 2021)

### 1.1.1 Final advance and the fall of Kabul

The Taliban initiated its final offensive on 1 May 2021, the same day as the withdrawal of international forces was initiated. During the summer months the Taliban swept over Afghanistan and took control over several districts, notably in the northern provinces and districts encircling the provincial capitals.<sup>17</sup> In the first week of August the Taliban advanced, and in less than nine days they took control over most of Afghanistan's provincial capitals, including Kabul.<sup>18</sup> During the last days key cities fell as Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) surrendered. By 13 August 2021 the Taliban had taken control over 17 of 34 provincial capitals, including Kandahar and Herat.<sup>19</sup> On 14 August 2021, Mazar-e Sharif fell, and as Jalalabad fell the following day, Kabul was left as the only major city still under government control.<sup>20</sup> On 15 August, President Ashraf Ghani fled the country, police and other government forces gave up their posts, and Taliban fighters entered the capital and took control of its checkpoints.<sup>21</sup> Taliban leaders entered the presidential palace<sup>22</sup>, addressed media on the following day, and declared the war to be over.<sup>23</sup>

The speed of the Taliban's takeover was surprising to many as US intelligence reports had indicated that the Taliban at worst could take control of Afghanistan within three to six months after the withdrawal of foreign troops.<sup>24</sup> In some cases Afghan forces surrendered without a fight.<sup>25</sup> Several international observers, analysts and scholars have tried to explain this outcome. Some emphasise intelligence failures, lack of willpower, and lack of leadership as main causes to the Taliban's rampage.<sup>26</sup> Others point out that the initial speed of the Taliban's advancements in itself might have accelerated the takeover, as the Taliban, on one hand, got increased access to weapons and other military equipment, and, on the other hand, had a psychological impact undermining the motivation of the ANDSF to keep their positions.<sup>27</sup>

### 1.1.2 Government formation under the Taliban

In a Twitter post on 19 August 2021, an official Taliban spokesperson, Zabiullah Mujahid, declared the creation of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan.<sup>28</sup> The name is also used by the Taliban in public statements.<sup>29</sup> However, the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan has not been internationally recognised,

<sup>17</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Control in Afghanistan, Mapping Taliban Control in Afghanistan, 2021, [url](#)

<sup>18</sup> VOA, Taliban's Afghanistan Takeover – a Timeline, 17 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>19</sup> AP, Taliban take Kandahar, Herat in major Afghanistan offensive, 13 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>20</sup> VOA, Taliban's Afghanistan Takeover – a Timeline, 17 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>21</sup> Al Jazeera, Kabul the day after the takeover, 16 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>22</sup> India Today, Taliban declare 'war is over' as president and diplomat flee Kabul, 16 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>23</sup> Al Jazeera, Biden defends Afghanistan pullout amid airport chaos, 17 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>24</sup> WSJ, Afghan Government Could Collapse Six Months After US Withdrawal, New Intelligence Assessment Says, 23 June 2021, [url](#); Reuters, Taliban could take Afghan capital within 90 days after rapid gains – U.S. intelligence, 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>25</sup> Washington Post, Afghan forces surrender in Kunduz as Taliban advances, 11 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>26</sup> CNBC, 'Intelligence failure of the highest order' – How Afghanistan fell to the Taliban so quickly, 16 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>27</sup> University of Gothenburg, Five questions about the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan, 19 August 2021, [url](#); Atlantic Council, How the Taliban did it: Inside the 'operational art' of its military victory, 15 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>28</sup> Zabiullah, [Twitter], posted on 19 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>29</sup> Al Jazeera, Transcript of Taliban's first news conference in Kabul, 17 August 2021, [url](#)

and a government has not been declared, although the Taliban stated that they intend to announce a new government ‘soon’.<sup>30</sup> Some sources reported on appointed acting ministers, however no official declaration was made by the Taliban during the reference period of this report.<sup>31</sup> There were reports indicating that a new government would not be announced until the complete withdrawal of US troops. Consequently, there was uncertainty regarding the form of a new administration under the Taliban and which policies it would pursue.<sup>32</sup> On 23 August 2021, Foreign Policy published an article citing sources ‘close to the [Taliban] leadership’, claiming that the group will form a 12-member council, and that members of the previous government may be offered some ministries.<sup>33</sup> According to Khaama Press, the Taliban have said that the new government will be ‘inclusive’ but led by religious scholars and further details on the meaning of ‘inclusive government’ were not provided.<sup>34</sup> On 29 August 2021, Afghan media reported that the Taliban’s supreme leader, Mullah Haibatullah Akhundzada, held meetings with other Taliban leaders in Kandahar.<sup>35</sup> According to Khaama Press, reporting on 30 August 2021, Akhundzada was expected to come to Kabul soon, and the negotiations over the new government were expected to expedite after his arrival.<sup>36</sup>

Members of the Taliban’s political office have met with politicians in Kabul such as former prime minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar<sup>37</sup>, former president Hamid Karzai, and Abdullah Abdullah, head of High Council for National Reconciliation (HCNR).<sup>38</sup> According to Khaama Press these are the only political figures that have met frequently with the Taliban and tribal elders.<sup>39</sup> However, on 26 August there were also reports that Karzai and Abdullah were under house arrest by the Taliban.<sup>40</sup>

The importance of forming an ‘inclusive government’ is repeatedly stressed by the Taliban, and both by politicians supportive and critical of the talks.<sup>41</sup> However, some Afghan political leaders criticise the political process itself of lacking in inclusiveness.<sup>42</sup> Sayed Eshaq Gailani, head of the Nahzat-e Hambastagi Afghanistan party, said that he ‘don’t see this game as a good one because it looks like a game of individuals, everyone tries to promote himself and does not show respect for the Afghans’. Atta Mohammad Noor, former governor of Balkh, said that ‘the war has not ended, we have a long way to go, we will test them, we will emerge again ... either to resolve it through an inclusive government or war’.<sup>43</sup>

It is yet to be seen whether the Taliban intend to adhere international obligations signed by Afghanistan during the last 20 years, including most international conventions on human rights, or if these agreements will be considered invalid.<sup>44</sup> During their first press conference after the takeover, the Taliban addressed some human rights, and claimed that they would not be violated. For instance,

<sup>30</sup> Tolonews, Taliban Says They Seek to Establish an ‘Inclusive Govt’, 17 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>31</sup> Reuters, Taliban appoints former Guantanamo detainee as acting defense minister, Al Jazeera says, 24 August 2021, [url](#); NDTV, Taliban Appoint Senior Veteran To Key Ministerial Posts In Afghanistan, 25 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>32</sup> International Crisis Group, Taliban Rule Begins in Afghanistan, 24 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>33</sup> FP, Taliban Ditch Presidency, Opt to Rule by Council in Afghanistan, 23 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>34</sup> Khaama Press, Religious scholars to lead upcoming government in Afghanistan: Taliban, 23 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>35</sup> Khaama Press, Supreme leader of Taliban to come to Kabul, 30 August 2021, [url](#); Ariana News, Taliban’s supreme leader Akhundzada ‘in meeting in Kandahar’: Sources, 29 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>36</sup> Khaama Press, Supreme leader of Taliban to come to Kabul, 30 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>37</sup> AA, Former Afghan premier says all ethnic groups to support future government, 23 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>38</sup> France 24, Taliban co-founder Baradar in Kabul for talks to set up government, 21 August 2021, [url](#); Tolonews, Taliban Says They Seek to Establish an ‘Inclusive Govt’, [url](#)

<sup>39</sup> Khaama Press, Karzai, Abdullah house-arrested by Taliban in Kabul, 26 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>40</sup> Khaama Press, Karzai, Abdullah house-arrested by Taliban in Kabul, 26 August 2021, [url](#); CNN, At least 13 US service members killed in Kabul airport attack, 27 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>41</sup> France 24, Taliban co-founder Baradar in Kabul for talks to set up government, 21 August 2021, [url](#); Tolonews, Taliban Says They Seek to Establish an ‘Inclusive Govt’, 17 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>42</sup> Tolonews, Taliban: New Govt to Be Announced Soon, 22 August 2021, [url](#); Tolonews, Afghan Political Leaders Call for Inclusive Govt, 22 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>43</sup> Tolonews, Taliban: New Govt to Be Announced Soon, 22 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>44</sup> University of Gothenburg, Five questions about the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan, 19 August 2021, [url](#)



a general amnesty was issued as the Taliban said that they have pardoned ‘all of those who had fought against us’.<sup>45</sup> Furthermore, they said that women’s rights will be permitted within the limits of Islamic Sharia, but did not clarify or elaborate on what those limits were.<sup>46</sup> Media was assured that the Taliban are committed to media ‘within our cultural frameworks’, and that private media should continue to work freely and independently as long as it takes Islamic values into account.<sup>47</sup> How these promises will conform with international human rights standards remain unclear.<sup>48</sup>

### 1.1.3 Reactions by the public and responses by the Taliban

In the first days after the Taliban entered Kabul many people stayed indoors. Especially professional women and persons fearing retaliation reportedly did not go outside<sup>49</sup> and prices on traditional Islamic clothing such as hijabs increased due to a sudden demand.<sup>50</sup> Most private shops and governmental offices closed<sup>51</sup> and some have remained closed since.<sup>52</sup> The closure of institutions normally offering fundamental services, such as the passport department and the banks, created major problems for Afghans in need of such services.<sup>53</sup> People could not access their savings, and at the same time food prices increased, as well as prices on other necessities.<sup>54</sup> Some experts reportedly believe that an economic downturn is to be expected due to the halt in economic activity.<sup>55</sup> The banks started to reopen again on 25 August 2021,<sup>56</sup> but the cash crisis has continued.<sup>57</sup>

#### Demonstrations

There have been reports of a few demonstrations in Afghanistan after the Taliban’s take-over. A group of women demonstrated on 17 August 2021, demanding proper rights.<sup>58</sup> There are no reports of the Taliban interfering during this protest action, although Taliban members were physically present.<sup>59</sup> On the Afghan National Independence Day, 19 August 2021, demonstrations were held in Kabul and other cities where protesters carried the Afghan national flag.<sup>60</sup> According to Al Jazeera, at least two persons were killed in Asadabad in Kunar Province. Witnesses said that Taliban opened fire at a crowd after a member of the crowd had stabbed a Taliban fighter. Al Jazeera also reported that shots were fired at protesters in Jalalabad carrying the Afghan national flag, injuring two persons.<sup>61</sup> Reuters, on the other hand, reported that three persons were killed in Jalalabad and a dozen injured after Taliban opened fire. However, it remains unclear whether the deaths were caused by shooting or a stampede.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Al Jazeera, Transcript of Taliban’s first news conference in Kabul, 17 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>46</sup> New York Times (The), What is Shariah Law, And What Does it Mean for Afghan Women, 19 August 2021, [url](#); WSJ, Sharia Law, Women’s Rights in Afghanistan and the Taliban: What to Know, 23 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>47</sup> Al Jazeera, Transcript of Taliban’s first news conference in Kabul, 17 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>48</sup> New York Times (The), What is Shariah Law, And What Does it Mean for Afghan Women, 19 August 2021, [url](#); WSJ, Sharia Law, Women’s Rights in Afghanistan and the Taliban: What to Know, 23 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>49</sup> Financial Times, Deaths reported as Taliban faces growing dissent in Afghan cities, 19 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>50</sup> Pajhwok News, Hijab, turban prices soar in Kabul with Taliban’s return, 22 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>51</sup> Tolonews, Afghans Urge Taliban to Open Govt Offices, Let Daily Resume, 17 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>52</sup> Pajhwok News, Mazar residents urge early formation of all-inclusive govt, 22 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>53</sup> Tolonews, EU Has Not Recognized Taliban: Reuters, 22 August 2021, [url](#); Ariana News, Closure of government offices and ministries hampers service delivery, 23 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>54</sup> Pajhwok News, Mazar residents urge early formation of all-inclusive govt, 22 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>55</sup> Pajhwok News, Closure of banks to create economic recession: Experts, 23 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>56</sup> Al Jazeera, Banks in Kabul reopen, drawing crowds of cash-starved Afghans, 25 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>57</sup> Independent (The), Protests outside bank in Afghanistan as cash crisis deepens after Taliban seize control, 29 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>58</sup> Independent (The), Women take to the streets of Kabul to protest against the Taliban, 17 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>59</sup> India Today, Taliban fighters watching, Afghan women protest for their rights on Kabul streets, 18 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>60</sup> New York Times (The), Demonstrations Against the Taliban Spread Throughout Kabul, 19 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>61</sup> Al Jazeera, Afghans display national flag as they mark independence day, 19 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>62</sup> Reuters, Three dead after anti-Taliban protests in Jalalabad-witnesses, 18 August 2021, [url](#)

## Turmoil at Kabul International Airport

After the Taliban moved into Kabul, tens of thousands Afghans entered or assembled outside the airfield of Hamid Karzai International Airport in Kabul trying to leave the country.<sup>63</sup> Footage has shown hundreds of people running alongside and clinging to the side of airplanes on the runway, and scenes of persons falling from planes after take-off.<sup>64</sup> The turmoil caused several deaths.<sup>65</sup> The Taliban kept control of the airport's exterior and set up checkpoints along the roads to the airport. Allegedly Taliban members attacked people at these checkpoints.<sup>66</sup> Taliban representatives said that they kept presence to safeguard the civilians' safety.<sup>67</sup> Moreover, the Taliban said it was poised to take control of the airport as soon as US forces departed on 31 August 2021.<sup>68</sup>

The evacuation efforts involved several states, and according to Reuters, reporting on 30 August, more than 114 000 persons had been evacuated since 14 August. Many states evacuated their citizens, persons with residence permits or similar links to their country, as well as persons that had assisted diplomatic missions or military forces, such as embassy staff and interpreters. Some countries also evacuated persons that they considered to be at 'risk' under the new circumstances.<sup>69</sup>

On 26 August 2021, the airport was attacked killing both civilians and US military personnel in two bomb blasts. On 28 August 2021, CNN cited an official from Afghanistan's Ministry of Public Health who said that more than 170 persons had been killed.<sup>70</sup> The Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant–Khorasan Province (ISKP) has claimed responsibility for the attack.<sup>71</sup>

### 1.1.4 Reports on acts of retaliation and violence against certain profiles

#### Journalists and media workers

Afghan journalism is currently facing challenges, and as journalists and media workers evacuate the possibility to cover the situation in Afghanistan is reducing.<sup>72</sup> International media get less reporters on the ground, forcing some to rely on journalists in nearby countries and coverages from abroad.<sup>73</sup> Reports on Taliban interactions with the Afghan population is therefore limited, and in many cases tend to be 'anecdotal'. Especially reporting on events taking place outside of Kabul is sparse.<sup>74</sup>

Reporters Without Borders (RSF) claims that around 100 media outlets have stopped operating, while hundreds of Afghan journalists have either gone into hiding or fled the country. Furthermore, still operating media outlets allegedly work in accordance with new conditions set by the Taliban. RSF states that Taliban promises of press freedom 'can only be regarded with the utmost scepticism'.<sup>75</sup>

<sup>63</sup> BBC, Afghanistan: People at Kabul airport flee Taliban with just a suitcase, 23 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>64</sup> The Guardian, Kabul airport: footage appears to show Afghans falling from plane after takeoff, 16 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>65</sup> BBC, Afghanistan: People at Kabul airport flee Taliban with just a suitcase, 23 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>66</sup> BBC, Afghanistan: Danger lies on Kabul's airport road to freedom, 19 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>67</sup> Reuters, Taliban guards continue to provide security outside Kabul airport-Taliban official, 26 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>68</sup> Reuters, U.S. winding down Afghanistan evacuation as Taliban set take charge of airport: officials, 29 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>69</sup> Reuters, Factbox: Evacuations from Afghanistan by country, 30 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>70</sup> CCN, The latest on the Kabul airport attack, 30 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>71</sup> Al Jazeera, US warns of 'credible' threats of more Kabul attacks, 27 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>72</sup> RSF, RSF seeks UN Security Council meeting on plight of journalists in Afghanistan, 18 August 2021, [url](#); CNN, The media spotlight in Afghanistan is about to dim as journalists evacuate, 20 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>73</sup> CNN, The media spotlight in Afghanistan is about to dim as journalists evacuate, 20 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>74</sup> International Crisis Group, Taliban Rule Begins in Afghanistan, 24 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>75</sup> RSF, RSF seeks UN Security Council meeting on plight of journalists in Afghanistan, 18 August 2021, [url](#)

Other sources also report on journalists fleeing Afghanistan and dozens of TV and radio outlets stopping their broadcasting or being seized by the Taliban.<sup>76</sup>

Since the Taliban takeover state television has been interrupted and currently airs Quranic recitations, Islamic shows, and Taliban announcements. Private channels reportedly have reduced content that pose a risk of provoking the Taliban, such as pop music shows or foreign soap operas, while increasingly airing appearances of the Taliban and praise for them.<sup>77</sup> According to Ahmed Mengli, Chief Executive Officer of Chinar Media, journalists on the ground are trying to figure out what is possible and not under the new circumstances.<sup>78</sup>

During the first days after the Taliban's take-over, women quickly disappeared from broadcasting media. However, some female news anchors and reporters soon resumed work and appeared on screen.<sup>79</sup> On 17 August 2021, a female news anchor, Beheshta Arghand, interviewed a Taliban spokesperson on air<sup>80</sup>, and a female journalist, Hasiba Atakpal, reported from the streets of Kabul.<sup>81</sup> However, both left Afghanistan soon after.<sup>82</sup> There have been reports on the Taliban hindering female journalists from resuming work. On 19 August 2021, two journalists at Radio Television Afghanistan (RTA) claimed that the Taliban were barring them from returning to work by not letting them into their office, while male colleagues were allowed to enter the building.<sup>83</sup> According to Pajhwok News, the Taliban in Ghazni have banned female presenters and music from broadcasting media.<sup>84</sup> The Afghan Analyst Network (AAN) says that the continuation of women's appearances in media was just an initial trend and that women once again have disappeared off air.<sup>85</sup>

Since the take-over there have been some reports on media workers being beaten by the Taliban.<sup>86</sup> On 18 August 2021, a journalist and a photographer were allegedly beaten by Taliban members while covering a demonstration in the city of Jalalabad in Nangarhar Province. On the same day a journalist was reportedly beaten when trying to interview a Taliban member in front of the airport in Kabul.<sup>87</sup> On 19 August 2021, Deutsche Welle (DW) reported that a family member of one of the media outlet's journalists was shot by the Taliban during a house-to-house search.<sup>88</sup> On 20 August 2021, a TV station director was allegedly subjected to an intrusion of armed men into his home, a vehicle and other equipment were stolen, and the director says his life was threatened. According to Tolonews, the Taliban claimed that they are investigating this report.<sup>89</sup> On 22 August 2021, the Taliban announced that they had formed a committee that will prevent and probe acts of violence against journalists. According to Tolonews, the committee was formed due to serious concerns about the safety of journalists and media workers following the reports of violence against journalists in Kabul and Nangarhar provinces.<sup>90</sup> Further information on actions of this committee could not be found.

<sup>76</sup> France 24, Afghanistan's media enters the unknown under Taliban rule, 24 August 2021, [url](#); VOA, As Taliban Advance and Fighting Intensifies, Afghan Media Outlets Close, 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>77</sup> BBC, Afghanistan crisis: 'Hey world, do you care what happens here?', 22 August 2021, [url](#); Gandhara, Fewer women, No Entertainment: Kabul's Media Scene Transforms After Taliban Takeover, 18 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>78</sup> Al Jazeera, Afghan journalists begin uncertain chapter under Taliban rule, 26 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>79</sup> BBC, Afghanistan crisis: 'Hey world, do you care what happens here?', 22 August 2021, [url](#); AAN, UN Human Rights Council to talk about Afghanistan: Why so little appetite for action, 23 August 2021, [url](#).

<sup>80</sup> Tolonews, [YouTube], نیمه ورځ: د کابل پر وضعیت مرکه, [informal translation 'half-day: discussion on the situation in Kabul'] August 17 August 2021,, [url](#)

<sup>81</sup> Tolonews [Twitter], Video – Tolonews' Hasiba Atakpal reports on the situation in Kabul, 17 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>82</sup> CNN, Female journalist flees Afghanistan following groundbreaking TV interview with Taliban spokesman, 30 August 2021, [url](#); Hasiba Atakpal [Twitter], posted on 1 September 2021, [url](#)

<sup>83</sup> AFP [Twitter], 20 August 2021, [url](#); Tolonews, Afghan Female Journalist Ask Taliban for Right to Work, 19 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>84</sup> Pajhwok News, Music, female employees in radios banned in Ghazni, 21 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>85</sup> AAN, UN Human Rights Council to talk about Afghanistan: Why so little appetite for action, 23 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>86</sup> Tolonews, TOLONews Reporter, Cameraman Beaten by Taliban, 26 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>87</sup> Ariana News, Three journalists allegedly beaten by Taliban, 18 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>88</sup> DW, Relative of DW journalist killed by the Taliban, 19 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>89</sup> Tolonews, Taliban Commission to Probe Violence Against Media, 22 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>90</sup> Tolonews, Taliban Commission to Probe Violence Against Media, 22 August 2021, [url](#)

On 24 August 2021, RSF published a press release in which private TV channels are said to be subjected to frequent threats, and in which a producer says that the Taliban have beaten five of the channel's staff in the past week and labelled them as 'takfiri' (unbelievers). The producer also accused Taliban members of 'systematically' trying to influence reporters in the field.<sup>91</sup> On 25 August 2021, a journalist and a camera operator were allegedly beaten by Taliban members.<sup>92</sup>

### Persons with links to the previous administration and foreign forces

Reuters claims to have seen an intelligence report by RHIPTO Norwegian Center for Global Analyses that contains information on the Taliban rounding up Afghans on a blacklist and hunting down people with suspected links to the previous administration or US-led forces, noting that those 'particularly at risk are individuals in central positions in military, police and investigative units.' However, the original document is not publicly accessible.<sup>93</sup> Christian Nellemann who heads the group behind the report told BBC that 'there are a high number of individuals that are currently being targeted by the Taliban and the threat is crystal clear'.<sup>94</sup> France 24 Observers refers to local sources that also claim that the Taliban conducts house-to-house visits to find blacklisted individuals, and that such searches have taken place in at least four provincial cities. The Taliban is also said to visit local mosques and police offices to receive information on certain individuals.<sup>95</sup>

Thousands of interpreters and former interpreters who worked for international and US forces have applied for Special Immigration Visas (SIV). Before the Taliban's takeover there were reports on interpreters or former interpreters being subjected to death threats and violent attacks.<sup>96</sup> There have been few reports on such attacks after the take-over. On 23 August, CNN reported that they had received letters written by the Taliban in which a death sentence for a translator's relative was issued. The sentenced man's brother served as an interpreter for US troops. In the letters, the man is accused of 'helping the Americans' and of providing security to his interpreting brother.<sup>97</sup> According to sources consulted by journalist Bilal Sarwary, Taliban have beaten a brother-in-law to the former deputy head of intelligence for military affairs in Takhar.<sup>98</sup> Sources consulted by Sarwary also reported that the Taliban had executed 14 surrenderers. Among the executed was Mosa Amiri, former deputy police chief for Khidir district in Daykundi.<sup>99</sup> In a speech to the Human Rights Council on 24 August, UN human rights chief Michelle Bachelet said that her office had received credible reports of serious violations of international law, *inter alia*, summary executions by the Taliban against civilians and Afghan soldiers. Bachelet did not provide details on the reported violations and did not indicate when they had taken place except for being received 'in recent weeks'.<sup>100</sup>

### Human rights activists

There are few reports on the current situation of human rights activists. France 24 Observers reports that human rights activists have gone into hiding due to the difficulties of leaving Afghanistan following the take-over.<sup>101</sup>

<sup>91</sup> RSF, New (unofficial) oppressive rules imposed on journalists in Afghanistan, 24 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>92</sup> Tolonews, TOLONews Reporter, Cameraman Beaten by Taliban, 26 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>93</sup> Reuters, Taliban are rounding up Afghans on blacklist – private intel report, 19 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>94</sup> BBC, Afghanistan: Taliban carrying out door-to-door manhunt, report says, 20 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>95</sup> France 24 Observers, 'Lay low and stay home': The only option for Afghans targeted by Taliban, 23 August 2021, [url](#);

France 24 Observers, 'I knew they'd come for us' Afghan journalists, activists report Taliban reprisals, 20 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>96</sup> CNN, Afghan interpreter for US Army was beheaded by Taliban. Other fear they will be hunted down too, 23 July 2021, [url](#);

Global News, 'Living in a hell': Afghan interpreters call for clarity, support amid Taliban threat, 28 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>97</sup> CNN, Taliban issue death sentence for brother of Afghan translator who helped US troops, according to letters obtained by CNN, 23 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>98</sup> Bilal Sarwary [Twitter], posted on 29 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>99</sup> Bilal Sarwary [Twitter], posted on 30 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>100</sup> OHCHR, 31st Special Session of the Human Rights Council, 24 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>101</sup> France 24 Observers, 'Lay low and stay home': The only option for Afghans targeted by Taliban, 23 August 2021, [url](#);

France 24 Observers, 'I knew they'd come for us', Afghan journalists, activists report Taliban reprisals, 20 August 2021, [url](#)

In an interview Rina Amiri, senior fellow at the New York University's Center for Global Affairs, claims to be in 'intense contact' with several women in Afghanistan, and that she gets reports of the Taliban intimidating journalists and activists at their offices and in their houses. According to Amiri, prominent women's organisations and human rights organisations have experienced such raids, and the Taliban have gone looking through their work material and phones.<sup>102</sup> Human Rights Watch also state that the Taliban have raided homes of activists.<sup>103</sup> In a recent interview with Thomson Reuters Foundation, former parliamentarian and women's rights defender Fawzia Koofia mentioned that women still appeared in media describing the changes taking place in their communities. Koofia also mentioned that the current situation is getting increasingly difficult for women's rights defenders.<sup>104</sup>

## 1.2 Prior peace negotiations and political developments

Looking back at political developments in 2021 prior to the Taliban take-over, negotiations between the Afghan government and Taliban to decide the political future of Afghanistan took place in Doha in January and February 2021, and at a conference in Moscow in March 2021.<sup>105</sup> High levels of violence in Afghanistan contributed to the slow progress of peace talks, with the Afghan government and public reported to be 'highly suspicious of the Taliban's willingness to negotiate meaningfully.'<sup>106</sup> On 13 April 2021, Turkey, Qatar and the UN announced that they would co-convene a high-level and inclusive conference between the Government of Afghanistan and the Taliban in Istanbul from 24 April to 4 May 2021, with the aim of accelerating and complementing negotiations in Doha for a 'just and durable political settlement'. However, the Taliban Political Commission stated that they would not participate in a conference that made decisions about Afghanistan until the withdrawal of all foreign troops.<sup>107</sup> Following the announcements on 14 April 2021 of the withdrawal of the remaining US military forces from Afghanistan by 11 September 2021, and the withdrawal of NATO allies by the same date, the co-conveners of the Istanbul conference announced its postponement 'to a date when conditions for meaningful progress would be more favourable'.<sup>108</sup>

According to the UN's Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team, the Taliban had shown no signs of reducing the level of violence to facilitate peace negotiations and its messaging remained 'uncompromising'.<sup>109</sup> Sources reported that the stated aim of the Taliban remained the full withdrawal of foreign troops, the release of an additional 7 000 Taliban fighters, the removal of UN sanctions and recognition by the international community as the legitimate Government of Afghanistan.<sup>110</sup> According to the UN source, the Taliban's intent appeared to be to continue strengthening its military position 'as leverage', and the Taliban appeared to believe that it could 'achieve almost all its objectives by

<sup>102</sup> New Yorker (The), The Terror Facing Human-Rights Activists in Kabul, 17 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>103</sup> HRW, UN Rights Body Needs to Investigate Abuses in Afghanistan, 23 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>104</sup> Thomson Reuters Foundation News, Floggings to forced marriages – women's freedoms under threat from Taliban, 16 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>105</sup> SIGAR, Quarterly report to the United States Congress, 30 April 2021, [url](#), p. 57

<sup>106</sup> USDOD, Lead Inspector General for Operation Freedom's Sentinel, 14 May 2021, [url](#), p. 15

<sup>107</sup> UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General, The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security A/75/926–S/2021/570, 15 June 2021, [url](#), para. 10

<sup>108</sup> UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General, The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security A/75/926–S/2021/570, 15 June 2021, [url](#), paras. 12-13

<sup>109</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486 , 1 June 2021, [url](#), p. 3

<sup>110</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486 , 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 17; Tolonews, Taliban Leader Urges Post-US 'Afghan-Inclusive Islamic System', 9 May 2021, [url](#)



negotiation or, if necessary, by force.<sup>111</sup> US Department of Defense (USDOD) reported that a Taliban spokesman claimed the Taliban to be as politically and militarily strong as they had ever been and that participation in the peace talks 'should never be read as weakness'.<sup>112</sup> On 9 May 2021, the Taliban leader, Mullah Hibatullah Akhundzada, was reported to have called for the implementation of the Doha agreement, saying that 'the world must bear witness and hold America accountable for all the consequences' if the US 'fails once again to live up to its commitments'. He said that the Taliban 'are ready to protect the independence and sovereignty of Afghanistan at any cost'.<sup>113</sup> However, in his Eid message he was reported to have emphasised the need for a political solution, saying that the Taliban would 'take advantage of any opportunity that would result in the establishment of an Islamic system and peace and security in the country'.<sup>114</sup> Similarly, one of the Taliban's top negotiators in Doha said to a meeting of European and US diplomats that they did not 'intend to seize power through a military struggle'.<sup>115</sup>

The UN Secretary General stated that peace negotiations in Doha continued 'at a slow pace',<sup>116</sup> and on 22 June 2021 the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Afghanistan, Deborah Lyons, said the peace process between the Afghan government and the Taliban had 'stalled' and that trends in relation to the political, peace, and security situation were all 'negative or stagnant'.<sup>117</sup> On 22 June 2021, Afghanistan's foreign minister told the UN Security Council that the Taliban had 'not engaged with the Afghan government's plan for a ceasefire, power-sharing arrangements, and early elections' for nearly 10 months.<sup>118</sup> Instead, they had reportedly focused on issues such as the treatment of detainees, roadside abductions and progress in prisoner releases and sanctions relief, which they said needed to be addressed adequately for peace negotiations to move forward.<sup>119</sup> Conversely the Taliban leader accused the Afghan government of 'wasting time in the peace talks'.<sup>120</sup> On 16 July 2021, an 'authoritative' delegation of high ranking Afghan government officials was reported to have met with the Taliban for talks in Doha for two days, after which they released a joint statement agreeing to expedite the peace efforts and continue high level talks.<sup>121</sup> Analysts from the US Institute of Peace (USIP) described the broader prospects for meaningful negotiations as 'dim' and claimed that the Taliban were never serious about negotiations but only joined the talks to fulfil minimum conditions set out in the Doha agreement for a US troop withdrawal, while consolidating their fighting strength. In light of the Taliban's successful fighting campaign and US troops withdrawing, they had 'even less incentive to talk'.<sup>122</sup> In an interview in July 2021, Taliban spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid stated in response to a question about their sincerity in the peace talks given the capture of 114 districts in the previous two months that 'this progress has not been by force or through war' and that 'negotiations process was moving forward slowly [...] therefore, we could not sit with the other side'.<sup>123</sup>

<sup>111</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486, 1 June 2021, [url](#), p. 3

<sup>112</sup> USDOD, Lead Inspector General for Operation Freedom's Sentinel, 14 May 2021, [url](#) p. 13

<sup>113</sup> Tolonews, Taliban Leader Urges Post-US 'Afghan-Inclusive Islamic System', 9 May 2021, [url](#)

<sup>114</sup> Tolonews, Taliban Leader Says Group Wants 'Political Solution', 18 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>115</sup> Tolonews, Taliban Leader Urges Post-US 'Afghan-Inclusive Islamic System', 9 May 2021, [url](#)

<sup>116</sup> UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General, The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security A/75/926-S/2021/570, 15 June 2021, [url](#), para. 7

<sup>117</sup> UNAMA, SRSG Briefing to the United Nations Security Council, 22 June 2021, [url](#), pp. 1-2

<sup>118</sup> UN, Swift Withdrawal of International Troops Sparks Widespread Fear in Afghanistan, Experts Tell Security Council, Sounding Alarm over Taliban Military Gains, 22 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>119</sup> SIGAR, Quarterly report to the United States Congress, 30 July 2021, [url](#), p. 84

<sup>120</sup> Tolonews, Taliban Leader Says Group Wants 'Political Solution', 18 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>121</sup> Tolonews, Afghan Politicians Leave Kabul for Talks with Taliban in Doha, 16 July 2021, [url](#); High Council for Reconciliation, Talking Points Of H.E. Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, Chairman Of The High Council For National Reconciliation, 17 July 2021, [url](#); Tolonews, Republic, Taliban Delegations Agree to Expedite Peace Efforts, 18 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>122</sup> USIP, 11 Things to Know: Afghanistan on the Eve of Withdrawal, 17 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>123</sup> Tolonews, Interview with Taliban's Zabihullah Mujahid: Full Transcript, 12 July 2021, [url](#)



In a briefing to the Security Council on 6 August 2021, the Secretary General’s Special Representative for Afghanistan said that the international community, including the Security Council and UNAMA, had ‘dealt with the Taliban as a potential partner for peace’. The expected reduction in violence, following the US-Taliban deal in February 2020, when talks between the Afghan Republic and the Taliban began in September 2020, and when international forces started leaving the country, did not happen. Instead, Lyons noted that there had been a ‘fifty percent increase in civilian casualties with the certainty of many more as the cities are attacked’, and that there was ‘a striking contrast between the activity on the battlefield and the quiet stalemate at the negotiation table in Doha’.<sup>124</sup>

On 11 August 2021, the Afghan delegation to the latest talks in Doha, led by the head of the government’s reconciliation council, demanded that the Taliban ‘immediately end attacks on cities and begin a dialogue to find a political solution’. On the previous day the US State Department spokesperson reportedly expressed regret at the ‘painfully slow’ pace of the talks and commented that all indications suggested that the Taliban were pursuing a battlefield victory. Envoys from the US, China, Russia, and Pakistan (the Extended Troika) are reported to have met with Taliban and Afghan government negotiators on 12 August 2021 in a ‘last-gasp bid to find a negotiated solution to the raging conflict’.<sup>125</sup> In a joint statement following the talks they said that they would not recognise any government ‘imposed through the use of military force’, and that ‘reconstruction assistance would be contingent on a political settlement’.<sup>126</sup>

## 1.3 Actors

### 1.3.1 US and other international forces

An agreement was made between the US and Taliban in February 2020, according to which US troops would withdraw on 1 May 2021.<sup>127</sup> Although the Taliban had not attacked US and coalition forces since signing the agreement, they threatened to resume hostilities if the withdrawal was not completed by May 2021.<sup>128</sup> The Biden administration decided to stick to the agreement, but did not withdraw within the set timeframe, with President Biden announcing in April 2021 that US troops would begin their withdrawal from Afghanistan on 1 May 2021 and would aim to complete the process by 11 September 2021.<sup>129</sup> On 30 July 2021, the US government’s oversight authority on Afghanistan reconstruction project and activities, Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), reported that the formal withdrawal of US Forces would be completed by the end of August 2021.<sup>130</sup>

On 1 May 2021, US Central Command began its military ‘draw-down’, including redeployment of US troops, turning facilities over to the ANDSF, moving equipment away from the frontline, and transferring equipment to the Afghan forces or returning it to the US Defence Logistics Agency.<sup>131</sup> More than half this process was completed by 14 June 2021, and 90% by 5 July 2021.<sup>132</sup> At the end of the

<sup>124</sup> UNAMA, Briefing to the United Nations Security Council by the Secretary-General’s Special Representative for Afghanistan, 6 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>125</sup> RFE/RL, Radio Azadi, Taliban Seizes 10th Afghan Provincial Capital As Ghazni Falls, 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>126</sup> RFE/RL, Radio Azadi, Taliban Captures Herat, Two Other Cities As Afghan Forces Collapse, 13 August 2021, [url](#); Tolonews, Doha Meeting Agrees on Need to Accelerate Afghan Peace Process, 13 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>127</sup> Agreement for Bringing Peace to Afghanistan between the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan which is not recognized by the United States as a state and is known as the Taliban and the United States of America, 20 February 2020, [url](#)

<sup>128</sup> USDOD, Lead Inspector General for Operation Freedom’s Sentinel, 14 May 2021, [url](#), p. 2; Bloomberg, Taliban Says It Will Fight U.S. Forces Again If They Miss Exit Deadline, 26 March 2021, [url](#)

<sup>129</sup> USDOD, Lead Inspector General for Operation Freedom’s Sentinel, 14 May 2021, [url](#), p. 2; White House, transcript, “Remarks by President Biden on the Way Forward in Afghanistan”, 14 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>130</sup> SIGAR, Quarterly report to the United States Congress, 30 July 2021, [url](#), p. 49

<sup>131</sup> US Central Command, Update on withdrawal of U.S. forces from Afghanistan May 11, 2021, 11 May 2021, [url](#)

<sup>132</sup> US Central Command, Update on withdrawal of U.S. forces from Afghanistan June 14, 2021, 15 June 2021, [url](#); US Central Command, Update on withdrawal of U.S. forces from Afghanistan July 5, 2021, 6 July 2021, [url](#)

drawdown, it was estimated that 650 US troops would remain to assist with security at the US Embassy in Kabul, down from 2 500 troops.<sup>133</sup> In early May 2021, a senior official of the US Secretary of Defence expressed the intention to establish a new defence relationship with Afghan forces consisting of funding key capabilities, paying salaries for security forces, and delivering certain military supplies. However, in mid-June 2021 the relationship was described as not requiring efforts larger than necessary to protect US diplomats.<sup>134</sup>

According to SIGAR, reporting in July 2021, the US Forces Afghanistan Forward had been established in Kabul, to be supported remotely from Qatar by the new Defence Security Cooperation Management Office-Afghanistan, to provide security assistance to the Afghan forces, including aircraft-maintenance support to sustain combat operations against the Taliban. On 12 July 2021, the Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan mission providing training, advice and assistance to the Afghan forces officially ended, and responsibility was transferred to the Defence Security Cooperation Management Office-Afghanistan. In the few months before its dissolution, the primary focus was the safe withdrawal of US personnel.<sup>135</sup>

NATO Resolute Support informed SIGAR that Coalition forces had also 'reduced their footprint' in Afghanistan during the first quarter of 2021. In July 2021, NATO's Special Operations Component Command-Afghanistan (NSOCC-A) were also reported to have 'retrograded' and closed their bases, repositioning some forces to provide remote support, 'in anticipation of orders to monitor and disrupt al-Qaeda and Islamic State-Khorasan operations originating from Afghanistan.'<sup>136</sup> Germany and Italy ended their Afghanistan missions at the end of June 2021<sup>137</sup>; the United Kingdom announced the end of their mission on 8 July 2021<sup>138</sup>; Australia announced on 11 July 2021 that their last personnel had left Afghanistan in recent weeks<sup>139</sup>; and at least 16 smaller contingents reportedly withdrew earlier in May or June 2021.<sup>140</sup> On 9 July 2021, the Turkish President announced that Turkey and the US had agreed on security arrangements for Kabul's Hamid Karzai International Airport, an essential transport facility for diplomatic missions, after the withdrawal of US forces, though the Taliban reportedly said they would view foreign forces present at the airport 'in the name of security' as 'invaders'.<sup>141</sup> Despite the rapid military gains of the Taliban between May and August 2021, the US announced that it was standing by its timeline for troops to withdraw from Afghanistan.<sup>142</sup> However, on 13 August 2021 media sources reported that as the security situation worsened in the country and the Taliban advanced on Kabul, the US would send an additional 3 000 troops to Afghanistan to assist with evacuation of Embassy staff and US citizens.<sup>143</sup> AP also reported on the same day that both Britain and Canada would send troops to Afghanistan on a short-term basis to help their nationals leave the country.<sup>144</sup> According to Reuters there were about 5 200 US troops as of 27 August 2021 to provide security during the evacuations.<sup>145</sup> Despite the developments in late August, the Biden administration

<sup>133</sup> USDOD, Statement by Acting Defense Secretary Christopher Miller on Force Levels in Afghanistan, 15 January 2021, [url](#)

<sup>134</sup> Senate Committee on Appropriations, Senate Appropriations Committee Holds Hearing on Fiscal 2022 Budget Request for the Defense Department, 17 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>135</sup> SIGAR, Quarterly report to the United States Congress, 30 July 2021, [url](#), p. 50

<sup>136</sup> SIGAR, Quarterly report to the United States Congress, 30 July 2021, [url](#), p. 50, 75

<sup>137</sup> SIGAR, Quarterly report to the United States Congress, 30 July 2021, [url](#), p. 50

<sup>138</sup> The Independent, The short goodbye: British troops leave Afghanistan amid warnings 'very bad things' could happen to country, 8 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>139</sup> VOA, Australia Says Last Troops Withdrawn From Afghanistan, 11 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>140</sup> AP, Most European troops exit Afghanistan quietly after 20 years, 30 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>141</sup> VOA, Taliban Tells Turkey Continued Troop Presence in Afghanistan Is 'Unacceptable', 18 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>142</sup> Al Jazeera, Afghan leader rallies forces in Taliban-besieged northern city, 11 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>143</sup> AP, US rushes in troops to speed up evacuations in Afghanistan, 13 August 2021, [url](#); Tolonews, US Sending 3,000 Troops to Afghanistan to Begin Evacuations, 13 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>144</sup> AP, US rushes in troops to speed up evacuations in Afghanistan, 13 August 2021, [url](#); AP, Canada sending forces to close Afghan embassy, 13 August 2021, [url](#); AP, UK to send 600 troops to Kabul to help nationals leave, 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>145</sup> Reuters, Pentagon bracing for more attacks after troops killed at Kabul airport, 27 August 2021, [url](#)

expressed that the 31 August deadline would be kept.<sup>146</sup> However, Jake Sullivan, Biden's national security adviser, said that safe passage will be ensured after 31 August for American citizens, legal permanent residents and for 'Afghans who helped us to continue coming out after the 31st of August', without providing details on how safe passage will be ensured.<sup>147</sup>

On 30 August 2021, right before midnight, the last US forces left Afghanistan as the final evacuation flights departed from Kabul's international airport.<sup>148</sup>

### 1.3.2 Involvement of new international actors

Between March and July 2021 various foreign states, including the 'Extended Troika' (Russia, China, the US and Pakistan), Iran and Central Asia countries, met with representatives of the negotiating teams of the Taliban and the government of Afghanistan to review the status of the peace process and to accelerate negotiations.<sup>149</sup> Delegations from the Taliban's political office visited the capitals of Russia, Iran and Turkmenistan, where they were reportedly urged to engage in serious negotiations with the Afghan government and warned against a military takeover.<sup>150</sup> According to USIP analysts, neighbouring states oppose a resurgence of the 'Islamic Emirate' due to concerns about domestic threats from Islamists and the risk of an intensifying civil war that could create a humanitarian crisis and drive refugees across their borders. While their formal policy was to support a negotiated political settlement, Afghanistan's neighbours were reportedly 'preparing for the worst'. USIP sources state that 'formal policy is only part of the equation' and that an intensification of the conflict in Afghanistan may tempt regional states to directly assist 'Afghan factions they perceive to be allies who can protect their equities', leading to a risk of broader regional conflict.<sup>151</sup>

In July 2021, USIP suggested that frontline Central Asian states were preparing for a new reality where the Taliban control most or all of Afghanistan, as Taliban fighters had rapidly taken control of the rural parts of northern Afghanistan, and nearly all the 1 500-mile border with Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan. Along with the capture of key border posts with Iran and Pakistan, the rapid advance of the Taliban in the northern region represented 'a major shift in the geostrategic context for Central Asia'. According to USIP, the Taliban had not threatened Central Asian forces on the border and had engaged in diplomatic efforts to reassure neighbouring countries 'of their respect for their territorial integrity with a commitment to keep the war within the borders of Afghanistan'. Furthermore, USIP suggest that the response among Central Asian states to the current situation has been to shore up border security, limit the exposure to refugee flows crossing their borders, and 'keep the lines of communication with the Taliban open'. Provided that the Taliban are willing and able to eliminate or contain transnational violent extremist groups such as ISKP, al-Qaida (AQ), and the remnants of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), USIP analyst say that Central Asian states are 'likely to adjust to working with them again'.<sup>152</sup>

According to journalist Bobby Ghosh, the prospect of Taliban success in Afghanistan 'poses a grave danger' to Iran, having Iran's strained relationship to the previous Taliban rule in mind. Although Iran has stepped up its diplomatic outreach to the Taliban, and they may not represent a direct threat to the Iranian regime, there are serious Iranian concerns about the prospect of refugees, as well as

<sup>146</sup> CNN, Biden keeps August 31 deadline to withdraw Afghanistan: 'The sooner we finish the better', 24 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>147</sup> CBS News, Transcript: National security adviser Jake Sullivan on "Face the Nation", 29 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>148</sup> New York Times (The), U.S. War in Afghanistan Ends as Final Evacuation Flights Departed, 30 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>149</sup> UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General, The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security A/75/926-S/2021/570, 15 June 2021, [url](#), para. 14; SIGAR, Quarterly report to the United States

Congress, 30 July 2021, [url](#), p. 84; Aljazeera, Afghan gov't delegation meets Taliban in Iran, 8 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>150</sup> USIP, Central Asia Prepares for Taliban Takeover, 20 July 2021, [url](#); USIP, India, Pakistan Watch Warily as Taliban Move to Takeover, 2 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>151</sup> USIP, India, Pakistan Watch Warily as Taliban Move to Takeover, 2 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>152</sup> USIP, Central Asia Prepares for Taliban Takeover, 20 July 2021, [url](#)

increased drug and human trafficking, and terrorist activity in its eastern region. In the context of ongoing sanctions, Iran's trade interests are also reportedly threatened, including 'an ambitious railway project that would channel Afghan exports to Iranian ports, and thence to the wider world'.<sup>153</sup>

According to International Crisis Group, Pakistan's efforts to facilitate the Taliban's return to Kabul through power-sharing arrangements have been undermined by the fast pace of the withdrawal of foreign troops in the context of 'stalled peace talks and rising insurgent violence in Afghanistan'. Instability in Afghanistan, as well as Taliban presence near the tribal areas along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, present security risks to Pakistan. In border areas, there is risk of destabilisation and of Pakistani militants aligning with the Taliban in Afghanistan, and a high influx of refugees. According to International Crisis Group, a Taliban military takeover in Kabul means that Pakistan would 'face the dilemma of dealing with its ally heading a regime that would enjoy scant outside backing and – crucially – very little financial aid.'<sup>154</sup> However, other analyses point out the competing interests within Pakistan's government.<sup>155</sup> Overall statements by Pakistani officials are interpreted as cheering the Taliban take-over.<sup>156</sup> However, some officials have carefully expressed that they support a peaceful resolution in Afghanistan, and they have communicated a stance of non-interference in Afghan affairs.<sup>157</sup> Others have been more explicit, like Pakistan's prime minister, Imran Khan, who said that the Taliban had broken 'the shackles of slavery'.<sup>158</sup>

Russia's main concern in relation to Afghanistan is reported to be the longstanding fear of instability on its southern borders and the ability of the Central Asian nations to defend their borders and prevent destabilisation of their own societies by militancy.<sup>159</sup> In July 2021 it was reported that Russia had 'reasserted its hard military commitment to protect its CSTO [Collective Security Treaty Organization] treaty allies in Central Asia from any military threat coming from Afghanistan' and had also publicly engaged with the Taliban, 'seeking and receiving assurance that they will not allow Afghanistan to become a security problem for Russia and Central Asia'.<sup>160</sup>

China's policy towards Afghanistan is 'almost entirely about managing threats', according to an analyst from the European Council for Foreign Relations. The dominant threat is perceived to be from Islamic militancy in the region. The Chinese government had reportedly 'long sought to reach agreements with the Taliban', largely focused on the question of their ties with Uyghur groups.<sup>161</sup> In July 2021, it was reported that the Taliban had offered reassurance to China that they would 'ignore the suppression of Muslim Uyghurs in Xinjiang in exchange for China's support in rebuilding Afghanistan'.<sup>162</sup> Although it has minimal economic interests in Afghanistan itself (investment in a copper mine and an energy project), China was reported to be concerned about the threat to its significant commercial and economic interests in the wider region, through increased militancy inspired by the Taliban's success, especially in Pakistan.<sup>163</sup>

<sup>153</sup> Bloomberg Opinion, No Joy for Iran Over the Taliban Romp Next Door, 12 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>154</sup> ICG, Pakistan: Shoring Up Afghanistan's Peace Process, Briefing No.169/Asia, 30 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>155</sup> Council on Foreign Relations, Why did Pakistani Officials cheer the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan?, 25 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>156</sup> The Diplomat, The Taliban's Careful Cheerleaders: Pakistan's Statements on the Fall of Kabul, 17 August 2021, [url](#);

Council on Foreign Relations, Why did Pakistani Officials cheer the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan?, 25 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>157</sup> The Diplomat, The Taliban's Careful Cheerleaders: Pakistan's Statements on the Fall of Kabul, 17 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>158</sup> Independent (The), Taliban have broken 'the shackles of slavery', says Pakistani PM Imran Khan, 17 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>159</sup> RFE/RL, Beneath The Gloating, Taliban Takeover Brings Unwelcome New Uncertainty For Moscow, 17 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>160</sup> USIP, Central Asia Prepares for Taliban Takeover, 20 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>161</sup> European Council on Foreign Relations, After the withdrawal: China's interests in Afghanistan, 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>162</sup> USIP, Central Asia Prepares for Taliban Takeover, 20 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>163</sup> European Council on Foreign Relations, After the withdrawal: China's interests in Afghanistan, 5 August 2021, [url](#)

### 1.3.3 Taliban

The Taliban, with an estimated 58 000 to 100 000 full-time fighters<sup>164</sup>, ‘is stronger now than at any point in the last twenty years’, according to the Council for Foreign Relations.<sup>165</sup> Taliban seized de facto control of Afghanistan after entering Kabul on 15 August.<sup>166</sup> As of 31 August 2021, LWJ considered 388 districts to be under Taliban control, 10 under the control of resistance forces, and 9 contested.<sup>167</sup>

The Defence Intelligence Agency cited by USDOD reported that the Taliban’s military strategy in the first quarter of 2021 was focused on ‘preparation for large-scale offensives against provincial centres, complex attacks against the ANDSF’s installations, and degrading ANDSF capabilities’. By February 2021 the Taliban had surrounded the provincial capitals of Baghlan, Helmand, Kandahar, Kunduz, and Uruzgan provinces, and conducted attacks against military and intelligence targets. Taliban fighters focused on controlling highways to limit the ability of Afghan government forces to resupply outposts and checkpoints.<sup>168</sup>

When US and Coalition forces officially began to withdraw their troops in May 2021, the Taliban launched their offensive, overrunning numerous ANDSF checkpoints, bases, and district centres.<sup>169</sup> The Taliban reportedly took over and displayed on social media US supplied equipment, including Humvees, abandoned by Afghan forces following truces mediated by local elders.<sup>170</sup> SIGAR noted ‘the speed and ease with which the Taliban seemingly wrested control of districts in Afghanistan’s northern provinces, once a bastion of anti-Taliban sentiment’.<sup>171</sup> AAN stated that controlling border crossings appears to have been a focus for the Taliban, allowing them to collect vast customs tax on traders (estimated at \$4 million per day in the first five months of 2021) and thereby weakening the government.<sup>172</sup> Similarly, as of mid-July the Taliban had gained control of major road routes, allowing them to tax and extort travellers as well as affecting the Afghan National Security Force’s (ANSF) freedom of movement.<sup>173</sup>

By 15 July 2021 FDD’s LWJ estimated that the Taliban was in control of 54 percent of Afghan districts, where months earlier it controlled only 20 percent.<sup>174</sup> AAN explained that after the ‘unexpected and highly successful sweep of rural districts in many parts of Afghanistan’, the Taliban started to attack major cities such as the Taliban’s Kandahar, Herat, Ghazni and Lashkargah. Furthermore, ‘The resistance they encountered there might have been why their military leaders changed the size of their targets. Although hardly relenting their push against other cities, they focused on easier objectives such as the relatively undefended lesser provincial capitals’.<sup>175</sup>

After a rapid fall of all but one provincial capital the Taliban could seize power.<sup>176</sup> According to analysis from AAN the subsequent ‘mass dissolution of the Afghan security forces and surrender of provincial and military leadership’ was at least in part due to a ‘sustained outreach campaign’ by the Taliban,

<sup>164</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486 , 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 26

<sup>165</sup> CFR, The Taliban in Afghanistan, 3 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>166</sup> AP, Taliban take over Afghanistan: What we know and what’s next, 17 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>167</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 31 August 2021), [url](#)

<sup>168</sup> USDOD, Lead Inspector General for Operation Freedom’s Sentinel, 14 May 2021, [url](#), pp. 11-12

<sup>169</sup> SIGAR, Quarterly report to the United States Congress, 30 July 2021, [url](#), p. 51

<sup>170</sup> SIGAR, Quarterly report to the United States Congress, 30 July 2021, [url](#), p. 51; WSJ, Afghan Government Could Collapse Six Months After U.S. Withdrawal, New Intelligence Assessment Says, 23 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>171</sup> SIGAR, Quarterly report to the United States Congress, 30 July 2021, [url](#), p. 51

<sup>172</sup> AAN, Menace, Negotiation, Attack: The Taliban take more district Centres across Afghanistan, 16 July 2021, [url](#); WSJ, Taliban Find New Revenues as They Seize Afghanistan’s U.S.-Built Border Gateway, 5 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>173</sup> AAN, Menace, Negotiation, Attack: The Taliban take more district Centres across Afghanistan, 16 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>174</sup> LWJ, Half of Afghanistan’s provincial capitals under threat from Taliban, 15 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>175</sup> AAN, The Fall of Nimruz: A symbolic or economic game-changer? 9 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>176</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 31 August 2021), [url](#)



involving deals made in advance at the local level and ‘probably also at a very high level’, with officials knowing ‘who to call’ at the point when they decided to surrender control.<sup>177</sup> A strategy of ‘coercion and persuasion’ was reportedly adopted and repeated across the country, as the Taliban ‘cut multiple surrender deals that handed them bases and ultimately entire provincial command centers’.<sup>178</sup>

### 1.3.4 Pro-government armed groups, warlords and their militias

Before the announcement of the withdrawal of US troops, the CIA Director William Burns reportedly told the Senate Intelligence Committee that a departure would pose a ‘significant risk’ of resurgent terrorism and ‘diminish’ the US government’s ability to ‘collect and act on threats emanating from Afghanistan’. In June 2021, USIP raised concerns about Western national security agencies looking at options to counter AQ and other terror networks operating from Afghanistan and ‘considering hiring Afghan warlords as proxies to provide intelligence on these groups’. According to USIP, some militia groups under consideration had previous ties to transnational terror groups and bear responsibility for ‘atrocities’ in the 1990s, as well as corruption, drug trafficking, arms smuggling, land grabbing and illegal checkpoints. USIP suggested that such a strategy may undermine the objective of preventing terrorist attacks by further alienating the Afghan population and ‘narrow the anti-Taliban base’.<sup>179</sup>

On 4 June 2021 the ANN reported that ‘for the first time in 20 years, powerbrokers are speaking publicly about mobilising armed men outside ANSF and government structures’. Although the presence of militias has reportedly been a ‘local fact of life’, public pronouncements about needs to mobilise or to establish autonomous spheres of influence have ‘never been expressed so brazenly’.<sup>180</sup> In July 2021, UNAMA reported on the resurgence of pro-government armed groups and indications that the government was supporting and issuing weapons to civilian self-defence groups operating ‘outside a well-defined chain of command’. This development reportedly compounded protection risks faced by the civilian population, including of human rights abuses.<sup>181</sup> At the end of June 2021 ACLED, citing media reports, stated that the ‘ongoing increase in violence had led to the formation of local militias with the tacit support of Afghan state forces’.<sup>182</sup>

Taliban gains in the north, including control of significant transportation routes, led the Afghan government to launch what it called ‘National Mobilization, arming local volunteers’.<sup>183</sup> In August 2021, the Afghan Interior Minister stated that the government was arming local groups ‘as part of a wider three-phase plan to fight back against the Taliban’s advances’. The Minister detailed that the government was supporting local volunteer militias known as ‘uprising movements’ and delegating power to local leaders to recruit and arm within their community to fight the Taliban. He said they had ‘announced their full support to the president and government’, would ‘fight the Taliban along with the government forces’, and ‘eventually merge into the Afghan Security Forces’.<sup>184</sup> Associated Press (AP) reported that the move potentially would resurrect militias ‘loyal to local commanders or powerful Kabul-allied warlords, who wrecked the Afghan capital during the inter-factional fighting of the 1990s and killed thousands of civilians’.<sup>185</sup> This development concerned the international community, with observers fearing the policy could lead to civil war.<sup>186</sup>

<sup>177</sup> AAN, Afghanistan Has a New Government: The country wonders what the new normal will look like, 17 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>178</sup> New York Times (The), Collapse and Conquest: The Taliban Strategy That Seized Afghanistan, 18 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>179</sup> USIP, After Afghanistan Withdrawal: A Return to ‘Warlordism?’, 25 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>180</sup> AAN, Changing political dynamics in the wake of the US troop withdrawal announcement, 4 June 2021, [url](#), Conclusion

<sup>181</sup> UNAMA, Afghanistan – Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, Midyear Report 2021, July 2021, [url](#), p. 12

<sup>182</sup> ACLED, Regional Overview: South Asia and Afghanistan, 19-25 June 2021, 30 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>183</sup> AP, Taliban gains drive Afghan government to recruit militias, 25 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>184</sup> Al Jazeera, Afghanistan’s interior minister reveals plan to push back Taliban, 11 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>185</sup> AP, Taliban gains drive Afghan government to recruit militias, 25 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>186</sup> Al Jazeera, Taliban gains drive Afghanistan gov’t to arm local volunteers, 25 June 2021, [url](#); SIGAR, Quarterly report to the United States Congress, 30 July 2021, [url](#), p. 64



Defections of local Public Uprising Forces in Badakhshan were reported in early July 2021<sup>187</sup> and in early August 2021 the defection of a former member of Parliament and ‘prominent militia commander’ to the Taliban along with hundreds of fighters was reported to contribute to the collapse of Aybak, the provincial capital of Samangan.<sup>188</sup>

On 11 August 2021, President Ghani was reported to have held talks with ‘long-time local strongman’ Atta Mohammad Noor and ‘infamous warlord’ Abdul Rashid Dostum about the defence of the ‘besieged’ northern city of Mazar-e Sharif city, as Taliban fighters had taken more than a quarter of the country’s provincial capitals in less than a week, and were approaching the outskirts of the city.<sup>189</sup>

However, the militias could not resist the Taliban forces and soon dissolved or joined the Taliban.<sup>190</sup> Noor and Dostum have reportedly fled to Uzbekistan.<sup>191</sup> Ismail Khan has reportedly fled to Iran.<sup>192</sup>

For more information on the anti-Taliban resistance movement in Panjsher, see [chapter 1.4.1](#).

### 1.3.5 Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant-Khorasan Province (ISKP)

Sources reported that ISKP regained strength in the first quarter of 2021, including through recruitment of disaffected Taliban members, continues to pose a threat in Afghanistan and the region at large, and retains the ability to carry out terrorist attacks in Kabul and other major cities.<sup>193</sup> The core group in Kunar and Nangarhar provinces reportedly retains around 1 500 to 2 200 fighters, mainly Afghan and Pakistani nationals, while smaller autonomous groups located in Badakhshan, Kunduz and Sar-e Pol are predominantly local ethnic Tajiks and Uzbeks. Sources reported to the UN Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team that a 450-strong cell of ISKP was disrupted around Mazar-e Sharif in Balkh Province, suggesting that the group may be stronger in northern Afghanistan than previously assessed.<sup>194</sup> The UN Secretary General reported an increase in attacks between 12 February and 15 May 2021 claimed by or attributed to ISKP – 88 compared with 16 during the same period in 2020, including targeted attacks on civilians in urban areas.<sup>195</sup> Between 1 January and 30 June 2021, UNAMA recorded 439 casualties (124 killed and 315 injured) in ISKP claimed or attributed attacks, which was 9% of the total casualties for that period.<sup>196</sup>

ISKP have claimed responsibility for the attack against Kabul’s international airport, see [Chapter 1.1.3](#).

### 1.3.6 Foreign fighters

According to the UN Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team, fighters from a variety of countries and militant groups continued to operate in Afghanistan and are reported to be ‘at minimum

<sup>187</sup> RFE/RL, Fighting The Taliban Was ‘Suicide’: Hundreds Of Afghan Soldiers Escape To Tajikistan, 9 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>188</sup> New York Times (The), The Taliban take a sixth provincial capital as government forces reel, 9 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>189</sup> Al Jazeera, Afghan leader rallies forces in besieged Mazar-i-Sharif, 11 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>190</sup> The World, Former warlord Ismail Khan led a militia against the Taliban. He spoke to the World days before Afghans lost the fight, 16 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>191</sup> Khaama Press, Marshal Dostum, Atta Muhammad Noor cross border into Uzbekistan, 15 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>192</sup> The World, Former warlord Ismail Khan led a militia against the Taliban. He spoke to the World days before Afghans lost the fight, 16 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>193</sup> USDOD, Lead Inspector General for Operation Freedom’s Sentinel, 14 May 2021, [url](#), p. 22; UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486, 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 61

<sup>194</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486, 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 62

<sup>195</sup> UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General, The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security A/75/926–S/2021/570, 15 June 2021, [url](#), para. 21

<sup>196</sup> UNAMA, Afghanistan – Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, Midyear Report 2021, July 2021, [url](#), pp. 2-3

tolerated or protected by the Taliban'.<sup>197</sup> USDOD cited reports from security officials that foreign nationals were among the 600 individuals killed in clashes with the Afghan forces during the first two months of 2021.<sup>198</sup> The number of foreign terrorist fighters is estimated to be between 8 000 and 10 000, mainly from Central Asia, the north Caucasus region of the Russian Federation, Pakistan and the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region of China. The Monitoring Team reported that most are affiliated with the Taliban, many support AQ and others are allied or sympathise with IS.<sup>199</sup> This is despite the Taliban order to its fighters, issued in February 2021 following the Doha agreement with the US, not to include foreign militants in their ranks and pledge to dismiss and disband those members and cells that refuse to follow the order.<sup>200</sup> The publication of the Taliban order on social media reportedly led to the perception that the instruction was produced 'for external consumption' to give the impression that the Taliban was complying with the Doha agreement.<sup>201</sup>

Sources reported in mid-2021 that 'the Taliban and AQ remain closely aligned and show no indication of breaking ties', despite expectations created by the Doha agreement.<sup>202</sup>

The Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team reported that AQ was resident in at least 15 Afghan provinces, primarily in remote locations in the east, southern and south-eastern regions, where its members have been relocated to more remote areas by the Taliban to avoid potential exposure and targeting.<sup>203</sup> AQ, including AQ in the Indian Subcontinent, reportedly 'numbers in the range of several dozen to 500 persons', with most of its core's members coming from North Africa and the Middle East. AQ in the Indian Subcontinent, reportedly operating 'under the Taliban umbrella' from Kandahar, Helmand and Nimruz Provinces, consists mainly of Afghan and Pakistani nationals, but also individuals from Bangladesh, India and Myanmar. Sources reported to the Monitoring Team that the group is an essential part of the insurgency, difficult to separate it from the Taliban. AQ's own weekly newsletter reported on AQ operations inside Afghanistan, listing attacks since 2020 in 18 provinces.<sup>204</sup>

AQ's strategy 'in the near term' is reportedly to maintain a safe haven for its leadership in Afghanistan, and the Monitoring Team reported that a significant part of the leadership is based in the border region of Afghanistan and Pakistan where it is 'joined by and works closely with AQ in the Indian Subcontinent'.<sup>205</sup> Assessments that AQ's longer term strategy is 'strategic patience' before regrouping to plan attacks against international targets were reported to be 'untested against stated Taliban

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<sup>197</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486 , 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 72

<sup>198</sup> USDOD, Lead Inspector General for Operation Freedom's Sentinel, 14 May 2021, [url](#), p. 15

<sup>199</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486 , 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 72

<sup>200</sup> USDOD, Lead Inspector General for Operation Freedom's Sentinel, 14 May 2021, [url](#), p. 15

<sup>201</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486 , 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 75

<sup>202</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486 , 1 June 2021, [url](#), paras. 40-42; USDOD, Lead Inspector General for Operation Freedom's Sentinel, 14 May 2021, [url](#), p. 15

<sup>203</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486 , 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 42

<sup>204</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486 , 1 June 2021, [url](#), paras. 47

<sup>205</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486 , 1 June 2021, [url](#), paras. 42-47

commitments in the Doha agreement to prohibit such activities.<sup>206</sup> According to the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team, the following terrorist groups have a presence in Afghanistan:

- Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP), located in the eastern districts of Nangarhar Province near the border with Pakistan, with 2 500 to 6 000 armed fighters; a reunification with an anti-Pakistan agenda, supported the Taliban militarily against Afghan Forces ‘despite growing distrust’;
- Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM) or Turkistan Islamic Party, located in Badakhshan and neighbouring provinces with hundreds of members; reportedly maintains relationships with AQ, ISKP, Jamaat Ansarullah and Jama’at al-Tawhid Wa’al-Jihad; seeks to establish a Uighur state in Xinjiang, China, but remains active in Afghanistan;
- Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), located in Faryab, Sar-e Pol and Jowzjan provinces, up to 700 people including family members of fighters, assessed to be dependent upon local Taliban for money and weapons and ‘closely aligned with Taliban command and control’;
- Other groups with Central Asian backgrounds including Khatiba Imam al-Bukhari (KIB) with approximately 25 to 150 fighters, mostly in Badghis Province, and Islamic Jihad Group with approximately 100 fighters in the northern provinces of Faryab and Kunduz, under Taliban shelter and control; both groups are reportedly forbidden from launching independent operations.<sup>207</sup>

On 6 August 2021, Afghanistan’s Ambassador to the UN reported to the Security Council that over 10 000 foreign fighters were located in Afghanistan, representing 20 groups including AQ and IS, and described ‘mounting evidence’ that the ETIM and the IMU, ‘which have pledged allegiance to ISIL’, fought alongside the Taliban in Faryab, Jowzjan, Takhar and Badakhshan provinces. The Ambassador claimed that the link between the Taliban and these groups were stronger than ever in recent times’.<sup>208</sup>

## 1.4 Recent security trends and armed confrontations

### 1.4.1 General

The Taliban initiated its final offensive on 1 May 2021 before taking overall control in Afghanistan.<sup>209</sup> Below the advances of the Taliban in the following months are outlined. However, it should be noted that the exact control of different districts at certain times is hard to determine, not least due to different measures and what being ‘in control’ really means. For instance, in some districts the Taliban caused Afghan forces to surrender but did not establish a shadow government or leave fighters to maintain control over the area.<sup>210</sup>

On 22 June 2021, UNAMA noted that more than 50 districts had fallen to the Taliban since the beginning of May 2021, most of them surrounding provincial capitals which suggested that the Taliban were positioning themselves to advance towards these capitals once foreign forces withdrew.<sup>211</sup> AAN also referred to such speculations in mid-July noting that the Taliban focused on taking control of district centres and not the provincial capitals.<sup>212</sup>

<sup>206</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486, 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 44

<sup>207</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486, 1 June 2021, [url](#), paras. 77-83

<sup>208</sup> UN Security Council, Afghanistan at ‘dangerous turning point’, UN envoy warns Security Council, 6 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>209</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Control in Afghanistan, Mapping Taliban Control in Afghanistan, 2021, [url](#)

<sup>210</sup> Vox, How are the Taliban gaining so fast in Afghanistan? 11 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>211</sup> UNAMA, SRSG Briefing to the United Nations Security Council, 22 June 2021, [url](#), p. 1-2

<sup>212</sup> AAN, Menace, Negotiation, Attack: The Taliban take more district Centres across Afghanistan, 16 July 2021, [url](#)

In the first week of July 2021, the Taliban continued to make territorial gains, including 40 districts in 10 provinces, and the strategic Islam Qala and Torghondai crossings in western Herat province, along the borders with Iran and Turkmenistan, resulting in the suspension of land trade with Iran.<sup>213</sup> On 2 July 2021 AAN claimed that the Taliban had captured 127 district centres, about 25% of the total, in addition to those they already controlled.<sup>214</sup> The Taliban had also captured more than 60 districts in nine northern provinces. AAN interpreted the concentration of operations to the northern parts of Afghanistan as an attempt to prevent emerging resistance, although a former senior official indicated that this was undermined by the heavy fighting in 26 of the 34 provinces.<sup>215</sup>

On 4 July 2021 the Taliban reportedly controlled around a third of all districts and district centres<sup>216</sup> and over half by 9 July 2021.<sup>217</sup>

Between 10 and 16 July, the Taliban captured another 15 districts across nine provinces according to ACLED, while Afghan forces, supported by pro-government militias, regained control over four districts in three provinces.<sup>218</sup> During this period the Taliban reportedly sought to capture strategic districts surrounding cities and intensified their attacks on at least 10 cities across the country. With the capture of major border crossings, they gained a key source of revenue through tax collection.<sup>219</sup> AAN explained that after the 'unexpected and highly successful sweep of rural districts in many parts of Afghanistan', the Taliban started to attack major cities such as Kandahar, Herat, Ghazni and Lashkargah. However, the resistance they encountered might have been a reason to the Taliban changing size of targets and focusing on smaller relatively undefended provincial capitals.<sup>220</sup>

By 15 and 16 July 2021, LWJ respectively AAN estimated that the Taliban were in control of 54 percent of Afghan districts.<sup>221</sup> Months earlier the Taliban only controlled 20 percent.<sup>222</sup> AAN reported that the Taliban had captured and held<sup>223</sup> 197 district centres since 1 May 2021, equating to 229 district centres held when adding those they already occupied. Only four provinces were reported to have district centres fully in government hands: Kabul, Panjshir, Kunar and Daikundi.<sup>224</sup>

During the Islamic holiday, Eid Al Adha, on 20 July 2021, the Taliban and Afghan forces observed an undeclared ceasefire, resulting in fewer 'events' according to ACLED, although the Taliban captured seven districts across six provinces and Afghan forces regained control of six districts in five provinces during the week 17-23 July 2021. US forces carried out airstrikes against the Taliban in Kandahar province and stated their intent to continue to do so even after their full withdrawal at the end of August 2021; the Taliban claimed this to be in violation of the Doha agreement and warned of 'consequences'.<sup>225</sup> Clashes took place in 30 provinces during the week 24-30 July 2021, as reported by ACLED, with the Taliban continuing attacks on Herat, Kandahar, and Lashkargah cities, and the US and Afghan forces continuing to target the Taliban with airstrikes.<sup>226</sup> During the last week of July 2021 the Taliban captured Herat, Karrukh and Guzera districts, facilitating the following attack on Herat city.<sup>227</sup>

<sup>213</sup> ACLED, Regional Overview: South Asia and Afghanistan, 3-9 July 2021, 14 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>214</sup> SIGAR, Quarterly report to the United States Congress, 30 July 2021, [url](#), p. 56

<sup>215</sup> AAN, A Quarter of Afghanistan's districts Fall to the Taliban amid Calls for a 'Second Resistance', 2 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>216</sup> Al Jazeera, Taliban seizes key districts in Afghanistan as gov't forces flee, 4 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>217</sup> RFE/RL, Fighting The Taliban Was 'Suicide': Hundreds Of Afghan Soldiers Escape To Tajikistan, 9 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>218</sup> ACLED, Regional Overview: South Asia and Afghanistan, 10-16 July 2021, 21 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>219</sup> ACLED, Regional Overview: South Asia and Afghanistan, 10-16 July 2021, 21 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>220</sup> AAN, The Fall of Nimruz: A symbolic or economic game-changer? 9 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>221</sup> LWJ, Half of Afghanistan's provincial capitals under threat from Taliban, 15 July 2021, [url](#); AAN, Menace, Negotiation, Attack: The Taliban take more district Centres across Afghanistan, 16 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>222</sup> LWJ, Half of Afghanistan's provincial capitals under threat from Taliban, 15 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>223</sup> It defines Taliban 'control' as control of the district centre, even if there are still ANSF present outside, see AAN, Menace, Negotiation, Attack: The Taliban take more district Centres across Afghanistan, 16 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>224</sup> AAN, Menace, Negotiation, Attack: The Taliban take more district Centres across Afghanistan, 16 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>225</sup> ACLED, Regional Overview: South Asia and Afghanistan, 17-23 July 2021, 28 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>226</sup> ACLED, Regional Overview: South Asia and Afghanistan 24-30 July 2021, 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>227</sup> ACLED, Regional Overview: South Asia and Afghanistan 24-30 July 2021, 5 August 2021, [url](#)

At the end of July 2021 a month-long night curfew was imposed across the country ‘in a bid to stop the Taliban from invading cities’.<sup>228</sup>

On 30 July, SIGAR reported that Afghan forces had conducted a ‘tactical (fighting) retreat’ in some districts and in others they had surrendered or fled ‘in disorder’. According to news reports cited by the same source, around 1 600 personnel from Afghan forces fled to Tajikistan to avoid Taliban advances in Badakhshan Province.<sup>229</sup> A ‘tactical retreat’ was arguably in accordance with longstanding Afghan government strategy, urged by the US military, to focus on defensible areas, cede rural areas and protect urban centres and major provinces.<sup>230</sup> Further, according to AAN, following the Doha agreement the Afghan security forces had been forced to adopt an ‘active-defence’ stance in relation to the Taliban. ‘The ANSF was forced to wait passively for the Taliban to attack them and could only watch as the Taliban consolidated territory and spoke of the coming victory’. Along with the withdrawal of US air support, this strategy reportedly both undermined the morale of the ANSF and further encouraged the Taliban, as they were ‘given virtually free reign’.<sup>231</sup>

By 5 August 2021 UNOCHA reported that conflict between Afghan state forces and the Taliban had ‘escalated sharply’, particularly in the provincial capitals of Kandahar City, Kandahar province and Lashkargah, Hilmand province. UNOCHA assessed that the security situation in the north-east remained ‘tense and unpredictable’ as intense conflict continued in Kunduz, Baghlan and Takhar provinces, resulting in the displacement and migration of hundreds of families to Kabul and neighbouring countries, Iran and Pakistan. The west saw a deterioration in the security situation, with armed clashes in several districts and in Herat city, causing significant risk for civilians and many to flee across the region. In the centre the security situation ‘remained unstable and unpredictable’ with security incidents affecting civilians reported in Kabul, Logar, Maidan Wardak, Parwan, Kapisa, Khost, Ghazni, Paktya Paktika and Daykundi provinces. The north was described as remaining ‘unstable and unpredictable’ with sporadic attacks reported around the provincial capitals of Mazar-e Sharif, Maymana, Shiberghan and Sar-e-Pul.<sup>232</sup>

In a briefing to the Security Council on 6 August 2021, the Secretary General’s Special Representative stated that in previous weeks the war in Afghanistan had ‘entered a new, deadlier, and more destructive phase’. She said that having captured rural areas during June and July 2021 and achieved ‘significant territorial gains’, the Taliban had begun to attack the larger cities, with Kandahar, Herat, and Lashkar Gah under particular pressure. According to the Special Representative, ‘The human toll of this strategy is extremely distressing—and the political message is even more deeply disturbing.’ She stated that it appeared to be a ‘strategic decision’ of the Taliban to attacks urban areas, knowing that this would ‘inflict enormous harm and cause massive civilian casualties’.<sup>233</sup>

UNOCHA’s weekly humanitarian update for 2-8 August 2021 reported on the escalation of fighting around provincial capitals. In the South, intense fighting was focused on the cities Nimroz, Hilmand and Kandahar, with increasing civilian casualties.<sup>234</sup> Zaranj was the first provincial capital to fall on 6 August 2021.<sup>235</sup> According to UNOCHA the city fell under the control of the Taliban without resistance from Afghan Security Forces, following mediation by ‘local elders’. The North-East also saw an escalation of fighting, culminating in Kunduz city and Taloqan city coming under the control of Taliban forces, and the displacement of a ‘large influx of people’ towards Kabul. In the East the security

<sup>228</sup> BBC, Afghanistan curfew imposed as Taliban militants advance, 25 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>229</sup> SIGAR, Quarterly report to the United States Congress, 30 July 2021, [url](#), p. 51

<sup>230</sup> New York Times (The), How the Taliban conquered Afghanistan, 18 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>231</sup> AAN, The Taliban’s rise to power: As the US prepared for peace, the Taliban prepared for war, 21 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>232</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (26 July – 1 August), 5 August 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>233</sup> UNAMA, Briefing to the United Nations Security Council by the Secretary-General’s Special Representative for Afghanistan, 6 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>234</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (1-8 August), 13 August, [url](#)

<sup>235</sup> New York Times (The), Taliban Seize Afghan Provincial Capital Just Weeks Before Final U.S. Withdrawal, 6 August 2021,



situation was described as ‘volatile’ and fighting continued for control of key areas, and tens of thousands of people fled due to the escalation of fighting in Kunar province. Ongoing clashes in the West reportedly impacted civilians and humanitarian organisations, while security in the Centre ‘remained unstable and unpredictable with elevated conflict and violence in Kabul, Logar, Maidan Wardak, Parwan, Kapisa, Khost, Ghazni, Paktya and Paktika provinces’. In the north UNOCHA described security situation as having remained ‘volatile’.<sup>236</sup>

On 10 August, Al Jazeera reported that the Taliban had captured nine provincial capitals the last days, including Sar-e Pol, Sheberghan, Aybak, Pul-e Khumri, Farah, Zaranj and Faizabad.<sup>237</sup> By 12 August 2021, this had become 15 provincial capitals, with the addition of Ghazni, Herat, Kandahar, Lashkar Gah, Feruz Koh and Qala-i Naw.<sup>238</sup> The fall of Herat in Western Afghanistan was reported to be ‘a devastating blow to the government in Kabul’, which by then only controlled ‘a scattered constellation of contested cities and around only one-third of the countryside’.<sup>239</sup>

On 13 August, representatives and envoys of international and regional countries and members of the Expanded Troika meeting for the August 2021 round of talks in Doha raised ‘grave concerns’ about reports from across Afghanistan of ‘continued violence, large numbers of civilian casualties and extra-judicial killings, widespread and credible allegations of human rights violations’, ‘attacks (ground and air) against provincial capitals and cities, and the destruction of physical infrastructure that perpetuate conflict and make reconciliation efforts more difficult’.<sup>240</sup>

On 14 August 2021, Mazar-e Sharif fell, and as Jalalabad fell the following day, Kabul was left as the only major city still under government control.<sup>241</sup> On 15 August, the Taliban entered and overtook control of Kabul.<sup>242</sup> As of 16 August 2021, LWJ considered 305 districts of Afghanistan to be under Taliban control, 94 to be contested and 8 to be under control of resistance forces.<sup>243</sup> As of 31 August 2021, LWJ considered 388 districts to be under Taliban control, 10 under the control of resistance forces, and 9 contested.<sup>244</sup>

According to analysis from AAN the subsequent ‘mass dissolution of the Afghan security forces and surrender of provincial and military leadership’ was at least in part due to a ‘sustained outreach campaign’ by the Taliban, involving deals made in advance at the local level and ‘probably also at a very high level’, with officials knowing ‘who to call’ at the point when they decided to surrender control.<sup>245</sup> A strategy of ‘coercion and persuasion’ was reportedly adopted and repeated across the country, as the Taliban ‘cut multiple surrender deals that handed them bases and ultimately entire provincial command centers’.<sup>246</sup>

As of late August 2021, the general security situation remained volatile and unstable in Afghanistan.<sup>247</sup> However, there were few reports on armed clashes since the Taliban’s final advance and over-taking of Kabul in mid-August 2021.<sup>248</sup> In Panjshir a resistance force has emerged, going under the name National Resistance Front (NRF).<sup>249</sup> NRF consists of militia fighters and former government soldiers

<sup>236</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (1-8 August), 13 August, [url](#)

<sup>237</sup> Al Jazeera, Infographic: Taliban captures nine Afghan provincial capitals, 10 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>238</sup> Al Jazeera, Infographic: Taliban captures nine Afghan provincial capitals, 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>239</sup> RFE/RL, Radio Azadi, Taliban Captures Herat, Two Other Cities As Afghan Forces Collapse, 13 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>240</sup> Tolonews, Doha Meeting Agrees on Need to Accelerate Afghan Peace Process, 13 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>241</sup> VOA, Taliban’s Afghanistan Takeover – a Timeline, 17 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>242</sup> Al Jazeera, Kabul the day after the takeover, 16 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>243</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 30 August 2021), [url](#)

<sup>244</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 31 August 2021), [url](#)

<sup>245</sup> AAN, Afghanistan Has a New Government: The country wonders what the new normal will look like, 17 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>246</sup> New York Times (The), Collapse and Conquest: The Taliban Strategy That Seized Afghanistan, 18 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>247</sup> Reuters, U.S. on alert for further Kabul attacks in race to complete evacuations, 28 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>248</sup> Pajhwok, Afghanistan witnesses major developments last week, 21 August 2021, [url](#); Liveuamap, News Live Afghanistan, information retrieved 27 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>249</sup> Al Jazeera, Anti-Taliban fighters din in to defend Panjshir Valley, 24 August 2021, [url](#)

loyal to the previous administration and opposed to the Taliban rule. The force is led by Ahmad Massoud, son of the late Tajik commander Ahmad Shah Massoud.<sup>250</sup> Another prominent leader of the resistance movement is former vice president Amrullah Saleh who proclaimed himself acting president of Afghanistan on 17 August 2021.<sup>251</sup> The group has initially kept Panjshir from Taliban control, and have taken control of four districts in neighbouring provinces.<sup>252</sup> However, by 23 August, the Taliban had claimed that they had retaken control of three of the districts in Baghlan province.<sup>253</sup> In the last days of August, an assessment of the LWJ mapping Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information, considered one district of Baghlan to be under the NRF's control, and three districts, Andarab, Khinjan and Puli Hisar, were considered to be contested. All districts of Panjshir were considered to be under NRF's control.<sup>254</sup> Although NRF kept control of Panjshir Valley and reportedly struck back Taliban attacks, the holdout was reportedly encircled<sup>255</sup> and according to Reuters there was a significant force of Taliban fighters in the area.<sup>256</sup>

During the last days before 31 August US sources claimed to have repelled several terrorist attacks against Kabul's international airport. According to AP, American officials have said that a US drone strike repelled an attack against the airport on 29 August 2021 by neutralising a vehicle with suicide bombers. Moreover, in the morning of 30 August 2021, rockets hit a neighbourhood close to the airport.<sup>257</sup> CCN reported that a local source claimed that the latter incident was caused by five rockets being neutralised by an air defense system at the airport.<sup>258</sup>

## 1.4.2 Number of security incidents

A report of the UN Secretary General to the Security Council noted the ongoing deterioration of the security situation in Afghanistan between 12 February and 15 May 2021, with the southern, eastern, and northern regions recording the highest number of incidents (63.6% of the total) and Helmand, Kandahar and Nangarhar the most conflict-affected provinces. A total of 6 827 security related incidents were recorded, an increase of 26.3% compared with the same period in 2020.<sup>259</sup>

According to UNAMA the use of non-suicide IEDs in targeted attacks in the first half of 2021 increased fourfold compared with the same period in 2020 (737 casualties, 178 killed and 559 injured). Anti-Government Elements targeted civilians, including human rights defenders, media workers, religious elders, civilian government workers, and humanitarian workers, and members of the Hazara ethnicity and Shi'a Muslim religious minority in sectarian attacks.<sup>260</sup> USDOD reported at least 40 incidents targeting, and in most cases killing, 'prominent Afghan civilians' in the first quarter of 2021, including civilian government officials, educators, religious scholars, tribal leaders, medical workers, journalists, and activists. Most were killed in hit-and-run shooting incidents or by magnetic explosives ('sticky bombs') attached to the target's vehicle. The Taliban denied involvement in these attacks, though the

<sup>250</sup> Al Jazeera, Explainer: Panjshir – Afghanistan's valley of resistance, 23 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>251</sup> News 18, Afghan Vice President Saleh Declares Himself Caretaker President; Reaches Out To Leaders for Support, 17 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>252</sup> LWJ, Anti-Taliban resistance makes modest gains outside Panjshir, 20 August 2021, [url](#); Tolonews, Local Forces Retake 3 Districts from Taliban in Baghlan, 21 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>253</sup> India Today, Taliban claim to have recaptured 3 districts seized by resistance forces in Baghlan, 23 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>254</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 31 August 2021), [url](#)

<sup>255</sup> FP, Ahmad Massoud: 'Peace Does Not Mean to Surrender', 30 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>256</sup> Reuters, At least seven Taliban reported killed in Panjshir fighting, 31 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>257</sup> AP, Rockets fired at Kabul airport but US flights continue, 30 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>258</sup> CNN, As many as 5 rockets were fired on Kabul airport, says US official, [url](#)

<sup>259</sup> UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General, The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security A/75/926–S/2021/570, 15 June 2021, [url](#), para. 17

<sup>260</sup> UNAMA, Afghanistan – Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, Midyear Report 2021, July 2021, [url](#), p. 5

Afghan government held them responsible.<sup>261</sup> Targeted attacks on humanitarian workers included deminers working for the Halo Trust on 8 June in north-eastern Baghlan Province, when at least 11 people were killed and 15 others wounded<sup>262</sup> and polio vaccination workers on 15 June.<sup>263</sup> USDOD reported that the campaign of targeted killings had contributed to ‘an increased feeling of general insecurity among the population’, especially in Kabul.<sup>264</sup> UNAMA reported a resurgence of ‘deliberate sectarian motivated attacks against the Shi’a Muslim religious minority’, mostly the Hazara ethnic minority. Nearly all the 20 incidents during this period were claimed by ISKP and included shootings and non-suicide IED attacks, some involving buses and other vehicles transporting members of the Hazara community, resulting in 500 civilian casualties (143 killed and 357 injured).<sup>265</sup>

The main cause of civilian casualties was reportedly ground engagements, then non-suicide improvised explosive devices (IEDs), targeted killings and airstrikes. According to SIGAR, as of 31 May 2021, the total known area of the country contaminated by ‘explosive remnants of war’, including landmines and improvised explosive devices, was 809.4 square kilometres (312.5 square miles) in 4 152 ‘hazard areas’.<sup>266</sup>

According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021 there were 5 781 security incidents recorded in Afghanistan, of whom 3 985 were coded as battles, 1408 remote violence and 388 incidents of violence against civilians.

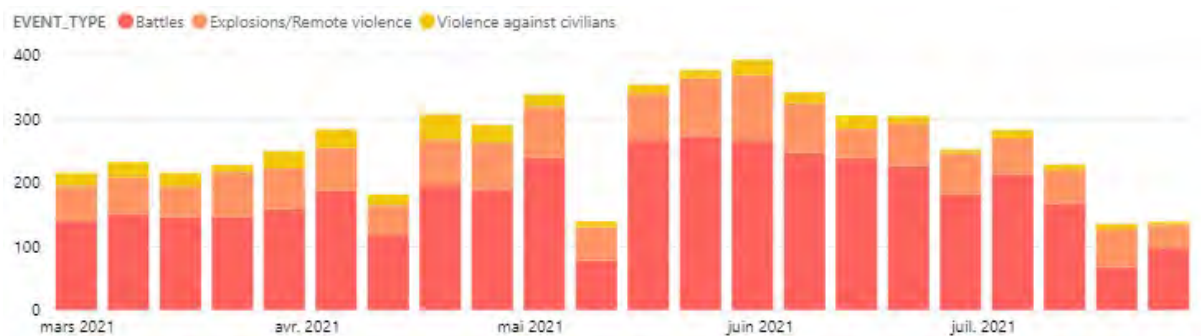


Figure 1. Afghanistan - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>267</sup>

In its War Casualty Report<sup>268</sup>, The New York Times recorded that May 2021 saw the highest death toll in a single month since July 2019 with at least 405 pro-government forces and 260 civilians killed.<sup>269</sup> In June 2021 at least 703 Afghan security forces and 208 civilians were killed, the highest count among security forces since The New York Times began tracking casualties in September 2018.<sup>270</sup> According to the same source, at least 335 Afghan security forces and 189 civilians were killed in Afghanistan in

<sup>261</sup> USDOD, Lead Inspector General for Operation Freedom’s Sentinel, 14 May 2021, [url](#), p. 17

<sup>262</sup> UNAMA, Afghanistan – Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, Midyear Report 2021, July 2021, [url](#), p.6

<sup>263</sup> UNAMA, Afghanistan – Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, Midyear Report 2021, July 2021, [url](#), p. 6

<sup>264</sup> USDOD, Lead Inspector General for Operation Freedom’s Sentinel, 14 May 2021, [url](#), p. 19

<sup>265</sup> UNAMA, Afghanistan – Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, Midyear Report 2021, July 2021, [url](#), p. 5

<sup>266</sup> SIGAR, Quarterly report to the United States Congress, 30 July 2021, [url](#), p. 80

<sup>267</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>268</sup> In its Afghan War Casualty Report New York Times (The) compiles ‘significant security incidents’, as confirmed by their reporters which it defines as ‘necessarily incomplete’ owing to the refusal of many local officials to confirm casualty information. The reports include government reported insurgent casualty figures (which in most cases cannot be verified by the New York Times (The), but not Taliban claims of attacks on the government unless they can be verified and note that both sides tend to inflate the numbers of casualties, they inflict on each other).

<sup>269</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, [url](#)

<sup>270</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, [url](#)

the month of July,<sup>271</sup> and in the first five days of August, at least 115 Afghan security forces and 58 civilians were reported to have been killed.<sup>272</sup>

At the time of finalisation of this report no ACLED data was available for the month of August 2021.

### 1.4.3 Trends in the nature of the violence and methods

Sources suggested that the continued assassination of government employees, security officials, and journalists by the Taliban during the first quarter of 2021 was intended to weaken the morale of the Afghan forces and undermine public trust in the government.<sup>273</sup> AAN described a ‘winter targeted killing campaign’ aimed at ANSF members, journalists and also members of the judiciary, women’s rights activists and other members of civil society noting that Taliban were ‘pre-emptively targeting independently-minded ‘public intellectuals’ in the hope of eventually capturing the capital’.<sup>274</sup>

In the first six months of 2021, UNAMA documented a nearly threefold increase in civilian casualties from the use of IEDs by Anti-Government Elements, representing the highest number of civilian casualties from these devices in the first half of a year since systematic documentation began in 2009.<sup>275</sup> These devices, including non-suicide vehicle born IEDs and pressure-plate IEDs, were the leading cause of civilian casualties in the first half of 2021. Pressure plate IEDs, mostly used by the Taliban, are victim activated devices triggered by a person stepping on them or a vehicle driving over them, affecting civilians indiscriminately. In the reporting period they were mostly placed in public areas frequented by civilians, such as roads leading into areas controlled by Anti-Government Elements, and in and around civilian homes in areas from which they had departed. Non-suicide vehicle-borne IEDs caused a more than tenfold increase in civilian casualties during the first 6 months of 2021, most from two attacks - on the Sayed ul-Shuhada School in Kabul, and on a guesthouse during an Iftar meal in Logar Province on 30 April, killing 4 and injuring 118 other civilians.<sup>276</sup> In the first six months of 2021, the World Health Organisation (WHO) recorded 30 incidents involving attacks on health care in Afghanistan, affecting eight provinces and 18 districts, of which 22 occurred between March and end June 2021. This marked an increase compared to the same six month period in 2020, when 19 incidents occurred.<sup>277</sup>

There was also a significant increase in the first half of 2021 in civilian casualties from ground engagements (41 %), causing 33 per cent of all civilian casualties and nearly all attributed to the Taliban and ANSF. Most casualties were caused by indirect weapons used in populated areas, mainly mortars and artillery, disproportionately affecting women and children who were impacted by munitions while sheltering in their homes. UNAMA documented hundreds of incidents during the first 6 months of 2021 in which the civilian casualties from mortars could not be attributed to Anti or Pro-Government Elements since they were both firing in the same area. UNAMA has infographics depicting civilian casualties by incident type and party to the conflict for the first six months of 2021.<sup>278</sup>

Targeted killings continued to be the third leading cause of civilian casualties documented by UNAMA, resulting in 741 casualties (403 killed, 338 injured) in the first six months of 2021; 457 of these were attributed to Anti-Government Elements. Airstrikes by Pro-Government Forces caused increased

<sup>271</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>272</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: August 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>273</sup> USDOD, Lead Inspector General for Operation Freedom’s Sentinel, 14 May 2021, [url](#), p. 12; UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486, 1 June 2021, [url](#), p. 3

<sup>274</sup> AAN, A Quarter of Afghanistan’s district s Fall to the Taliban amid Calls for a ‘Second Resistance’, 2 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>275</sup> UNAMA, Afghanistan – Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, Midyear Report 2021, July 2021, [url](#), pp. 1-2

<sup>276</sup> UNAMA, Afghanistan – Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, Midyear Report 2021, July 2021, [url](#), p. 1,2,3-7

<sup>277</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (January-June 2021), 12 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>278</sup> UNAMA, Afghanistan – Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, Midyear Report 2021, July 2021, [url](#), p. 8

numbers of civilian casualties (33% rise compared with the first six months of 2020), mainly attributed to the Afghan Air Force, since international military forces conducted far fewer airstrikes, in a context of increased fighting between ANSF and the Taliban. There was a continued reduction in the incidence in civilian casualties due to suicide attacks in the first six months of 2012 – 92 casualties compared with 154 in the same period of 2020.<sup>279</sup>

In June 2021, the UN Secretary General reported 22 suicide attacks between 12 February and 15 May compared with 8 during the same period in 2020, 17 involving suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices primarily targeting ANDSF positions in contested areas, in particular in the south.<sup>280</sup> UNAMA records show that Anti-Government Elements were responsible for nearly 64% of total civilian casualties and Pro-Government forces were responsible for 25% of casualties, an increase of 63% and 30% respectively, compared with the same period in 2020.<sup>281</sup>

On 15 July 2021, Tolonews reported that the Taliban either torched or destroyed 260 government buildings and assets in 116 districts and that 13 million Afghans were deprived of social services.<sup>282</sup> In a briefing to the Security Council on 6 August 2021, the Secretary General's Special Representative on 13 August 2021 stated that 'roads, bridges, schools, clinics and other critical infrastructure are being destroyed'.<sup>283</sup>

#### 1.4.4 Impact of the violence on the civilian population

Civilian casualties have remained on high levels the past years, but the first half of 2021 saw record levels of civilians deaths and injuries.<sup>284</sup> Since the clashes between the Taliban and the Afghan forces have ended, civilian casualties have dropped significantly.<sup>285</sup> On 15 August 2021, Pajhwok News reported that civilian casualties had dropped by 49% compared to the previous week.<sup>286</sup> On 21 August 2021, Pajhwok News reported that civilian casualties had dropped eight times compared to the previous week, from 361 to 47 recorded deaths or injuries. The latter number also include deaths and injuries caused during rallies and stampedes at Kabul's international airport.<sup>287</sup> However, this downward facing trend was interrupted by the terrorist attack at Kabul's international airport on 26 August 2021, which has reportedly caused over 170 civilian deaths.<sup>288</sup>

UNAMA documented 5 183 civilian casualties (1 659 killed and 3 524 injured) between 1 January and 30 June 2021, an increase of 47 per cent compared with the first six months of 2020, and comparable with figures in 2014 and 2018. A record number of girls and women were killed and injured during this period, and overall child casualties also reached record levels. Women comprised 14% of all civilian casualties, an increase of 82% compared with the same period in 2020. Child casualties represented 32% of all civilian casualties between January and June 2021 (1 682, 468 killed and 1 214 injured), including through ground engagement, airstrikes, 'explosive remnants of war' and targeted killings.<sup>289</sup>

Casualty numbers reported by UNAMA increased in April 2021 as international military forces withdrew, and as districts and administrative centres were captured by the Taliban. UNAMA recorded

<sup>279</sup> UNAMA, Afghanistan – Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, Midyear Report 2021, July 2021, [url](#), p. 3-4, 8-9

<sup>280</sup> UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General, The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security A/75/926–S/2021/570, 15 June 2021, [url](#), para. 18

<sup>281</sup> UNAMA, Afghanistan – Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, Midyear Report 2021, July 2021, [url](#), p. 4

<sup>282</sup> Tolonews, Taliban Destroyed, Damaged Infrastructure in 116 district s: IARCS, 15 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>283</sup> UNAMA, Secretary-General's Press Encounter on Afghanistan, 13 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>284</sup> UNAMA, Civilian Casualties set to Hit Unprecedented Highs in 2021 Unless Urgent Action to Stem Violence – UN Report, 26 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>285</sup> Pajhwok News, Afghanistan witnesses major developments last week, 21 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>286</sup> Pajhwok News, Civilian casualties down 49pc last week, 15 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>287</sup> Pajhwok News, Afghanistan witnesses major developments last week, 21 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>288</sup> CNN, The latest on the Kabul airport attack, 30 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>289</sup> SIGAR, Quarterly report to the United States Congress, 30 July 2021, [url](#), p. 80



2 392 civilian casualties between 1 May and 30 June 2021, nearly as many as casualties in the four preceding months, and the highest on record for those months since records began in 2009. Most casualties were attributed to non-suicide IEDs used by Anti-government Elements, and to ground engagements. Control of many districts and administrative centres changed hands during this period, resulting in significant fighting in civilian populated areas and destruction of civilian property and increasing incidence of ‘killing, ill-treatment, persecution and discrimination in communities affected by the fighting’. Conflict and the resulting displacement of civilians during this period occurred in the context of the third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic and a government declared drought. UNAMA documented a continuation of attacks on health and education facilities and workers during the first half of 2021, including direct attacks and fighting causing damage to, schools, hospitals, and their personnel.<sup>290</sup> This included attacks by Anti-Government Elements on the polio vaccination campaign in Jalalabad in March and June 2021. The International NGO Safety Office recorded 74 safety and security incidents affecting NGOs between March and July 2021, with 16 killed, 32 injured and 18 abducted.<sup>291</sup>

UNAMA further reported on ‘concerning developments’ during May and June 2021, including ‘intentional destruction of civilian property and infrastructure, and attacks that appeared to intentionally target objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population’. The majority of these incidents, were attributed to the Taliban after they took control of a new area. Also reported by UNAMA was the imposition of restrictions on individual’s rights in respect of personal and social freedoms in areas newly captured by the Taliban, causing communities to fear for women, some ethnic and religious minorities, as well as human rights defenders and those who speak out against the Taliban.<sup>292</sup>

In a briefing to the Security Council on 6 August 2021, the Secretary General’s Special Representative said that in the previous month there had been over 1 000 civilian casualties, as well as ongoing ‘destruction of homes, hospitals, shops, bridges and other infrastructure’. She reported that fighting had been particularly severe in Laskhar Gah, where in the 10 days since 28 July 2021 at least 104 civilians were killed and 403 wounded, mostly by ground engagements and airstrikes. In Kandahar, between 9 July and 6 August 2021 there had been more than 460 civilian casualties, and to the west in and around Herat, she cited ‘credible reports’ of over 135 civilian casualties from the onset of the Taliban offensive.<sup>293</sup> In a further briefing on 13 August 2021 she stated that in the previous month alone, more than 1 000 people had been ‘killed or injured from indiscriminate attacks against civilians, notably in Helmand, Kandahar and Herat provinces’.<sup>294</sup>

### 1.4.5 Conflict-induced displacement

According to IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix Baseline Mobility Assessment, as of the end of 2020 there were 4 937 277 internally displaced persons (IDPs) [displaced between 2012 and 2020] in host communities.<sup>295</sup> By comparison, the IDMC recorded 3 547 000 persons displaced as a result of conflict in Afghanistan in 2020.<sup>296</sup> UNOCHA recorded 546 000 people newly displaced in Afghanistan in 2021 as of 22 August 2021 due to fighting.<sup>297</sup>

<sup>290</sup> UNAMA, Afghanistan – Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, Midyear Report 2021, July 2021, [url](#), p. 1, 2, 5, 10, 11

<sup>291</sup> INSO, Key Data Dashboard, Total NGO Incident Data (March 2021- June 2021): Afghanistan, accessed 6 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>292</sup> UNAMA, Afghanistan – Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, Midyear Report 2021, July 2021, [url](#), p. 11-12

<sup>293</sup> UNAMA, Briefing to the United Nations Security Council by the Secretary-General’s Special Representative for Afghanistan, 6 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>294</sup> UNAMA, Secretary-General’s Press Encounter on Afghanistan, 13 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>295</sup> IOM DTM Afghanistan, Baseline Mobility Assessment: Summary Results, Round 11 Jul-Dec 2020, 2 May 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>296</sup> IDMC, Global Internal Displacement Dataset, 20 May 2021, [url](#)

<sup>297</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan: Snapshot of Population Movements (January – July 2021), 22 August 2021, [url](#)

UNAMA described in its mid-year 2021 report that ‘Indiscriminate shelling during ground engagements, the use of IEDs including victim activated pressure-plate IEDs, and airstrikes, all of which took place in populated areas, contributed not only to a high number of civilian casualties, but also to an increased fear among the population of the battle coming to their doorstep. Families were displaced from their homes due to the conflict, whether forcibly due to fighting nearby, or following pre-emptive decisions to relocate in anticipation of the situation growing worse’.<sup>298</sup>

According to UNOCHA, 484 867 individuals were displaced by conflict between 1 March and 9 August 2021. 69% of these individuals (or 336 130) were displaced from 1 June 2021 onwards. During this period, people who were displaced originated from 32 of Afghanistan’s 34 provinces, with only Paktika and Panjsher provinces spared.<sup>299</sup>

In mid-July 2021, noting that an estimated 270 000 Afghans had been internally displaced since 2021 due to insecurity and violence, UNHCR warned of a ‘looming humanitarian crisis’.<sup>300</sup> On 6 August 2021, IOM estimated that over 300 000 Afghans had been internally displaced by the recent intensification of the conflict with IDPs facing ‘continued deterioration’ in the country.<sup>301</sup> By the 8 August 2021 UNOCHA reported this figure had increased to 389 645 people displaced by conflict in Afghanistan.<sup>302</sup> UNHCR reported on 13 August 2021 that around 80% of the displaced were women and children.<sup>303</sup>

## 2. Regional description of the security situation in Afghanistan

As mentioned in the [Reference Period section](#), this chapter covers the security situation on provincial level between 1 March to 13 August 2021, except for the following topics that include information until 31 August: territorial control, attacks, healthcare, airport, and displacement data. Furthermore, it should be noted that the illustrative incidents outlined by province in general do not include events after 5 August due to the limited availability of information within the consulted sources and time constraints.

### 2.1 Kabul City

For a detailed description of Kabul city and security trends observed between 1 April 2020 to 15 May 2021 see: [CGRS-CEDOCA – Office of the Commissioner General for Refugees and Stateless Persons \(Belgium\), COI unit: Afghanistan: Security Situation in Kabul City, 15 June 2021.](#)

As of 16 August 2021, an assessment of the LWJ mapping Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information, considered Kabul to be under Taliban control.<sup>304</sup>

According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021 there were 97 security incidents recorded in Kabul City, of whom 41 were coded as battles, 31 remote violence and 25 incidents of violence against civilians.

<sup>298</sup> UNAMA, Afghanistan – Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, Midyear Report 2021, July 2021, [url](#), p. 10

<sup>299</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>300</sup> UNHCR, UNHCR warns of imminent humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan, 13 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>301</sup> IOM, Displaced Afghans face ‘continued deterioration’ in country, 6 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>302</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (2 - 8 August), 13 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>303</sup> UNHCR, UNHCR warns Afghanistan’s conflict taking the heaviest toll on displaced women and children, 13 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>304</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 31 August 2021), [url](#)

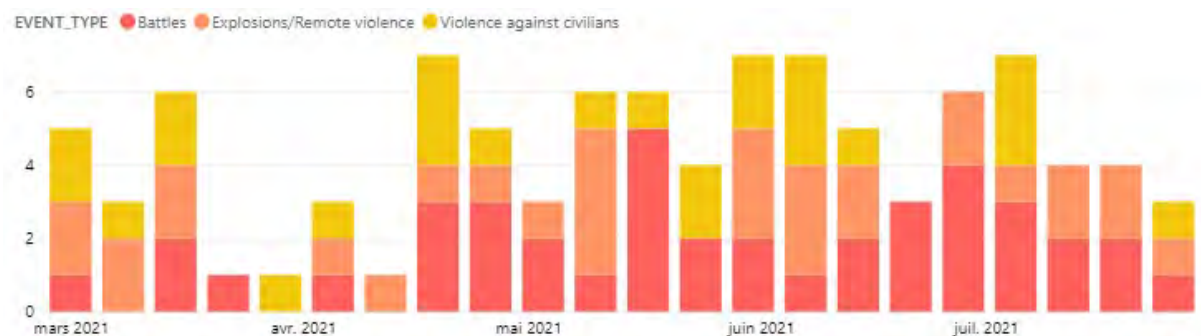


Figure 2. Kabul district - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>305</sup>

In mid-May 2021, the Taliban captured Nerkh, located less than an hour's drive west of Kabul city, a location from where the Taliban has previously used the province as a 'gateway' to the capital and to launch suicide bombings and hit-and-run attacks from.<sup>306</sup> Non-state armed groups remained capable of carrying out attacks in the city even before the takeover of the city by the Taliban. Whilst suicide attacks were described as 'relatively rare' in the 18 months prior to May 2021, the Taliban reportedly carried out a wave of unclaimed targeted attacks over winter in Kabul city, including against members of the ANSF, government employees, judges, lawyers, journalists and human rights defenders, although the numbers fell ahead of the announcement of the US troop withdrawal.<sup>307</sup> The USDOD reported that the campaign of targeted killings had contributed to 'an increased feeling of general insecurity among the population', especially in Kabul, where fear is described as 'omnipresent' and the sense of impending danger 'a state of being'.<sup>308</sup> Targeted assassinations continued to be documented throughout March to August 2021 in Kabul.<sup>309</sup> Regarding the modus operandi of the Taliban, explosions and the use of magnetic or 'sticky bombs' on cars in Kabul city continued to be reported, with the UN documenting 10 magnetic improvised explosive devices in Kabul between mid-March and mid-June 2021.<sup>310</sup> Sticky bombs are reportedly simple and cheap to make (around \$25), consisting of explosives in a small box with a magnet and mobile attached which detonates remotely, and thus are also easy to carry.<sup>311</sup> UNOCHA reported that during the second quarter of 2021, Kabul was the district experiencing the highest number of casualties from IED incidents in Afghanistan, at 281. Kabul was also one of the urban centres most affected by a spike in robberies and thefts reported by UNOCHA in the first quarter of 2021, with 36 incidents which decreased to 20 incidents in the second quarter in total.<sup>312</sup> One report described daytime muggings as 'commonplace' in Kabul city, with increasing numbers of kidnappings for ransom.<sup>313</sup>

On 3 March 2021, a religious scholar was shot dead in the 17<sup>th</sup> police district and on 8 March 2021 a prosecutor was assassinated in the fifth police district.<sup>314</sup> On 18 March 2021, a bus transporting

<sup>305</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>306</sup> Reuters, Taliban capture key district near Afghan capital, 11 May 2021, [url](#)

<sup>307</sup> AAN, As US troops withdraw, what next for war and peace in Afghanistan? 1 May 2021, [url](#)

<sup>308</sup> USDOD, Lead Inspector General for Operation Freedom's Sentinel, 14 May 2021, [url](#), p. 19

<sup>309</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>310</sup> UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General, The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security A/75/926-S/2021/570, 15 June 2021, [url](#), para. 18; The Independent (via AAP), Sticky bombs latest weapon in Afghanistan's arsenal of war, 26 March 2021, [url](#)

<sup>311</sup> The Independent (via AP), Sticky bombs latest weapon in Afghanistan's arsenal of war, 26 March 2021, [url](#)

<sup>312</sup> UNOCHA, HAG Quarterly Report (April to June 2021), 19 July 2021, [url](#), p. 10, 14

<sup>313</sup> War on the Rocks, Afghan Cities Become Key Battlegrounds, 9 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>314</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

government employees exploded in the 17<sup>th</sup> police district killing four and wounding nine others.<sup>315</sup> On 14 March 2021, two separate explosions in police district 3 and 6 reportedly killed three civilians and wounded 11 others.<sup>316</sup> April 2021 saw the first suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive device of the year in Kabul city, targeted at the National Directorate of Security (NDS) in the 15<sup>th</sup> police district which killed one civilian and one NDS member and wounded a further civilian and six security force members.<sup>317</sup> No group claimed responsibility for the attack.<sup>318</sup> A university lecturer was killed by unknown gunmen on 24 April 2021.<sup>319</sup> The deadliest attack against civilians in Afghanistan in the first half of 2021 was on 8 May 2021, with three non-suicide vehicle-borne IEDs detonated outside of Sayed ul-Shuhada school, in a neighbourhood mainly inhabited by the Hazara community, in which at least 85 civilians were killed and at least 216 other civilians were injured, most of whom were school girls.<sup>320</sup> As of end of July 2021, no group had claimed responsibility and the results of a NDS investigation had not been made public.<sup>321</sup> US officials believed that ISKP were the perpetrators.<sup>322</sup> On 22 May 2021, a former pro-government militia commander was shot dead by unknown gunmen in the fifth police district.<sup>323</sup> On 2 June 2021, sticky bombs targeting a minibus near the residence of a presidential adviser and another on a passenger vehicle killed 10 people.<sup>324</sup>

On 12 June 2021, at least seven people were killed and six more wounded as two bombs exploded in vehicles in a western Kabul neighbourhood largely populated by the Hazara minority, one of which was in front of Muhammad Ali Jinnah hospital.<sup>325</sup> The Islamic State claimed responsibility.<sup>326</sup> On 18 June 2021, an army colonel was assassinated in the eighth police district and on 5 July 2021, a National Solidarity Movement of Afghanistan was killed by unidentified gunmen in the fifth police district. On 13 July 2021, a bomb exploded in the first police district killing four civilians and wounding five others.<sup>327</sup> On 20 July 2021, rockets landed near the presidential palace in Kabul city during Eid prayers, but there were no immediate reports of injuries.<sup>328</sup> On 27 July 2021, the director of the Logar Justice Directorate was gunned in the third police district by unidentified assailants.<sup>329</sup>

On 1 August 2021, the head of Paktia's prison was shot dead in the 12<sup>th</sup> police district and on 3 August 2021, in the fifth police district, the governor of Wardak's Sayedabad district was assassinated.<sup>330</sup> In three days in early August 2021, seven people were killed in criminal incidents.<sup>331</sup> The Taliban claimed responsibility for a 3 August 2021 attack on the acting Defence Minister's house which killed eight people and wounded 20 others, demonstrating their ability to mount attacks in the city centre.<sup>332</sup> After the attack the Taliban reportedly vowed to continue targeted Afghani officials in Kabul. On 6 August

<sup>315</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>316</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (8-14 March 2021), 16 March 2021, [url](#)

<sup>317</sup> UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General, The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security A/75/926-S/2021/570, 15 June 2021, [url](#), para. 18; New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>318</sup> Reuters, Suicide Bomb Blast Hits Afghan Security Convoy In Kabul, 20 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>319</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>320</sup> UNAMA, Afghanistan – Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, Midyear Report 2021, July 2021, [url](#), pp. 5-6

<sup>321</sup> UNAMA, Afghanistan – Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, Midyear Report 2021, July 2021, [url](#), p. 6

<sup>322</sup> SIGAR, Quarterly report to the United States Congress, 30 July 2021, [url](#), p. 58

<sup>323</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>324</sup> Arab News, 10 killed in twin Kabul blasts, power supply disrupted across Afghanistan, 2 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>325</sup> Al Jazeera, Seven killed in twin van bomb blasts in Afghanistan's Kabul, 12 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>326</sup> The New Arab, Afghan IS group claims sticky bomb attacks in western Kabul, 13 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>327</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>328</sup> Reuters, Rockets land near Afghan presidential palace, Taliban deny responsibility, 20 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>329</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>330</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: August 2021, updated 5 August, [url](#)

<sup>331</sup> Tolonews, 7 People Killed in Criminal Incidents in Kabul in 3 Days: Report, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>332</sup> Al Jazeera, Powerful blasts and gunfire rock Afghanistan capital Kabul, 3 August 2021, [url](#); The National, Afghanistan: Taliban claim responsibility for attack on defence minister, 3 August 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: August 2021, updated 5 August, [url](#)

2021 the Taliban assassinated a senior media official.<sup>333</sup> On 7 August 2021, it was reported that an Afghan pilot was killed in an explosion targeting his vehicle and another explosion targeting a vehicle belonging to the Afghan Rail Authority injured three.<sup>334</sup>

Kabul International Airport, known as Hamid Karzai Airport, is located 1km from the north east Kabul City, one of four international airports in Afghanistan, serving international and domestic scheduled passenger flights.<sup>335</sup> The airport has been under the joint responsibility of NATO and the Afghanistan Civil Aviation Authority (ACAA) since 2015 and was intended to be passed to the ACAA in 2021.<sup>336</sup> The Turkish authorities offered to secure and run the airport after the departure of NATO, however the Taliban effectively rejected the proposal.<sup>337</sup> SIGAR noted as of June 2021 eight airlines were operating flights to and from Kabul.<sup>338</sup> In the two days prior to the takeover of Kabul on 15 August 2021, 21 international commercial flights left Kabul for Georgia, India, Iran, Pakistan, Qatar, Turkey, UAE and Uzbekistan between 14 and 15 August 2021. On 16 August 2021, the ACAA announced the cancellation of commercial flights from Hamid Karzai International Airport with the last commercial flight from Kabul taking place that day before the Afghan airspace was closed.<sup>339</sup> The airspace reopened and in total 272 flights departed between 14 and 23 August 2021, of which 110 had unknown destinations (often military aircraft).<sup>340</sup> As of 29 August 2021, numerous domestic and international flights continued to be scheduled, including to India, Pakistan, Turkey and Dubai.<sup>341</sup> On 30 August 2021, Reuters cited the US FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) reporting on the absence of 'air traffic services and a functional civil aviation authority in Afghanistan'.<sup>342</sup> During the same period, the New York Times reported that the reopening of the airport for commercial flights was 'uncertain'.<sup>343</sup>

In March 2021, UNOCHA reported that major highways from Kabul to Jalalabad, Logar and Ghazni remained 'insecure'.<sup>344</sup> In June 2021, it was reported that the four major highways were insecure: Kabul-Kandahar, Kabul-North, Kabul-Gardiz, and Kabul-Jalalabad.<sup>345</sup> Due to the nation-wide Taliban offensive starting in May 2021, Kabul was more and more isolated.<sup>346</sup> AAN noted that as of mid-July 2021, all of the three major roads connecting Bamyan city and the Hazarajat with Kabul passed through Taliban-controlled areas. It further detailed that the Taliban had 'also gained control of new sections of the ring road that circles Afghanistan from Mazar-e Sharif in the north to Herat in the west, Kandahar in the south and Kabul in the centre' and that Kabul was still linked to the east border with Pakistan via the Nangarhar and the Torkham crossings, but that the road was 'not without problems'.<sup>347</sup> In August 2021, Tolonews reported about the destruction of bridges along the Kabul-Jalalabad highway, reportedly costing USD 200 000.<sup>348</sup>

<sup>333</sup> LWJ, Taliban assassinates senior Afghan media official, 6 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>334</sup> Tolonews, Afghan Pilot Killed in Kabul Blast, 7 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>335</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#), p. 226; KamAir, Route Map, n.d. (accessed 28 July 2021), [url](#)

<sup>336</sup> SIGAR, Quarterly report to the United States Congress, 30 April 2021, [url](#), p. 133

<sup>337</sup> Reuters, U.S. says diplomatic presence in Kabul requires 'functioning, secure airport', 11 June 2021, [url](#); ANI, Turkey's offer to secure Kabul airport could prove to be a very risky business, 12 July 2021, [url](#); SIGAR, Quarterly report to the United States Congress, 30 July 2021, [url](#), p. 52

<sup>338</sup> SIGAR, Quarterly report to the United States Congress, 30 July 2021, [url](#), p. 121

<sup>339</sup> Reuters, Chaos in Kabul, 18 August 2021, [url](#); CNN, Airlines avoid Afghan airspace as Kabul airport closes to commercial flights, 16 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>340</sup> Guardian, Evacuating Afghanistan: a visual guide to flights in and out of Kabul, 27 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>341</sup> Flightradar24, Kabul International Airport Live Air Traffic, n.d. (accessed 29 August 2021), [url](#)

<sup>342</sup> Reuters, FAA says Kabul airport uncontrolled now, U.S. carriers barred from flights, 30 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>343</sup> New York Times (The), Afghanistan updates: the U.S. occupation is over, ending American's longest war, 30 August 2021, [url](#)

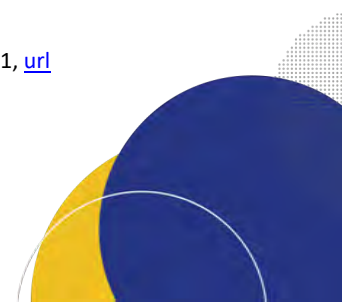
<sup>344</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (1-7 March 2021), 10 March 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>345</sup> Tolonews, Travel on Afghan Highways Increasingly Dangerous, 22 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>346</sup> New York Times (The), The Taliban seek to isolate Kabul, the Pentagon says, 13 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>347</sup> AAN, Menace, Negotiation, Attack: The Taliban take more district Centres across Afghanistan, 16 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>348</sup> Tolonews, Concerns Grow Over Damage to Infrastructure Amid Fighting, 8 August 2021, [url](#)

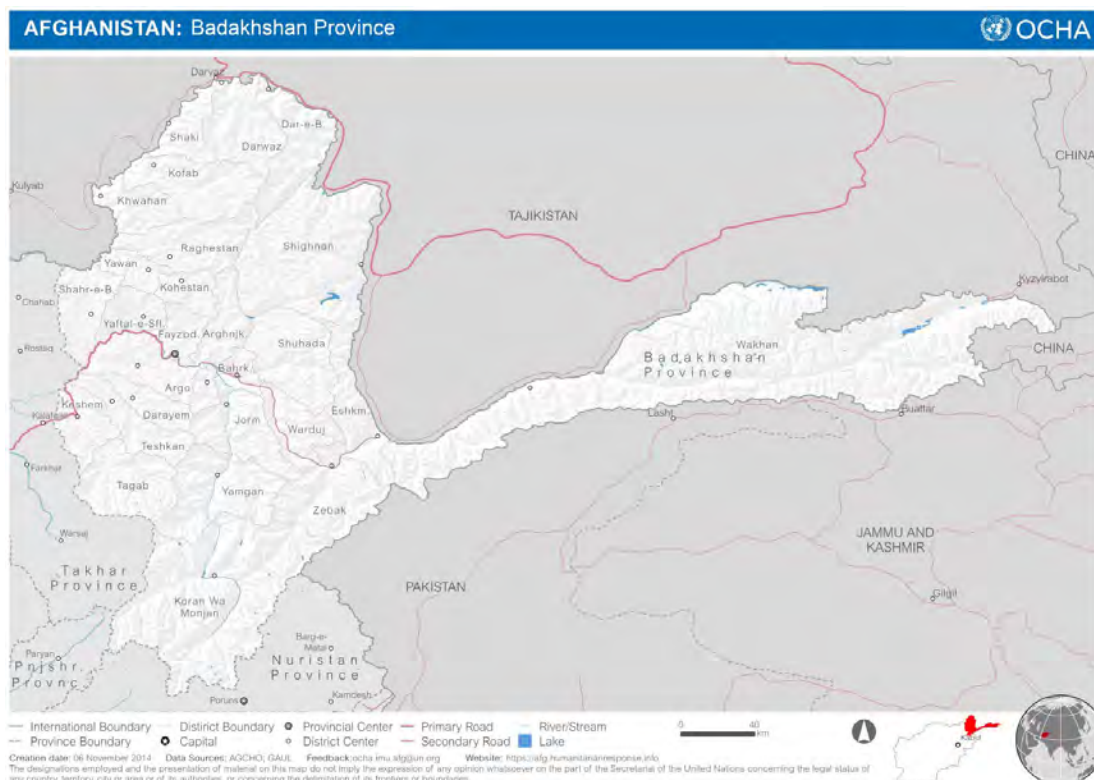




## Displacement

Between 1 March 2021 – 9 August 2021, UNOCHA collected data on 10 976 persons displaced to Kabul province, all to Kabul district.<sup>349</sup> UNOCHA reported an influx of people fleeing to Kabul and other large cities from 1 July 2021<sup>350</sup>, 57% of whom arrived in Kabul.<sup>348</sup> The IDPs arriving in Kabul district came from a range of different provinces, such as Baghlan, Bamyán, Ghazni, Kapisa, Kunduz, Laghman, Logar, Nuristan, Paktya, Parwan, Samangan, Takhar and Wardak. During the same reporting period, no conflict-induced internal displacement from Kabul district was reported by UNOCHA.<sup>351</sup>

## 2.2 Badakhshan



Map 2: Afghanistan – Badakhshan province, source: UNOCHA<sup>352</sup>

As of 31 August 2021, an assessment of the LWJ mapping Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information, considered all districts in Badakhshan province to be under Taliban control.<sup>353</sup>

According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021, there were 168 security incidents recorded in Badakhshan, of whom 126 were coded as battles, 36 remote violence and 6 incidents of violence against civilians.

<sup>349</sup> UNOCHA does not differentiate between Kabul City and Kabul district.

<sup>350</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (9-15 August 2021), 19 August 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>351</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>352</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan – Badakhshan Province- District Atlas, April 2014, [url](#)

<sup>353</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 31 August 2021), [url](#)

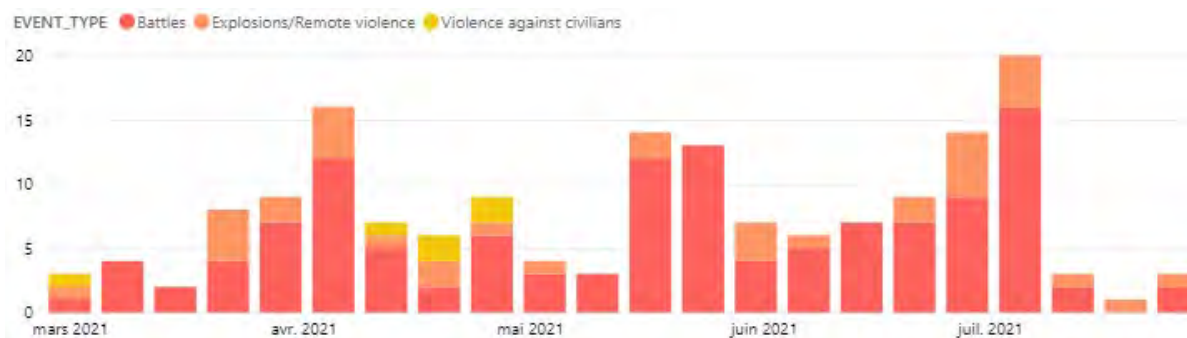


Figure 3. Badakhshan province - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>354</sup>

The Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team report covering the period May 2020 and April 2021 noted that the Taliban moved forces into five northern provinces, including Badakhshan, with the objective to 'deny Afghan Forces freedom of movement and establish control over road communications and border crossings to facilitate narcotic and mineral trade'.<sup>355</sup> AAN described Badakhshan in early July 2021 as having been 'relatively untouched' by the Taliban, but by mid-July 2021 it had largely fallen to the Taliban, with only the provincial capital, Faizabad, and its district and neighbouring Yaftal-e Sufla in government control.<sup>356</sup> Faizabad was captured on 10 August 2021.<sup>357</sup>

During the reporting period, airstrikes and Taliban attacks including on security outposts were reported in Badakhshan.<sup>358</sup> In an 20 April 2021 attack, a security outpost in the Sarshakh area of Zibak district fell, with eight police officers killed and two more wounded.<sup>359</sup> A Taliban attack on 23 May 2021 at a pro-government militia commander's house in Darayem district killed six militia members.<sup>360</sup> Bilal Sarwary posted on Twitter on 4 July 2021 that Baharaak district fell to the Taliban with little resistance.<sup>361</sup> On 5 June 2021, the Afghan forces launched an airstrike in Kohistan district which killed 15 pro-government militia members, and wounded seven more.<sup>362</sup> On 9 July 2021, it was reported that according to local officials, 26 of the 28 districts in Badakhshan had fallen to the Taliban, and were given up without a fight, with over 1000 Afghan military personnel crossing the border to Tajikistan and hundreds more fleeing to the provincial capital of Faizabad.<sup>363</sup> UNOCHA described 'intense fighting' in Koran Wa Munjan district.<sup>364</sup> On 15 July 2021, an ANSF airstrike killed at least 12 civilians and injured a further 20 in Shuhada district.<sup>365</sup> Between 19 and 25 July 2021, in Shohada district centre, airstrikes reportedly killed eight civilians and injured four more.<sup>366</sup>

<sup>354</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>355</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486 , 1 June 2021, [url](#) para. 32

<sup>356</sup> AAN, Menace, Negotiation, Attack: The Taliban take more district Centres across Afghanistan, 16 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>357</sup> Al Jazeera, Afghan leader rallies forces in Taliban-besieged northern city, 11 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>358</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#); NYT, Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>359</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>360</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>361</sup> Sarwary, B., (@bsarwary), [Twitter], posted on: 4 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>362</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>363</sup> RFE/RL, Fighting The Taliban Was 'Suicide': Hundreds Of Afghan Soldiers Escape To Tajikistan, 9 July 2021, [url](#); Al Jazeera, Taliban seizes key districts in Afghanistan as gov't forces flee, 4 July 2021, [url](#); AAN, Menace, Negotiation, Attack: The Taliban take more district Centres across Afghanistan, 16 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>364</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (12-18 July 2021), 23 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>365</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>366</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (19-25, 29 July 2021, [url](#)

Regarding the security situation in the main urban centre/provincial capital Fayzabad, on 8 June 2021, a protest over water and electricity led to violence, with three civilians killed and 36 people wounded, 16 of which were security forces.<sup>367</sup> On 2 July 2021, Taliban attacks on security outposts in the eighth police district killed seven soldiers and 14 pro-government militia, and 25 members of the security forces were abducted by the Taliban, who captured the police district.<sup>368</sup> In mid-July 2021, AAN described Fayzabad city as 'vulnerable'.<sup>369</sup> It was captured by the Taliban on 10 August 2021, following weeks of assaults.<sup>370</sup>

As of April 2021, Badakhshan was listed as one of the 15 Afghan provinces where AQ was reportedly present. ISKP was assessed to have retained a small group in Badakhshan, predominantly made up of local ethnic Tajiks and Uzbeks. ETIM was reported to be mainly found in Badakhshan and neighbouring provinces, reportedly consisting of several hundred fighters.<sup>371</sup> In July 2021, the Taliban had reportedly put Mahdi Arsalon of Tajik group Jamaat Ansarullah in control of security of Kuf Ab, Khwahan, Maimay, Nusay, and Shekay districts along the Tajik border.<sup>372</sup>

The WHO did not record any attacks related to health care provision in Badakhshan province in the first seven months of 2021.<sup>373</sup>

Fayzabad domestic airport is located 12 kilometres west of Fayzabad city.<sup>374</sup> As of end July 2021, Kam Air offered scheduled passenger services between Fayzabad and Kabul.<sup>375</sup> As of 29 August 2021 no further flights were scheduled.<sup>376</sup> On 30 August 2021, Reuters cited the US FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) reporting on the absence of 'air traffic services and a functional civil aviation authority in Afghanistan'.<sup>377</sup>

## Displacement

UNOCHA collected data from the period 1 March – 9 August 2021, reporting 14 364 persons displaced from Badakhshan province. 13 951 were displaced within the province itself with 10 353 IDPs seeking refuge in Fayzabad district. The remaining IDPs travelled to Kabul (350), Parwan (28) and Panjsher (35) province. During the same period, 9 121 displaced persons sought refuge in Badakhshan province (all in Fayzabad district), originating from the Kunduz province.<sup>378</sup> Ongoing conflict led to waves of IDPs originating from Argo and Arghanjkhwah districts in April 2021<sup>379</sup> and from Arghanjkhaw district in June 2021.<sup>380</sup>

<sup>367</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>368</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>369</sup> AAN, Menace, Negotiation, Attack: The Taliban take more district Centres across Afghanistan, 16 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>370</sup> LWJ, Former headquarters of Northern Alliance falls under Taliban control, 10 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>371</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486, 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 42, 62, 80

<sup>372</sup> RFE/RL, Exclusive: Taliban Puts Tajik Militants Partially In Charge Of Afghanistan's Northern Border, 27 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>373</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (January-July 2021), 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>374</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#), p. 137

<sup>375</sup> KamAir, Route Map, n.d. (accessed 28 July 2021), [url](#)

<sup>376</sup> Flightradar24, Live Air Traffic n.d. (accessed 29 August 2021), [url](#); Kam Air, n.d. (accessed 29 August 2021), [url](#)

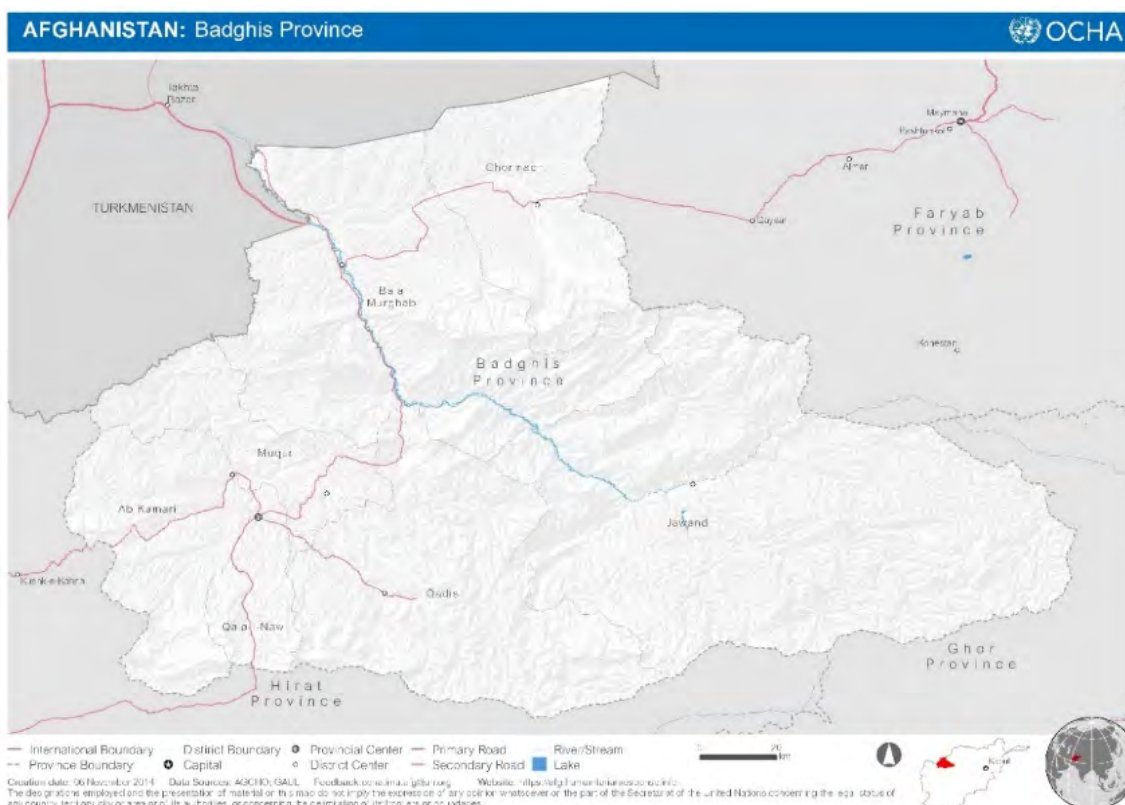
<sup>377</sup> Reuters, FAA says Kabul airport uncontrolled now, U.S. carriers barred from flights, 30 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>378</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, accessed (29 August 2021), [url](#)

<sup>379</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (5-11 April 2021), 15 April 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>380</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (7-13 June 2021), 17 June 2021, [url](#), p. 2

## 2.3 Badghis



Map 3: Afghanistan – Badghis province, source: UNOCHA<sup>381</sup>

As of 31 August 2021, an assessment of the LWJ mapping Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information, considered all districts in Badghis province to be under Taliban control.<sup>382</sup>

According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021, there were 169 security incidents recorded in Badghis, of whom 129 were coded as battles, 31 remote violence and 9 incidents of violence against civilians.

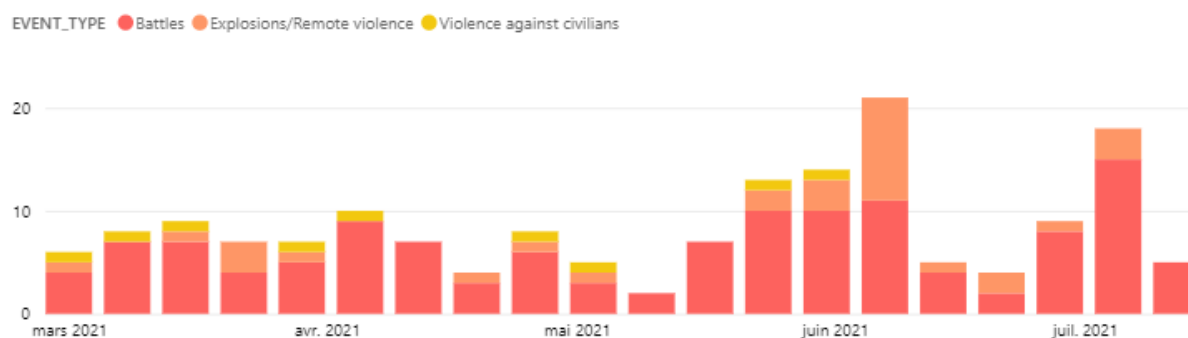


Figure 4. Badghis province - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>383</sup>

<sup>381</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan – Badghis Province- District Atlas, April 2014, [url](#)

<sup>382</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 31 August 2021), [url](#)

<sup>383</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)



The Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team report covering May 2020 to April 2021 noted that Khatiba Imam al-Bukhari had approximately 25 to 150 fighters mainly in Badghis province.<sup>384</sup>

The Taliban attacked security outposts in various districts of Badghis, and mortar fire and roadside bombs continued to cause casualties during the reporting period.<sup>385</sup> On 24 March 2021, mortar fire hit a house in Moqor district killing a woman and two children.<sup>386</sup> In April 2021, a Taliban infiltrator attack in Moqor district killed three police officers whilst they were sleeping.<sup>387</sup> On 29 May 2021, a roadside bomb killed an NDS officer in Moqor district.<sup>388</sup> On 5 June 2021, a roadside bomb hit a van in Ab-Kamari district killing 11 civilians.<sup>389</sup> On 5 June 2021, a minibus was hit by an IED on the Qala-e Naw – Abkamari road, killing 11 civilians.<sup>390</sup> On 6 July 2021, around 65 security force members were killed, 14 others wounded and 43 troops abducted in a Taliban ambush of a convoy of ASNF.<sup>391</sup>

Regarding the security situation in the main urban centre/provincial capital Qala-e Naw, on 11 March 2021, unidentified attackers shot dead two soldiers.<sup>392</sup> On 7 July 2021, the Taliban entered Qala-e Naw amidst widespread fighting and freed prisoners and threatened to overtake the city<sup>393</sup>, however on the same day that Afghan forces backed by Afghan Special forces took back control of city.<sup>394</sup> On 10 July 2021, a mortar shell hit a house in the provincial capital killing two children and wounding three more.<sup>395</sup> UNOCHA reported that between 5-11 July 2021, ongoing fighting in Qala-e Naw City had killed 3 and injured a further 71.<sup>396</sup> Qala-e Naw fell on 12 August 2021 after days of fighting.<sup>397</sup>

On 15 July 2021, it was reported that following the Taliban securing complete control over all districts in the province, the governor of Badghis had negotiated a ceasefire with the Taliban, mediated by tribal elders, although this was denied by the Taliban who put their withdrawal down to avoiding civilian casualties.<sup>398</sup>

The WHO recorded one attack against health care provision in Badghis province in the first seven months of 2021; the destruction of a healthcare facility in July 2021.<sup>399</sup>

Qala-i Naw airport in Badghis province is located 1.60 km west of Qala-I Naw city centre.<sup>400</sup> As of 29 August 2021, no domestic flights were scheduled from the airport.<sup>401</sup> UNOCHA reported in early April

<sup>384</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486, 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 82

<sup>385</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>386</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>387</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>388</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>389</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>390</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (31 May - 6 June 2021), 8 June 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>391</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>392</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>393</sup> New York Times (The), Taliban Attack a Provincial Capital in Afghanistan's North, Freeing Prisoners, updated 15 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>394</sup> Sarwary, B., (@bsarwary), [Twitter], posted on: 7 July 2021, [url](#); Swiss Institute for Global Affairs, What Recent Taliban Advances in Afghanistan Do and Do Not Mean, 8 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>395</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>396</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (5 -11 July 2021), 15 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>397</sup> LWJ, Taliban overrun Herat City, Qala-i-Naw, 12 August 2021, [url](#); RFE/RL, Radio Azadi, Taliban Captures Herat, Two Other Cities As Afghan Forces Collapse, 13 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>398</sup> Reuters, Provincial Afghan govt, Taliban agree on ceasefire in Western Badghis, 15 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>399</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care July 2021, 10 August 2021, [url](#); WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (January-June 2021), 12 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>400</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#), p. 437

<sup>401</sup> Flightradar24, Live Air Traffic n.d. (accessed 29 August 2021), [url](#); Kam Air, n.d. (accessed 29 August 2021), [url](#)

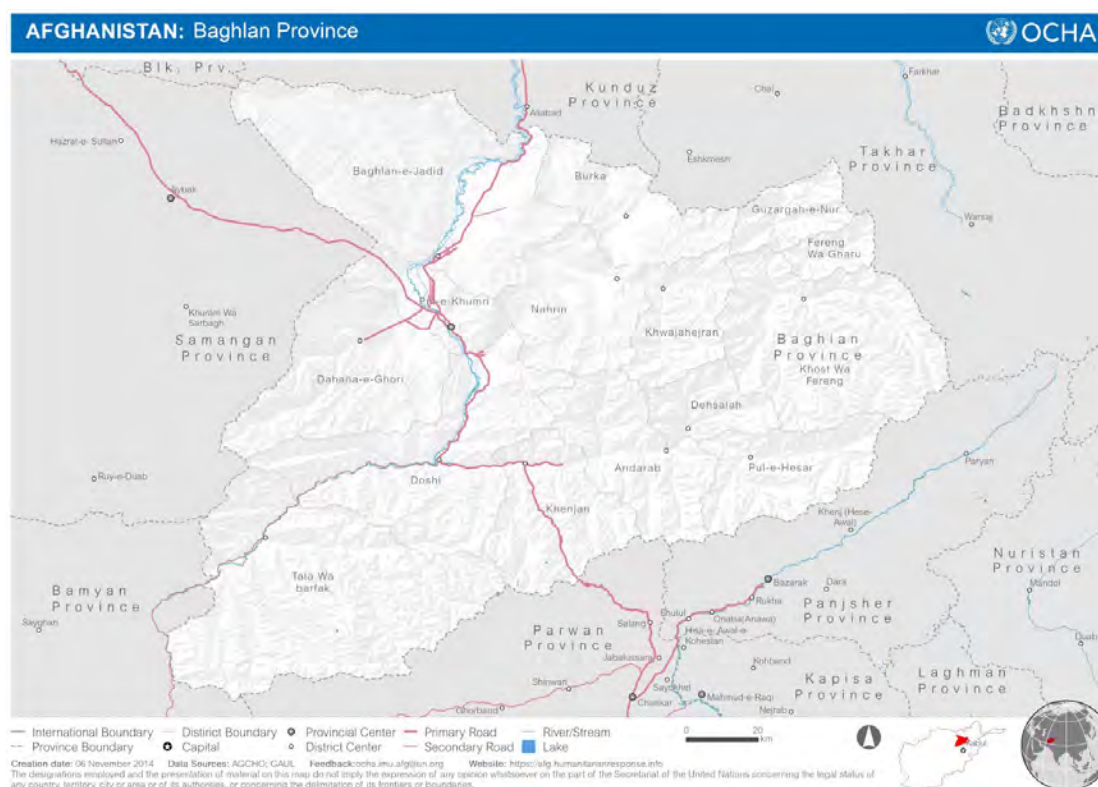


2021 that the road connecting Qala-e-Naw to Jawand district, Badghis province had been blocked since 2019, affecting access to markets and medical facilities.<sup>402</sup>

### Displacement

UNOCHA collected data from the period 1 March – 9 August 2021, reporting that 48 624 persons were displaced from Badghis province. IDPs predominantly originated from Qala-e-Naw district (45 679), including 39 977 displaced from Qala-e-Naw district on 4 July 2021. Of the IDPs fleeing Badghis, 42 087 or 87% remained in the province itself with the remaining 6 537 displaced to other provinces (of them, 6 389 to Herat). No displacement was reported to Badghis from other provinces during this period.<sup>403</sup>

## 2.4 Baghlan



Map 4: Afghanistan – Baghlan province, source: UNOCHA<sup>404</sup>

As of 31 August 2021, an assessment of the LWJ mapping Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information, considered all district of Baghlan to be under Taliban control except for Dushi that was considered to be under the NRF's control, and the districts Andarab, Khinjan and Puli Hisar that were considered to be contested.<sup>405</sup>

According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021 there were 219 security incidents recorded in Baghlan, of whom 166 were coded as battles, 41 remote violence and 12 incidents of violence against civilians.

<sup>402</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (29 March -4 April 2021), 7 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>403</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>404</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan – Baghlan Province - District Atlas, April 2014, [url](#)

<sup>405</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 31 August 2021), [url](#)

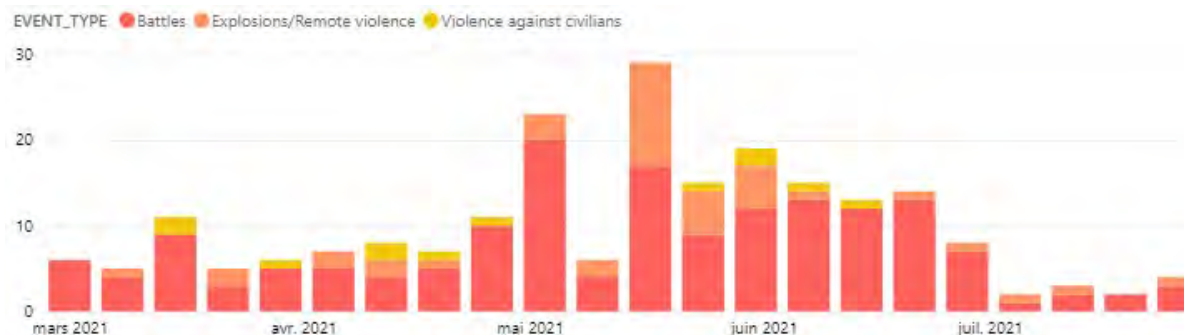


Figure 5. Baghlan province - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>406</sup>

The Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team report covering the period May 2020 and April 2021 noted that the Taliban moved forces into five northern provinces including Baghlan, with the objective to deny the ANSF freedom of movement and to control road communications and border crossings to facilitate narcotic and mineral trade. Daily taxes collected from Taliban checkpoints such as those between Pul-e Khumri and Mazar-e Sharif alone were reportedly lucrative.<sup>407</sup>

ISKP attacked electricity pylons and fuel tankers in Baghlan in the first half of May 2021.<sup>408</sup> On 8 June 2021, ISKP entered a HALO Trust camp where over 100 humanitarian de-miners were stationed, took their belongings and fired shots indiscriminately, killing 11 and injuring a further 15.<sup>409</sup> According to HALO Trust, Hazara ethnic group members were specifically targeted.<sup>410</sup>

During the reporting period the Taliban attacked security outposts and security forces in various districts of Baghlan, with roadside bombs, airstrikes, mortar fire were also documented.<sup>411</sup> On 29 April 2021 the Taliban opened fire on people leaving a mosque, killing seven civilians, the police responded, killing two Taliban fighters and wounding three others.<sup>412</sup> On 31 May 2021 a security forces vehicle explosion targeted a police headquarters in in Baghlan-e-Markazi district, killing four police officers, two soldiers and one commando and wounding 12 security forces and 16 civilians.<sup>413</sup> UNOCHA reported that towards the end of June 2021 airstrikes in Baghlan reportedly killed three civilians.<sup>414</sup> UNOCHA noted that three citizens had been reportedly killed and two further civilians injured by mortar fire.<sup>415</sup> On 27 July 2021 a Taliban attack on the convoy of Sayed Dawood Naderi, head of Ismaili Council, killed five and wounded two others.<sup>416</sup> On 4 August 2021 the Taliban attacked security outposts and checkpoints in Khost district, killing eight pro-government militia members and wounding seven others.<sup>417</sup>

<sup>406</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>407</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486, 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 32, 59

<sup>408</sup> UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General, The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security A/75/926-S/2021/570, 15 June 2021, [url](#), para. 21

<sup>409</sup> UNAMA, Afghanistan – Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, Midyear Report 2021, July, [url](#), p. 6

<sup>410</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>411</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>412</sup> New York Times (The)YT, Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>413</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#);

<sup>414</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (28 June – 4 July 2021), 4 July 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>415</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (12-18 July 2021), 23 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>416</sup> KabulNow, Taliban ambush Naderi's convoy in Baghlan killing five people, 28 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>417</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: August 2021, updated 5 August, [url](#)

Regarding the security situation in the main urban centre/provincial capital Pul-i-Khumri, on 16 March 2021, a rocket struck a Baghlan University bus carrying about 25 lecturers and students, killing the driver and a student and injuring six others.<sup>418</sup> on 12 April 2021 the Taliban beheaded two civilians for unknown reasons.<sup>419</sup> On 23 May 2021 an airstrike in the killed three civilians.<sup>420</sup> Battles with the Taliban were reported on the outskirts of Pul-e-Khumri in Baghlan on 11 July 2021.<sup>421</sup> In mid-July 2021 AAN described Pul-e-Khumri as 'vulnerable'.<sup>422</sup> Pul-i-Khumri was reported to have been captured by the Taliban on 10 August 2021, a day after it launched a 'major attack'.<sup>423</sup>

The WHO did not record any attacks related to health care provision in Baghlan province in the first seven months of 2021.<sup>424</sup> On 18 May 2021 it was reported that during clashes with the Taliban, the ANSF bombed a clinic wounding four health workers.<sup>425</sup>

Baghlan province is not served by an airport offering scheduled domestic flights.<sup>426</sup> AAN detailed that at the end of June 2021, sections of the Kabul to Kunduz/Balkh highway had been blocked for two days due to heavy clashes.<sup>427</sup> It further noted that by mid-July 2021 the Taliban controlled check posts on the highway on stretches of the road between Doshi and Pul-e Khumri.<sup>428</sup>

## Displacement

UNOCHA collected data for the period 1 March 2021 - 9 August 2021, reporting 15 077 persons displaced from Baghlan, of which 12 872 (some 85%) were displaced within the province within Pul-e-Khumri district. The remaining 2 205 persons were displaced to Parwan (231), Panjsher (140), Kabul (1 827) and Faryab (7) provinces. During the same period, no displacement was reported to Baghlan from other provinces.<sup>429</sup> Ongoing fighting led to tens of thousands of displacements in the first six months of 2021, particularly towards the end of May 2021.<sup>430</sup>

Between 22 and 28 March 2021, 5 705 people in Pul-e-Khumri district in Baghlan province were displaced to safer districts due to ongoing fighting.<sup>431</sup> Owing to ongoing fighting, between 3 and 9 May 2021, some 24 500 people were displaced in Baghlan province and between 17 and 23 May 2021, over 21 000 people were displaced in Baghlan province.<sup>432</sup> Between 24 and 30 May 2021, heavy fighting in the province reportedly displaced more than 21 000 people.<sup>433</sup> Between 21 and 27 June 2021, 14 000 people were displaced from Nahrin, BaghlanJaded, Tala-wa-Barfak, Doshi, Khinjan, and the outskirts of Pul-e Khumri to safer locations in Pul-e Khumri city, adding to the 10 500 people that were displaced the week before.<sup>434</sup>

<sup>418</sup> Gandhara, University Students Targeted In Latest Violence In Afghanistan, 16 March 2021, [url](#)

<sup>419</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>420</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>421</sup> Tolonews, Two district s Fall as Battles Continue Near 10 Cities, 11 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>422</sup> AAN, Menace, Negotiation, Attack: The Taliban take more district Centres across Afghanistan, 16 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>423</sup> LWJ, Farah City, Pul-i-Khumri fall to the Taliban, 10 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>424</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (January-July 2021), 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>425</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021

<sup>426</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#)

<sup>427</sup> AAN, A Quarter of Afghanistan's district s Fall to the Taliban amid Calls for a 'Second Resistance', 2 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>428</sup> AAN, Menace, Negotiation, Attack: The Taliban take more district Centres across Afghanistan, 16 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>429</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>430</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (22-28 March 2021), 31 March 2021, [url](#), p. 2; UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (21-27 June 2021), 1 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2; UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (24 - 30 May 2021), 2 June 2021, [url](#), p. 2; UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (21-27 June 2021), 1 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2

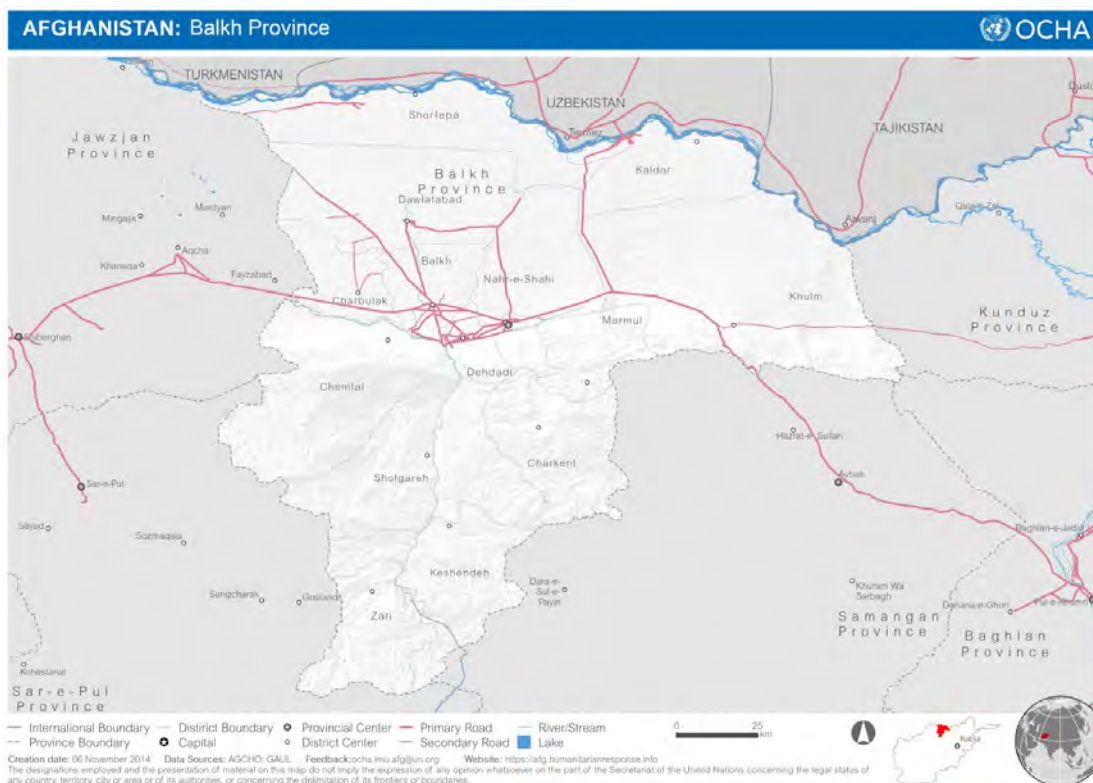
<sup>431</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (22-28 March 2021), 31 March 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>432</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (21-27 June 2021), 1 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>433</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (24 - 30 May 2021), 2 June 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>434</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (21-27 June 2021), 1 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2

## 2.5 Balkh



Map 5: Afghanistan – Balkh province, source: UNOCHA<sup>435</sup>

As of 31 August 2021, an LWJ assessment of Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information, considered all districts of Balkh Province to be under Taliban control except Chahar Kint that remained contested.<sup>436</sup>

According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021 there were 271 security incidents recorded in Balkh, of whom 184 were coded as battles, 83 remote violence and 4 incidents of violence against civilians.

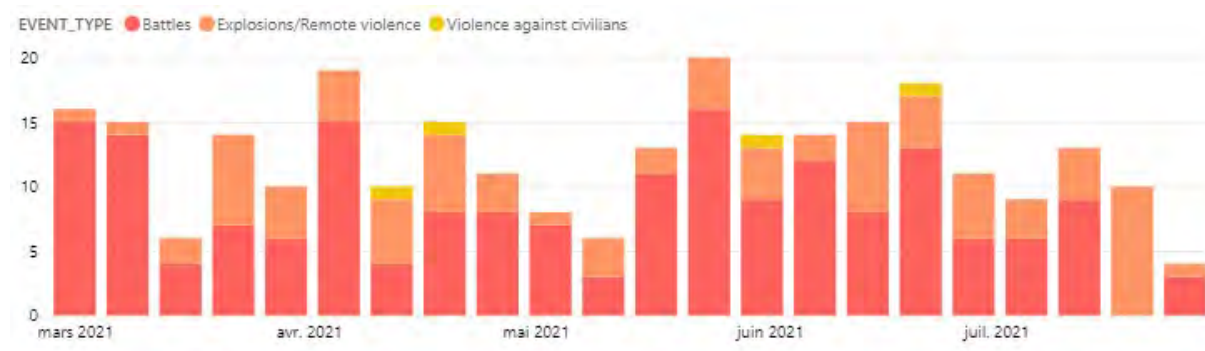


Figure 6. Balkh province - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>437</sup>

<sup>435</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan – Balkh Province- District Atlas, April 2014, [url](#)

<sup>436</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 13 August 2021), [url](#)

<sup>437</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)



During the reporting period the Taliban attacked several military bases in Balkh, mortar fire was reported and targeted attacks and sticky bombs were reported in the provincial capital.<sup>438</sup> A Taliban infiltrator attack in Chemtal district on 6 March 2021 killed nine soldiers.<sup>439</sup> On 17 April 2021 Taliban mortars targeting the Balkh bazaar killed two civilians and wounded two more.<sup>440</sup> June 2021 saw the Taliban attack and capture districts with ANSF soldiers fleeing to Uzbekistan and two exploding Humvees killed five civilians, 17 security forces, one police officer and wounded 88 civilians.<sup>441</sup> On 20 June 2021 in Dawlatabad district, mortars fired during a ground engagement between the ANSF and the Taliban killed six civilians, injured a further two and destroyed 50 local shops.<sup>442</sup>

As of early July 2021, it was reported that the Taliban had captured eight out of 15 districts in Balkh and that according to a civil society activist, the ANSF had mostly not put up a resistance, with a counterattack to push back the Taliban from the district centre on 24 June 2021.<sup>443</sup>

Regarding the security situation in the main urban centre/provincial capital Mazar-e Sharif, in April 2021 security officers were shot dead and on 22 April 2021 a civilian was shot dead in his house and two others wounded in the 10<sup>th</sup> police district, both by unknown gunmen.<sup>444</sup> On 11 June 2021 a magnetic bomb attached to a bicycle killed one civilian and wounded three more.<sup>445</sup> In mid-June 2021 'fierce fighting' was reported between the Taliban and ANSF on the outskirts of Mazar-e Sharif.<sup>446</sup> In mid-July 2021 Mazar-e Sharif was described as 'relatively calm'.<sup>447</sup> On 17 July 2021 a NDS officer was gunned down in the fifth police district and on 18 July 2021 three civilians were killed and two further injured in a roadside bomb explosion in the ninth police district.<sup>448</sup> On 4 August 2021 in the village of Samar Qandian the Taliban killed a young woman for wearing tight clothing and not being accompanied by a male relative.<sup>449</sup> On 5 August 2021 a magnetic bomb attached to a bicycle killed one civilian and wounded 12 others.<sup>450</sup> On 11 August 2021 President Ghani was reported to have held talks with 'long-time local strongman' Atta Mohammad Noor and 'infamous warlord' Abdul Rashid Dostum about the defence of the 'besieged' northern city of Mazar-e Sharif.<sup>451</sup> On 14 August 2021 the Taliban captured the 'heavily defended' Mazar-e Sharif, Afghanistan fourth largest city and the last northern city to fall.<sup>452</sup>

Mazar was one of the urban centres reported to be most affected by a spike in robberies and thefts reported by UNOCHA in the first quarter of 2021, with 36 incidents which decreased to 20 incidents in the second quarter in total.<sup>453</sup>

ISKP was assessed in April 2021 to have retained a core group of fighters in Kunar and Nangarhar, with smaller groups in Badakhshan, Kunduz and Sar-e-Pol. However, the ANSF reported a disruption of a

<sup>438</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>439</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>440</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>441</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>442</sup> UNAMA, Afghanistan – Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, Midyear Report 2021, July 2021, [url](#), p. 7

<sup>443</sup> AAN, A Quarter of Afghanistan's districts Fall to the Taliban amid Calls for a 'Second Resistance', 2 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>444</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>445</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>446</sup> Al Jazeera, Taliban captures Afghanistan's main Tajikistan border crossing, 22 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>447</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (5 -11 July 2021, 15 July, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>448</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

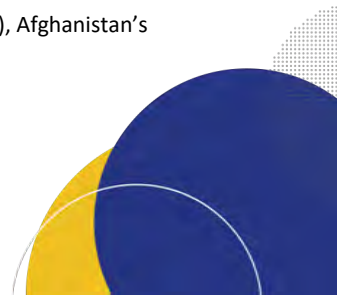
<sup>449</sup> RFE/RL, Radio Azadi, Afghan Police Say Taliban Killed Young Woman For Wearing Tight Clothing, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>450</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: August 2021, updated 5 August, [url](#)

<sup>451</sup> Al Jazeera, Afghan leader rallies forces in besieged Mazar-i-Sharif, 11 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>452</sup> AP, Taliban capture key northern city, approach Afghan capital, 14 August 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghanistan's commercial hub, Mazar-i-Sharif, falls to the insurgents, 14 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>453</sup> UNOCHA, HAG Quarterly Report (April to June 2021), 19 July 2021, [url](#), p. 14





cell around Mazar-e Sharif of 450 fighters, potentially indicating that the group may have been stronger in northern Afghanistan than previously thought.<sup>454</sup> It was reported in July 2021 that the ANSF had taken down 'large IS-Khorasan cells' around Mazar-e Sharif.<sup>455</sup>

In the first seven months of 2021 the WHO recorded the death of one healthcare professional.<sup>456</sup> On 12 April 2021 a chief military doctor and his driver were killed by the Taliban in the fifth police district of Mazar-e Sharif in an attack on their vehicle.<sup>457</sup>

Mazar-e Sharif International Airport, also known as Mawlānā Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Balkhī International Airport, is located 4.5 nautical miles (8.3km) east of Mazar-e Sharif, one of four international airports in Afghanistan, serving both international and several domestic scheduled passenger flights, including to Kabul.<sup>458</sup> The airport has been under the joint responsibility of NATO and the ACAA since 2015 and was intended to be passed fully over to the ACAA in 2021.<sup>459</sup> At the end of July 2021 UNOCHA reported that non-state armed groups continued to carry out sporadic attacks around provincial capitals including Mazar-e Sharif but that the airport remained operational.<sup>460</sup> As of 29 August 2021, domestic flights were scheduled between Kabul and Mazar-e Sharif and an international departure to Moscow.<sup>461</sup> On 30 August 2021, Reuters cited the US FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) reporting on the absence of 'air traffic services and a functional civil aviation authority in Afghanistan'.<sup>462</sup>

## Displacement

UNOCHA collected data for the period 1 March 2021 – 9 August 2021, reporting 1 316 persons displaced from Balkh, all within the province itself. 53% (700) fled from Sholgareh, the remaining 47% fled from Zari (357), Dawlatabad (175) and Balkh (84). These IDPs sought refuge in Nahr-e-Shahi district (86%) or Mazar-e Sharif district (14%) of Balkh province. During the same period, 560 persons were displaced to Balkh originating from other provinces, namely Samangan (315), Jawzjan (175) and Faryab (70). All displacement from other provinces into Balkh was recorded on 5 May 2021.<sup>463</sup>

<sup>454</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486, 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 62

<sup>455</sup> VOA, Al-Qaida, Islamic State Set to Reconstitute in Afghanistan, Beyond, 11 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>456</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (January-July 2021), 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>457</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>458</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#), p. 382; KamAir, Route Map, n.d. (accessed 28 July 2021), [url](#)

<sup>459</sup> SIGAR, Quarterly report to the United States Congress, 30 April 2021, [url](#), p. 133

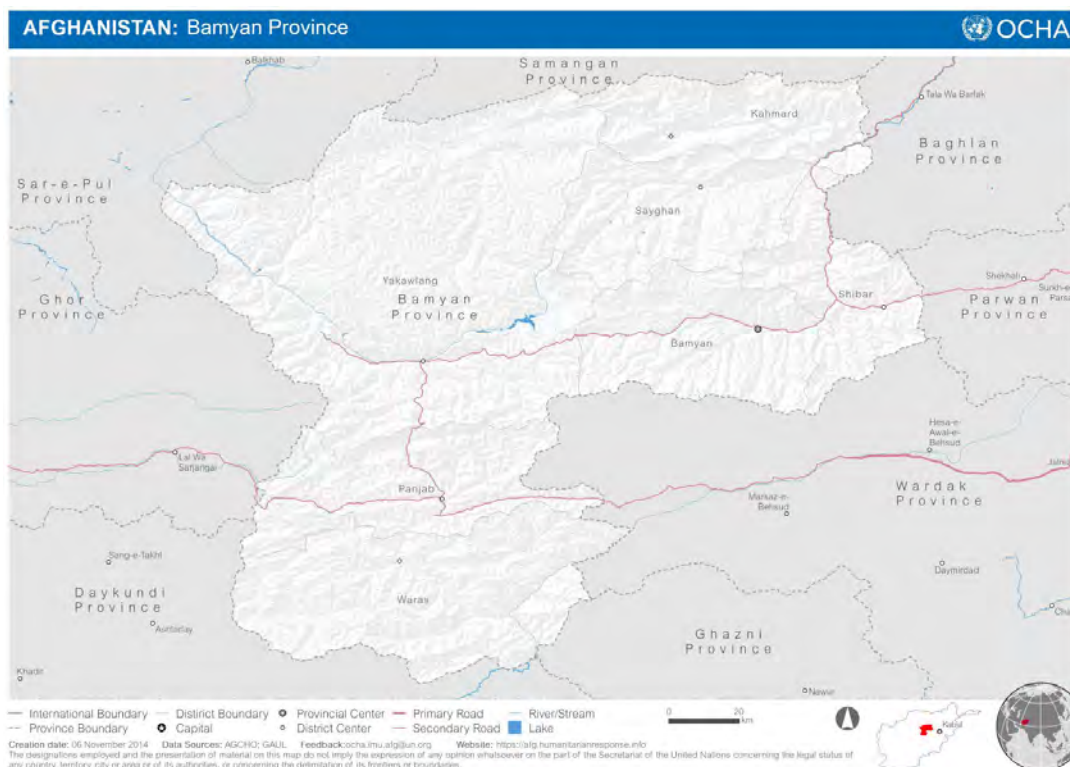
<sup>460</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (19-25, 29 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>461</sup> Flightradar24, Mazar-I-Sharif International Airport Live Air Traffic n.d. (accessed 29 August 2021), [url](#); Kam Air, n.d. (accessed 29 August 2021), [url](#)

<sup>462</sup> Reuters, FAA says Kabul airport uncontrolled now, U.S. carriers barred from flights, 30 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>463</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, [url](#)

## 2.6 Bamyan



Map 6: Afghanistan – Bamyan province, source: UNOCHA<sup>464</sup>

As of 31 August 2021, an assessment of the LWJ mapping Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information, considered all the districts of Bamyan province under Taliban control.<sup>465</sup>

According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021 there were 6 security incidents recorded in Bamyan, of whom all 6 were coded as battles, and no remote violence or incidents of violence against civilian were recorded.

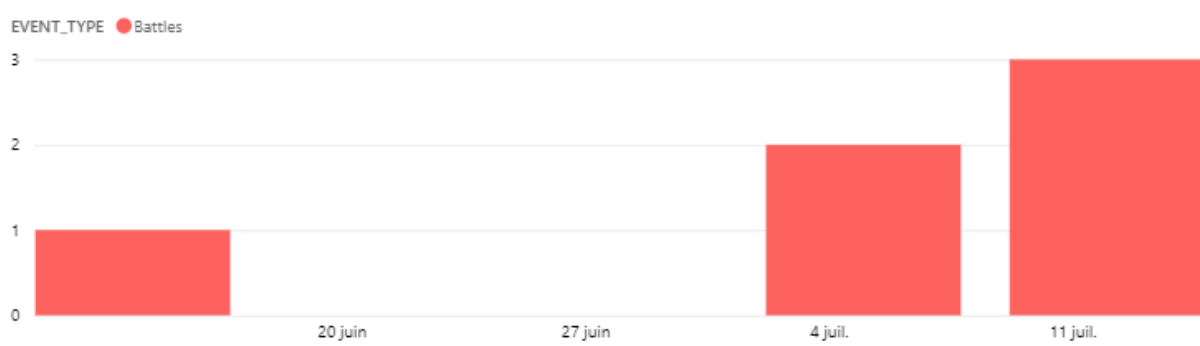


Figure 7. Bamyan province - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>466</sup>

On 16 June 2021 a Taliban attack on a security outpost in Kahmard district killed five police officers and wounded one.<sup>467</sup> On 12 July 2021 Reuters noted that Bamyan had been historically ‘comparatively

<sup>464</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan – Bamyan Province - District Atlas, April 2014, [url](#)

<sup>465</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 31 August 2021), [url](#)

<sup>466</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>467</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

free from conflict or Taliban presence’ but that the Taliban had taken over Kahmard district following a ANSF retreat.<sup>468</sup> In mid-July 2021 the central provinces were described as having become ‘increasingly unstable and unpredictable’, with reports of increased activities and violence against civilians by non-state armed groups in Bamyan and other central provinces.<sup>469</sup> The following week UNOCHA described reports of increased non-state armed group activity and that the ANSF reportedly retook control of several districts in Bamyan, Ghazni and Parwan provinces.<sup>470</sup>

The WHO did not record any attacks related to health care provision in Bamyan province in the first seven months of 2021.<sup>471</sup>

There is a domestic airport in Bamyan located 1.4 km north east of Bamyan town centre.<sup>472</sup> As of end July 2021, Kam Air offered scheduled passenger services between Bamyan and Kabul.<sup>473</sup> As of 29 August 2021, no domestic flights were scheduled from Bamyan airport.<sup>474</sup> On 30 August 2021, Reuters cited the US FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) reporting on the absence of ‘air traffic services and a functional civil aviation authority in Afghanistan’.<sup>475</sup>

### Displacement

UNOCHA collected data for the period 1 March 2021 – 9 August 2021, reporting that 90 790 people were displaced from Bamyan province, all of whom left Bamyan district to other districts of the province (except 385 from Kahmard district who went to Kabul). All 90 790 IDPs were displaced between 9 and 10 July 2021. During the same period, 694 persons were displaced to Bamyan from Jalrez district in Wardak province on 2 April 2021.<sup>476</sup> Between 12 and 18 July 2021, tens of thousands of people in Bamyan province were temporarily displaced within Bamyan and to other provinces, with the majority (about 60%) of people reportedly returning to their homes a few days later.<sup>477</sup>

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<sup>468</sup> Reuters, Taliban surround central Afghan city of Ghazni – officials, 12 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>469</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (5 -11 July 2021, 15 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>470</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (12-18 July 2021), 23 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>471</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (January-July 2021), 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>472</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#), p. 54

<sup>473</sup> KamAir, Route Map, n.d. (accessed 28 July 2021), [url](#)

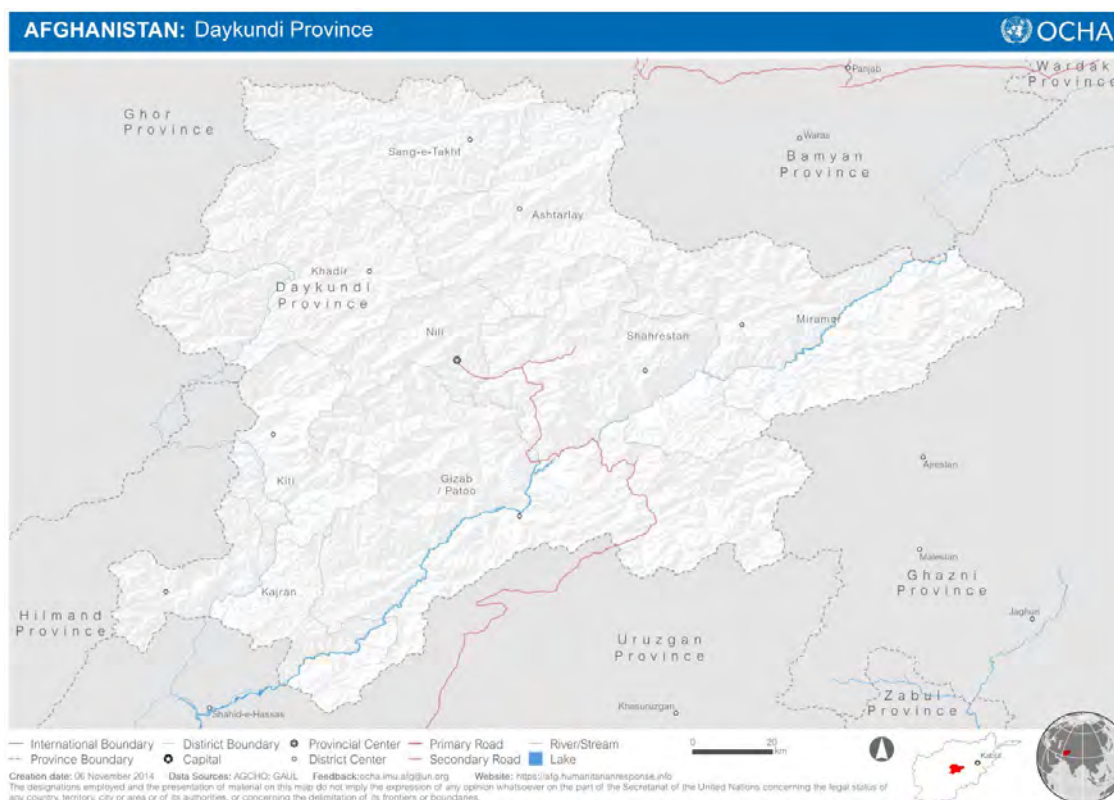
<sup>474</sup> Flightradar24, Bamiyan Airport Live Air Traffic n.d. (accessed 29 August 2021), [url](#)

<sup>475</sup> Reuters, FAA says Kabul airport uncontrolled now, U.S. carriers barred from flights, 30 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>476</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>477</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (12-18 July 2021), 23 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2

## 2.7 Daykundi



Map 7: Afghanistan – Daykundi province, source: UNOCHA<sup>478</sup>

As of 31 August 2021, an assessment of the LWJ mapping Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information, considered all districts of Daikundi province to be under Taliban control.<sup>479</sup>

According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021 there were 29 security incidents recorded in Daykundi, of whom 24 were coded as battles, 4 remote violence and 1 incident of violence against civilians.



Figure 8. Daykundi province - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>480</sup>

<sup>478</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan Daykundi Province - District Atlas, April 2014, [url](#)

<sup>479</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 31 August 2021), [url](#)

<sup>480</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

On 20 March 2021 a roadside IED in the Bazar Mushtarak area in Nawmish district reportedly killed a civilian.<sup>481</sup> On 28 May 2021 a roadside bomb in Pato district killed one child and wounded three others.<sup>482</sup> On 23 June 2021 in Pato district a civilian was shot dead working on his farm, no group claimed responsibility but local officials blamed the Taliban.<sup>483</sup> On 3 July 2021 a Taliban attack in Pato district killed one police officer and a pro-government militia member and wounded three others.<sup>484</sup> In mid-July 2021 the central was described as having become ‘increasingly unstable and unpredictable’, with reports of increased activities and violence against civilians by non-state armed groups in Daykundi.<sup>485</sup> In mid-July 2021 the Taliban was reported to have been attacking the Hazara majority district of Pato since 10 June 2021 and there were accounts of the Taliban burning crops and houses in areas that put up a resistance.<sup>486</sup> On 14 August 2021 Daykundi was reported to have been surrendered to the Taliban with ‘only two gunshots heard in capital, Nili’.<sup>487</sup>

The WHO did not record any attacks related to health care provision in Daykundi province in the first seven months of 2021.<sup>488</sup>

Daykundi lacks an operational domestic airport.<sup>489</sup> In 2020, the National Procurement Authority of Afghanistan issued a tender to construct the airport and relevant infrastructure in Daykundi<sup>490</sup>, but no publicly available update was located as of end July 2021.

### Displacement

UNOCHA collected data for the period 1 March 2021 – 9 August 2021, reporting 15 936 persons displaced from Daykundi, of which all persons apart from 14 were displaced within the province on 15 June 2021, travelling from Gizab/Patoo to Nili (12 646) or Kiti (5 600) districts. During the same period, no displacement was reported to Daykundi from other provinces.<sup>491</sup> In early July 2021, conflict and threats from the Taliban were reported to have displaced almost 3 000 families in one week.<sup>492</sup>

<sup>481</sup> UNAMA, Afghanistan – Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, Midyear Report 2021, July 2021, [url](#), p. 12

<sup>482</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>483</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>484</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>485</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (5 -11 July 2021, 15 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>486</sup> AAN, Menace, Negotiation, Attack: The Taliban take more district Centres across Afghanistan, 16 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>487</sup> AP, Afghan lawmaker says central province of Daykundi surrendered to Taliban, with only two gunshots heard in capital, Nili, 14 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>488</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (January-July 2021), 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>489</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#)

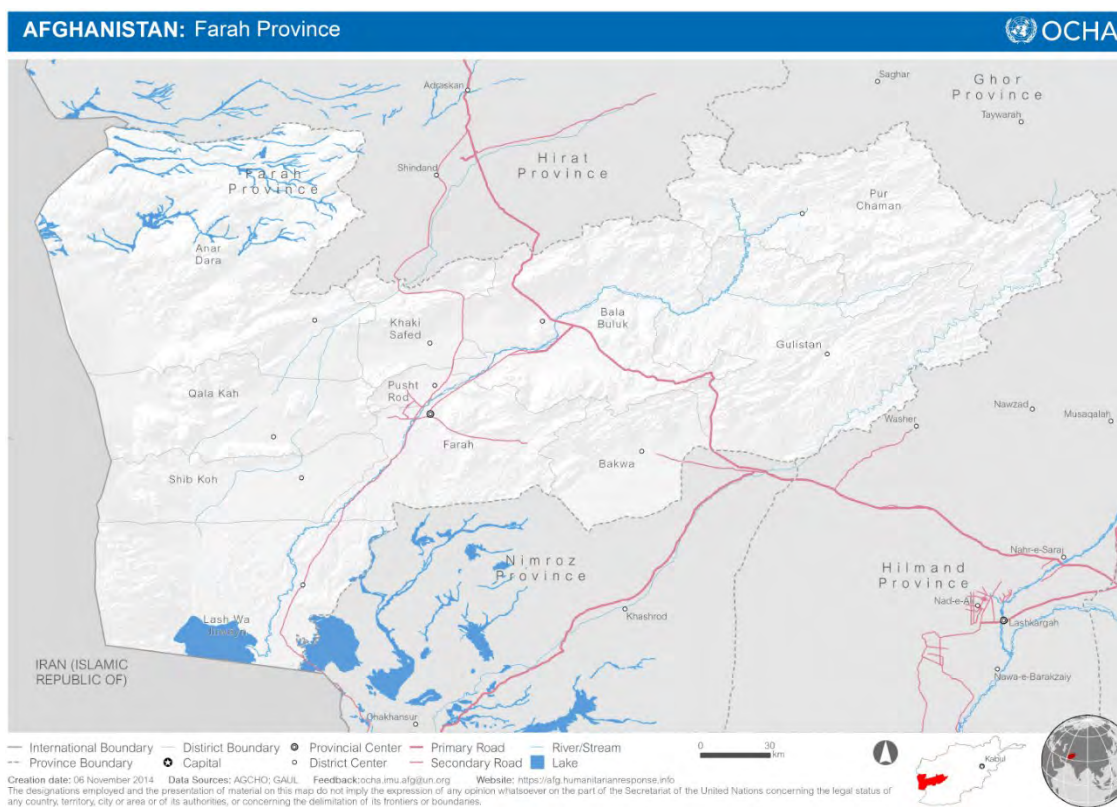
<sup>490</sup> Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, National Procurement Authority (NPA), Addendum No. 6 to Bidding Documents for Construction of Daikundi Airport, 27 June 2020, [url](#)

<sup>491</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>492</sup> MENA FM, Fighting displaces thousands in Daikundi, 5 July 2021, [url](#)



## 2.8 Farah



Map 8: Afghanistan – Farah province, source: UNOCHA<sup>493</sup>

As of 31 August 2021, an assessment of the LWJ mapping Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information, considered all districts in Farah province to be under Taliban control.<sup>494</sup>

According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021 there were 109 security incidents recorded in Farah, of whom 64 were coded as battles, 32 remote violence and 13 incidents of violence against civilians.

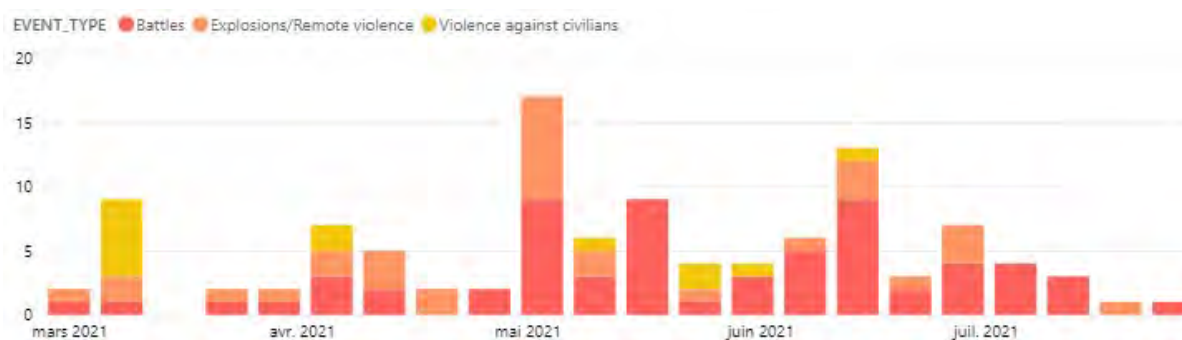


Figure 9. Farah province - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>495</sup>

On 3 May 2021 a Taliban attack on a military base in Balaboluk district killed 20 soldiers.<sup>496</sup> On 13 June 2021 a Taliban attack on Lash-e Juwayn district killed 10 soldiers, four police officers, three NDS

<sup>493</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan, Farah Province - District Atlas, April 2014, [url](#)

<sup>494</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 13 August 2021), [url](#)

<sup>495</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>496</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

officers, abducted four others and they successfully took the district.<sup>497</sup> Bilal Sarwary posted on Twitter on 15 June 2021 that the district Centre of Anar Dara was blown up by the Taliban after they captured it the day before.<sup>498</sup> The Sheikh Abu Nasr Farahi dry port in Shibkoh district of Farah province located on the Iran border was reported to have been captured by the Taliban on 8 July 2021.<sup>499</sup>

ACLED noted that in mid-July 2021 the Taliban took over Pur Charman district, bringing all of the districts of Farah under their control apart from Farah city, the provincial capital.<sup>500</sup>

Regarding the security situation in the main urban centre/provincial capital Farah city, on 27 March 2021 unidentified gunmen fired on police officers in the second police district killing one and two civilians.<sup>501</sup> On 11 April 2021 unidentified gunmen shot dead the father of a judge in the Nawda area.<sup>502</sup> On 13 April 2021 a vehicle-borne IED in Qala-e-Ghulam Seddiq Khan village, reportedly killed two civilians and injured 18 others.<sup>503</sup> On 3 May 2021 anti-government elements carried out a targeted attack against a high ranking member of the ANSF forces in a crowded area of the city, injuring 19 civilians in addition to those targeted.<sup>504</sup> On 26 May 2021 the Taliban killed a female prison employee.<sup>505</sup> On 28 July 2021 unidentified assailants gunned down two police officers in the first police district.<sup>506</sup> The Taliban overran Farah city on 10 August 2021.<sup>507</sup>

The WHO did not record any attacks related to health care provision in Farah province in the first seven months of 2021.<sup>508</sup> Unknown gunmen were reported to have shot dead a doctor in front of his clinic in Farah city on 15 June 2021.<sup>509</sup>

There is a domestic airport in Farah that is located two nautical miles (3.7km) southeast of Farah City.<sup>510</sup> As of end July 2021, Kam Air offered several scheduled passenger services from Farah, including to Kabul.<sup>511</sup> As of 29 August 2021 only flights to Kabul were available.<sup>512</sup> On 30 August 2021, Reuters cited the US FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) reporting on the absence of 'air traffic services and a functional civil aviation authority in Afghanistan'.<sup>513</sup>

## Displacement

UNOCHA collected data from the period 1 March – 9 August 2021, reporting 2 352 persons displaced from Farah province, with 83% (some 1 955) displaced within the province itself (all in Farah, the provincial capital), 13% displaced into Nimroz and the remaining 3% displaced into Herat. During the same period, 54 persons were displaced into Farah from other provinces, origination from Faryab (30), Helmand (13), Herat (6) and Kandahar (5).<sup>514</sup> Between 8 and 14 March 2021, 454 people who were displaced from Bala Buluk, Khak-e-Safed, Pushtrod, Gulistan, Pur Chaman, Lash-e-Juwayn and Shibkoh districts by conflict were assessed in Farah province.<sup>515</sup>

<sup>497</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>498</sup> Sarwary, B., (@bsarwary), [Twitter], posted on: 15 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>499</sup> AAN, A Quarter of Afghanistan's districts Fall to the Taliban amid Calls for a 'Second Resistance', 2 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>500</sup> ACLED, Regional Overview: South Asia and Afghanistan 10-16 July 2021, 21 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>501</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>502</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>503</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (12-18 April 2021), 21 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>504</sup> UNAMA, Afghanistan – Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, Midyear Report 2021, July 2021, [url](#), p. 8

<sup>505</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>506</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>507</sup> LWJ, Farah City, Pul-i-Khumri fall to the Taliban, 10 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>508</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (January-July 2021), 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>509</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>510</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#), p. 129

<sup>511</sup> KamAir, Route Map, n.d. (accessed 28 July 2021), [url](#)

<sup>512</sup> Flightradar24, Farah Airport Live Air Traffic, n.d. (accessed 29 August 2021), [url](#)

<sup>513</sup> Reuters, FAA says Kabul airport uncontrolled now, U.S. carriers barred from flights, 30 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>514</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>515</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (8-14 March 2021), 16 March 2021, [url](#), p. 2

## 2.9 Faryab



Map 9: Afghanistan – Faryab province, source: UNOCHA<sup>516</sup>

As of 31 August 2021, an assessment of the LWJ mapping Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information, considered all districts of Farah to be under Taliban control.<sup>517</sup>

According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021 there were 181 security incidents recorded in Faryab, of whom 110 were coded as battles, 55 remote violence and 16 incidents of violence against civilians.

<sup>516</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan Faryab Province - District Atlas, April 2014, [url](#)

<sup>517</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 31 August 2021), [url](#)

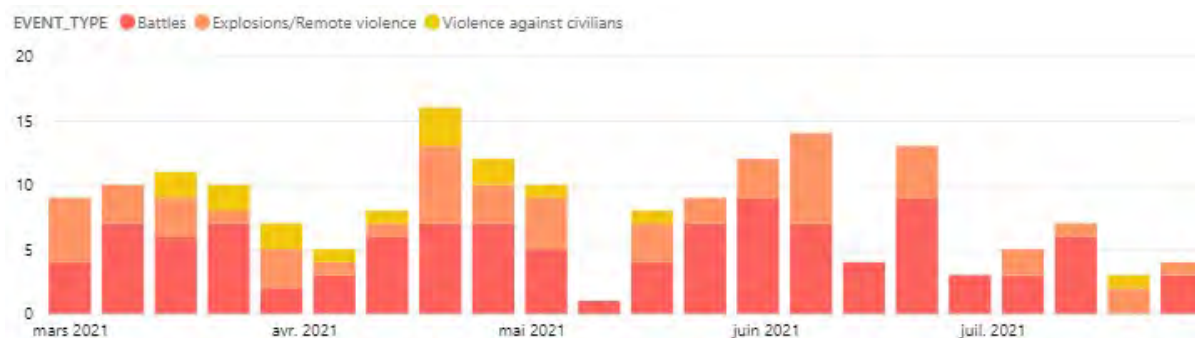


Figure 10. Faryab province - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>518</sup>

During the reporting period, Taliban targeted attacks against security force members and attacks on security outposts were documented, with roadside bombs, mortar fire also documented.<sup>519</sup> On 19 March 2021 the Taliban shot two civilians dead in the Sarchakan village of Gorziwan district, owing to their connection to a local pro-government militia member and on the same day the Taliban shot a soldier and his sister and niece in the Jar Qala village of Gorziwan district.<sup>520</sup> On 31 May 2021 an infiltrator killed a pro-government militia commander at an outpost in Qurghan district.<sup>521</sup> During June 2021 several districts were attacked and taken by the Taliban, with reports of civilian, security force and pro-government militia casualties and unsuccessful attempts to recapture districts leading to more casualties. On 6 June 2021 a Taliban car bomb explosion followed by an attack against a police headquarters in Qaisar district killed 19 security force and nine pro-government militia members, the Taliban took the district and abducted 121 security force members.<sup>522</sup> On 16 June 2021 in an operation to recapture Dawlat Abad district the ANSF were ambushed and 24 commandos and five police officers were killed, with eight abducted by the Taliban.<sup>523</sup> When Gurziwan was under attack its district governor stated on 21 June 2021 that they had sought assistance from the government for two weeks and that they faced a shortage of ammunition but that there had been no response, with the district falling three days later.<sup>524</sup> At the end of June 2021 the ANSF attempted to recapture Pashtun Kot, however the operation was unsuccessful with one police officer and five pro-government militia members killed, nine others wounded and 27 security force members abducted.<sup>525</sup> Shirin Tagab was reported to fall to the Taliban in July 2021 after a pro-government militia commander had surrendered control to spare his own life, however he was later shot dead and a civilian was killed in the crossfire.<sup>526</sup> In August 2021 UNICEF reported that a 12 year old boy from Shirin Tagab district had endured a 'brutal flogging' by a member of an anti-government group.<sup>527</sup>

AAN reported that between 1 May and 2 July 2021 the Taliban had captured 12 of Faryab's 14 districts – Qaisar, Dawlatabad, Shirin Tagab, Khawja Sabposh, Kohistan, Pashtun Kot, Belcheragh, Khan-e Chahar Bagh, Andkhoi, Gurziwan, Qurghan and Qaramqul, adding to Almar, which they took over in March 2021 and noted that sporadic fighting continued around the provincial capital, Maimana city.

<sup>518</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>519</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>520</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>521</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>522</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>523</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>524</sup> AAN, A Quarter of Afghanistan's districts Fall to the Taliban amid Calls for a 'Second Resistance', 2 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>525</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>526</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>527</sup> UNICEF, Statement by UNICEF Afghanistan Representative Hervé Ludovic De Lys on the brutal flogging of a young boy, 4 August 2021, [url](#)



This included the loss of Aqina, a border crossing with Turkmenistan. AAN also described Qaisar as having been under siege for a year.<sup>528</sup>

Regarding the security situation in the main urban centre/provincial capital Maimana, on 29 April 2021 unidentified gunmen killed a civilian, a former pro-government militia member, in the second police district.<sup>529</sup> In mid-June 2021 ‘fierce fighting’ was reported between the Taliban and ANSF on the outskirts of three provincial capitals including Maimana.<sup>530</sup> On 9 July 2021 a Taliban mortar hit a house in the city killing a 3 year old child and wounding six others.<sup>531</sup> In mid-July 2021 AAN described the Maimana as ‘vulnerable’.<sup>532</sup> Also in mid-July 2021 UNOCHA described increased ‘heavy fighting’ in Maimana.<sup>533</sup> The city was reported to have been under siege for several weeks by mid-July 2021 with heavy fighting reported around Maimana.<sup>534</sup> On 17 July 2021 a Taliban attack on the first police district of Maimana lasted a few hours and two police officers were killed, but the Taliban were repelled.<sup>535</sup>

The Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team report covering the period May 2020 and April 2021 listed Faryab as one of the 15 provinces where AQ was reported to be resident.<sup>536</sup> Furthermore, Islamic Jihad Group was reported to have around 100 fighters in Faryab and Kunduz under Taliban shelter and control as of April 2021.<sup>537</sup>

The WHO did not record any attacks related to health care provision in Faryab province in the first seven months of 2021.<sup>538</sup>

There is a domestic airport in Maimana that is located 0.4 nautical miles (0.74km) north east of Maimana.<sup>539</sup> As of end July 2021, Kam Air offered scheduled passenger services between Maimana and Kabul.<sup>540</sup> At the end of July 2021 UNOCHA reported that non-state armed groups continued to carry out sporadic attacks around provincial capitals including Maymana but that the airport remained operational.<sup>541</sup> As of 29 August 2021, there were no scheduled flights from the airport.<sup>542</sup> On 30 August 2021, Reuters cited the US FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) reporting on the absence of ‘air traffic services and a functional civil aviation authority in Afghanistan’.<sup>543</sup>

## Displacement

UNOCHA collected data from the period 1 March – 9 August 2021, reporting 17 790 persons displaced from Faryab province, of which 15 904 remained within the province, seeking refuge exclusively in the Maymana district. The remaining IDPs sought refuge in Balkh (70), Farah (30), Ghor (8), Herat (42), Jawzjan (1 715) and Sar-e-Pul (21). Almost 8 000 were displaced on 23 June 2021 from Pashtunkot district. During the same period, 63 IDPs were displaced into Faryab province from other provinces, all

<sup>528</sup> AAN, A Quarter of Afghanistan’s district s Fall to the Taliban amid Calls for a ‘Second Resistance’, 2 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>529</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>530</sup> Al Jazeera, Taliban captures Afghanistan’s main Tajikistan border crossing, 22 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>531</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>532</sup> AAN, Menace, Negotiation, Attack: The Taliban take more district Centres across Afghanistan, 16 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>533</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (12-18 July 2021), 23 July 2021, [url](#), p. 3

<sup>534</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (12-18 July 2021), 23 July 2021, [url](#), p. 3; New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>535</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>536</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486 , 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 42

<sup>537</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486 , 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 82

<sup>538</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (January-July 2021), 12 August 2021, [url](#)

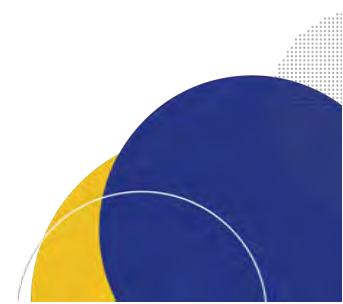
<sup>539</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#), p. 375

<sup>540</sup> KamAir, Route Map, n.d. (accessed 28 July 2021), [url](#)

<sup>541</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (19-25, 29 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>542</sup> Flightradar24, Maimana Airport Live Air Traffic, n.d. (accessed 29 August 2021), [url](#)

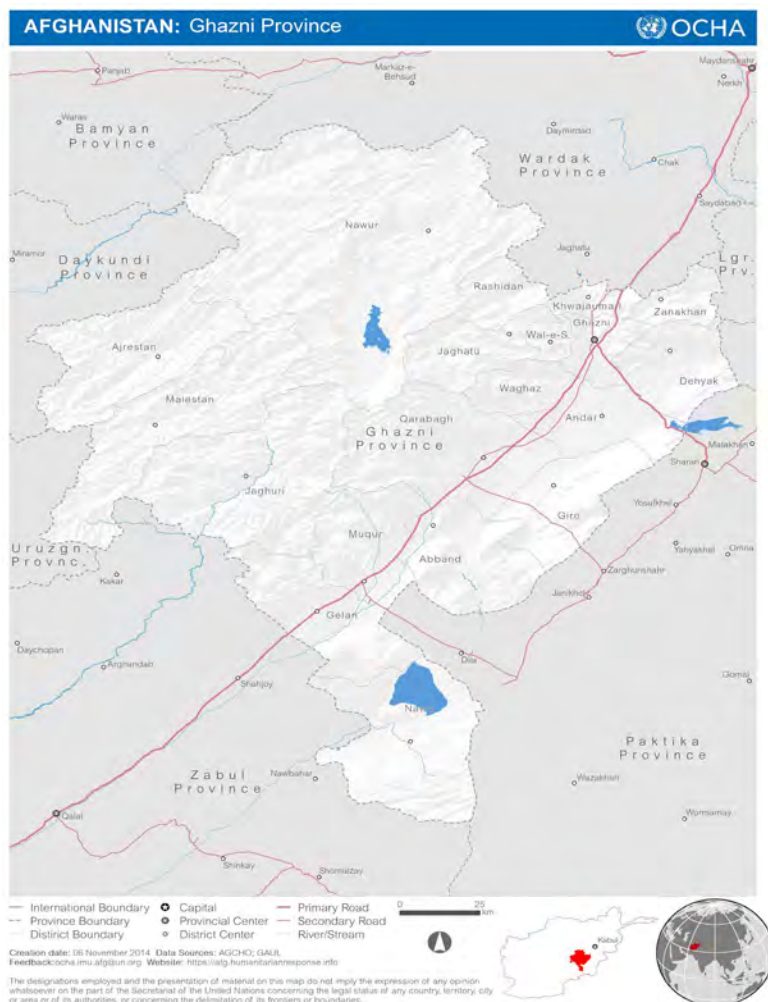
<sup>543</sup> Reuters, FAA says Kabul airport uncontrolled now, U.S. carriers barred from flights, 30 August 2021, [url](#)





of them into the Maymana district. These IDPs were displaced from Badghis, Sar-e-Pul, Ghor, Baghlan, Helmand, and Herat provinces, and all were displaced on either 13 March 2021 or 1 April 2021.<sup>544</sup>

## 2.10 Ghazni



Map 10: Afghanistan – Ghazni province, source: UNOCHA<sup>545</sup>

As of 31 August 2021, an assessment of the LWJ mapping Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information, considered all districts of Ghazni to be under Taliban control.<sup>546</sup>

According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021 there were 287 security incidents recorded in Ghazni, of whom 206 were coded as battles, 64 remote violence and 17 incidents of violence against civilians.

<sup>544</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>545</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan Ghazni Province - District Atlas, April 2014, [url](#)

<sup>546</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 31 August 2021), [url](#)

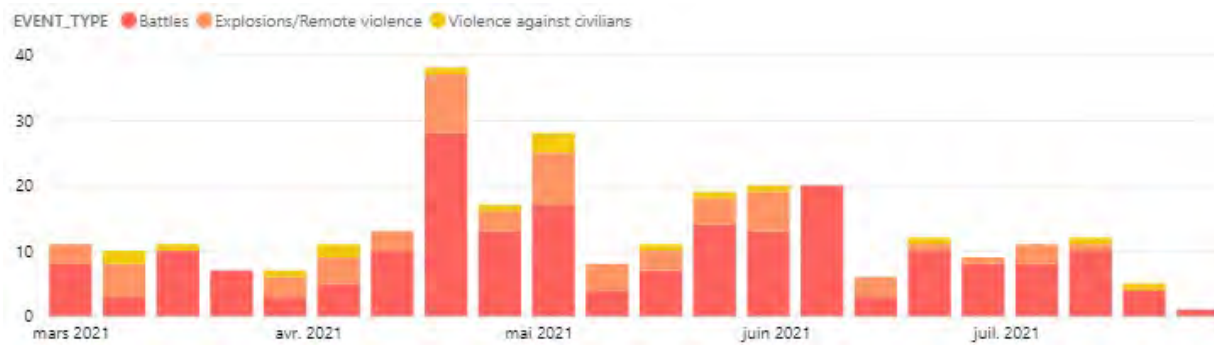


Figure 11. Ghazni province - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>547</sup>

During the reporting period the Taliban attacked security outposts and security forces in Ghazni, with crossfire and targeted killings also being reported.<sup>548</sup> The Swedish Committee for Afghanistan noted on 11 June 2021 that owing to increased fighting between the government and the Taliban in recent months in Ghazni province, many schools had been forced to close.<sup>549</sup> In May and June 2021 the Taliban attacked and captured outposts killing security force members including in some instances soldiers who had surrendered.<sup>550</sup> Malistan was reported to be under siege for two weeks with the ANSF abandoning the district to the Taliban in early July 2021.<sup>551</sup> This represented the first Taliban capture of a Hazara district in 20 years with Ezzatullah Mehrdad of the Washington Post highlighting fears of revenge by the Taliban given sustained local resistance.<sup>552</sup> Amnesty International documented the Taliban massacre of nine Hazara men between 4 to 6 July in Mundarakht, Malistan district noting 'Six of the men were shot and three were tortured to death, including one man who was strangled with his own scarf and had his arm muscles sliced off'.<sup>553</sup> On 18 July 2021 a pro-government militia recaptured Malistan but was repelled the next day, with around 20 Hazara residents killed by the Taliban.<sup>554</sup> In mid-July 2021 the Taliban was reported to have been attacking two other Hazara majority districts: Nawur and Jaghori.<sup>555</sup> Bilal Sarwary posted on Twitter on 13 July 2021 that Sunny Farty military base in Andar district in Ghazni province fell to the Taliban.<sup>556</sup> On 14 July 2021 29 civilians were killed by the Taliban in Malistan district by cross or direct fire and reportedly nine civilians were beheaded whilst trying to flee.<sup>557</sup> In mid-July 2021 UNOCHA described that the ANSF reportedly retook control of several districts in Bamyan, Ghazni and Parwan provinces.<sup>558</sup> Investigations by the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission confirmed 37 executions by the Taliban in Ghazni province.<sup>559</sup>

Regarding the security situation in the main urban centre/provincial capital Ghazni city, on 11 March 2021 unknown gunmen shot head a police officer and a civilian in the first police district and on 14 March 2021 unidentified gunmen assassinated a provincial court employee in the second police

<sup>547</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>548</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>549</sup> Swedish Committee for Afghanistan, Armed clashes force school closures in Ghazni, 11 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>550</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>551</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>552</sup> Mehrdad, E., (@EzzatMehrdad), [Twitter], posted on: 13 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>553</sup> Al, Afghanistan: Taliban responsible for brutal massacre of Hazara men – new investigation, 19 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>554</sup> New York Times (The), The Propaganda War Intensifies in Afghanistan as the Taliban Gain Ground, 8 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>555</sup> AAN, Menace, Negotiation, Attack: The Taliban take more district Centres across Afghanistan, 16 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>556</sup> Sarwary, B., (@bsarwary), [Twitter], posted on: 13 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>557</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>558</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (12-18 July 2021), 23 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>559</sup> National (The), Taliban killing spree pursues soldiers and civilians in captured areas, 9 August 2021, [url](#)

district.<sup>560</sup> On 31 May 2021 a tribal elder was shot dead.<sup>561</sup> On 9 July 2021 a mortar hit a house in the Hyderabad area, killing a civilian and wounding 10 others.<sup>562</sup> AAN described that the Taliban offensive was ‘partially losing its stunning speed and effectiveness in the face of government resistance in major centres such as Herat and Ghazni’.<sup>563</sup> Battles with the Taliban were reported on the outskirts of the city on 11 July 2021.<sup>564</sup> On 12 August 2021, Ghazni city was the 10<sup>th</sup> provincial capital to be captured by the Taliban, described as ‘strategically important’ given that it sits on the road between Kabul and Kandahar city.<sup>565</sup> Reportedly the governor’s compound, police quarters, prison were captured quickly and the governor fled the city after reaching an agreement with the Taliban and was later arrested on route to Kabul.<sup>566</sup>

As of April 2021, Ghazni was listed as one of the 15 provinces where AQ was reported to be resident.<sup>567</sup>

The WHO recorded one healthcare facility closed, one destroyed and seven people injured in Ghazni province in the first seven months of 2021.<sup>568</sup> UNOCHA reported that in mid-April 2021 Qarabagh district Hospital was closed, affecting some 80 000 people.<sup>569</sup>

There is a mention of an aerodrome in Ghazni but it is not further described in the ACAA Aeronautical Information Publication.<sup>570</sup> In March 2021 a contract was signed between the ACAA and a private company for the construction of a terminal building in the Jaghori district of Ghazni.<sup>571</sup> As of end July 2021, Kam Air did not offer scheduled flights to Ghazni.<sup>572</sup>

## Displacement

UNOCHA collected data from the period 1 March – 9 August 2021, reporting 1 512 persons displaced from Ghazni province. The majority of those displaced (1 085) fled to Kabul, including 770 displaced from Qarabagh to Kabul on 12 June 2021. The remainder fled to Herat (7) and Paktika (420) provinces. During the same period, no displacement was reported to Ghazni from other provinces.<sup>573</sup> On 12 April 2021, fighting between ANSF and an NSAG displaced over 650 families (approximately 4 550 people) in Ghazni province.<sup>574</sup> Between 3 and 9 May 2021, 2 030 people were newly displaced in Kapisa and Ghazni provinces due to ongoing fighting and insecurity.<sup>575</sup> Between 12 and 18 July 2021, 1 200 families (about 8 400 people) were displaced from Malistan district to Jaghori in Ghazni Province.<sup>576</sup>

<sup>560</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>561</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>562</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>563</sup> AAN, The Fall of Nimruz: A symbolic or economic game-changer? 9 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>564</sup> Tolonews, Two district s Fall as Battles Continue Near 10 Cities, 11 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>565</sup> LWJ, Ghazni City falls to the Taliban, 12 August 2021, [url](#); RFE/RL, Radio Azadi, Taliban Seizes 10th Afghan Provincial Capital As Ghazni Falls, 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>566</sup> LWJ, Ghazni City falls to the Taliban, 12 August 2021, [url](#); Pajhwok, Ministry of Interior: Ghazni governor arrested, 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>567</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486 , 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 42

<sup>568</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (January-July 2021), 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>569</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (12-18 April 2021), 21 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>570</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#), p. 6

<sup>571</sup> Pajhwok Afghan News, Contract for Jaghori airport terminal signed, 6 March 2021, [url](#)

<sup>572</sup> KamAir, Route Map, n.d. (accessed 28 July 2021), [url](#)

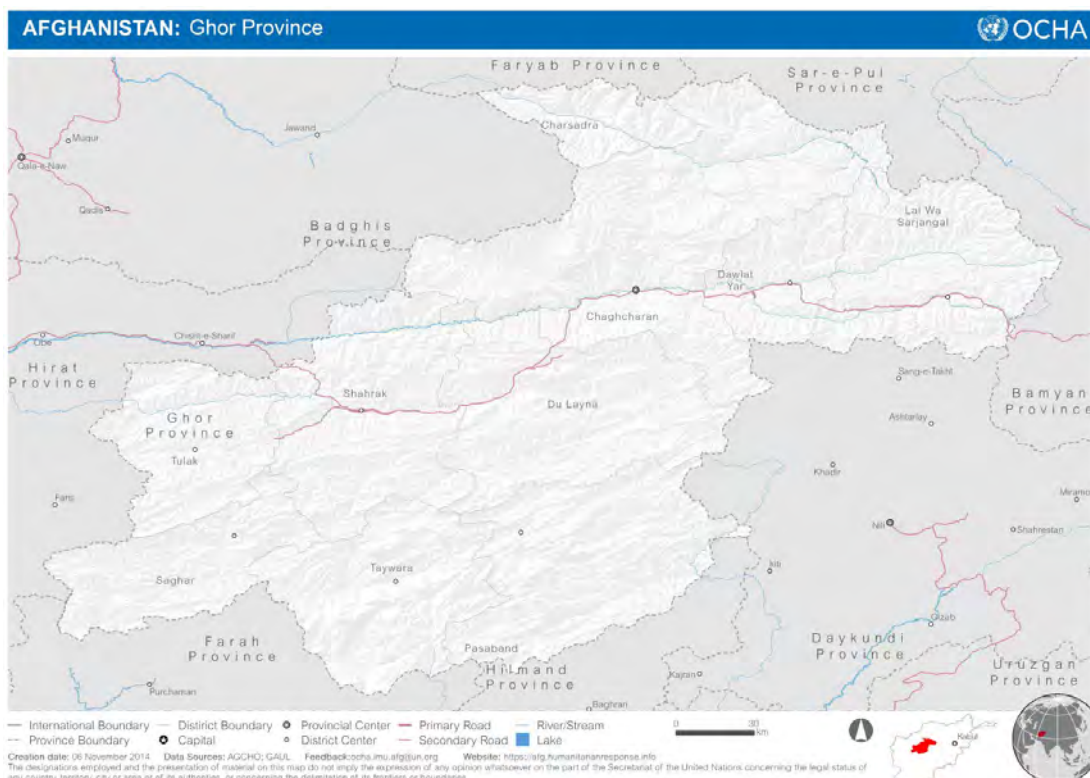
<sup>573</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>574</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (12-18 April 2021), 21 April 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>575</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (3-9 May 2021), 12 May 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>576</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (12-18 July 2021), 23 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2

## 2.11 Ghor



Map 11: Afghanistan – Ghor province, source: UNOCHA<sup>577</sup>

As of 31 August 2021, an assessment of the LWJ mapping Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information, considered all districts in Ghor province to be under Taliban control.<sup>578</sup>

According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021 there were 99 security incidents recorded in Ghor, of whom 63 were coded as battles, 22 remote violence and 14 incidents of violence against civilians.

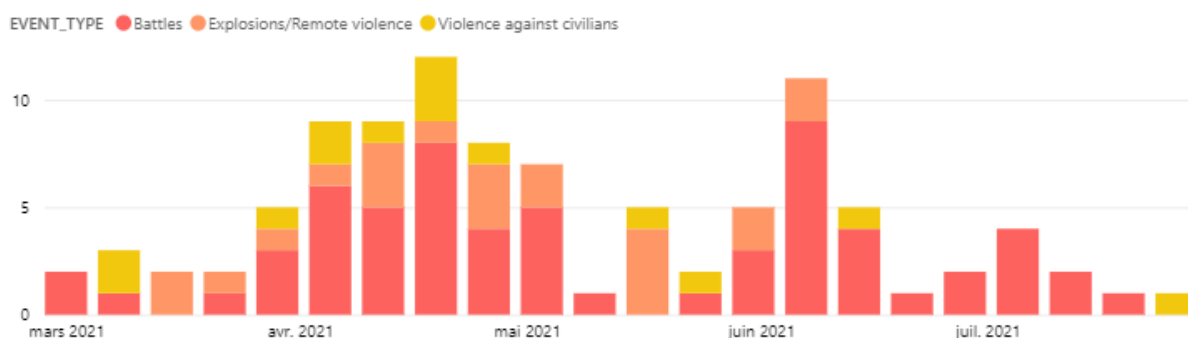


Figure 12. Ghor province - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>579</sup>

<sup>577</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan Ghor Province - District Atlas, April 2014, [url](#)

<sup>578</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 31 August 2021), [url](#)

<sup>579</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)



Targeted assassinations, car bombs, IEDs and Taliban attacks were documented in Ghor during the reporting period.<sup>580</sup> On 10 March 2021 two civilians including an employee of a health department were killed by unknown gunmen in Du Linah district and on 20 March 2021 the governor of Taywara District was killed by a magnetic bomb.<sup>581</sup> In April 2021 ISKP claimed ‘an incident’ in Ghor, the first in the province since 2017.<sup>582</sup> On 21 April 2021 the Taliban killed two civil servants and two civilians, all of Hazara ethnicity in Dawlatyar district.<sup>583</sup> On 6 June 2021 in Shahrak district nine soldiers were killed and seven wounded when a Taliban car bomb followed a complex attack.<sup>584</sup> Between 31 May and 6 June 2021, the security situation was reported to deteriorate in Ghor province and on 5 June 2021, a mini-bus was struck by an IED along the Qala-e-Naw – Abkamari road killing 11 civilians.<sup>585</sup> On 12 June 2021 the Taliban attacked and took over Tulak district, killing 18 police officers and two pro-government militia members and wounding 15 more.<sup>586</sup> UNOCHA reported that towards the end of June 2021, four out of nine districts (excluding the capital) in Ghor province were reportedly under the control of a non-state armed group.<sup>587</sup> The two districts of Taiwara and Pasaband fell to the Taliban on 11 July 2021.<sup>588</sup>

Regarding the security situation in the main urban centre/provincial capital Firoz Koh, on 11 March 2021 the Taliban killed a teacher.<sup>589</sup> On 21 April 2021 the Taliban shot and killed two civil servants and two civilians in Dawlatyar district, all of whom were of Hazara ethnicity and on 28 April 2021 a police officer was killed by the Taliban in front of the provincial hospital.<sup>590</sup> Several roadside bombs killed civilians in May 2021 and three Hazara were killed by the Taliban on 19 May 2021.<sup>591</sup> On 23 May 2021 crossfire reportedly injured two children.<sup>592</sup> On 14 June 2021 the Taliban killed a judge and his son and nephew whilst travelling.<sup>593</sup> In June and July 2021 in Firoz Koh Taliban attacks on security outposts killed police officers and pro-government militias with 19 security forces and militia men killed and nine others wounded.<sup>594</sup> On 13 August 2021 the Taliban were reported to have taken control of Firoz Koh without a fight.<sup>595</sup>

The WHO did not record any attacks related to health care provision in Ghor province in the first seven months of 2021.<sup>596</sup>

There is a domestic airport in Chakhcharan that is located 1.64 km north east of Chakhcharan.<sup>597</sup> As of end July 2021, Kam Air offered several scheduled passenger services from Chakhcharan, including to

<sup>580</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>581</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>582</sup> UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General, The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security A/75/926-S/2021/570, 15 June 2021, [url](#), para. 21

<sup>583</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>584</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>585</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (31 May - 6 June 2021), 8 June 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>586</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>587</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (21-27 June ), 1 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>588</sup> Tolonews, Two districts Fall as Battles Continue Near 10 Cities, 11 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>589</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>590</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>591</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>592</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update ((24 – 30 May 2021), 2 June 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>593</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>594</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>595</sup> Al Jazeera, Taliban seizes Feruz Koh, Qal-e-Naw, 13 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>596</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (January-July 2021), 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>597</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#), p. 95



Kabul.<sup>598</sup> As of 29 August 2021, no flights were scheduled.<sup>599</sup> On 30 August 2021, Reuters cited the US FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) reporting on the absence of 'air traffic services and a functional civil aviation authority in Afghanistan'.<sup>600</sup>

### Displacement

UNOCHA collected data for the period 1 March - 9 August 2021, reporting 14 447 IDPs displaced from Ghor province, including 13 992 within the province (5 495 in Chaghcharan district and 8 497 in Lal Wa Sarjantal district). Of the remaining IDPs, 448 were displaced into the Injil district in Herat province, and 7 into the Maymana district in Faryab province. During the same period, 151 IDPs were displaced into the province of Ghor from other provinces. These came from the Badghis, Helmand, Laghman, Faryab, and Kandahar provinces, with 93 IDPs being displaced in March 2021, and 48 being displaced in June 2021.<sup>601</sup> Between 28 June and 4 July 2021, following clashes in Dawlatyar district in Ghor province, some 10 500 people were displaced from 25 villages to Lal Wa Sarjantal district.<sup>602</sup> UNOCHA reported in early July 2021 that as a result of 'intense clashes' in Dawlatyar district around 10 500 people were reportedly displaced from 25 villages to Lal Wa Sarjantal district.<sup>603</sup> In mid-July 2021 armed clashes were reported to be causing sporadic displacement towards the provincial capital.<sup>604</sup>

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<sup>598</sup> KamAir, Route Map, n.d. (accessed 28 July 2021), [url](#)

<sup>599</sup> Kam Air, Flight schedule, n.d. (accessed 29 August 2021), [url](#)

<sup>600</sup> Reuters, FAA says Kabul airport uncontrolled now, U.S. carriers barred from flights, 30 August 2021, [url](#)

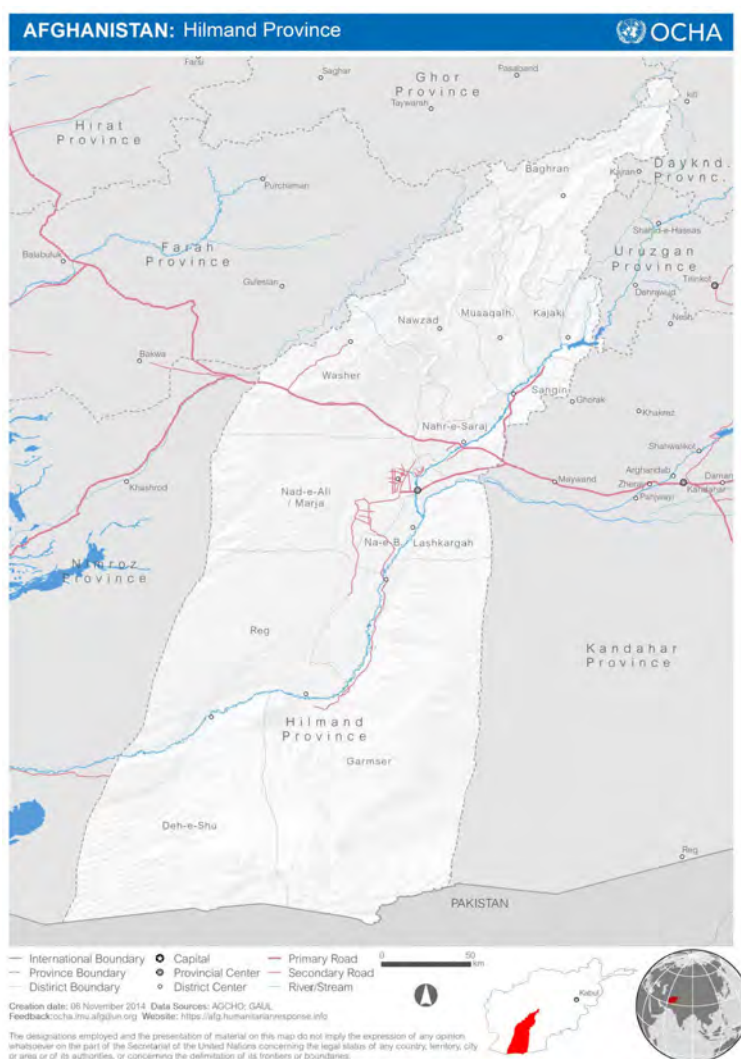
<sup>601</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>602</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (28 June – 4 July 2021), 4 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>603</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (28 June – 4 July 2021), 4 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>604</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (5 -11 July 2021), 15 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2

## 2.12 Helmand



Map 12: Afghanistan – Helmand province, source: UNOCHA<sup>605</sup>

As of 31 August 2021, an assessment of the LWJ mapping Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information, considered all districts in Helmand province to be under Taliban control.<sup>606</sup>

According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021 there were 420 security incidents recorded in Helmand, of whom 246 were coded as battles, 148 remote violence and 26 incidents of violence against civilians.

<sup>605</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan Helmand Province - District Atlas, April 2014, [url](#)

<sup>606</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 31 August 2021), [url](#)

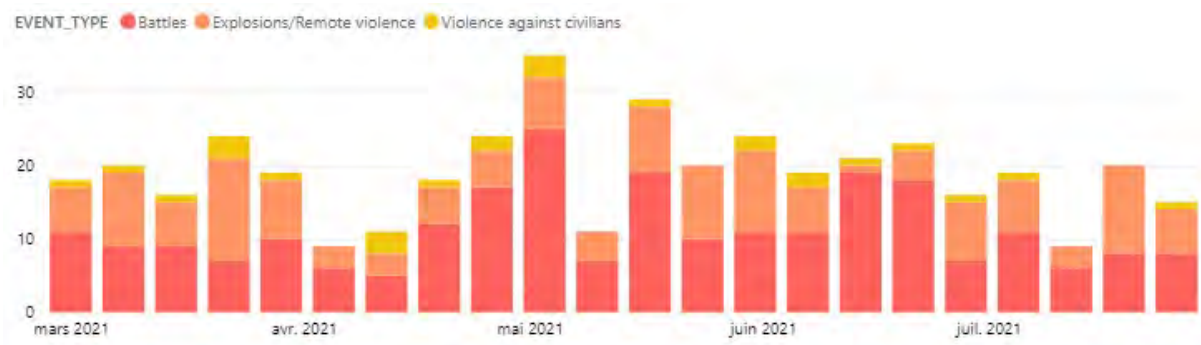


Figure 13. Helmand province - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>607</sup>

Targeted killings, IEDs, car bombs, Taliban attacks and airstrikes were documented in Helmand during the reporting period.<sup>608</sup> In mid-March 2021 airstrikes were reported in Nahr-e-Saraj, Nad-e-Ali, Lashkargh and Naw-e-Barakzai districts<sup>609</sup> and fighting was reported to be continuing in Nawa-e-Barakzai, Lashkargah, Nahr-e-Saraj and Nad-e-Ali districts.<sup>610</sup> On 27 March 2021 a Taliban insider attack on a security outpost in Greshk district killed 11 police officers and on 31 March 2021 in Washir district the Taliban claimed to have shot down a Black Hawk helicopter, reportedly killing four police officers and wounding two others although officials stated that a technical problem caused the crash.<sup>611</sup> On 5 April 2021 a car bomb targeted a police outpost in Nawa district which killed eight soldiers and wounded 12 others and on 25 April 2021 an imam in Greshk district was assassinated by unidentified assailants.<sup>612</sup> In Greshk district, two Hazara were shot dead on 23 May 2021 by unknown gunmen and on 28 May 2021 a Taliban car bomb targeted a security base killing seven security force members and wounding 52 others.<sup>613</sup> On 20 May 2021 nine civilians were injured by an IED in the Basharan area in Nad-e-Ali district.<sup>614</sup> Towards the end of May 2021, fighting in Nahr-e-Saraj district reportedly injured around 100 civilians.<sup>615</sup> UNOCHA documented in early July 2021 that ‘intense armed clashes’ were reported in Nad-e-Ali district.<sup>616</sup> It further noted that during mid-July 2021 the province witnessed a ‘significant spike in conflict’, with the ANSF conducting clearing operations and airstrikes.<sup>617</sup>

Regarding the security situation in the main urban centre/provincial capital Lashkargah, on 3 March 2021 a sticky bomb attached to a police vehicle killed one police officer and wounded a civilian and on 6 March 2021 a car bomb targeting the police headquarters killed a senior NDS official and his bodyguard and wounded eight civilians.<sup>618</sup> On 5 April 2021 a Taliban attack on a military base near Lashkar Gah killed 10 soldiers and 12 others were taken prisoner.<sup>619</sup> Battles with the Taliban were reported on the outskirts of Lashkargah on 11 July 2021.<sup>620</sup> In May 2021 rockets hit houses in

<sup>607</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>608</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>609</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (15-21 March 2021), 24 March 2021, [url](#)

<sup>610</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (8-14 March 2021), 16 March 2021, [url](#)

<sup>611</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>612</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>613</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>614</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (17-23 May 2021), 23 May 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>615</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (14-20 June 2021), 23 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>616</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (28 June – 4 July 2021), 4 July 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>617</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (12-18 July 2021), 23 July 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>618</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>619</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>620</sup> Tolonews, Two districts Fall as Battles Continue Near 10 Cities, 11 July 2021, [url](#)

Lashkargah causing civilian casualties.<sup>621</sup> By 3 May 2021, around 18 security outposts in the provincial capital had been captured by the Taliban, with at least 18 security forces killed and forcing the retreat of all forces, with the Taliban blocked by an Afghan and American Air Force air campaign.<sup>622</sup> As of mid-July 2021, the capital Lashkar Gah was reported to be on the 'verge of collapse'.<sup>623</sup> UNAMA detailed on 3 August 2021 that in the previous three days, at least 10 civilians had been killed and 85 wounded in Lashkargah.<sup>624</sup> Bilal Sarwary posted on Twitter on 3 August 2021 that heavy fighting was underway in Lashkargah city with Bost private university and a factory reportedly hit in air strikes<sup>625</sup> and residents told to evacuate.<sup>626</sup> By 4 August 2021 the city was reported to be under siege and fighting for control of the city described 'raging', with Taliban seen on the city roads, thousands of residents trapped or fleeing for their lives and bodies lying in the streets.<sup>627</sup> One resident the BBC spoke to said that the Taliban told them that if they didn't leave their house within half an hour they would be counted among the police and Afghan forces.<sup>628</sup> An Afghan commander leading the Helmand military operation also told residents to flee.<sup>629</sup> On 4 August 2021 fighting was reported to continue near the police headquarters, governor's office, prison, and other government buildings in the first police district.<sup>630</sup> During 26 July to 1 August 2021 UNOCHA noted reports of increased civilian casualties, destruction to residences, shops and hospitals in Kandahar and Lashkargah.<sup>631</sup> In a briefing to the Security Council on 6 August 2021, the Secretary General's Special Representative stated that in Lashkargah, in the previous 10 days at least 104 civilians were killed and 403 wounded.<sup>632</sup> On 13 August 2021, Lashkargah fell to the Taliban after a 'lengthy siege.'<sup>633</sup>

As of April 2021, AQ in the Indian Subcontinent was reported to be operating under the umbrella of the Taliban from Kandahar, Helmand (notably Baramcha) and Nimroz Provinces.<sup>634</sup>

In the first seven months of 2021 the WHO recorded damage to one healthcare facility, the destruction of another and the temporary closure of five more, as well as the injury of three healthcare professionals, one person killed and four others wounded and three patients injured.<sup>635</sup> At the end of May 2021 the Bolan Basic Health Clinic closed due to fighting, denying over 13 000 people access to basic health services.<sup>636</sup> Fighting in Garmser district partially damaged the district hospital in June 2021.<sup>637</sup> In August 2021 the Afghan air force bombed a private hospital that the Taliban had used as shelter, killing a civilian and wounding two more.<sup>638</sup> Bilal Sarwary posted on Twitter that a school and a clinic were hit in air strikes in two different locations in Lashkargah city on 7 August 2021<sup>639</sup> with

<sup>621</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>622</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>623</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>624</sup> UNAMA, (@UNAMANews), [Twitter], posted on: 3 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>625</sup> Sarwary, B., (@bsarwary), [Twitter], posted on: 3 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>626</sup> Sarwary, B., (@bsarwary), [Twitter], posted on: 3 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>627</sup> BBC, Afghanistan war: Bodies on the streets as fighting traps Lashkar Gah residents, 4 August 2021, [url](#); Guardian, Taliban on brink of taking key Afghan city as residents told to flee, 3 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>628</sup> BBC, Afghanistan war: Bodies on the streets as fighting traps Lashkar Gah residents, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>629</sup> Guardian, Taliban on brink of taking key Afghan city as residents told to flee, 3 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>630</sup> Tolonews, After 7 Days, Heavy Clashes Still Ongoing in Helmand's Capital, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>631</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (26 July -1 August 2021), 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>632</sup> UNAMA, Briefing to the United Nations Security Council by the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Afghanistan, 6 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>633</sup> LWJ, After lengthy siege, Lashkar Gah is taken by the Taliban, 13 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>634</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486, 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 46

<sup>635</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (January-July 2021), 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>636</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update ((24 – 30 May 2021), 2 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>637</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (June 2021), 12 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>638</sup> New York Times (The), Key Afghan City in Danger of Falling to the Taliban, updated 4 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>639</sup> Sarwary, B., (@bsarwary), [Twitter], posted on: 8 August 2021, [url](#)

UNOCHA reporting that a school was reportedly used by a party to the conflict and damaged in fighting.<sup>640</sup>

There is a domestic airport in Bost that is located in the southern boundary of Lashkar Gah city.<sup>641</sup> Humanitarian flights were suspended to Lashkargah in mid-June 2021 due to the security situation.<sup>642</sup> As of end July 2021, Kam Air offered scheduled passenger services from Bost to Kabul.<sup>643</sup> Bastion and Dwyer airfields are also located near Lashkar Gah.<sup>644</sup> As of 29 August 2021, there were no scheduled flights to or from Bost.<sup>645</sup> On 30 August 2021, Reuters cited the US FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) reporting on the absence of 'air traffic services and a functional civil aviation authority in Afghanistan'.<sup>646</sup>

According to an Afghan pilot cited in March 2021, the Taliban's control of checkpoints along major roads in Helmand has meant that it was impossible to reach many of the Afghanistan National Army bases safely by road.<sup>647</sup> UNOCHA reported that at the end of May 2021, the main roads between Lashkargah city and districts as well as to Kandahar city remained closed due to IEDs.<sup>648</sup> Furthermore, it noted that during July 2021 primary and secondary roads to provinces and districts in the south were reportedly being intermittently blocked by a non-state armed group which was affecting civilian movements and transportation of food as well as other basic items.<sup>649</sup> Bilal Sarwary posted on Twitter on 27 July 2021 that a powerful roadside bomb targeting a police check post exploded by a bridge in Lashkargah city, Helmand province, damaging it.<sup>650</sup>

## Displacement

UNOCHA collected data from the period 1 March – 9 August 2021, reporting 12 098 persons displaced from Helmand province. Most (96%) sought refuge within the province in Lashkargah district. The remaining 4% (511) travelled to Kandahar (355), Herat (119), Faryab (14), Farah (13), and Ghor (10). 99% of displacement occurred during May and June 2021. During the same period, no displacement was reported to Helmand from other provinces.<sup>651</sup> Between 3 and 9 May 2021 UNOCHA described the security situation as having deteriorated with 7 000 people displaced by fighting in Lashkargah and Nawa-e- Barakzai districts.<sup>652</sup> Between 10 and 16 May 2021, internal displacement of civilians continued in Lashkargah city due to fighting and insecurity.<sup>653</sup> Between 14 and 20 June 2021, fighting in Nahr-e-Saraj district that began on 17 June resulted in 4 200 people being displaced, mostly within the district administrative centre to nearby villages with some families reportedly moving towards Lashkargah as well as Herat, Nimroz and Kandahar.<sup>654</sup>

<sup>640</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (2 - 8 August 2021), 13 August 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>641</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#), p. 87

<sup>642</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (31 May - 6 June 2021), 8 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>643</sup> KamAir, Route Map, n.d. (accessed 28 July 2021), [url](#)

<sup>644</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#), p. 62 and 105

<sup>645</sup> Kam Air, Flight schedule, n.d. (accessed 29 August 2021), [url](#)

<sup>646</sup> Flightradar24, Bost Airport Live Air Traffic n.d. (accessed 29 August 2021), [url](#)

<sup>647</sup> Reuters, FAA says Kabul airport uncontrolled now, U.S. carriers barred from flights, 30 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>648</sup> USDOD, Lead Inspector General for Operation Freedom's Sentinel, 14 May 2021, [url](#), p. 14; Washington Post, With less U.S. tactical support, Afghanistan's elite forces are struggling to roll back Taliban advances, 7 March 2021, [url](#)

<sup>649</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (31 May - 6 June 2021), 8 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>649</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (28 June – 4 July 2021), 4 July 2021, [url](#), p. 1; UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (12-18 July 2021), 23 July 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>650</sup> Sarwary, B., (@bsarwary), [Twitter], posted on: 27 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>651</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, [url](#)

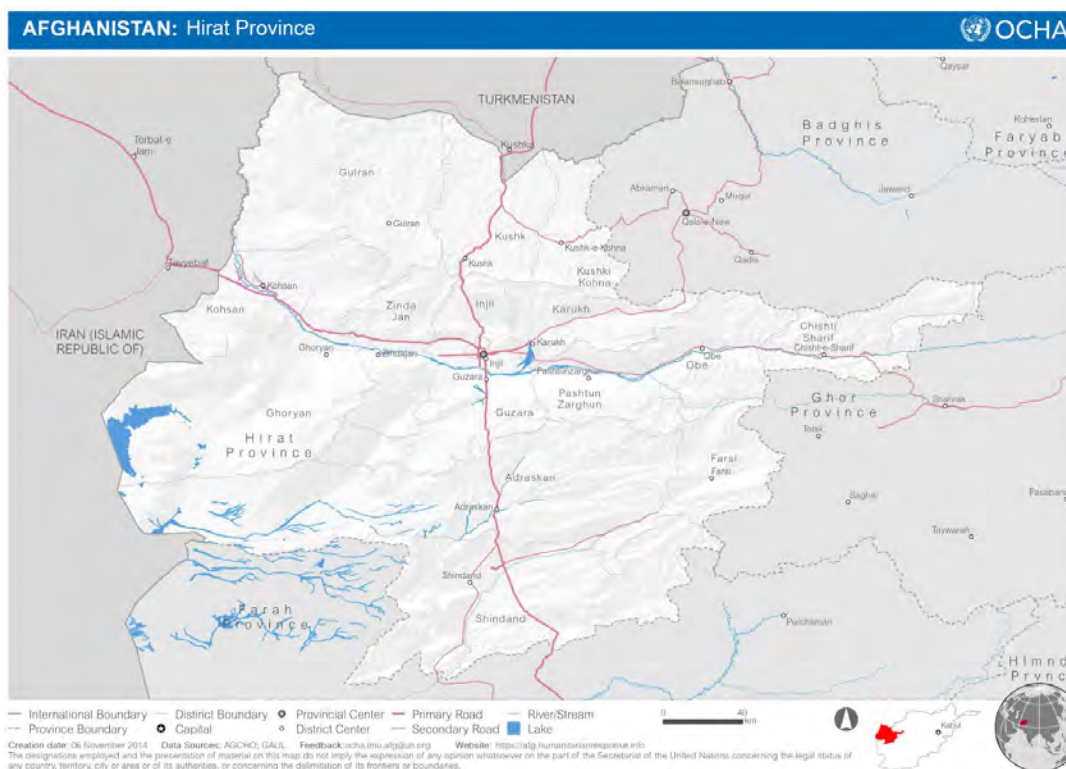
<sup>652</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (3-9 May 2021), 12 May 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>653</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (10-16 May 2021), 19 May 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>654</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (14-20 June 2021), 23 June 2021, [url](#), p. 1



## 2.13 Herat



Map 13: Afghanistan – Herat province, source: UNOCHA<sup>655</sup>

As of 13 August 2021, an assessment of the LWJ mapping Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information, considered all districts in Herat province to be under Taliban control.<sup>656</sup>

According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021 there were 389 security incidents recorded in Herat, of whom 286 were coded as battles, 67 remote violence and 36 incidents of violence against civilians.

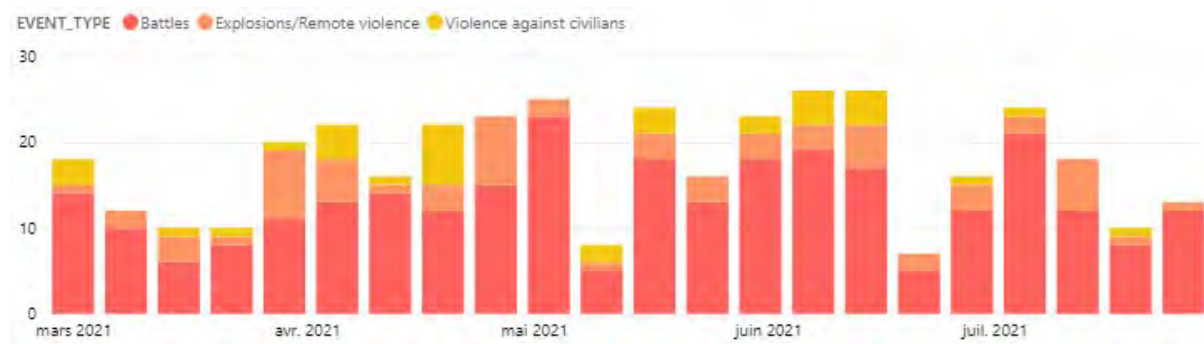


Figure 14. Herat province - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>657</sup>

<sup>655</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan: Herat Province - District Atlas, April 2014, [url](#)

<sup>656</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 31 August 2021), [url](#)

<sup>657</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

In March 2021 clashes between security forces and militias affiliated with local strongman Habibullah in the area of Ghoryani in Jabriel caused the wounding of 36 people.<sup>658</sup>

Roadside bombs, IEDs, targeted killings, Taliban attacks, including on security outposts and clashes between the Taliban and ANSF in Herat were documented during the reporting period.<sup>659</sup> On 21 March 2021 a roadside bomb hit a security forces vehicle killing seven border soldiers in Kushk-e-Robat Sangi district.<sup>660</sup> On 20 April 2021 a car bomb in Ghoryan district killed two pro-government militia members and wounded two others, resulting fighting wounded 15 civilians.<sup>661</sup> On 31 May 2021 in Ghoryan district two civilians were killed and five others wounded during a firefight between the Taliban and ANSF.<sup>662</sup> On 3 June 2021 the deputy head of the religious scholars council for western Afghanistan was assassinated by unknown armed men in Injil district.<sup>663</sup> By mid-July 2021 AAN documented that much of Herat province was reported to be in Taliban hands, including Islam Qala, the main border crossing into Iran, which generated an estimated \$20m in monthly revenue for the government, as well as Torghondai crossing.<sup>664</sup> On 5 July 2021 the Taliban attacked and overran an outpost in Chesht-e-Sharif district, killing all 16 soldiers, and later in the week the Taliban took the district. On 29 July 2021 the Taliban attacked a security outpost in Guzara district killing two commandos, two soldiers and two pro-government militia members and wounding 22 others.<sup>665</sup> Bilal Sarwary posted on Twitter on 29 July 2021 that there had been reports of fighting between the Taliban and fighters loyal to Ismail Khan in Guzara district which lies around 20km outside of Herat city.<sup>666</sup> Khan stated that he had 3 000 fighters in Herat.<sup>667</sup> Bilal Sarwary further posted on Twitter on 30 July 2021 that the Taliban retook control of the strategic Karoakh district, close to the city of Herat<sup>668</sup> as well as having Guzara district under its control.<sup>669</sup> UNOCHA reported that during the second quarter of 2021, Herat was the province that experienced the third highest number of IED incidents in Afghanistan, at 119.<sup>670</sup> On 1 August 2021 three security forces were killed and 27 wounded, with two civilians killed and four wounded in clashes on the outskirts of Herat city and in Injil district.<sup>671</sup>

Regarding the security situation in the main urban centre/provincial capital Herat city, in early March 2021 gunfire resulted in several casualties including around 25 civilians wounded.<sup>672</sup> On 12 March 2021 a car bomb in police district 14, in the Payen Ab area killed six civilians, wounded 46 more and caused extensive damage to nearby homes.<sup>673</sup> In May 2021 two police officers were shot dead in separate incidents by unknown gunmen.<sup>674</sup> On 25 July 2021 a religious scholar was shot dead in the seventh police district.<sup>675</sup> On 30 July 2021 UNAMA reported that its compound had been attacked,

<sup>658</sup> Khaama Press, Gunmen murder 7 factory workers in Nangarhar, 4 March 2021, [url](#)

<sup>659</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>660</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>661</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>662</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>663</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>664</sup> AAN, Menace, Negotiation, Attack: The Taliban take more district Centres across Afghanistan, 16 July 2021, [url](#); BBC, Taliban capture key Afghanistan border crossings, 9 July 2021, [url](#); ACLED, Regional Overview: South Asia and Afghanistan 3-9 July 2021, 14 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>665</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>666</sup> Sarwary, B., (@bsarwary), [Twitter], posted on: 29 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>667</sup> National (The), Inside the fight for Herat, as the Taliban threaten Afghanistan's third biggest city, 2 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>668</sup> Sarwary, B., (@bsarwary), [Twitter], posted on: 30 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>669</sup> Sarwary, B., (@bsarwary), [Twitter], posted on: 30 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>670</sup> UNOCHA, HAG Quarterly Report (April to June 2021), 19 July 2021, [url](#), p. 10

<sup>671</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: August 2021, updated 5 August, [url](#)

<sup>672</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (1-7 March 2021), 10 March 2021, [url](#)

<sup>673</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (8-14 March 2021), 16 March 2021, [url](#)

<sup>674</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#);

<sup>675</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

resulting in the death of an Afghan police officer and injuries to others.<sup>676</sup> On the same day, in Guzara district one civilian was killed and two wounded and four pro-government members killed and 19 wounded in a Taliban attack.<sup>677</sup> On 2 August 2021 three civilians were killed, 31 civilians wounded and three security forces injured in cross fire in the city.<sup>678</sup> On 4 August 2021 ‘heavy clashes’ between the Taliban and the ANSF were reported in the villages in the southern part of the city and that two public resistance force members reportedly killed and 15 others, including three civilians wounded.<sup>679</sup> In a briefing to the Security Council on 6 August 2021, the Secretary General’s Special Representative stated that in Herat city, UNAMA had credible reports of at least 135 civilian casualties ‘from the onset of the Taliban offensive’.<sup>680</sup> Herat city was captured by the Taliban on 12 August 2021, having been under siege for weeks.<sup>681</sup> Ismail Khan, the warlord who once ruled Herat city, fled before it fell.<sup>682</sup> The fall of Herat city, the fourth largest city in Afghanistan was described as a ‘devastating blow to the government in Kabul’, and the ‘Taliban’s biggest victory’ since it began to take control of provincial capitals.<sup>683</sup> It was reported that in the two weeks preceding the city’s capture, over 18 civilians were killed and 260 others wounded in the fighting in Herat.<sup>684</sup>

Herat was one of the urban centres most affected by a spike in robberies and thefts reported by UNOCHA in the first quarter of 2021, with 36 incidents which decreased to 20 incidents in the second quarter in total.<sup>685</sup>

The WHO did not record any attacks related to health care provision in Herat province in the first six months of 2021, but one healthcare facility looted and one other closed in July 2021.<sup>686</sup> According to national power utility Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat 35 electricity pylons were damaged or destroyed in the first six months of 2021<sup>687</sup>, including one in Herat’s Kohsan city near the border with Iran on 1 June 2021,<sup>688</sup> On 6 July 2021 the Taliban destroyed the Rozanak railway station located in Ghorian district and related facilities.<sup>689</sup>

Herat International Airport, known as Khwaja Abdullah Ansari International Airport, is located 10 nautical miles (18.5 km) south of Herat town. It is one of four international airports in Afghanistan, serving both international and several domestic scheduled passenger flights, including to Kabul.<sup>690</sup> The airport has been under the joint responsibility of NATO and the ACAA since 2015 and was planned to be passed fully over to the ACAA in 2021.<sup>691</sup> Herat also hosts Shindand airfield.<sup>692</sup> As of 29 August 2021, there were scheduled flights between Herat and Kabul.<sup>693</sup> On 30 August 2021, Reuters cited the US

<sup>676</sup> UNAMA, United Nations Compound in Herat Attacked, 30 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>677</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>678</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: August 2021, updated 5 August, [url](#)

<sup>679</sup> Tolonews, Heavy Clashes Still Ongoing in Herat City, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>680</sup> UNAMA, Briefing to the United Nations Security Council by the Secretary-General’s Special Representative for Afghanistan, 6 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>681</sup> RFE/RL, Radio Azadi, Taliban Captures Herat, Two Other Cities As Afghan Forces Collapse, 13 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>682</sup> LWJ, Taliban overrun Herat City, Qala-i-Naw, 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>683</sup> LWJ, Taliban overrun Herat City, Qala-i-Naw, 12 August 2021, [url](#); RFE/RL, Radio Azadi, Taliban Captures Herat, Two Other Cities As Afghan Forces Collapse, 13 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>684</sup> Tolonews, 18 Civilians Killed in Two Weeks of Fighting in Herat, 13 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>685</sup> UNOCHA, HAG Quarterly Report (April to June 2021), 19 July 2021, [url](#), p. 14

<sup>686</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (January-June 2021), 12 July 2021, [url](#); WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care July 2021, 10 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>687</sup> Reuters, Violence intensifies across Afghanistan’s central and northern provinces, 28 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>688</sup> SIGAR, Quarterly report to the United States Congress, 30 July 2021, [url](#), p. 140

<sup>689</sup> AIHRC, Escalation of Violent Confrontations and a Rise in Violations of Human Rights, 17 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>690</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#), p. 147

KamAir, Route Map, n.d. (accessed 28 July 2021), [url](#)

<sup>691</sup> SIGAR, Quarterly report to the United States Congress, 30 April 2021, [url](#), p. 133

<sup>692</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#), p. 6

<sup>693</sup> Flightradar24, Herat International Airport Live Air Traffic n.d. (accessed 29 August 2021), [url](#)

FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) reporting on the absence of 'air traffic services and a functional civil aviation authority in Afghanistan'.<sup>694</sup>

Fighting was reported in late July 2021 near the airport.<sup>695</sup> Between 2 - 8 August 2021, operations at the airport were disrupted by mortars and armed clashes along the main road to the airport.<sup>696</sup> The strategic Shindand air base was taken over on 12 August 2021 when Herat city was overrun.<sup>697</sup>

In mid-May 2021 UNOCHA reported that parts of the following roads around Herat were affected by violence such as armed clashes and IEDs: Herat-Badghis, Herat-Chaghcharan, Herat-Islam Qala and a bridge was closed connecting Obe district.<sup>698</sup> As of mid-July 2021 the Kandahar-Herat highway remained closed 'due to ongoing conflict, checkpoints and the presence of improvised explosive devices' and UNOCHA described the situation on Herat-Islam Qala road as unpredictable.<sup>699</sup>

## Displacement

UNOCHA collected data for the period 1 March - 9 August 2021, reporting 890 IDPs displaced from Herat province, of which 99% (877) were displaced within the province, all into Injil district. The remaining 13 IDPs were displaced into Faryab and Farah provinces. During the same period, 7 215 IDPs were displaced from a number of other provinces, into Herat province, all of these to the Injil district. 6 389 of these IDPs came from Badghis with the remainder coming from Daykundi, Farah, Faryab, Ghazni, Ghor, Helmand, Kandahar Kunduz and Wardak provinces. 2 478 IDPs were displaced from Badghis province into Herat province on 2 July 2021, and an additional 2 149 were displaced from Badghis into Herat the following day.<sup>700</sup> In early July 2021 armed clashes were reported to be causing sporadic displacement towards the provincial capital in Herat.<sup>701</sup> By mid-July 2021 according to initial reports from local authorities, around 42 000 people had been displaced to Herat city from Ghor, Badghis and Farah provinces due to conflict.<sup>702</sup>

<sup>694</sup> Reuters, FAA says Kabul airport uncontrolled now, U.S. carriers barred from flights, 30 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>695</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#); Sarwary, B., (@bsarwary), [Twitter], posted on: 31 July 2021, [url](#); Sarwary, B., (@bsarwary), [Twitter], posted on: 30 July 2021, [url](#); RFE/RL's Radio Azadi, Battle Continues On The Outskirts Of Herat Between Taliban And Afghan Forces, 31 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>696</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (2 - 8 August 2021), 13 August 2021, [url](#), p. 1; Sarwary, B., (@bsarwary), [Twitter], posted on: 3 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>697</sup> LWJ, Taliban overrun Herat City, Qala-i-Naw, 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>698</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (17-23 May 2021 ), 23 May 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>699</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (5 -11 July 2021, 15 July 2021, [url](#), p. 1

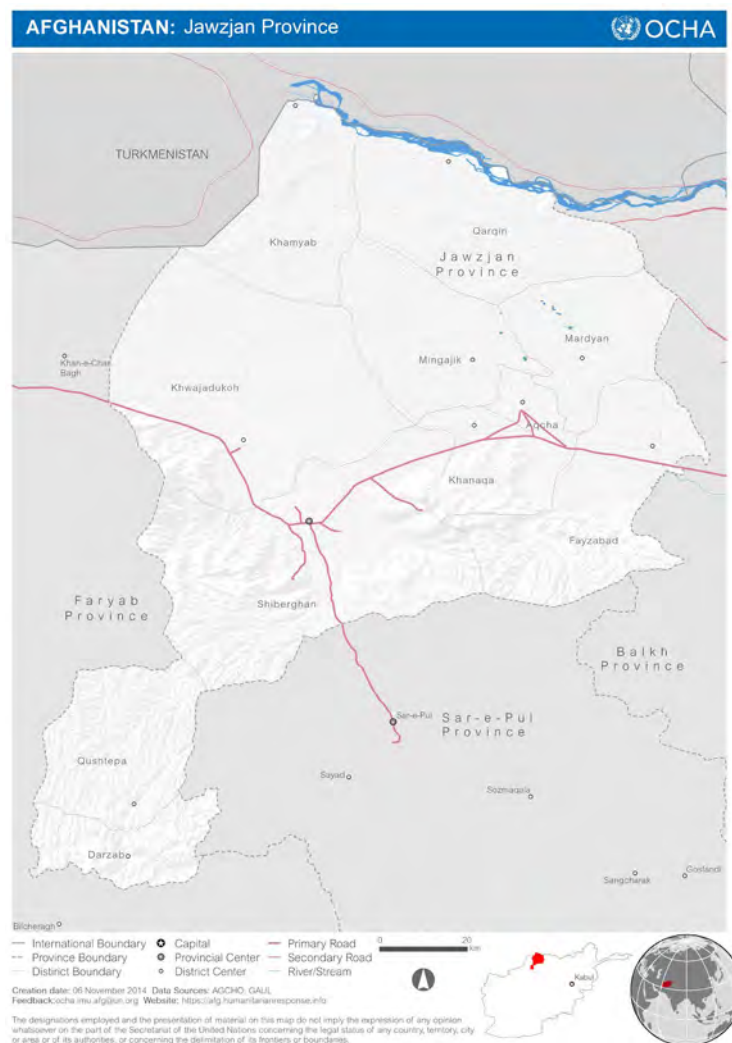
<sup>700</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>701</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (5-11 July 2021), 15 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>702</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (5-11 July 2021), 15 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2



## 2.14 Jawzjan



Map 14: Afghanistan – Jawzjan province, source: UNOCHA<sup>703</sup>

As of 31 August 2021, an assessment of the LWJ mapping Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information, considered all districts in Jawzjan province to be under Taliban control.<sup>704</sup>

According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021 there were 144 security incidents recorded in Jawzjan, of whom 87 were coded as battles, 45 remote violence and 12 incidents of violence against civilians.

<sup>703</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan: Jawzjan Province - District Atlas, April 2014, [url](#)

<sup>704</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 31 August 2021), [url](#)



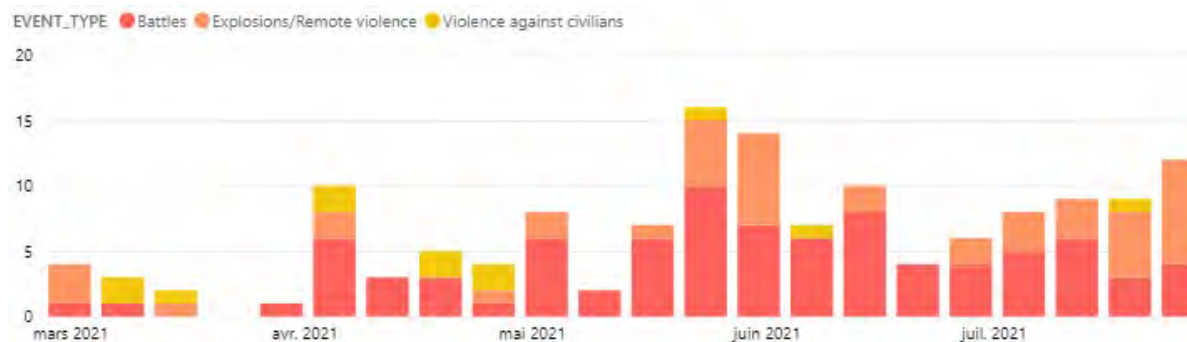


Figure 15. Jawzjan province - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>705</sup>

On 16 April 2021 a Taliban attack on the centre of Mordian district killed a police officer and two pro-government militia members. On 29 April 2021 a roadside bomb in Qosh Tapa district killed a pro-government militia member.<sup>706</sup> In late May 2021 Aqcha district was described as ‘under siege’ and the Taliban had put roadside bombs along the highway.<sup>707</sup> In May and in June 2021 the Taliban attacked several outposts including on 30 May 2021 in Faizabad district which they took over, killing three police officers, pro-government militia members and a civilian.<sup>708</sup> On the next day a rocket hit a rickshaw killing six civilians and wounding a child.<sup>709</sup> On 18 June 2021 in Aqcha a rocket killed two civilians and wounded two others.<sup>710</sup>

The Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team report covering the period May 2020 and April 2021 noted that the Taliban moved forces into Jawzjan to deny the ANSF freedom of movement and to control road communications and border crossings to facilitate narcotic and mineral trade.<sup>711</sup> AAN reported that Jawzjan had seen a ‘collapse’ of government-held district centres with nine out of 11 districts captured by the Taliban between 18 to 23 June 2021.<sup>712</sup>

Regarding the security situation in the main urban centre/provincial capital Shiberghan, targeted killings, roadside bombs and Taliban attacks on security outposts were reported.<sup>713</sup> On 1 March 2021 a vehicle bomb killed a tribal elder and wounded three civilians in the first police district and on 2 March 2021 a roadside bomb hit a military vehicle in the east, killing a public protection forces member and wounding six others.<sup>714</sup> On 11 April 2021 a Taliban attack on a security outpost in the Mangotai area killed three police officers and wounded eight more. On 20 April 2021 the Taliban killed two members of the public protection forces and wounded three more when attacking an outpost in the Khwaja Gogerdak area.<sup>715</sup> On 20 May 2021 a sticky bomb targeted a military prosecutor.<sup>716</sup> In mid-July 2021 UNOCHA described ‘heavy fighting’ in the surroundings of Shiberghan.<sup>717</sup> Battles with the Taliban

<sup>705</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>706</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>707</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>708</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>709</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>710</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>711</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486, 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 32

<sup>712</sup> AAN, A Quarter of Afghanistan’s district s Fall to the Taliban amid Calls for a ‘Second Resistance’, 2 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>713</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>714</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>715</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>716</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>717</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (12-18 July 2021), 23 July 2021, [url](#), p. 3

were reported on the outskirts of the city on 11 July 2021.<sup>718</sup> On 24 July 2021 unidentified assailants killed a religious scholar in the first police district.<sup>719</sup> On 3 August 2021 the Taliban attacked security outposts in the city killing three pro-government militia members and wounding three more.<sup>720</sup> The Taliban overran Shiberghan on the 7 August 2021, the second provincial capital since the May 2021 offensive began.<sup>721</sup> Warlord Marshall Abdul Rashid Dostum and his followers abandoned the capital.<sup>722</sup>

The WHO did not record any attacks related to health care provision in Jawzjan province in the first six months of 2021 but recorded one healthcare facility damaged, one looted and one closed in July 2021.<sup>723</sup>

There is mention of an aerodrome in Jawzjan in Shiberghan but it does not appear to be operating scheduled flights and it is not described in the ACAA Aeronautical Information Publication.<sup>724</sup> An airport is reported to be located in Khwajadukoh, which as of 6 August 2021 was the only district under government control.<sup>725</sup> The Taliban captured the airport outside of the provincial capital on 11 August 2021, along with Kunduz airport and the Pamir Corp headquarters.<sup>726</sup>

### Displacement

UNOCHA collected data for the period 1 March - 9 August 2021, reporting 2 240 persons displaced from Jawzjan province. Of these, 92% (2 058) were displaced within the Jawzjan province itself, all to the Shiberghan district. Of the 182 IDPs displaced to regions outside of Jawzjan province, 175 were displaced to Balkh province and 7 to Sar-e-Paul. During the same period, 2 674 were displaced into Jawzjan province (all to Shiberghan district) from other provinces, including 1 715 (64%) from Faryab province. Of the 4 732 people displaced to Jawzjan province (both from within and outside the province), 55% (2 597) were displaced on one day, 18 June 2021.<sup>727</sup> Between 15 and 21 March 2021, armed clashes were reported in Jawzjan.<sup>728</sup> Interagency assessment teams identified 1 281 people affected by conflict to receive humanitarian assistance in the coming days in Balkh, Faryab, Sar-e-Pul, Samangan and Jawzjan provinces.<sup>729</sup> Between 26 April and 2 May, a further 868 IDPs affected by conflict were identified by interagency assessment teams to receive humanitarian assistance in Faryab, Jawzjan and Sar-e-Pul provinces.<sup>730</sup>

<sup>718</sup> Tolonews, Two districts Fall as Battles Continue Near 10 Cities, 11 July 2021, [url](#); UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (19-25, 29 July 2021, [url](#))

<sup>719</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>720</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: August 2021, updated 5 August, [url](#)

<sup>721</sup> LWJ, Taliban takes second provincial capital, 7 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>722</sup> LWJ, Taliban takes second provincial capital, 7 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>723</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (January-June 2021), 12 July 2021, [url](#); WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care July 2021, 10 August 2021, [url](#);

<sup>724</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#), p. 6

<sup>725</sup> LWJ, Taliban takes second provincial capital, 7 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>726</sup> LWJ, Taliban seizes Afghan Army corps headquarters, 2 northern airports, 11 August 2021, [url](#)

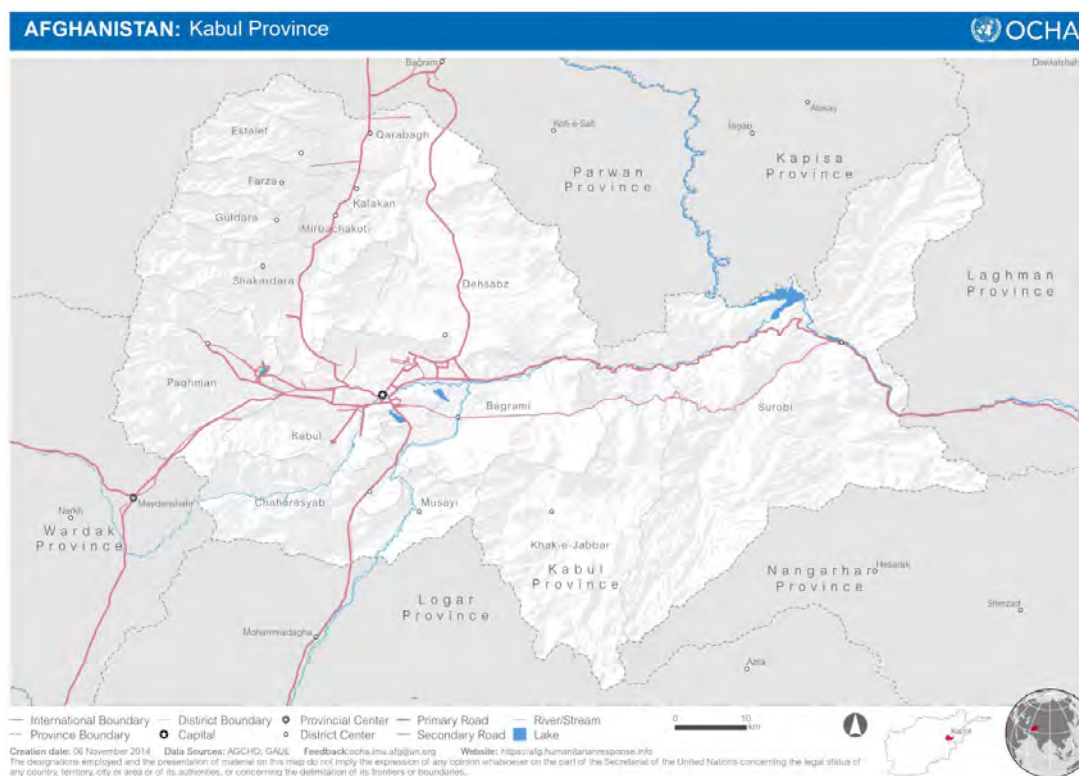
<sup>727</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>728</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (15-21 March 2021), 24 March 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>729</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (15-21 March 2021), 24 March 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>730</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (26 April-2 May 2021), 5 May 2021, [url](#), p. 2

## 2.15 Kabul province



Map 15: Afghanistan – Kabul province, source: UNOCHA<sup>731</sup>

For information on the situation in Kabul city, see [Chapter 2.1](#).

As of 31 August 2021, an assessment of the LWJ mapping Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information considered all districts of Kabul Province to be under Taliban control.<sup>732</sup>

According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021 there were 192 security incidents recorded in Kabul province, of whom 92 were coded as battles, 58 remote violence and 42 incidents of violence against civilians.

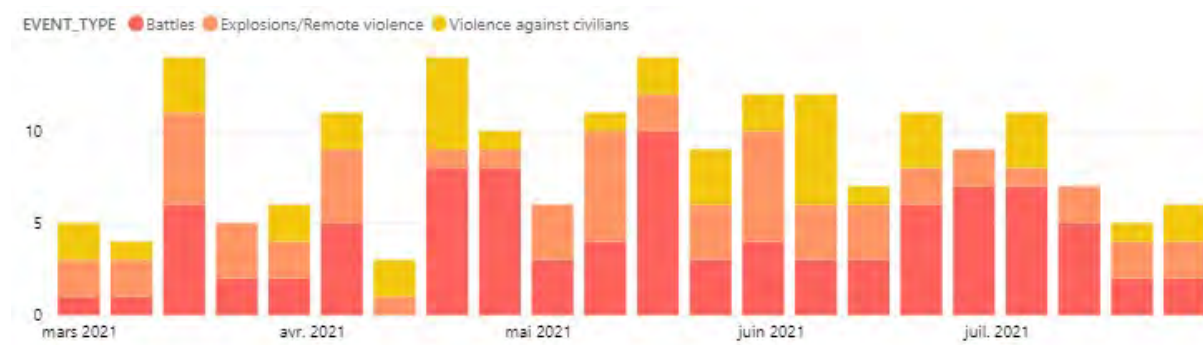


Figure 16. Kabul province - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>733</sup>

<sup>731</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan Kabul Province - District Atlas, April 2014, [url](#)

<sup>732</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed August 2021), [url](#)

<sup>733</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

ISKP attacked electricity pylons and fuel tankers in Kabul in the first half of May 2021.<sup>734</sup> In May 2021 elders in the Kohdaman region stated that the Taliban and Islamic State were present in their area.<sup>735</sup> During the government and Taliban declared ceasefire for the celebration of Eidul-Fitr, on 14 May 2021 ISKP claimed a detonated IED attack at a Sufi mosque in Shakar dara district during Friday prayers which killed 10 civilians and injured a further 25.<sup>736</sup> On 23 July 2021 gunmen killed three police officers, one soldier and one civilian, who according to security officials were affiliated to the Islamic State.<sup>737</sup>

During the reporting period roadside bombs and targeted attacks against security forces were reported in Kabul province.<sup>738</sup> UNOCHA reported that during the second quarter of 2021, Kabul was the province experiencing the fifth highest number of IED incidents in Afghanistan, at 75.<sup>739</sup>

A roadside bomb killed five civilians in Chahar Asyab district on 21 March 2021.<sup>740</sup> On 7 April 2021 a civil servant was shot dead and on 22 April 2021 a commando major was assassinated by the Taliban, both in Paghman district. On 27 April 2021 a Taliban ambush of an NDS vehicle killed an NDS officer and wounded two more.<sup>741</sup> On 15 May 2021, an IED exploded in a mosque in Shakar Dara district in Kabul province.<sup>742</sup> On 12 and 17 June 2021 armed men shot dead five police officers and two civilians in Paghman district. On 19 June 2021 a roadside bomb hit a police vehicle killing two officers in Paghman district. On 25 June 2021 an operation by CIA-backed Afghan forces killed five civilians in Deh Sabz district.<sup>743</sup> On 13 July 2021 unknown gunmen shot dead three officers working for the Independent Authority of Prisons in Bagrami district.<sup>744</sup> On 1 August 2021 a religious scholar was assassinated in Deh Sabz district.<sup>745</sup>

As of April 2021, Kabul was listed as one of 15 Afghan provinces where AQ was reportedly present.<sup>746</sup>

In the first seven months of 2021 the WHO recorded the killing of one healthcare provider and injury of three others in Kabul province.<sup>747</sup> SIGAR noted that militants attacked Afghanistan's energy infrastructure including on 1 June 2021 in northern Kabul where unknown assailants attacked electricity pylons, cutting off electricity to several parts of the country.<sup>748</sup>

See [Section 2.1](#) for information about Kabul International Airport and security on major highways.

## Displacement

Between 1 March 2021 – 9 August 2021, UNOCHA collected data on 10 976 persons displaced to Kabul province, all to Kabul district. 57% of these IDPs arrived in Kabul from 1 July 2021. During the same reporting period, no conflict-induced internal displacement from Kabul district was reported by

<sup>734</sup> UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General, The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security A/75/926–S/2021/570, 15 June 2021, [url](#), para. 21

<sup>735</sup> Tolonews, Local Elders Report Militant Presence North of Kabul City, 18 May 2021, [url](#)

<sup>736</sup> UNAMA, Afghanistan – Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, Midyear Report 2021, July 2021, [url](#), pp. 10-11

<sup>737</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>738</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>739</sup> UNOCHA, HAG Quarterly Report (April to June 2021), 19 July 2021, [url](#), p. 10

<sup>740</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>741</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>742</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (10-16 May 2021), 19 May 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>743</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>744</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>745</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: August 2021, updated 5 August, [url](#)

<sup>746</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486, 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 42

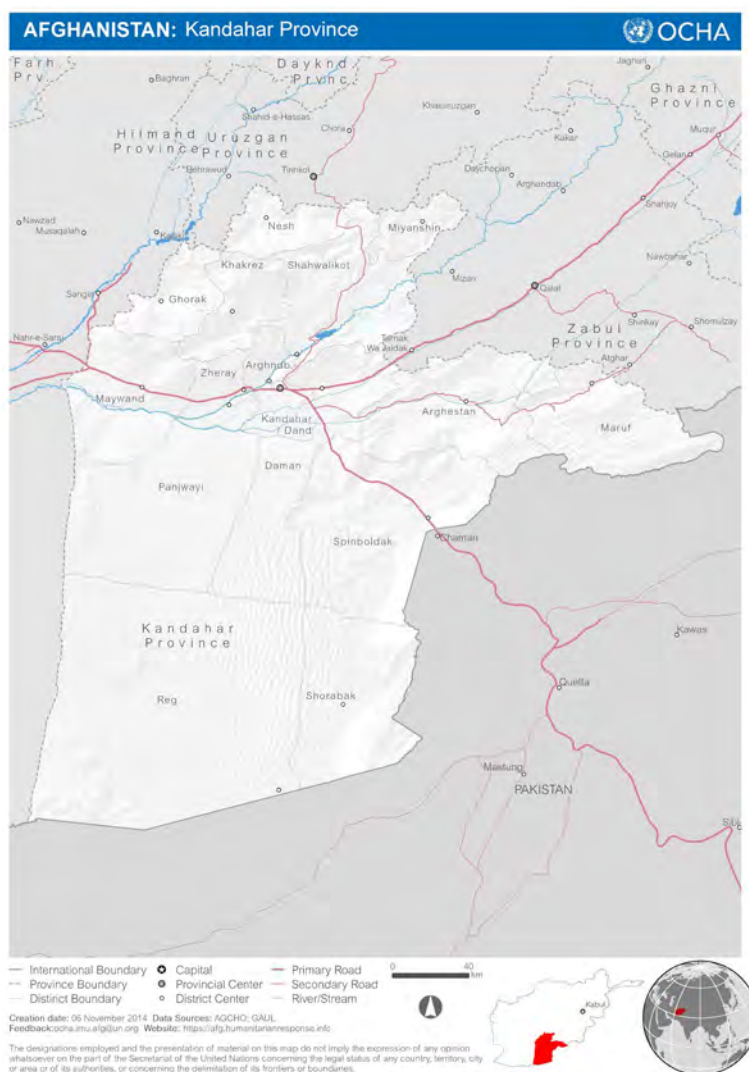
<sup>747</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (January-July 2021), 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>748</sup> SIGAR, Quarterly report to the United States Congress, 30 July 2021, [url](#), p. 111; Arab News, 10 killed in twin Kabul blasts, power supply disrupted across Afghanistan, 2 June 2021, [url](#)



UNOCHA.<sup>749</sup> Between 26 April and 2 May 2021, UNOCHA reported that against a backdrop of ongoing volatile security situation in Kabul, 2 030 IDPs in Kabul and Paktika provinces underwent needs assessments.<sup>750</sup> Between 10 and 16 May 2021, 721 IDPs affected by conflict received humanitarian assistance in Ghazni, Panjsher and Kabul provinces.<sup>751</sup> UNHCR reported on 13 August 2021 that since the beginning of 2021, 120 000 people had fled from rural areas and provincial towns to Kabul province.<sup>752</sup>

## 2.16 Kandahar



Map 16: Afghanistan – Kandahar province, source: UNOCHA<sup>753</sup>

As of 13 August 2021, an assessment of the LWJ mapping Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information, considered all districts in Kandahar province to be under Taliban control.<sup>754</sup>

<sup>749</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>750</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (26 April-2 May 2021), 5 May 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>751</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (10-16 May 2021), 19 May 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>752</sup> UNHCR, UNHCR warns Afghanistan's conflict taking the heaviest toll on displaced women and children, 13 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>753</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan: Kandahar Province - District Atlas, April 2014, [url](#)

<sup>754</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 31 August 2021), [url](#)



According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021 there were 517 security incidents recorded in Kandahar, of whom 363 were coded as battles, 125 remote violence and 29 incidents of violence against civilians.

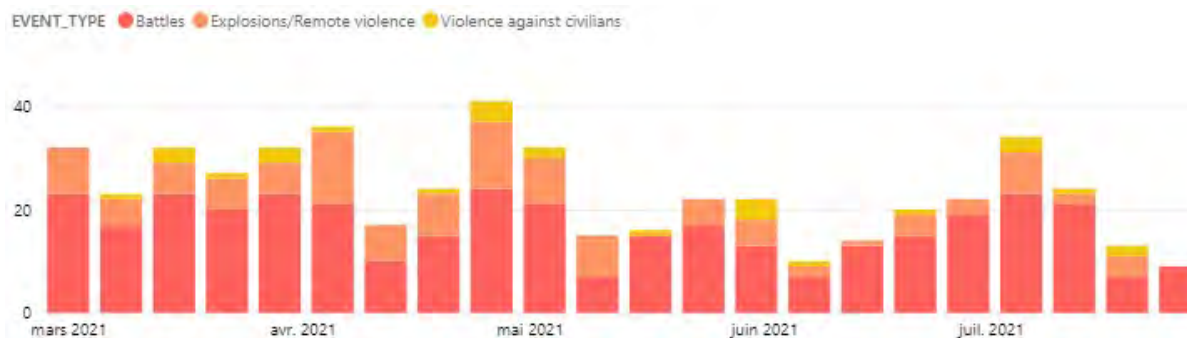


Figure 17. Kandahar province - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>755</sup>

During the reporting period, airstrikes, IEDs, roadside bombs, cross-fire, targeted killings and detentions by the Taliban and Taliban attacks on security outposts were reported in Kandahar.<sup>756</sup> In mid-March 2021 US forces carried out airstrikes for two days against the Taliban in several towns in Kandahar, reportedly highlighting the dependence of the ANSF on American airpower.<sup>757</sup> On 22 March 2021 mortar shells hit a house in Arghandab district, killing two civilians.<sup>758</sup> On 2 April 2021 an airstrike that targeted a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device damaged houses in Arghandab district.<sup>759</sup> On 11 April 2021 Taliban infiltrators killed eight police officers at a security outposts on Panjwayi district.<sup>760</sup> Bilal Sarwary posted on Twitter on 6 May 2021 that the Taliban took control of the Dahla dam as well as control all of the irrigation water provided by the Arghandab irrigation network which feeds four districts.<sup>761</sup> On 13 May 2021, an IED hit a vehicle in Maywand Bazar and Panjwayi district killing seven civilians and wounding two more.<sup>762</sup> On 29 June 2021 the Taliban detonated triple car bombs in Khakrez district centre killing two soldiers, taking the district and dozens of security force members surrendered.<sup>763</sup> On 22 June 2021, a roadside IED hit a bus travelling along the Herat – Kandahar highway in Maywand district killing five civilians and injuring 20 others.<sup>764</sup> UNOCHA documented in early July 2021 that ‘intense armed clashes’ were reported in Panjwayi, Zheray and Arghistan districts, including airstrikes in Panjwayi resulting in the deaths of five civilians and the injury of six others.<sup>765</sup> By early July 2021 the Taliban had reportedly taken control of Shahwalikot district<sup>766</sup>, Panjwai district<sup>767</sup> and on 14 July 2021 posts and bases around Spin Boldak and Welsh crossing.<sup>768</sup> In mid-July 2021 both Arghandab and Dand districts fell to the Taliban and in attacks on the districts on 12 July 2021, 49 civilians were wounded, 25 security force members were killed and 11 more wounded.<sup>769</sup> On 16 July 2021 Indian photojournalist Danish Siddiqui was killed in a Taliban ambush in

<sup>755</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>756</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>757</sup> USDOD, Lead Inspector General for Operation Freedom’s Sentinel, 14 May 2021, [url](#), p. 14

<sup>758</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>759</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (29 March -4 April 2021), 7 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>760</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>761</sup> Sarwary, B., (@bsarwary), [Twitter], posted on: 6 May 2021, [url](#)

<sup>762</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (10-16 May 2021), 19 May 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>763</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>764</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (21-27 June), 1 July 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>765</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (28 June – 4 July 2021), 4 July 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>766</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (28 June – 4 July 2021), 4 July 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>767</sup> Al Jazeera, Taliban seizes key districts in Afghanistan as gov’t forces flee, 4 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>768</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (12-18 July 2021), 23 July 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>769</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

Spin Boldak, and his body was later mutilated in Taliban custody.<sup>770</sup> The four districts bordering the provincial capital Kandahar city, Arghandab, Dand, Shah Wali Kot, and Zheray had been taken as of mid-July 2021.<sup>771</sup> The Taliban were reported to have detained hundreds of residents accused of association with the government and reportedly killed some of the detainees, including security forces and relatives of provincial government officials.<sup>772</sup> In Spin Boldak, the Taliban conducted house raids, abducting and killing those with connections to the government or to former Kandahar police chief Gen. Abdul Raziq.<sup>773</sup> A spokesman for the Ministry of Interior put the figure at 100 civilian deaths in Spin Boldak.<sup>774</sup> On 19 July 2021 the Taliban shot dead two sons of a provincial council member.<sup>775</sup> In a briefing to the Security Council on 6 August 2021, the Secretary General's Special Representative stated that between 9 July and 6 August 2021 in Kandahar there had been more than 460 civilian casualties.<sup>776</sup> On 9 August 2021 UNICEF recorded that in three days 20 children had been killed and 130 children injured in Kandahar province.<sup>777</sup>

UNOCHA reported that during the second quarter of 2021, Kandahar recorded the most IED incidents of all provinces in Afghanistan (221) and that Arghandab was the district experiencing the fourth highest number of casualties from IED incidents in Afghanistan (111) with Kandahar district fifth (48).<sup>778</sup>

Regarding the security situation in the main urban centre/provincial capital Kandahar city, targeted killings and IED explosions continued.<sup>779</sup> On 29 March 2021 unidentified assailants shot dead four soldiers and one civilian in three incidents in different districts of the city.<sup>780</sup> On 7 April 2021, a rocket that landed next to the provincial governor's compound reportedly injured a woman and child.<sup>781</sup> In April 2021 roadside bombs caused casualties and on 19 April 2021 a magnetic bomb targeted a police commander's car, killing him and a passer-by.<sup>782</sup> On 6 May 2021 a Finance Ministry employee and former journalist with Tolonews was shot dead in the 14th police district.<sup>783</sup> Battles with the Taliban were reported on the outskirts of Kandahar city on 11 July 2021.<sup>784</sup> On the same day mortar strikes hit houses in the seventh police district, killing two civilians and wounding 20 others.<sup>785</sup> On 13 July 2021 10 civilians were killed and 42 others wounded in cross fire between the ANSF and the Taliban and in further clashes in the city on 14 July 2021, eight security force members and three civilians were killed and a further 41 civilians were wounded.<sup>786</sup> On 22 July 2021 it was reported that Kandahar city was 'under siege.'<sup>787</sup> On 22 July 2021 the US carried out airstrikes to support the ANSF on the outskirts of Kandahar city.<sup>788</sup> At the end of July 2021 UNOCHA noted that according to Mirwais Hospital, over 700

<sup>770</sup> New York Times (The), Body of Reuters Photographer Was Mutilated in Taliban Custody, Officials Say, 31 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>771</sup> LWJ, Taliban battles Afghan military for control of Kandahar City, 22 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>772</sup> HRW, Afghanistan: Threats of Taliban Atrocities in Kandahar, 23 July 2021, [url](#); Afghanistan Human Rights Commission, Violations of International Humanitarian Law in Spin Boldak district of Kandahar Province, 31 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>773</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>774</sup> Tolonews, Sources Allege 100 Civilians Killed After Fall of Spin Boldak, 22 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>775</sup> Tolonews, Sources Allege 100 Civilians Killed After Fall of Spin Boldak, 22 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>776</sup> UNAMA, Briefing to the United Nations Security Council by the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Afghanistan, 6 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>777</sup> UNICEF, UNICEF, At least 27 children killed and 136 injured in past 72 hours as violence escalates in Afghanistan, 9 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>778</sup> UNOCHA, HAG Quarterly Report (April to June 2021), 19 July 2021, [url](#), p. 10

<sup>779</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (22-28 March 2021), 31 March 2021, [url](#)

<sup>780</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>781</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (5-11 April 2021), 15 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>782</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>783</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>784</sup> Tolonews, Two districts fall as battles continue near 10 cities, 11 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>785</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>786</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>787</sup> LWJ, Taliban battles Afghan military for control of Kandahar City, 22 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>788</sup> Reuters, U.S. launches air strikes in aid of embattled Afghan forces, 23 July 2021, [url](#)

civilians had been killed and injured in the previous couple of weeks.<sup>789</sup> UNAMA detailed on 3 August 2021 that in the previous three days, at least five civilians had been killed and 42 wounded in Kandahar city.<sup>790</sup> On 5 August 2021, the government advised residents to evacuate following a weekend which saw almost 100 civilian casualties.<sup>791</sup> Kandahar city, Afghanistan's second largest city, fell to the Taliban on 12 August 2021, having been under siege for two months.<sup>792</sup>

As of April 2021 AQ in the Indian Subcontinent was reported to be operating under the umbrella of the Taliban in three provinces including Kandahar.<sup>793</sup>

During the first seven months of 2021 the WHO recorded attacks on healthcare in Kandahar province, with the effects including one healthcare facility damaged and three closed, five patients killed and one patient injured, one health provider injured and four health providers detained and released, three other people killed and one person injured and six others detained.<sup>794</sup> In early March 2021 an IED in Panjwayi and a rocket in the same district caused damage to two healthcare facilities and on 1 March 2021 an ambulance came under gunfire in Arghandab district.<sup>795</sup> Towards the end of April 2021, in Arghandab district, three of six health facilities remained closed due to the presence of IEDs.<sup>796</sup> In early May 2021 due to hostilities Maywand Comprehensive Health Clinic could only offer first aid.<sup>797</sup> In May 2021 the Shahkariz Health Facility in Khakrez district closed due to fighting, depriving around 8,000 people of access to healthcare.<sup>798</sup> During 26 July to 1 August 2021 UNOCHA noted reports of destruction to residences, shops and hospitals in Kandahar and Lashkargah.<sup>799</sup>

Kandahar International Airport, known as Ahmad Shah Baba International Airport, is located 9 nautical miles (16.7) km southeast of Kandahar City, one of four international airports in Afghanistan, serving both international and domestic scheduled passenger flights to Kabul.<sup>800</sup> The airport was under the joint responsibility of NATO and the ACAA since 2015 and was passed to the ACAA on 10 January 2021.<sup>801</sup> As of end July 2021 the government was still seeking a contractor to operate the airport.<sup>802</sup> In the first quarter of 2021, the limited capacity of the ACAA meant that civilian flights were restricted to daylight hours.<sup>803</sup> In early August 2021 Taliban rockets hit the airport damaging the runway and stopping flights.<sup>804</sup> As of 29 August 2021 scheduled flights were operating between Kandahar International Airport and Kabul.<sup>805</sup> On 30 August 2021, Reuters cited the US FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) reporting on the absence of 'air traffic services and a functional civil aviation authority in Afghanistan'.<sup>806</sup>

<sup>789</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (19-25, 29 July 2021, [url](#))

<sup>790</sup> UNAMA, (@UNAMANEWS), [Twitter], posted on: 3 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>791</sup> LWJ, Kandahar City falls to the Taliban, 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>792</sup> LWJ, Kandahar City falls to the Taliban, 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>793</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486, 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 46

<sup>794</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (January-July 2021), 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>795</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (1-7 March 2021), 10 March 2021, [url](#)

<sup>796</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (19-25 April 2021), 28 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>797</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (3-9 May 2021), 12 May 2021, [url](#)

<sup>798</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (17-23 May 2021), 23 May 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>799</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (26 July -1 August 2021), 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>800</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#), p. 323; KamAir, Route Map, n.d. (accessed 28 July 2021), [url](#)

<sup>801</sup> SIGAR, Quarterly report to the United States Congress, 30 April 2021, [url](#), p. 133

<sup>802</sup> SIGAR, Quarterly report to the United States Congress, 30 July 2021, [url](#), p. 120

<sup>803</sup> SIGAR, Quarterly report to the United States Congress, 30 April 2021, [url](#), p. 134

<sup>804</sup> Al Jazeera, Afghan forces bomb Taliban in bid to halt advance on cities, 1 August 2021, [url](#); Sarwary, B., (@bsarwary), [Twitter], posted on: 1 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>805</sup> Flightradar24, Kandahar Airport Live Air Traffic, n.d. (accessed 29 August 2021), [url](#)

<sup>806</sup> Reuters, FAA says Kabul airport uncontrolled now, U.S. carriers barred from flights, 30 August 2021, [url](#)

UNOCHA reported between 22 and 28 March 2021 that an IED explosion destroyed a key bridge in the Sarkari Bagh area in Arghandab district.<sup>807</sup> UNOCHA reported in early July 2021 that primary and secondary roads to provinces and districts in the south were reportedly being intermittently blocked by a non-state armed group which was affecting civilian movements and the transportation of food and other basic items.<sup>808</sup> As of mid-July 2021 the Kandahar-Herat highway remained closed 'due to ongoing conflict, checkpoints and the presence of improvised explosive devices'.<sup>809</sup>

## Displacement

UNOCHA collected data for the period 1 March - 9 August 2021, reporting 14 050 persons displaced from Kandahar province. 99% (13 996) were displaced within the province itself, mostly to the Kandahar/Dand district. During this period, there were two peak days of displacement within the province both within the Kandahar/Dand district; 6 404 displaced on 9 July 2021 and 3 486 on 20 July 2021. During the same period, 355 were displaced into Kandahar from other provinces, coming exclusively from Helmand province.<sup>810</sup> Between 26 April and 2 May 2021, 2 842 people were displaced from Arghistan district of Kandahar province to Spin Boldak and Kandahar city.<sup>811</sup> Between 10 and 16 May 2021, armed clashes were reported in Shah Wali Kot, Arghistan, Panjwayi, Maywand and Zheray districts across the province, leading to 3 500 people from Maywand district displaced to Kandahar city.<sup>812</sup> As clashes continued, between 17 and 23 May 2021, 500 people were reportedly displaced within Khakrez district.<sup>813</sup> Between 28 June and 4 July 2021, armed clashes were reported in Panjwayi, Zheray and Arghistan districts, resulting in internal displacement of hundreds of civilians. Around 2 000 fled conflict in Panjwayi district to Kandahar city.<sup>814</sup> Between 5 and 11 July 2021, fighting, including airstrikes, continued in Kandahar city leading to around 11 200 people in contested areas fleeing to safer parts of Kandahar city.<sup>815</sup> Between 19 and 25 July 2021, it was reported that four out of the five provincial capitals were partially or fully surrounded by a NSAG, resulting in displacement of civilians to neighbouring areas.<sup>816</sup> Conflict continued to escalate sharply between 26 July and 1 August 2021 leading to displacement to safer areas within the provincial capitals and neighbouring districts.<sup>817</sup> Between 9 and 15 August 2021, UNOCHA reported that that over the 'previous weeks' around 35 000 people were displaced by conflict in Kandahar city, districts and neighbouring provinces.<sup>818</sup>

<sup>807</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (22-28 March 2021), 31 March 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>808</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (28 June – 4 July 2021), 4 July 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>809</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (5 -11 July 2021), 15 July 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>810</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>811</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (26 April-2 May 2021), 5 May 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>812</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (10-16 May 2021), 19 May 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>813</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (17-23 May 2021), 23 May 2021, [url](#), p. 1

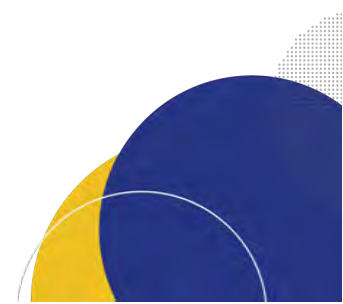
<sup>814</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (28 June -4 July 2021), 4 July 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>815</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (5-11 July 2021), 15 July 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>816</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (19-25 July 2021), 29 July 2021, [url](#), p. 1

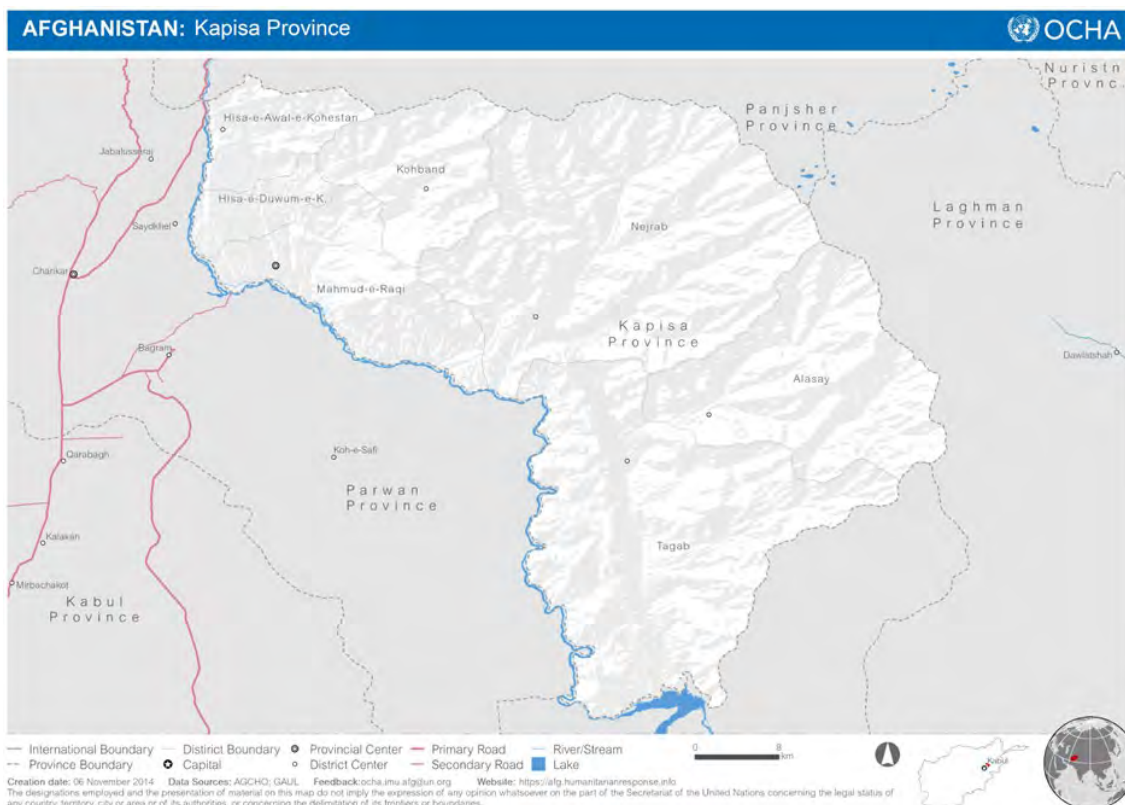
<sup>817</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (26 July -1 August 2021), 5 August 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>818</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (9-15 August 2021), 19 August 2021, [url](#), p. 2





## 2.17 Kapisa



Map 17: Afghanistan – Kapisa province, source: UNOCHA<sup>819</sup>

As of 31 August 2021, an assessment of the LWJ mapping Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information, considered all districts in Kapisa province to be under Taliban control.<sup>820</sup>

According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021 there were 105 security incidents recorded in Kapisa, of whom 65 were coded as battles, 32 remote violence and 8 incidents of violence against civilians.

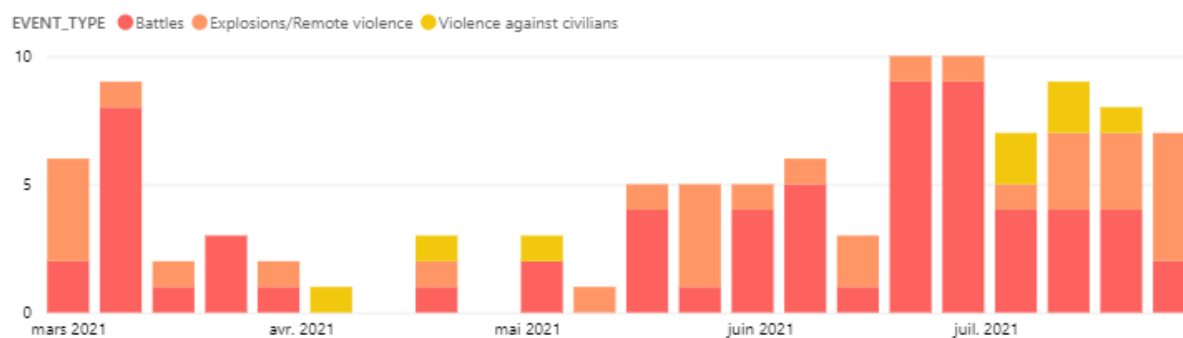


Figure 18. Kapisa province - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>821</sup>

<sup>819</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan: Kapisa Province - District Atlas, April 2014, [url](#)

<sup>820</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 31 August 2021), [url](#)

<sup>821</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)



During the reporting period the Taliban attacked security forces with mortar fire, and Taliban detentions and targeted killings were also documented.<sup>822</sup> On 29 March 2021 a Taliban attack killed three soldiers and took another prisoner and on 31 March 2021 in Kohistan district the Taliban assassinated an NDS official and a civilian.<sup>823</sup> On 21 May 2021 a Taliban attack in Tagab district killed two pro-government militia members and wounded four others.<sup>824</sup> On 14 May 2021 a Taliban ambush killed a soldier and wounded three others in Tagab and on 29 May 2021 a Taliban mortar hit a wedding party in the same district, killing seven civilians and injuring six more.<sup>825</sup> On 8 June 2021 30 outposts collapsed in Tagab with one soldier and one pro-government militia member killed.<sup>826</sup> On 30 June 2021 the Taliban attacked Alasay district, killing one soldier and one police officer, wounding two others and temporarily detaining 200 security force members.<sup>827</sup> In early July 2021 the central region was described as having become 'increasingly unstable and unpredictable', with reports of increased activities and violence against civilians by non-state armed groups in Kapisa.<sup>828</sup> On 14 July 2021 unidentified assailants killed a religious scholar in a Kohistan district (not specified) and in Nejrab district the deputy governor of Kapisa was killed in a Taliban ambush. On 25 July 2021 an ANSF strike killed three civilians and wounded two others in Nijrab district and on the next day a rocket hit a house in a Kohistan district (not specified) and killed one civilian.<sup>829</sup> Also on 25 July 2021 unknown assailants stormed the house of a female police officer, dragging her out and shooting her dead.<sup>830</sup> On 30 July 2021 a civilian was killed in a failed attempt to retake Nijrab district and on 2 August 2021 two commandos were killed in an successful ANSF recapture.<sup>831</sup>

At the end of July 2021, a former governor of the province indicated that weak coordination among public uprising forces along with a large number of Taliban fighters led to the fall of many key districts in the province.<sup>832</sup>

Regarding the security situation in the main urban centre/provincial capital Mahmud Raqi on 12 March 2021 the Taliban attacked the first police district, killing a police officer and wounding his brother.<sup>833</sup> On 4 May 2021 the Taliban killed a police officer whilst he was visiting his family and on 27 May 2021 a bomb explosion killed three civilians.<sup>834</sup> On 20 June 2021 in the second police district an unidentified assailant killed a police officer.<sup>835</sup> On 3 August 2021 a police officer was shot dead in the second police district.<sup>836</sup>

As of April 2021, Kapisa was listed as one of the 15 Afghan provinces where AQ was reportedly present.<sup>837</sup>

<sup>822</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>823</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>824</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>825</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>826</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>827</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>828</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (5 -11 July 2021, 15 July, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>829</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>830</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>831</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: August 2021, updated 5 August, [url](#)

<sup>832</sup> Tolonews, 'Lack of Coordination' of Public Forces Cited in Kapisa Losses, 26 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>833</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>834</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>835</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>836</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: August 2021, updated 5 August, [url](#)

<sup>837</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486 , 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 42

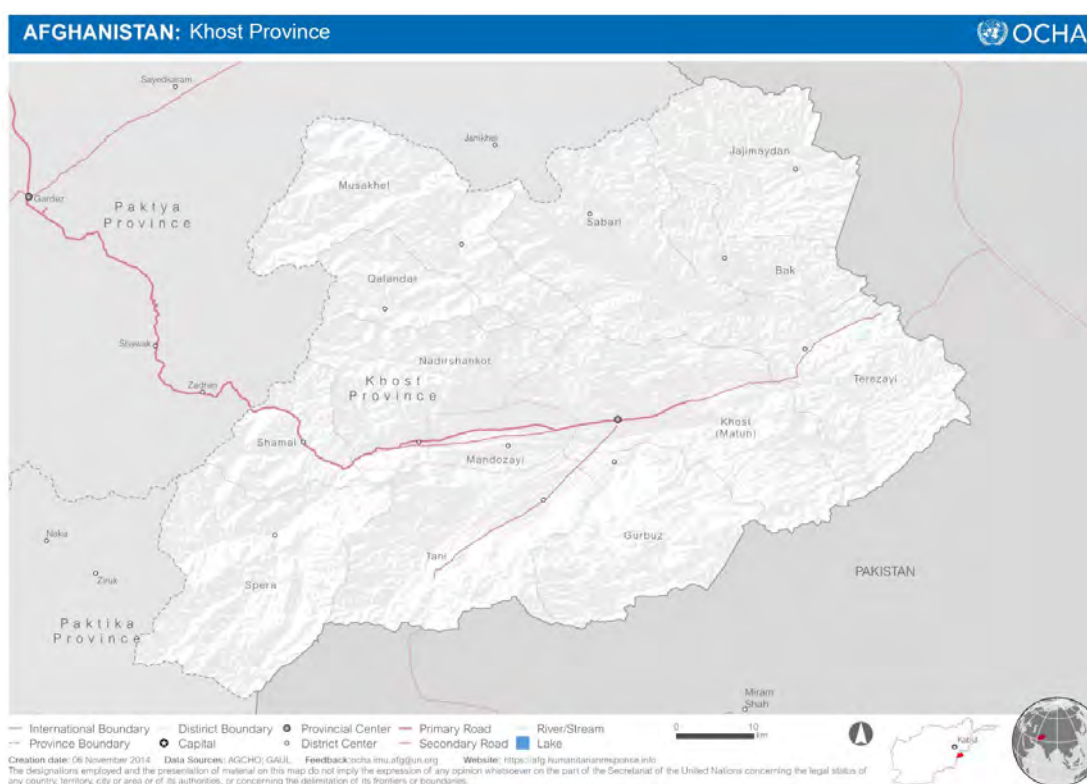
The WHO did not record any attacks related to health care provision in Kapisa province in the first seven months of 2021.<sup>838</sup>

Kapisa lacks an operational domestic airport.<sup>839</sup>

## Displacement

UNOCHA collected data for the period 1 March - 9 August 2021, reporting 1 316 persons displaced from Kapisa province, of whom the majority (1 106) were displaced to Kabul and the remaining 210 within the province itself (finding refuge in Hisa-e-Duwum-e-Kohestan, Mahmud-e-Raqi, Hisa-e-Awal-e-Kohestan and Nejrab districts). During the same period, no displacement was reported into Kapisa from other provinces.<sup>840</sup> Between 3 and 9 May 2021, 2 030 people were newly displaced in Kapisa and Ghazni provinces due to ongoing fighting and insecurity.<sup>841</sup>

## 2.18 Khost



Map 18: Afghanistan – Khost province, source: UNOCHA<sup>842</sup>

As of 31 August 2021, an assessment of the LWJ mapping Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information, considered all districts to be under Taliban control.<sup>843</sup>

According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021 there were 124 security incidents recorded in Khost, of whom 75 were coded as battles, 32 remote violence and 17 incidents of violence against civilians.

<sup>838</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (January-July 2021), 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>839</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#)

<sup>840</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>841</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (3-9 May 2021), 12 May 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>842</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan: Khost Province - District Atlas, April 2014, [url](#)

<sup>843</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 31 August 2021), [url](#)

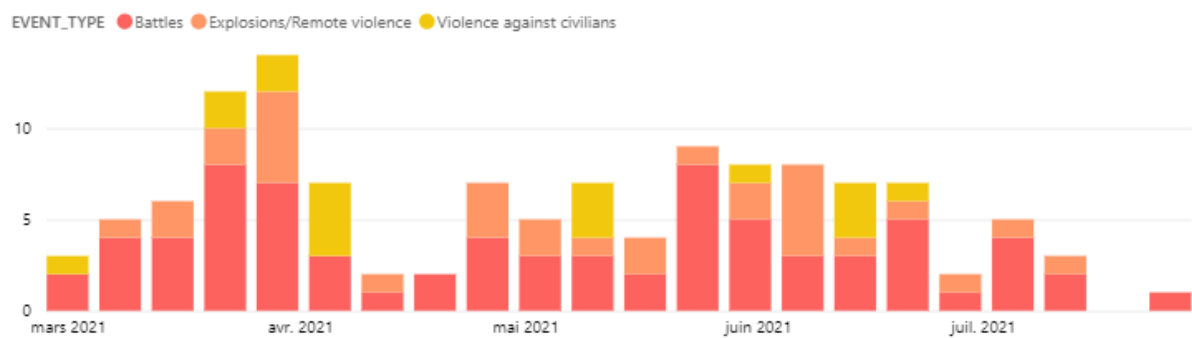


Figure 19. Khost province - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>844</sup>

On 8 March 2021 the pro-government militia Khost Protection Force (KPF) conducted a military operation in Spera district in which 15 civilians and 30 Taliban fighters were reportedly killed, with two KPF members killed and 22 others wounded in a counter attack. On 28 March 2021 the KPF conducted a military operation in Sabari district in which over 17 civilians were killed, with several shops, houses and one mosque targeted.<sup>845</sup> On 16 May 2021 a rocket landed in Baraki Barak district killing three civilians and wounding six others.<sup>846</sup> On 18 May 2021 in Jajimaydan district a magnetic bomb exploded killing one NDS officer.<sup>847</sup> On 19 June 2021 a roadside bomb in Musakhel district killed four civilians.<sup>848</sup> On the same day the Taliban killed six soldiers and abducted dozens more in an attack on an outpost which they captured before it was taken back.<sup>849</sup> On 8 July 2021, three children were killed and one more wounded by a bomb in Sabari district.<sup>850</sup> In mid-July 2021 the central region was described as having become ‘increasingly unstable and unpredictable’, with reports of increased activities and violence against civilians by non-state armed groups in Khost.<sup>851</sup> At the same time AAN reported that the Khost’s district centres were all in government control except Qalandar and Musakhel, and that government strength in the province was largely on account of the KPF, formerly controlled by the CIA.<sup>852</sup> On 30 July 2021 a Taliban attack on a gathering near a military base killed two civilians and wounded 30 more.<sup>853</sup> UNOCHA reported that during the second quarter of 2021, Khost was the province that experienced the fourth highest number of IED incidents in Afghanistan, at 114.<sup>854</sup>

Regarding the security situation in the main urban centre/provincial capital Khost city, on 9 May 2021 an NDS officer was shot dead and on 17 May 2021 unidentified gunmen killed four civilians.<sup>855</sup>

The Haqqani Network within the Taliban structure is reported to have a force of between 3 000 to 10 000 traditional armed fighters operating in the “P2K” region of Khost, Paktika and Paktiya provinces.<sup>856</sup>

<sup>844</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>845</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>846</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>847</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>848</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>849</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>850</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>851</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (5 -11 July 2021, 15 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>852</sup> AAN, Menace, Negotiation, Attack: The Taliban take more district Centres across Afghanistan, 16 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>853</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>854</sup> UNOCHA, HAG Quarterly Report (April to June 2021), 19 July 2021, [url](#), p. 10

<sup>855</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>856</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486 , 1 June 2021, [url](#), paras. 27-28

The WHO did not record any attacks related to health care provision in Khost province in the first seven months of 2021.<sup>857</sup>

There is a domestic airport in Khost that is located 15km southwest from the city.<sup>858</sup> As of end July 2021, Kam Air offered scheduled passenger services from Khost to Kabul.<sup>859</sup>, but as of 29 August 2021 no flights were scheduled.<sup>860</sup> Salerno airfield is also located in Khost.<sup>861</sup> In July 2021 it was reported that an international airport was set to be opened in the 'near future' but that it lacked facilities that met international standards.<sup>862</sup> On 30 August 2021, Reuters cited the US FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) reporting on the absence of 'air traffic services and a functional civil aviation authority in Afghanistan'.<sup>863</sup>

### Displacement

UNOCHA collected data for the period 1 March 2021 – 9 August 2021, reporting 1 050 persons displaced from within the province. During the same period, no displacement was reported to Khost from other provinces. By district, displacement was recorded during the reference period from Sabari, Bak, Qalandar and Musakhel. All IDPs displaced from Sabari, Bak, Qalandar and Musakhel were displaced to Matun district.<sup>864</sup> Between 17 and 23 May 2021, some 4 900 people were newly displaced in Wardak and Khost provinces due to fighting.<sup>865</sup>

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<sup>857</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (January-July 2021), 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>858</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#), p. 360

<sup>859</sup> KamAir, Route Map, n.d. (accessed 28 July 2021), [url](#)

<sup>860</sup> Flightradar24, Khost Airport Live Air Traffic, n.d. (accessed 29 August 2021), [url](#)

<sup>861</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#), p. 447

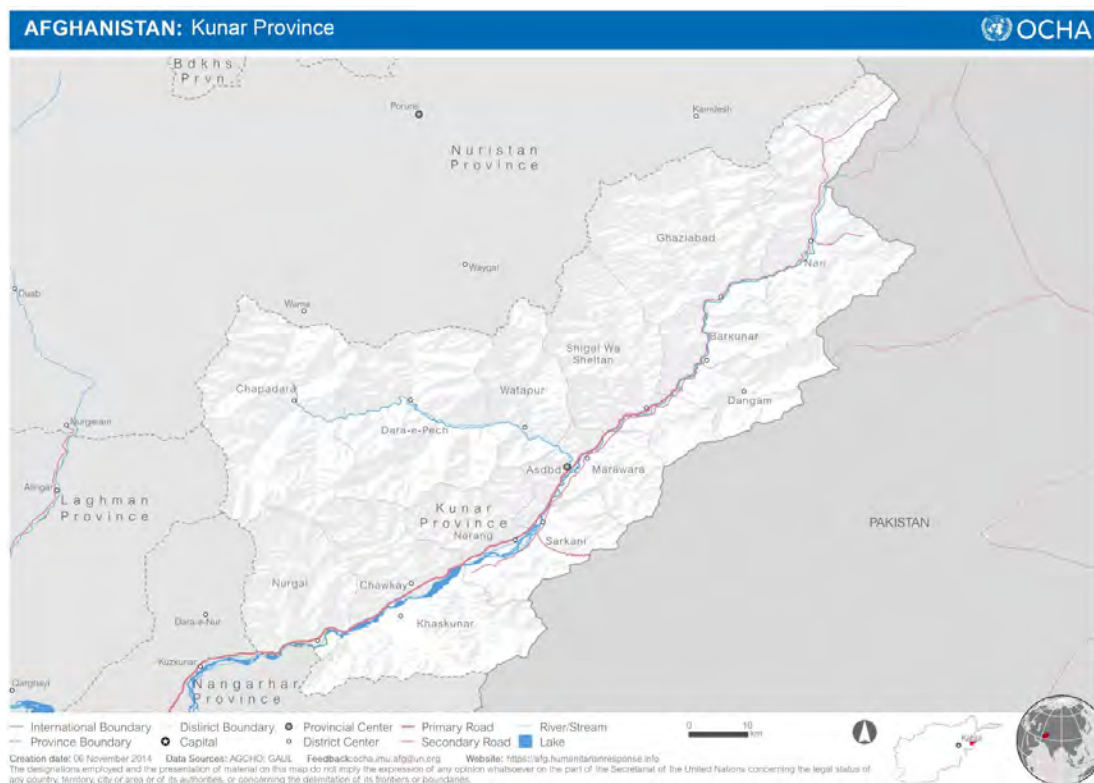
<sup>862</sup> Pajhwok Afghan News, Set to open soon, Khost airport lacks global standards, 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>863</sup> Reuters, FAA says Kabul airport uncontrolled now, U.S. carriers barred from flights, 30 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>864</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>865</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (17-23 May 2021), 23 May 2021, [url](#), p. 2

## 2.19 Kunar



Map 19: Afghanistan – Kunar province, source: UNOCHA<sup>866</sup>

As of 31 August 2021, an assessment of the LWJ mapping Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information, considered all the districts of Kunar province to be under Taliban control.<sup>867</sup>

According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021 there were 93 security incidents recorded in Kunar, of whom 65 were coded as battles, 27 remote violence and 1 incident of violence against civilians.

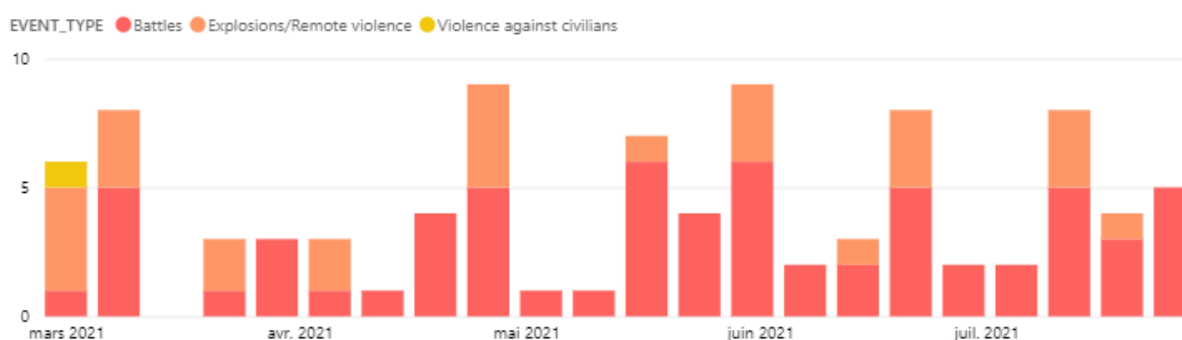


Figure 20. Kunar province - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>868</sup>

<sup>866</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan: Kunar Province – District Atlas, April 2014, [url](#)

<sup>867</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 31 August 2021), [url](#)

<sup>868</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)



On 7 March 2021 a doctor was killed by a roadside bomb in Sawkay district.<sup>869</sup> On 25 March 2021 shelling killed a civilian and wounded another in Sarkani district.<sup>870</sup> On 3 April 2021 four soldiers were killed and four taken prisoner when the Taliban attacked two outposts in Chapadara district, taking control of one.<sup>871</sup> In mid-July 2021 five children were reportedly injured by an unexploded ordnance in the Bachi area in Marawara district.<sup>872</sup> In mid-July 2021 AAN reported that the Taliban was relatively weak in Kunar compared to the strength of the ANSF and Uprising Forces and that Taliban attacks on Ghaziabad, Bar Kunar and Marawara districts were successfully defended.<sup>873</sup> Bilal Sarwary posted on Twitter on 22 July 2021 that the Taliban took control of Ghaziabad district in Kunar province.<sup>874</sup> On 23 July 2021 a Taliban attack killed four soldiers, wounded a dozen more and abducted 23 others in Nari district which had reportedly been under siege for the previous two months.<sup>875</sup>

Regarding the security situation in the main urban centre/provincial capital Asadabad, on 26 April 2021 a rocket hit the provincial governor's compound, killing three children and wounding a further 10.<sup>876</sup>

ISKP was assessed in April 2021 to have retained a core group of around 1 500 to 2 200 fighters in the Manogay (Dara-e-Pech) district of Kunar and the Achin district of Nangarhar.<sup>877</sup> As of April 2021 Kapisa was listed as one of the 15 Afghan provinces where AQ was reportedly present.<sup>878</sup>

The WHO did not record any attacks related to health care provision in Kunar province in the first six months of 2021, but one healthcare facility damaged in July 2021.<sup>879</sup> On 23 June 2021, mortar fire caused extensive damage to the Asadabad Provincial Hospital, the Polio Eradication Management Team building and destroyed vaccines.<sup>880</sup> Between 4 and 5 July 2021 a health facility in Kunar was closed due to damage caused by fighting.<sup>881</sup>

Kunar province lacks an operational domestic airport.<sup>882</sup> At the end of June 2021, the road between Asadabad and Ghaziabad remained closed.<sup>883</sup>

## Displacement

UNOCHA collected data for the period 1 March 2021 – 9 August 2021, reporting 23 182 persons displaced from Kunar, of which 79% (18 407) were displaced within the province and the remainder in Nang. 96% (8 793) of displacement within the province took place in June 2021, with most IDPs travelling to the Asadabad district. IDPs were displaced from across the province, originating from 11 districts, with the majority travelling from Ghaziabad district. During the same period, a further 8 IDPs sought refuge in Kunar's Asadabad district, travelling from Nangarhar province.<sup>884</sup> As of 27 July 2021,

<sup>869</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>870</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (22-28 March 2021), 31 March 2021, [url](#)

<sup>871</sup> NEW YORK TIMES (THE), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>872</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (12-18 July 2021), 23 July 2021, [url](#), p.1

<sup>873</sup> AAN, Menace, Negotiation, Attack: The Taliban take more district Centres across Afghanistan, 16 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>874</sup> Sarwary, B., (@bsarwary), [Twitter], posted on: 22 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>875</sup> NEW YORK TIMES (THE), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>876</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (26 April-2 May 2021), 5 May 2021, [url](#)

<sup>877</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486 , 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 62

<sup>878</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486 , 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 42

<sup>879</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (January-June 2021), 12 July 2021, [url](#); WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care July 2021, 10 August 2021, [url](#);

<sup>880</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (21-27 June ), 1 July 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>881</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (5 -11 July 2021, 15 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2

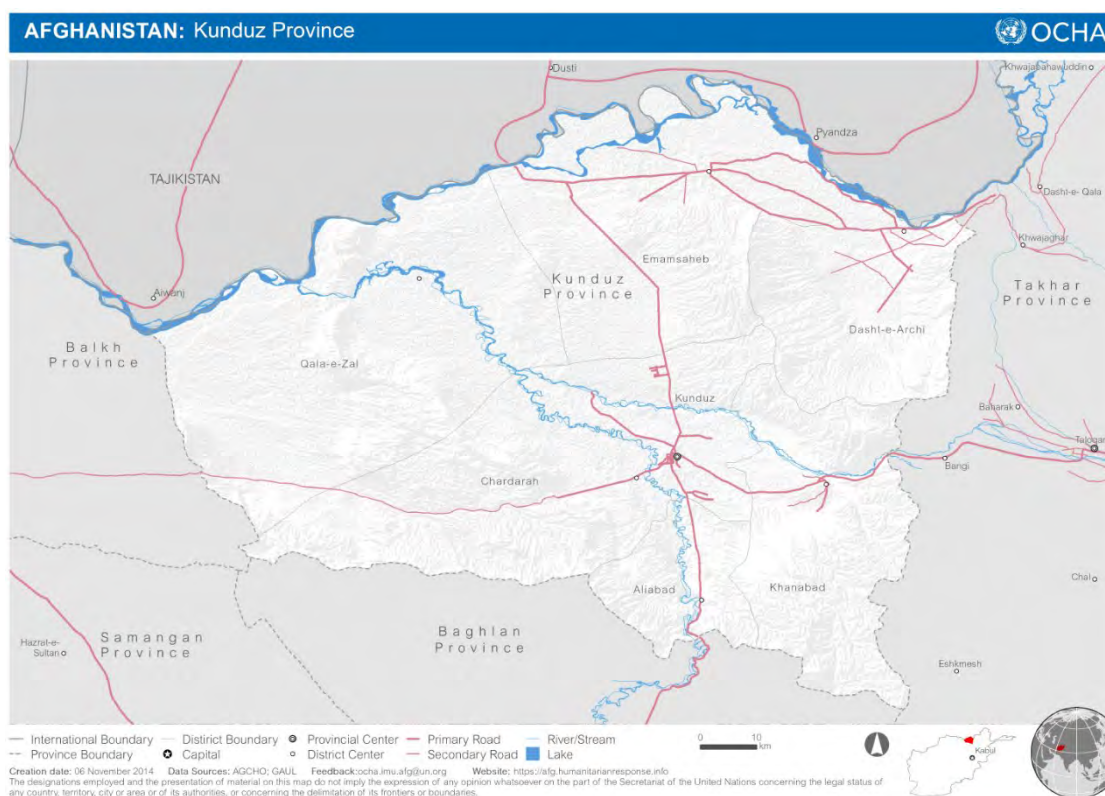
<sup>882</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#)

<sup>883</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (21-27 June ), 1 July 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>884</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, [url](#)

19 950 people were reportedly displaced due to fighting in Kunar province.<sup>885</sup> Of these, 14 217 people were displaced to Asadabad, Shegal, Barkunar, Narang, Chawkay, Nurgal and Sarkani districts and 5 733 people were displaced to Behsud, Jalalabad, Kuzkunar and Kama districts in Nangarhar Province.<sup>886</sup> Towards the end of June 2021, fighting in Ghaziabad displaced 1 050 people.<sup>887</sup> Since 25 July 2021, tens of thousands of people were displaced by an escalation in conflict in the province with people fleeing to districts within Kunar and Nangarhar provinces.<sup>888</sup>

## 2.20 Kunduz



Map 20: Afghanistan – Kunduz province, source: UNOCHA<sup>889</sup>

As of 31 August 2021, an assessment of the LWJ mapping Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information, considered all districts in Kunduz province to be under Taliban control.<sup>890</sup>

According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021 there were 240 security incidents recorded in Kunduz, of whom 186 were coded as battles, 47 remote violence and 7 incidents of violence against civilians.

<sup>885</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (19-25 July 2021), 29 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>886</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (19-25 July 2021), 29 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>887</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (14-20 June 2021), 23 June 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>888</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (2 - 8 August 2021), 13 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>889</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan: Kunduz Province – District Atlas, April 2014, [url](#)

<sup>890</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 31 August 2021), [url](#)

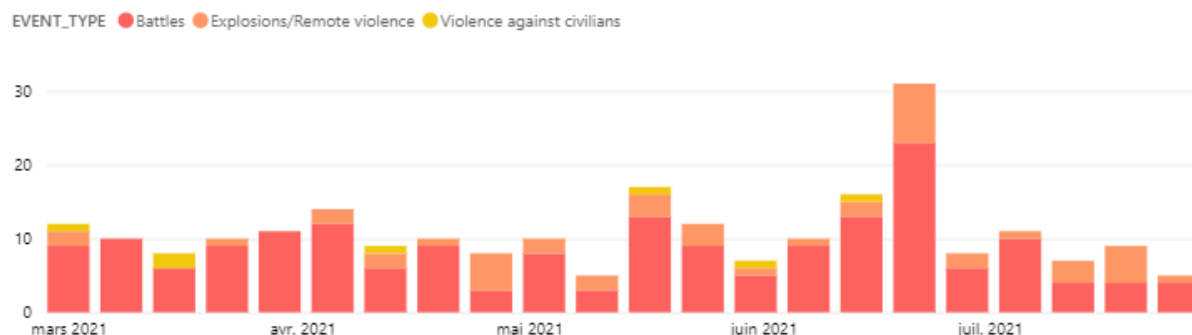


Figure 21. Kunduz province - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>891</sup>

The Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team report covering the period May 2020 and April 2021 noted that the Taliban moved forces into five northern provinces including Kunduz, with the objective to deny the ANSF freedom of movement and to control road communications and border crossings to facilitate narcotic and mineral trade.<sup>892</sup> By early July 2021 AAN reported that seven out of 10 districts had been recently captured by the Taliban, with two already held. The source explained that the 'even recently-captured districts in Kunduz had all changed hands between ANSF and the Taliban many times and were vulnerable to Taliban capture. But the collapse of all within days of each other appears to have been triggered by low morale within the ANSF.'<sup>893</sup>

During the reporting period, rockets, mortar fire, roadside bombs, Taliban attacks on security outposts and battles were documented in Kunduz.<sup>894</sup> On 6 March 2021 two people were reportedly killed at an illegal checkpoint in Aliabad district.<sup>895</sup> On 20 April 2021 an Afghan air force rocket hit a house in Emamsaheb district, killing one child and wounding three civilians.<sup>896</sup> On 11 May 2021 an ANSF mortar hit a house in Imam Sahib district which killed five civilians and injured a further two and on 18 May 2021 the Taliban attacked the house of a police chief in Emamsaheb district killing two and wounding nine security force members.<sup>897</sup> In one week towards the end of June 2021, 21 people were reportedly killed and a further 225 wounded by conflict in the province.<sup>898</sup> In one incident that week in Emamsaheb district, seven civilians were killed and 67 others wounded and ten security force members killed and 17 others wounded.<sup>899</sup> At the end of June 2021 the Taliban captured Shir Khan Bandar, the main border crossing with Tajikistan, described as 'the most significant gain for the Taliban' since its increase in operations following the US troop withdrawal, forcing 134 Afghan soldiers to flee to Tajikistan.<sup>900</sup>

Regarding the security situation in the main urban centre/provincial capital Kunduz city, on 6 March 2021 a roadside bomb hit a military vehicle in the fifth police district, killing a pro-government commander and wounded two others.<sup>901</sup> On 6 May 2021 the Taliban attacked a battalion headquarters

<sup>891</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>892</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486, 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 32

<sup>893</sup> AAN, A Quarter of Afghanistan's districts Fall to the Taliban amid Calls for a 'Second Resistance', 2 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>894</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>895</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (8-14 March 2021), 16 March 2021, [url](#)

<sup>896</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>897</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>898</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (21-27 June), 1 July 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>899</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>900</sup> Al Jazeera, Taliban captures Afghanistan's main Tajikistan border crossing, 22 June 2021, [url](#); Khaama Press, 134 Afghan soldiers escape the Taliban attack, seeking sanctuary in Tajikistan, 23 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>901</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

in the third police district, killing eight soldiers, wounding two others and reportedly 13 Taliban fighters were also killed.<sup>902</sup> On 13 May 2021, an IED detonated in the Sar-e-Dawa area killed two civilians and wounded 14 others.<sup>903</sup> In mid-June 2021 ‘fierce fighting’ was reported between the Taliban and ANSF on the outskirts of Kunduz city.<sup>904</sup> By 24 June 2021 the Taliban was reported to be involved in street-to-street battles with the security forces in every neighbourhood of the provincial capital.<sup>905</sup> In one incident on 23 June 2021 cross fire killed four civilians and wounded 78 more and on 24 June 2021 with two civilians and 42 more wounded in clashes between the Taliban and Afghan security forces. Also on 24 June 2021 in Eighth police district an airstrike killed two police officers and wounded eight more and the Taliban captured the district.<sup>906</sup> At the end of June 2021 residents of Bagh-e Sherkat stated that homes had been burnt and they had been ordered by the Taliban to evacuate with the militants reportedly threatening those they claimed had offered previous support to the government.<sup>907</sup> In early July 2021 the Taliban was also reported to be searching for members of the ALP, uprising forces and former mujahedin commanders in the districts under their control.<sup>908</sup> On 16 July 2021 a vehicle exploded in the third police district, killing one civilian and wounding nine more.<sup>909</sup> UNOCHA reported at the end of July 2021 that the ANSF had been conducting military operations in police districts 1, 2, 3, 4 and that IEDs and magnetic IEDs had killed a civilian and injured 20 others.<sup>910</sup> In one incident on 23 July 2021 the Taliban targeted a pro-government militia base at a mosque, killing two members.<sup>911</sup> On 8 August 2021 the Taliban claimed Kunduz city, with residents reported to be forced to flee and the city’s market on fire.<sup>912</sup> Bilal Sarwary posted on Twitter on 8 August 2021 that at least 100 civilians were killed following fighting in Kunduz.<sup>913</sup> The Red Unit, the Taliban’s ‘special fighters’ were reported to have been seen in Kunduz city.<sup>914</sup>

As of April 2021 Kunduz was listed as one of the 15 Afghan provinces where AQ was reportedly present.<sup>915</sup> ISKP was assessed in April 2021 to have retained a small group in Kunduz, predominantly made up of local ethnic Tajiks and Uzbeks.<sup>916</sup> The ISKP attacked electricity pylons and fuel tankers in Kunduz in the first half of May 2021.<sup>917</sup> During the government and Taliban declared ceasefire for the celebration of Eidul-Fitr, on 13 May 2021 the ISKP claimed a remote detonated IED attack outside a shop in the Zer-e-Dawra area of Kunduz city which killed two civilians and injured a further 15.<sup>918</sup> On 30 July 2021 Islamic State fighters abducted and executed a traffic police officer from the Eighth police district in Kunduz city.<sup>919</sup>

<sup>902</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>903</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (10-16 May 2021), 19 May 2021, [url](#), p.2

<sup>904</sup> Al Jazeera, Taliban captures Afghanistan’s main Tajikistan border crossing, 22 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>905</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>906</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>907</sup> HRW, Afghanistan: Taliban Forcibly Displace Civilians, 7 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>908</sup> AAN, A Quarter of Afghanistan’s districts Fall to the Taliban amid Calls for a ‘Second Resistance’, 2 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>909</sup> NEW YORK TIMES (THE), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>910</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (19-25, 29 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>911</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>912</sup> The Guardian, Major coup for Taliban as fighters take Afghan city of Kunduz, 8 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>913</sup> Sarwary, B., (@bsarwary), [Twitter], posted on: 8 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>914</sup> LWJ, Taliban takes control of Afghan provincial capitals of Kunduz, Sar-i-Pul and Taloqan, 8 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>915</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486 , 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 42

<sup>916</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486 , 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 62

<sup>917</sup> UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General, The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security A/75/926–S/2021/570, 15 June 2021, [url](#), para. 21

<sup>918</sup> UNAMA, Afghanistan – Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, Midyear Report 2021, July 2021, [url](#), p. 10

<sup>919</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)





The WHO did not record any attacks related to health care provision in Kunduz province in the first seven months of 2021.<sup>920</sup>

There is an airport in Kunduz that is located 3 nautical miles (5.5 km) southeast from Kunduz city.<sup>921</sup> As of end July 2021, Kunduz to Kabul is an intended future Kam Air passenger services route.<sup>922</sup> UNOCHA noted that in mid-July 2021 attacks near the Kunduz airport impacted some flights, although humanitarian flights remained operational.<sup>923</sup> The airport was reported to remain under government control as of 8 August 2021<sup>924</sup> but Afghan troops reportedly surrendered to the Taliban three days later.<sup>925</sup> The Taliban also captured the airport outside of the Jawzjan's provincial capital Shiberghan on 11 August 2021, along the Pamir Corps headquarters, meaning that the Taliban controls the roads leading to the two cities and denying the ability to launch counterattacks by road.<sup>926</sup> As of 29 August 2021, flights were scheduled to and from Kabul.<sup>927</sup> On 30 August 2021, Reuters cited the US FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) reporting on the absence of 'air traffic services and a functional civil aviation authority in Afghanistan'.<sup>928</sup>

In the first quarter of 2021, the Taliban set up new checkpoints on the Kunduz-Takhar highway to control transit and commerce routes.<sup>929</sup> In May 2021 the Taliban blew up two bridges in Emamsaheb district.<sup>930</sup> In July 2021 AAN noted that 'most of the roads connecting Kunduz city to its districts are under Taliban control, as are the highways to Baghlan to the south and Takhar to the east'.<sup>931</sup>

## Displacement

UNOCHA collected data for the period 1 March 2021 – 9 August 2021, reporting 95 909 persons displaced from Kunduz province, of which around 90% (86 667) were displaced within the province, almost all (84 042) remaining within the Kunduz district. 11 837 IDPs left the Kunduz province, seeking refuge in Badakhshan (6 475), Kabul (2 667), Herat (63) and Panjsher (37). No displacement from other provinces was registered to Kunduz province in the same period.<sup>932</sup> Between 22 and 28 March 2021, 4 200 people from remote villages in Imam Sahib district, Kunduz province were displaced to safer districts due to fighting.<sup>933</sup> Between 29 March and 4 April 2021, 3 472 people were displaced to Emamsaheb district due to ongoing fighting in Kunduz province.<sup>934</sup> Between 19 and 25 April 2021, 9 100 people were displaced from Estameng, Agibai, Mominabad, Rawza and Ismael Qishlaq villages to Emamsaheb district due to ongoing fighting in the province.<sup>935</sup> Between 14 and 20 June 2021, around 35 000 people had been displaced by conflict around Kunduz<sup>936</sup> with a further 7 500 people displaced from Khanabad, Aliabad, Emamsaheb, and the outskirts of Kunduz city to safer locations in Kunduz city in the week of 21 to 27 June 2021.<sup>937</sup>

<sup>920</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (January-July 2021), 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>921</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#), p. 360

<sup>922</sup> KamAir, Route Map, n.d. (accessed 28 July 2021), [url](#)

<sup>923</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (12-18 July 2021), 23 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>924</sup> LWJ, Taliban takes control of Afghan provincial capitals of Kunduz, Sar-i-Pul and Taloqan, 8 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>925</sup> LWJ, Taliban seizes Afghan Army corps headquarters, 2 northern airports, 11 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>926</sup> LWJ, Taliban seizes Afghan Army corps headquarters, 2 northern airports, 11 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>927</sup> Flightradar24, Kunduz Airport Live Air Traffic, n.d. (accessed 29 August 2021), [url](#)

<sup>928</sup> Reuters, FAA says Kabul airport uncontrolled now, U.S. carriers barred from flights, 30 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>929</sup> USDOD, Lead Inspector General for Operation Freedom's Sentinel, 14 May 2021, [url](#), p. 13

<sup>930</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>931</sup> AAN, A Quarter of Afghanistan's districts fall to the Taliban amid Calls for a 'Second Resistance', 2 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>932</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>933</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (22-28 March 2021), 31 March 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>934</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (29 March - 4 April 2021), 7 April 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>935</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (19-25 April 2021), 28 April 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>936</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (14-20 June 2021), 23 June 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>937</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (21-27 June 2021), 1 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2



## 2.21 Laghman



Map 21: Afghanistan – Laghman province, source: UNOCHA<sup>938</sup>

As of 31 August 2021, an assessment of the LWJ mapping Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information, considered all districts in Laghman to under Taliban control.<sup>939</sup>

According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021 there were 179 security incidents recorded in Laghman, of whom 123 were coded as battles, 45 remote violence and 11 incidents of violence against civilians.

<sup>938</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan: Laghman Province – District Atlas, April 2014, [url](#);

<sup>939</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 31 August 2021), [url](#)

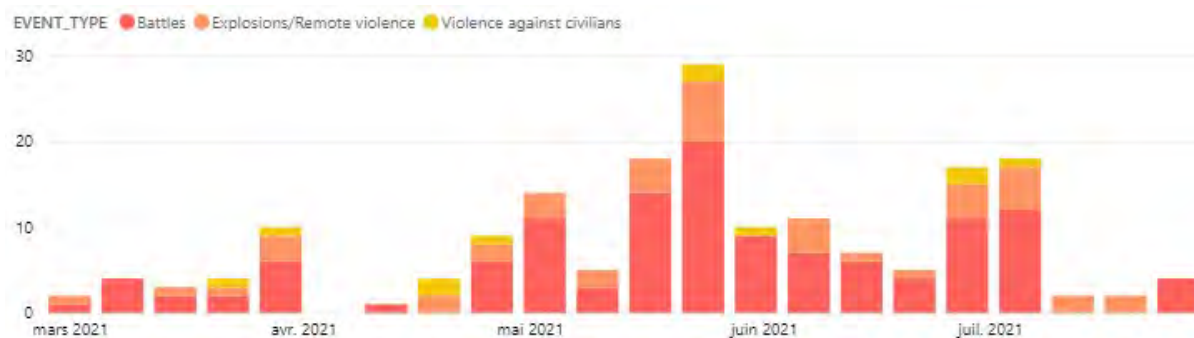


Figure 22. Laghman province - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>940</sup>

On 2 April 2021 mortar shells that landed near residential areas in Alishang district reportedly injured 17 civilians.<sup>941</sup> On 13 June 2021 a mortar shell killed five civilians including a newborn, and wounded one other in Alishang district.<sup>942</sup> On 3 July 2021 armed clashes reportedly led to the deaths of three civilians and injury of 20 others with further clashes and mortar fire in some Alishang villages killing three civilians and injuring eight others.<sup>943</sup> On 15 July 2021 mortar fire hit houses in Alingar district killing five civilians and wounding 12 others. On 27 July 2021 four security officers were killed in a Taliban ambush in Alingar district.<sup>944</sup>

An August 2021 AAN report described Laghman as having long been contested with ‘strong Taliban presence in some rural areas, held at bay by government forces based in district centres’.<sup>945</sup> It noted that since 1 May 2021, three district centres and several security outposts fell with loss of life, following ANSF surrenders that had been mediated by tribal elders.<sup>946</sup>

Regarding the security situation in the main urban centre/provincial capital Mehtarlam, on 23 April 2021 unidentified assailants shot and killed a tribal elder and wounded three civilians.<sup>947</sup> On 21 May 2021 the Taliban captured Dawlatshah district which enabled them to capture security outputs around Mehtarlam.<sup>948</sup> On 26 May 2021, a mortar was reported to wound four children.<sup>949</sup> Residents reported that at the end of May 2021 the Taliban had warned them to leave their homes due to a planned offensive.<sup>950</sup> On 27 July 2021 the Taliban stormed a house in Mehtarlam and killed three civilians and wounded three others.<sup>951</sup>

As of April 2021, Laghman was listed as one of the 15 Afghan provinces where AQ was reportedly present.<sup>952</sup>

The WHO did not record any attacks related to health care provision in Laghman province in the first six months of 2021 but one healthcare facility destroyed and one other damaged in July 2021.<sup>953</sup>

<sup>940</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>941</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (29 March -4 April 2021), 7 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>942</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>943</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (28 June – 4 July 2021), 4 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>944</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>945</sup> AAN, Taliban Victory or Government Failure? A security update on Laghman province, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>946</sup> AAN, Taliban Victory or Government Failure? A security update on Laghman province, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>947</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>948</sup> VOA, Taliban Attack Threatens Afghan Provincial Capital, 23 May 2021, [url](#)

<sup>949</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update ((24 – 30 May 2021), 2 June 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>950</sup> AAN, Taliban Victory or Government Failure? A security update on Laghman province, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>951</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>952</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486, 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 42

<sup>953</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (January-June 2021), 12 July 2021, [url](#); WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care July 2021, 10 August 2021, [url](#)

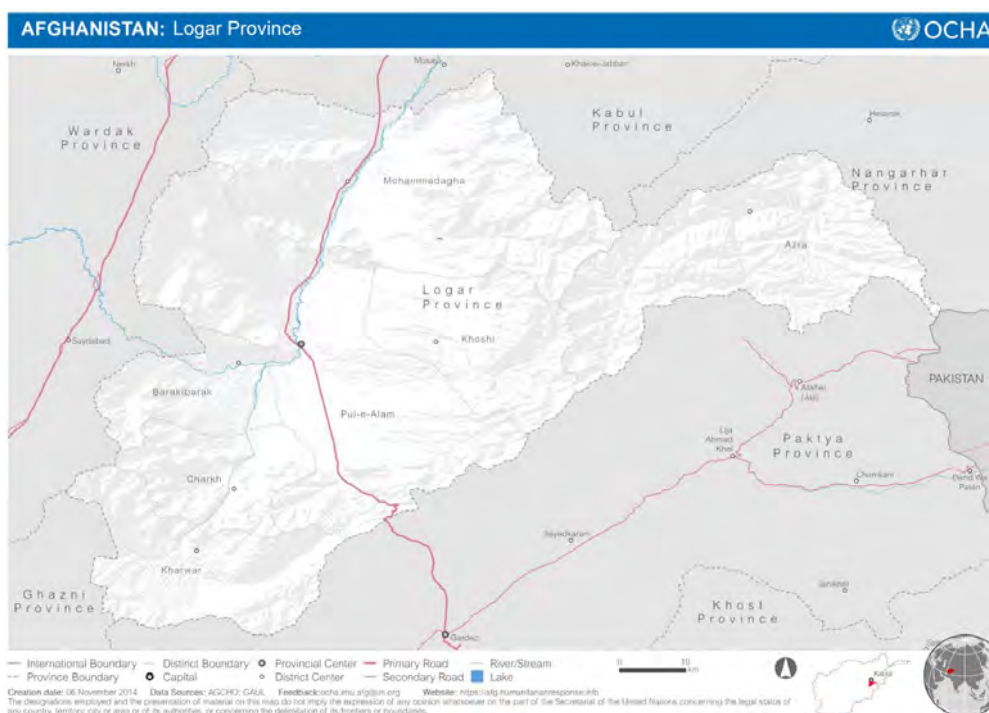
Between 4 and 5 July 2021, a health facility in Laghman provinces was closed due to damage caused by fighting.<sup>954</sup>

There is no operational domestic airport in Laghman province.<sup>955</sup>

### Displacement

UNOCHA collected data for the period 1 March 2021 – 9 August 2021, reporting 17 814 persons displaced from Laghman, of which 17 745 were displaced within the province. The remainder fled to Ghor (6), Kabul and (28) Panjsher (35) provinces. During the same period, no displacement was reported to Laghman from other provinces. By district, displacement was recorded during the reference period from Alishang and Alingar district. 98 % of persons displaced from Alishang and Alingar district were displaced to Mehtarlam/Bad Pash district.<sup>956</sup> Between 26 April and 2 May 2021, 150 families (approximately 1 050 people) were displaced within Alishang district due to fighting between the ANSF and an NSAG.<sup>957</sup> In mid-May 2021, 14 000 people were displaced owing to clashes between the ANSF and a non-state armed group in Mehtarlam city and Alishang, Alingar and Dawlatshah districts.<sup>958</sup> On 17 June 2021, UNOCHA reported that since the start of the conflict, fighting had displaced a cumulative 23 000 people in Laghman.<sup>959</sup>

## 2.22 Logar



Map 22: Afghanistan – Logar province, source: UNOCHA<sup>960</sup>

<sup>954</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (5 -11 July 2021, 15 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>955</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#)

<sup>956</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>957</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (26 April-2 May 2021), 5 May 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>958</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (17-23 May 2021), 23 May 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>959</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (7-13 June 2021), 17 June 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>960</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan Logar Province - District Atlas, April 2014, [url](#)

As of 31 August 2021, an assessment of the LWJ mapping Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information, considered all districts in Logar province to be under Taliban control.<sup>961</sup>

According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021 there were 244 security incidents recorded in Logar, of whom 168 were coded as battles, 59 remote violence and 17 incidents of violence against civilians.

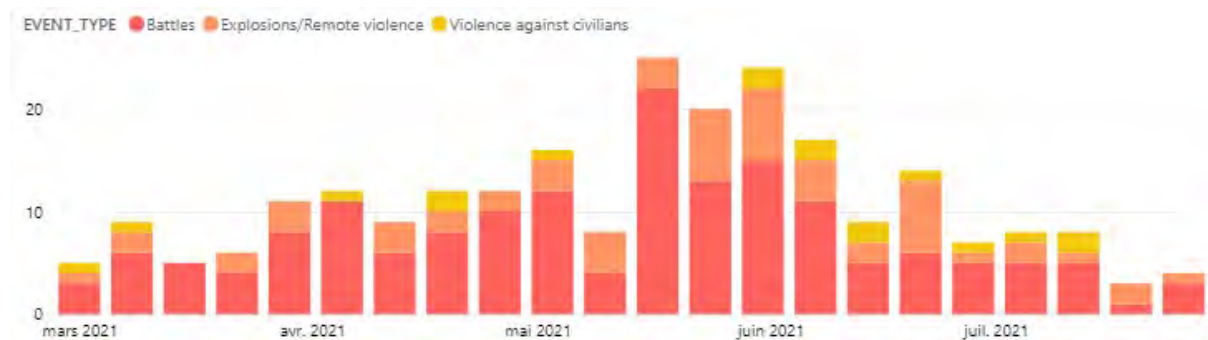


Figure 23. Logar province - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>962</sup>

On 23 April 2021 a doctor and his son were killed during a NDS military operation in Mohammad Agha district. Clashes between the ANSF and the Taliban in April 2021 led to security force casualties.<sup>963</sup> On 25 May 2021 four civilians were killed when mortar fire by an unknown group hit a house in Baraki Barak district.<sup>964</sup> On 16 June 2021 four people were killed and six others wounded when mortar hit a house in Mohammed Agha district.<sup>965</sup> In mid-July 2021 the central region was described as having become ‘increasingly unstable and unpredictable’, with reports of increased activities and violence against civilians by non-state armed groups in Logar.<sup>966</sup>

Regarding the security situation in the main urban centre/provincial capital Pul-e-Alam targeted killings and roadside bombs were documented in the reporting period.<sup>967</sup> On 28 March 2021, unknown gunmen killed two members of a pro-government militia and another was wounded in the Khader Bazaar area of.<sup>968</sup> On 24 April 2021 a roadside bomb killed three soldiers in the Kunjuk area.<sup>969</sup> On 30 April 2021, a vehicle explosion at a guesthouse in during Iftar killed four and injured a further 118 civilians, as well as causing severe damage to the provincial hospital and other buildings.<sup>970</sup> Other sources put the figure at 25 or 27 dead.<sup>971</sup> No group claimed responsibility.<sup>972</sup> Police officers, NDS officers and a former spokesman of Logar police were reported to be shot dead and wounded in several Taliban attacks in May 2021. On 9 May 2021 the Taliban killed a bank branch manager and on 24 May 2021 shot dead a bank security guard.<sup>973</sup> On 12 June 2021 a religious scholar was abducted

<sup>961</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 31 August 2021), [url](#)

<sup>962</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>963</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>964</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>965</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>966</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (5 -11 July 2021, 15 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>967</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>968</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>969</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>970</sup> UNAMA, Afghanistan – Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, Midyear Report 2021, July 2021, [url](#), p. 7

<sup>971</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (26 April-2 May 2021), 5 May 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>972</sup> UNAMA, Afghanistan – Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, Midyear Report 2021, July 2021, [url](#), p. 7

<sup>973</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

and killed by the Taliban.<sup>974</sup> UNOCHA reported that during the second quarter of 2021, Pul-e-Alam was the district experiencing the second highest number of casualties from IED incidents in Afghanistan, at 205.<sup>975</sup> Pul-e-Alam was captured by the Taliban on 13 August 2021.<sup>976</sup>

In the first seven months of 2021 the WHO recorded one healthcare facility damaged and one closed.<sup>977</sup> In addition to the end of April 2021 vehicle explosion described above, on 31 March 2021 a rocket hit a health facility in Baraki Barak wounding 20 civilians.<sup>978</sup>

Logar province lacks an operational domestic airport, though it hosts an airfield in Shank (camp Dahlke).<sup>979</sup>

## Displacement

UNOCHA collected data for the period 1 March 2021 - 9 August 2021, reporting 3 010 persons displaced from Logar province, of which 1 400 were displaced within the province itself (all finding refuge in Pul-e Alam district) and 1 610 persons were displaced to Kabul. During the same period, no displacement was reported to Logar from other provinces.<sup>980</sup> Owing to an unstable security situation, UNOCHA reported that between 5 and 11 April 2021, 5 600 people were displaced in Logar and Wardak provinces<sup>981</sup> and a further 5 334 were displaced by conflict in Logar, Parwan and Paktika provinces between 31 May and 6 June 2021.<sup>982</sup>

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<sup>974</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>975</sup> UNOCHA, HAG Quarterly Report (April to June 2021), 19 July 2021, [url](#), p. 10

<sup>976</sup> LWJ, Afghan government on verge of collapse as Taliban capture 4 more cities, 13 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>977</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (January-July 2021), 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>978</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (29 March -4 April 2021), 7 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>979</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#), p. 455

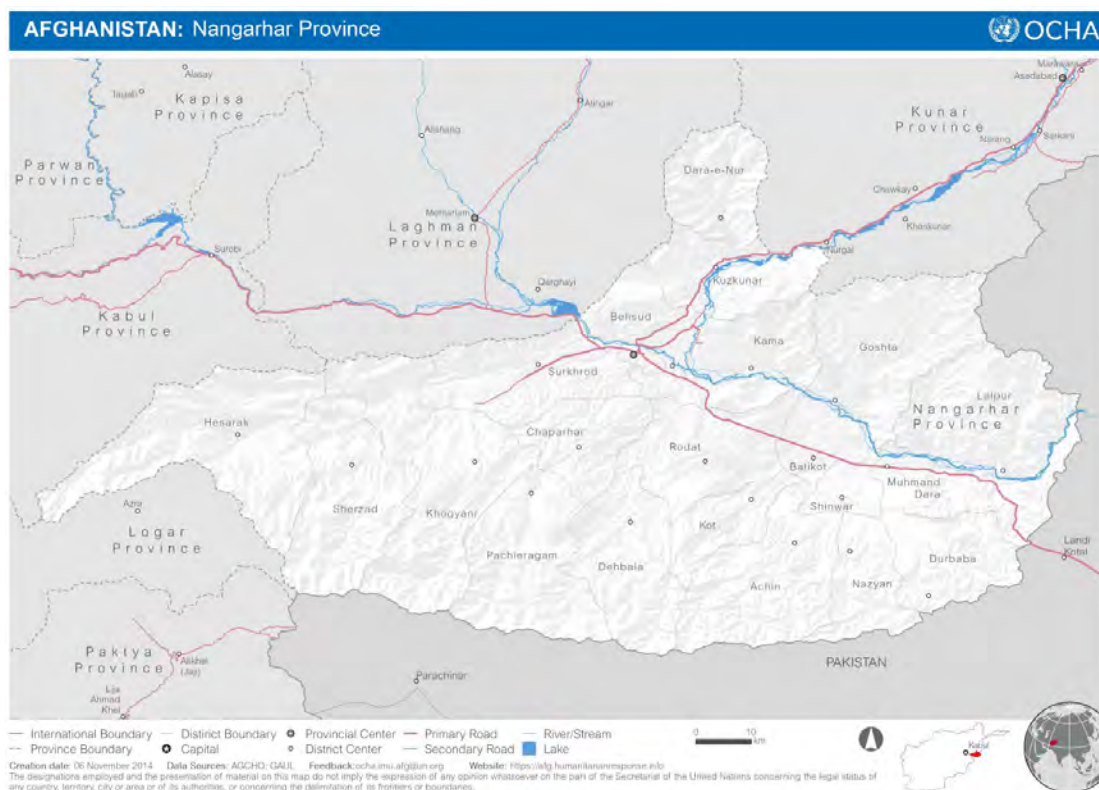
<sup>980</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>981</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (5-11 April 2021), 15 April 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>982</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (31 May - 6 June 2021), 8 June 2021, [url](#), p. 2



## 2.23 Nangarhar



Map 23: Afghanistan – Nangarhar province, source: UNOCHA<sup>983</sup>

As of 31 August 2021, an assessment of the LWJ mapping Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information, considered all districts to be under Taliban control.<sup>984</sup>

According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021 there were 388 security incidents recorded in Nangarhar, of whom 252 were coded as battles, 110 remote violence and 25 incidents of violence against civilians.

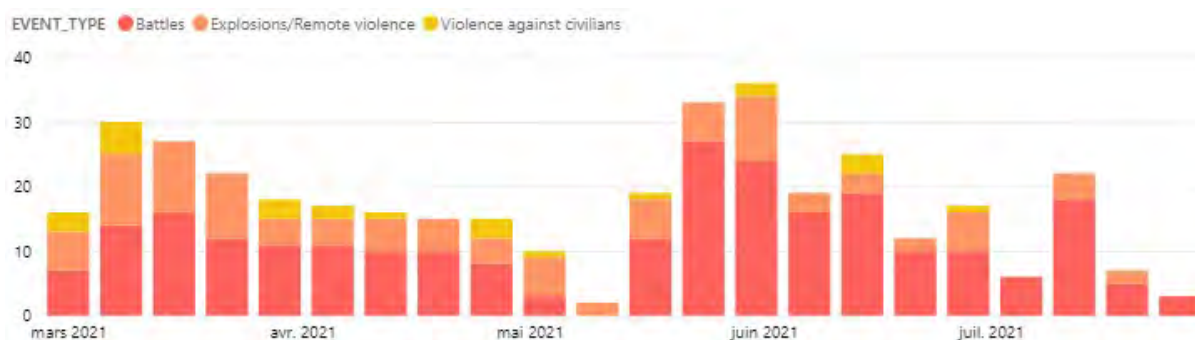


Figure 24. Nangarhar province - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>985</sup>

ISKP claimed responsibility for the assassination of three female media workers and one female doctor on 2 and 5 March 2021 and for explosions against several civilian targets on 21 March 2021, in

<sup>983</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan: Nangarhar Province – District Atlas, April 2014, [url](#);

<sup>984</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 31 August 2021), [url](#)

<sup>985</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

Nangarhar's provincial capital Jalalabad.<sup>986</sup> At the end of March 2021, the NDS was involved in operations against the Islamic State and the Haqqani Network in Nangarhar.<sup>987</sup> AAN assessed that the province's fight against the ISKP meant that the army was 'proficient' and that it retained a network of strong pro- government militias, coupled with a comparatively weak Taliban. As such it noted that in May 2021 the Taliban attacked two districts bordering Pakistan; Deh Bala and Pachir Wa Agam districts but were stopped by Uprising Forces supported by the ANSF.<sup>988</sup> At the end of May 2021, UNOCHA recorded conflict in Achin, Dehbalah, Pachir Wa Agam, Surkhrod and Khogyani districts.<sup>989</sup>

Targeted attacks, IEDs and sticky bombs attached to vehicles were documented in Nangarhar during the reporting period.<sup>990</sup> On 3 March 2021 seven Hazara workers were tied up and killed at a factory in the Mar Ghondi area of Surkhrod district by unidentified gunmen, although local officials believed the assailants to be the Islamic State.<sup>991</sup> Around 13 March 2021, nine students and a teacher were killed in a night raid by the Afghan military forces on an Islamic institute and civilian houses in Khogyani district.<sup>992</sup> On 27 April 2021 five civilians were killed and three others wounded when unidentified gunmen attacked a gathering in Lalpur district.<sup>993</sup> On 12 May 2021, an IED denotated Sherzad district killed two civilians and wounded four others.<sup>994</sup> On 2 June 2021 the Taliban attacked outposts in Haska Meyna (Deh Balah) district killing 40 security force members and wounding 12 others, with the result that five outposts and a base fell to the Taliban.<sup>995</sup> UNOCHA reported that during the second quarter of 2021, Nangarhar was the province experiencing the second highest number of IED incidents in Afghanistan, at 162.<sup>996</sup>

Regarding the security situation in the main urban centre/provincial capital Jalalabad, on 2 March 2021 three women employees of a television network were killed and one other wounded in two attacks in the first police district of Jalalabad. On 4 March 2021, a female doctor was killed, and a child wounded when a rickshaw exploded in the third police district and on 6 March 2021 a sticky bomb killed a tribal elder of the seventh district. On 18 March 2021 a roadside bomb exploded in the fifth district, killing two civilians and wounding eight others.<sup>997</sup> On 7 April 2021, IED detonations reportedly killed two civilians and wounded 27 others.<sup>998</sup> On 28 June 2021, a magnetic IED detonation injured four NGO staff, killed a civilian and wounded another.<sup>999</sup> UNOCHA reported that during the second quarter of 2021, Jalalabad was the district experiencing the third highest number of casualties from IED incidents in Afghanistan, at 127.<sup>1000</sup>

<sup>986</sup> UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General, The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security A/75/926-S/2021/570, 15 June 2021, [url](#), para. 21

<sup>987</sup> ACLED, Regional Overview: South Asia and Afghanistan 27 March – 2 April 2021, 8 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>988</sup> AAN, Menace, Negotiation, Attack: The Taliban take more district Centres across Afghanistan, 16 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>989</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (31 May - 6 June 2021), 8 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>990</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>991</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>992</sup> Insecurity Insight, Education in Danger Monthly News Brief, March 2021, 20 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>993</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>994</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (10-16 May 2021), 19 May 2021, [url](#), p.1

<sup>995</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>996</sup> UNOCHA, HAG Quarterly Report (April to June 2021), 19 July 2021, [url](#), p. 10

<sup>997</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>998</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (5-11 April 2021), 15 April 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>999</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (21-27 June ), 1 July 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>1000</sup> UNOCHA, HAG Quarterly Report (April to June 2021), 19 July 2021, [url](#), p. 10

As of April 2021, Nangarhar was listed as one of the 15 Afghan provinces where AQ was reportedly present.<sup>1001</sup>

ISKP was assessed in April 2021 to have retained a core group of around 1 500 to 2 200 fighters in the Manogay district of Kunar and the Achin district of Nangarhar.<sup>1002</sup> The Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) was estimated to have between 2 500 and 6 000 armed fighters and traditionally located in eastern districts of Nangarhar, near the Pakistan border.<sup>1003</sup>

The WHO recorded attacks related to health care provision in Nangarhar province in the first seven months of 2021, resulting in one healthcare facility damaged, nine healthcare providers killed with six injured and three detained, and one other person injured.<sup>1004</sup> On 30 March 2021 three women vaccinators were killed by unidentified gunmen in the fourth police and seventh districts of Jalalabad City, the provincial capital.<sup>1005</sup> On 15 June 2021 there were five attacks on polio vaccinators in Jalalabad city, Khogyani and Surkhrod districts, killing six and wounding a further three.<sup>1006</sup>

There is a domestic airport in Jalalabad that is located 2 nautical miles (3.7 km) southeast of Jalalabad city.<sup>1007</sup> Bakhtar Afghan Airways operated its first Kabul-Jalalabad test flight in January 2021, but no further updates have been reported.<sup>1008</sup> Bilal Sarwary posted on Twitter on 26 May 2021 that a bridge was blown up on the Kabul- Jalalabad highway in Surkhrod district.<sup>1009</sup> On 5 August 2021, the Taliban blew up three culverts in Surkhrod district of on the second highway between Kabul and Jalalabad.<sup>1010</sup>

## Displacement

UNOCHA collected data for the period 1 March 2021 – 9 August 2021, reporting 12 424 persons displaced from Nangarhar. An overwhelming majority of these IDPs were displaced within the province. Only 8 people headed to Kunar. Displaced persons originated from across the province, with persons travelling from Sherzad, Hesarak, Khogyani, Pachieragam, Dehbala, Surkhrod and Achin districts. 77% originated from two districts, Achin (4 941) and Pachieragam (4 570). 10 358 (83 % of total displaced persons) were displaced in May 2021, mostly from Achin. During the same period, a further 4 607 IDPs sought refuge in Nangarhar from Kunar. The majority (4 522) were displaced from Nari district in Kunar on 24 July 2021.<sup>1011</sup> Between 1 and 7 March 2021, airstrikes and ANSF military clearing operations continued displacing people to Khogyani, Surkhrod, Behsud districts and Jalalabad City.<sup>1012</sup> On 17 June 2021, UNOCHA reported that since the start of the conflict, fighting had displaced a cumulative 12 000 people in Nangarhar.<sup>1013</sup> Towards the end of June 2021, fighting in Pachieragam district displaced around 7 000 people.<sup>1014</sup>

<sup>1001</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486 , 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 42

<sup>1002</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486 , 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 62

<sup>1003</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486 , 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 78

<sup>1004</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (January-July 2021), 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1005</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1006</sup> UNAMA, Afghanistan – Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, Midyear Report 2021, July 2021, [url](#), p. 6

<sup>1007</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#), p. 191

<sup>1008</sup> Pajhwok Afghan News, Test flights begin from Kabul to Nangarhar, 7 January 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1009</sup> Sarwary, B., (@bsarwary), [Twitter], posted on: 26 May 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1010</sup> Pajhwok Afghan News, Taliban blow up culverts on Kabul-Jalalabad highway, 5 August 2021, [url](#)

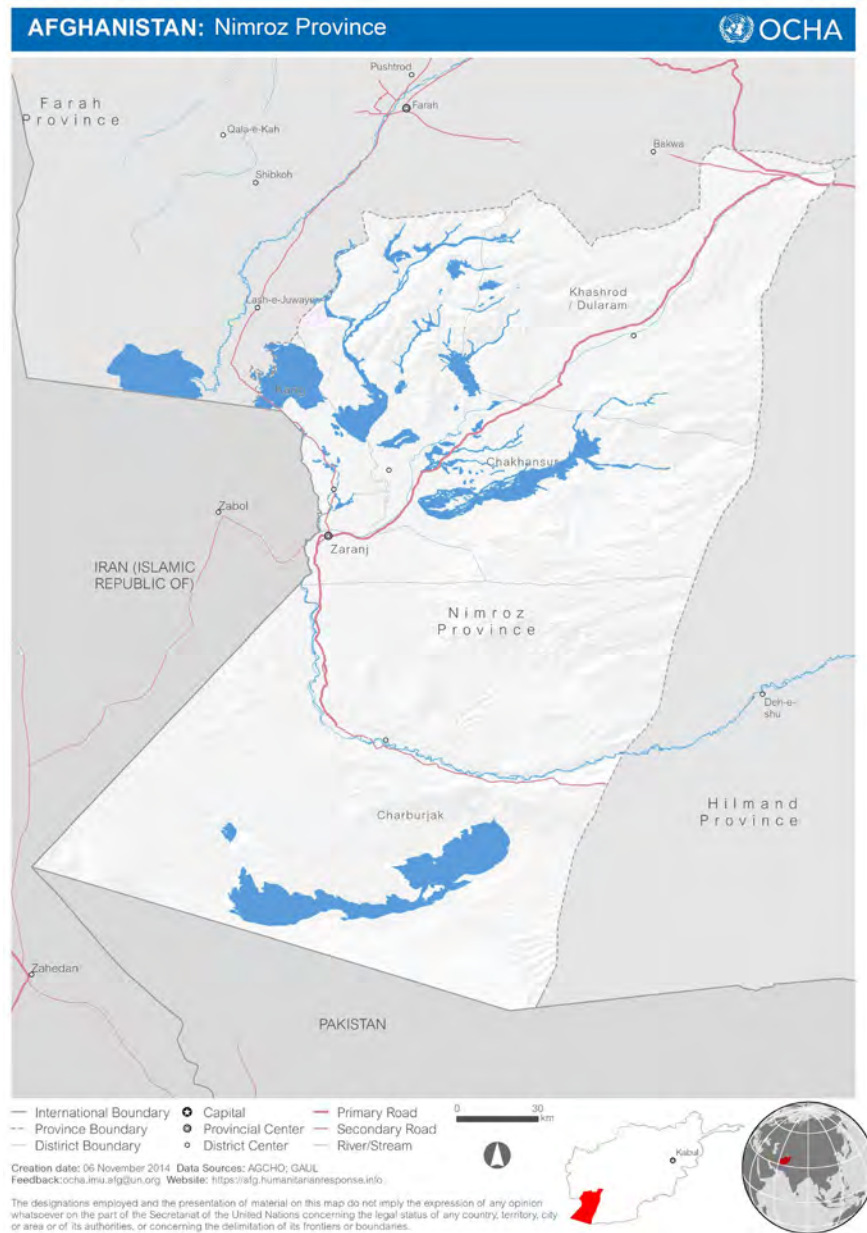
<sup>1011</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1012</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (1-7 March 2021), 10 March 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>1013</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (7-13 June 2021), 17 June 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>1014</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (14-20 June 2021), 23 June 2021, [url](#), p. 2

## 2.24 Nimroz



Map 24: Afghanistan – Nimroz province, source: UNOCHA<sup>1015</sup>

As of 31 August 2021, an assessment of the LWJ mapping Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information, considered all districts in Nimroz province to be under Taliban control.<sup>1016</sup>

According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021 there were 57 security incidents recorded in Nimruz, of whom 40 were coded as battles, 15 remote violence and 2 incidents of violence against civilians.

<sup>1015</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan: Nimroz Province – District Atlas, April 2014, [url](#)

<sup>1016</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 31 August 2021), [url](#)



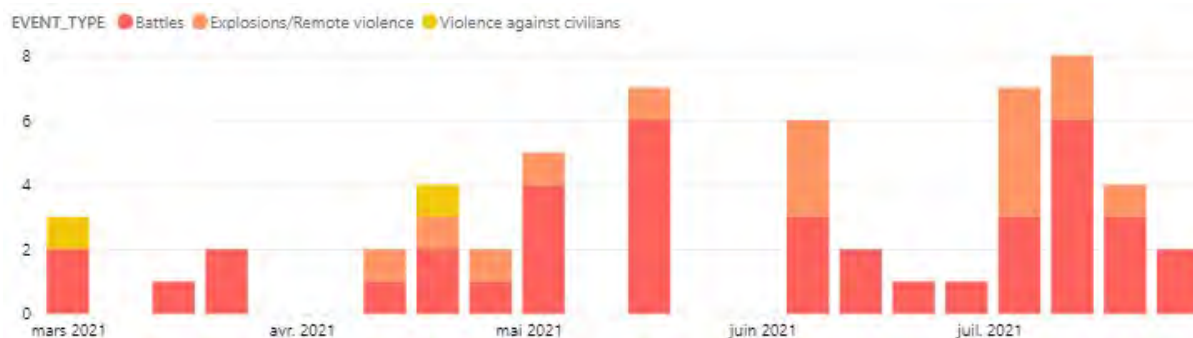


Figure 25. Nimruz province - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>1017</sup>

On 24 March 2021 the Taliban attacked but was not able to take a security outpost in Khachrod district, killing three soldiers and injuring four more.<sup>1018</sup> On 9 June 2021 the Taliban attacked and took over an army battalion in Khashrod, killing 11 soldiers and wounding five others, before it was recaptured.<sup>1019</sup> On 5 August 2021 the Taliban attacked and captured Kang district, killing 30 security forces despite some of them surrendering.<sup>1020</sup> Bilal Sarwary posted on Twitter on 6 August 2021 that Zaranj, the provincial capital of Nimroz, fell to the Taliban without a single shot being fired.<sup>1021</sup> Reportedly it was 'was lightly defended because government forces were focused on holding the much larger southern cities of Kandahar and Lashkar Gah'.<sup>1022</sup> It was the first provincial capital to fall to the Taliban since it launched its offensive in May 2021<sup>1023</sup>, described as a gateway for drug smuggling and for refugee entry to Iran.<sup>1024</sup>

As of April 2021, AQ in the Indian Subcontinent was reported to be operating under the umbrella of the Taliban from Kandahar, Helmand and Nimroz provinces.<sup>1025</sup>

The WHO did not record any attacks related to health care provision in Nimroz province in the first seven months of 2021.<sup>1026</sup>

There is a domestic airport in Nimroz that is located 17 km east of Zaranj City.<sup>1027</sup> As of end July 2021, Kam Air offered several scheduled passenger services from Zaranj, including to Kabul.<sup>1028</sup> By 6 August 2021 the Taliban had taken control of the airport.<sup>1029</sup> As of 29 August 2021, there were no scheduled flights from the airport.<sup>1030</sup> On 30 August 2021, Reuters cited the US FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) reporting on the absence of 'air traffic services and a functional civil aviation authority in Afghanistan'.<sup>1031</sup> UNOCHA reported in early July 2021 that primary and secondary roads to

<sup>1017</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1018</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1019</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1020</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: August 2021, updated 5 August, [url](#)

<sup>1021</sup> Sarwary, B., (@bsarwary), [Twitter], posted on: 6 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1022</sup> New York Times (The), Collapse and Conquest: The Taliban Strategy That Seized Afghanistan, 18 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1023</sup> LWJ, Taliban takes full control of Nimruz province, seizes capital, 6 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1024</sup> AAN, The Fall of Nimruz: A symbolic or economic game-changer? 9 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1025</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486, 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 46

<sup>1026</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (January-July 2021), 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1027</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#), p. 421

<sup>1028</sup> KamAir, Route Map, n.d. (accessed 28 July 2021), [url](#)

<sup>1029</sup> LWJ, Taliban takes full control of Nimruz province, seizes capital, 6 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1030</sup> FlightRadar24, Zaranj Airport Live Air Traffic n.d. (accessed 29 August 2021), [url](#)

<sup>1031</sup> Reuters, FAA says Kabul airport uncontrolled now, U.S. carriers barred from flights, 30 August 2021, [url](#)

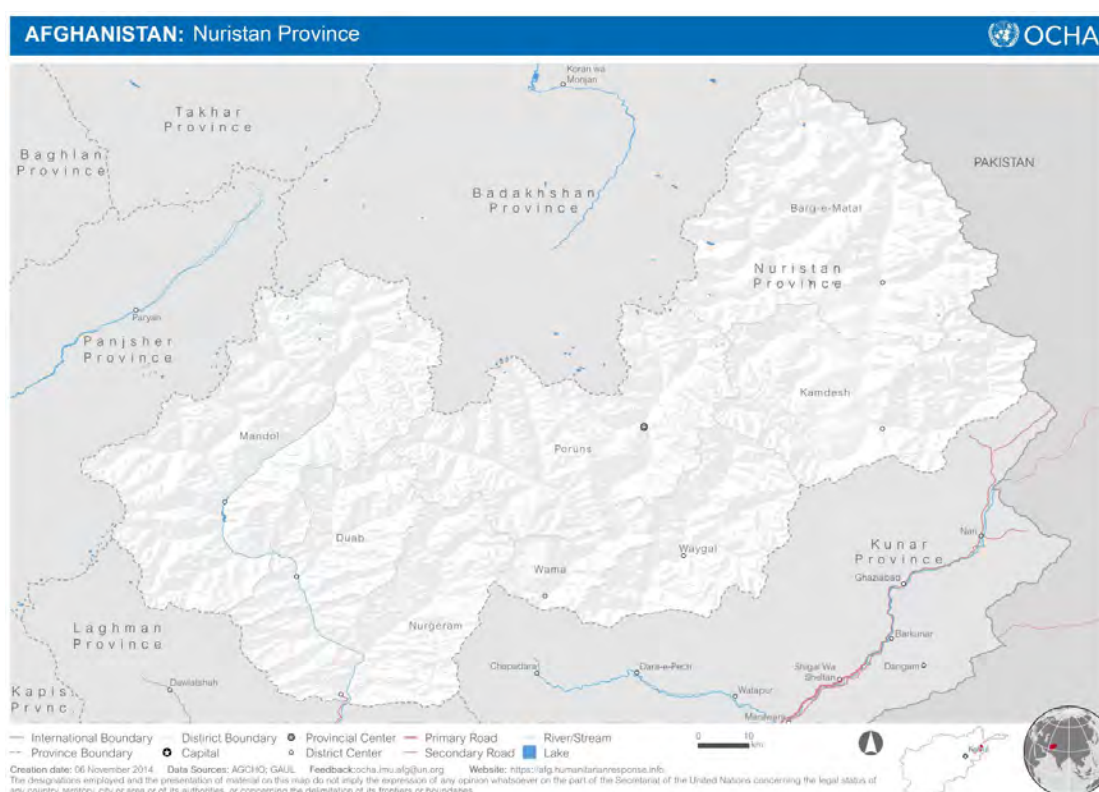


provinces and districts in the south were reportedly being intermittently blocked by a non-state armed group which was affecting civilian movements and food transportation, as well as other basic items.<sup>1032</sup>

## Displacement

UNOCHA collected data for the period 1 March 2021 – 9 August 2021, reporting 590 persons displaced within Nimroz province from Khashrod/Dularam district to Zaranj district. During the same period, 299 persons were displaced from Farah province to Nimroz, all sought refuge in Zaranj district.<sup>1033</sup> Between 12 and 18 April, 805 people were displaced to the provincial capital Zaranj from Khashrod district as well as from Ghor and Farah provinces.<sup>1034</sup> Between 14 and 20 June, 8 813 IDPs from Nimroz and Kandahar provinces were newly displaced to Zaranj in Nimroz province and to Kandahar city.<sup>1035</sup>

## 2.25 Nuristan



Map 25: Afghanistan – Nuristan province, source: UNOCHA<sup>1036</sup>

As of 31 August 2021, an assessment of the LWJ mapping Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information, considered all districts in Nuristan Province to be under Taliban control.<sup>1037</sup>

According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021 there were 24 security incidents recorded in Nuristan, of whom 20 were coded as battles, 4 remote violence and no incident of violence against civilians.

<sup>1032</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (28 June – 4 July 2021), 4 July 2021, [url](#), p.1

<sup>1033</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1034</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (12-18 April 2021), 21 April 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>1035</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (14-20 June 2021), 23 June 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>1036</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan: Nuristan Province – District Atlas, April 2014, [url](#)

<sup>1037</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 31 August 2021), [url](#)

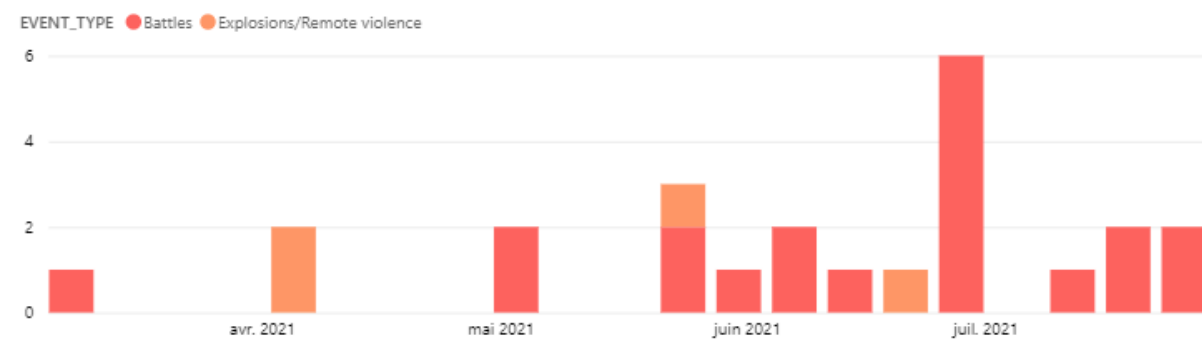


Figure 26. Nuristan province - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>1038</sup>

Between 12 and 15 May 2021, tribal conflict in remote areas of Sham Valley, Nurgeram district resulted in several casualties and the destruction of houses.<sup>1039</sup> In early July 2021 it was reported that a ‘large number’ of people in Nuristan province had taken up arms to fight the Taliban.<sup>1040</sup> On 14 July 2021, five civilians were reportedly killed and a further 12 injured by mortars in Nurgeram district administrative centre.<sup>1041</sup>

As of April 2021 Nuristan was listed as one of the 15 Afghan provinces where AQ was reportedly present.<sup>1042</sup>

The WHO did not record any attacks related to health care provision in Nuristan province in the first seven months of 2021.<sup>1043</sup> UNOCHA reported that in mid-May 2021 18 health facilities reopened and at the end of May 2021 a healthcare facility in Duab district as closed due to insecurity.<sup>1044</sup>

Nuristan province lacks an operational domestic airport.<sup>1045</sup> In mid-July 2021, sections of the Asadabad-Ghaziabad and Ghaziabad-Nari roads remained closed, affecting the supply of basic commodities and with the potential to disrupt medical supplies.<sup>1046</sup>

## Displacement

UNOCHA collected data for the period 1 March 2021 – 9 August 2021, reporting 322 persons displaced from Nuristan, of which 43 % (150) were displaced within the province in Parun district. During the same period, 70 persons from Nuristan were displaced to Kabul province, 21 to Parwan and 91 to Panjsher province. A further 168 IDPs from Kunar sought refuge in Nuristan’s Parun district during the same period.<sup>1047</sup>

<sup>1038</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1039</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (10-16 May 2021), 19 May 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>1040</sup> Tolonews, Afghan Govt Vows to Retake district s from Taliban, 6 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1041</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (12-18 July 2021), 23 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>1042</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486 , 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 42

<sup>1043</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (January-July 2021), 12 August 2021, [url](#)

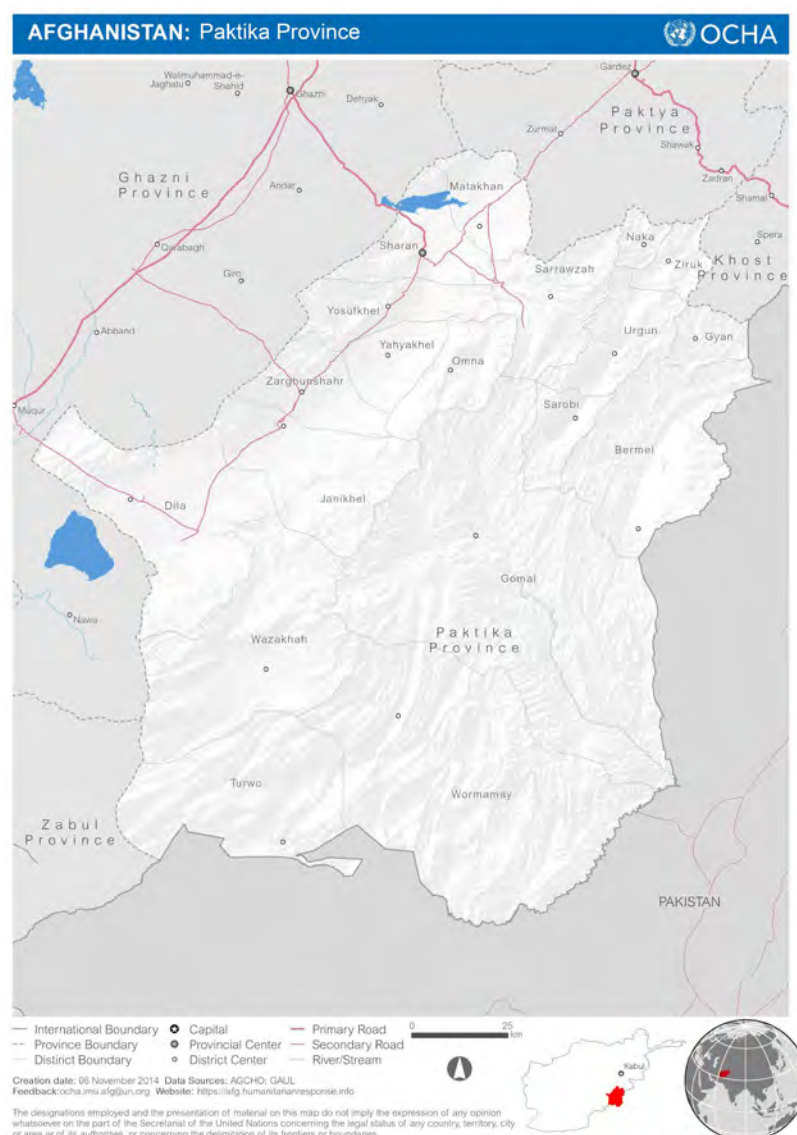
<sup>1044</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan-Weekly Humanitarian Update (10-16 May 2021), 19 May 2021, [url](#), p. 2; UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (31 May - 6 June 2021), 8 June 2021, [url](#), p.2

<sup>1045</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1046</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (12-18 July 2021), 23 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>1047</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, [url](#)

## 2.26 Paktika



Map 26: Afghanistan – Paktika province, source: UNOCHA<sup>1048</sup>

As of 31 August 2021, an assessment of the LWJ mapping Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information, considered all districts to be under Taliban control.<sup>1049</sup>

According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021 there were 112 security incidents recorded in Paktya, of whom 84 were coded as battles, 19 remote violence and 9 incidents of violence against civilians.

<sup>1048</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan: Paktika Province – District Atlas, April 2014, [url](#)

<sup>1049</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 13 August 2021), [url](#)

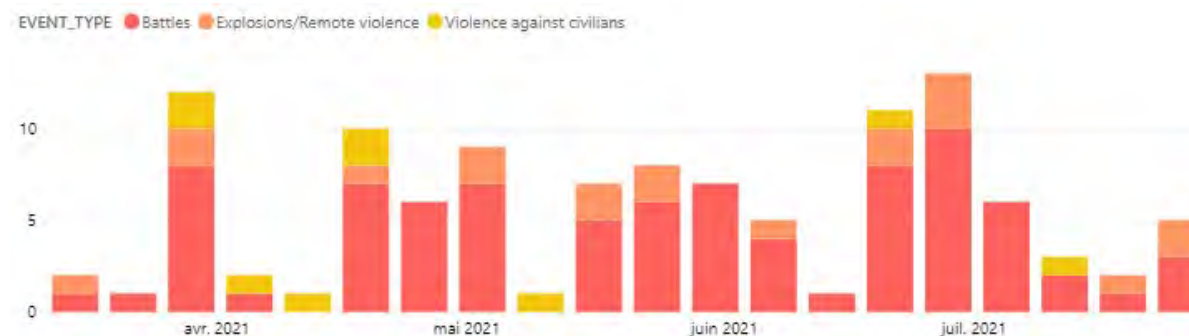


Figure 28. Paktika province - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>1050</sup>

On 30 March 2021, Afghan forces led a raid in Gyan district that led to the death of a prominent AQ in the Indian Subcontinent commander, Dawlat Bek Tajiki (alias Abu Mohammad al-Tajiki), in addition to Hazrat Ali, a Taliban commander from Waziristan.<sup>1051</sup> On 5 May 2021 the Taliban attacked an outpost in Sarawza district, following which a police chief was killed in a roadside bomb and three of his bodyguards were injured. On 29 May 2021 a roadside bomb in Sarhawaza district killed a police officers and wounded two more.<sup>1052</sup> On 28 July 2021 a roadside bomb hit a vehicle in Mata Khan district killing four civilians.<sup>1053</sup>

In mid-July 2021 the central region was described as having become ‘increasingly unstable and unpredictable’, with reports of increased activities and violence against civilians by non-state armed groups in Paktika and other central provinces.<sup>1054</sup>

The Haqqani Network within the Taliban structure is reported to have a force of between 3 000 to 10 000 traditional armed fighters operating in the “P2K” region of Khost, Paktika and Paktya provinces.<sup>1055</sup>

The WHO did not record any attacks related to health care provision in Paktika province in the first seven months of 2021.<sup>1056</sup>

There is a domestic airport in Sharana, Paktika that is located 4 km southeast of the city of Zahar Sharan.<sup>1057</sup> As of end July 2021, Kam Air listed Sharana to Kabul as an intended future route.<sup>1058</sup>

## Displacement

UNOCHA collected data for the period 1 March 2021 – 9 August 2021, reporting that 833 persons were displaced to Paktika. 420 of those displaced came from Ghazni and sought refuge in Yosufkhel district. The remaining 413 persons came from Paktya and found refuge in Sharan district. There was no one

<sup>1050</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1051</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486 , 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 47

<sup>1052</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1053</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1054</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (5 -11 July 2021), 15 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>1055</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486 , 1 June 2021, [url](#), paras. 27-28

<sup>1056</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (January-July 2021), 12 August 2021, [url](#)

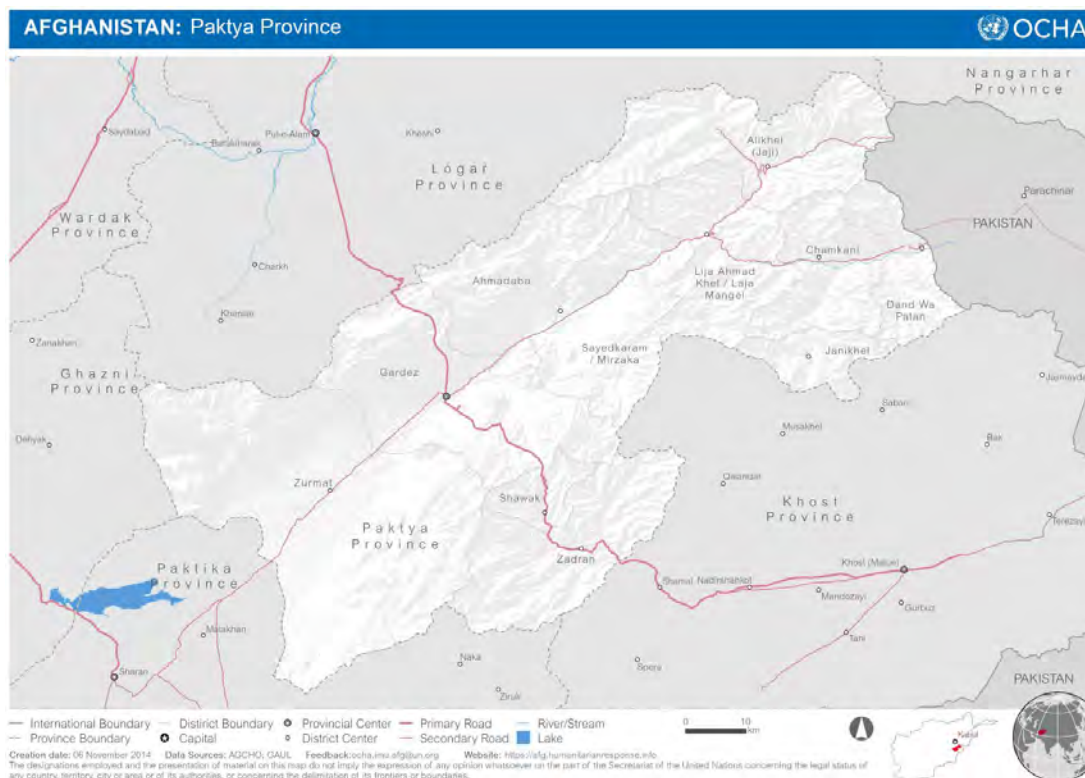
<sup>1057</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#), p. 421

<sup>1058</sup> KamAir, Route Map, n.d. (accessed 28 July 2021), [url](#)



displaced from Paktika to another province in the reporting period.<sup>1059</sup> Between 31 May and 6 June, 5 334 people were reportedly displaced by conflict in Logar, Parwan and Paktika provinces.<sup>1060</sup>

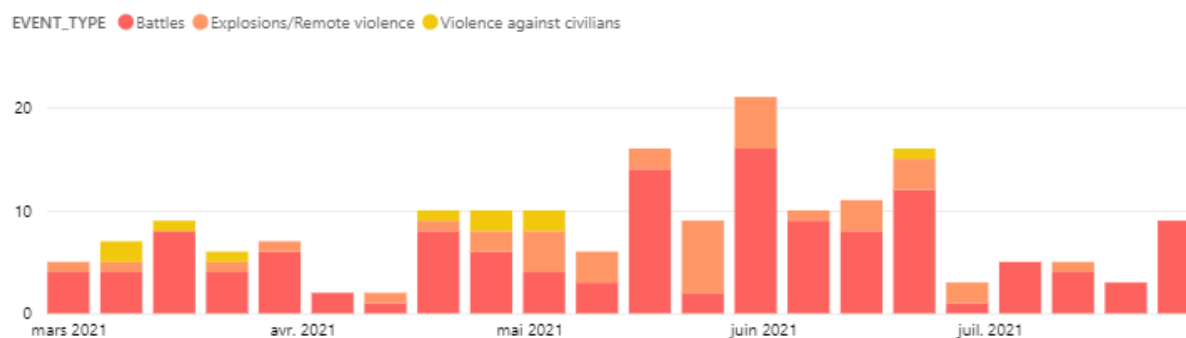
## 2.27 Paktya



Map 27: Afghanistan – Paktya province, source: UNOCHA<sup>1061</sup>

As of 31 August 2021, an assessment of the LWJ mapping Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information, considered all districts to be under Taliban control.<sup>1062</sup>

According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021 there were 182 security incidents recorded in Paktya, of whom 133 were coded as battles, 39 remote violence and 10 incidents of violence against civilians.



<sup>1059</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1060</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (31 May 2021- 6 June 2021), 8 June 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>1061</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan: Paktya Province – District Atlas, April 2014, [url](#)

<sup>1062</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 31 August 2021), [url](#)



Figure 27. Paktya province - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>1063</sup>

On 25 April 2021 the district police chief of Wazi Khwa district was killed in clashes with the Taliban.<sup>1064</sup> On 12 June 2021 the Taliban attacked and took over a security outpost in Mirzaka district, killing four soldiers and abducting 30 security force members and on 16 June 2021 a Taliban car bomb targeting an outpost in Zazai Aryub district killed nine soldiers and wounded 12 others.<sup>1065</sup> On 21 June 2021 and 2 July 2021 roadside bombs killed 13 civilians in Ahmad Aba district and two others were wounded.<sup>1066</sup>

AAN reported that in the last two weeks of June 2021 Paktya lost several northeastern districts, including the two bordering Pakistan, and Zurmat and Rohani Baba, and that as of mid-July 2021 the three Dzadran districts still held by the government, Shwak, Zadran and Gerda Tserai were controlled by the pro-government militia the Khost Protection Force, formerly controlled by the CIA.<sup>1067</sup>

Regarding the security situation in the main urban centre/provincial capital Gardez, on 20 March 2021 a provincial council member was shot dead in the second police district, and 27 March 2021 a prosecutor was shot dead in the fifth police district, both by unidentified gunmen.<sup>1068</sup> On 3 May 2021 a Taliban attack on a security outpost killed four pro-government militia members and one police officer and injured 12 more and on 9 May 2021 a civil society activist was shot dead.<sup>1069</sup> On 6 June 2021 a roadside bomb killed four civilians and on 12 June 2021 a Taliban ambush led to seven soldiers killed and 40 ANSF members surrendered to the Taliban.<sup>1070</sup> In late June 2021 Tolonews reported that the Paktya governor Haleem Fedayee considered that 'Taliban infiltrators had played a key role in the fall of the districts'.<sup>1071</sup> On 4 July 2021 a roadside bomb hit a vehicle in in the fourth police district killing four civilians and on 12 July 2021 a bomb killed a police officer in the second police district.<sup>1072</sup>

The Haqqani Network within the Taliban structure is reported to have a force of between 3 000 to 10 000 traditional armed fighters operating in the "P2K" region of Khost, Paktika and Paktya provinces.<sup>1073</sup>

The WHO recorded one attack related to health care provision in Paktya province in the first seven months of 2021 which killed one person.<sup>1074</sup>

Paktya province lacks an operational domestic airport.<sup>1075</sup> On 17 June 2021 the Taliban closed a number of key highways connecting the centre of the province to a number of districts.<sup>1076</sup> Bilal Sarwary posted on Twitter on 18 June 2021 that main road in Paktya Province was blown up.<sup>1077</sup> On 2 July 2021 Zurmat district fell to the Taliban, which lies on the supply route to Paktika and the region's 'most important' ANA garrison.<sup>1078</sup>

<sup>1063</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1064</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1065</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1066</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1067</sup> AAN, Menace, Negotiation, Attack: The Taliban take more district Centres across Afghanistan, 16 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1068</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1069</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1070</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1071</sup> Tolonews, 'Infiltrators' Had Role in Fall of Districts in Paktia: Governor, 24 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1072</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1073</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486, 1 June 2021, [url](#), paras. 27-28

<sup>1074</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (January-July 2021), 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1075</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1076</sup> Tolonews, Taliban Close Key Routes in Paktia: Residents, 17 June 2021, [url](#)

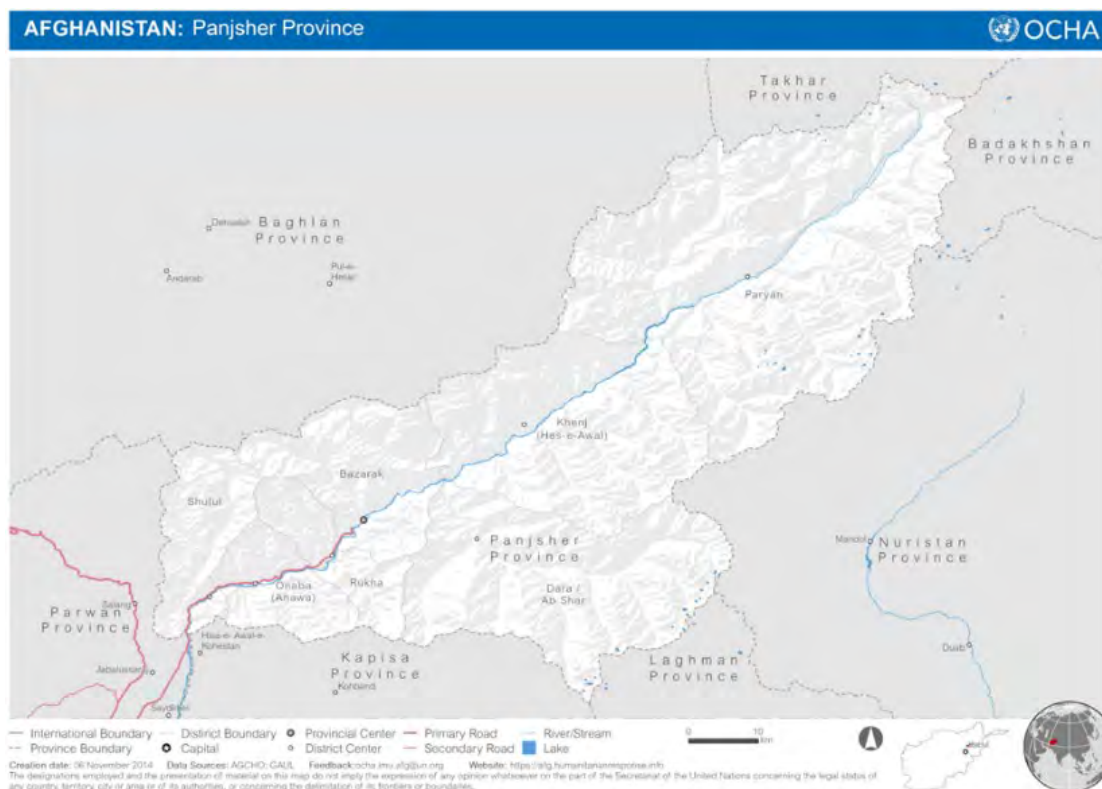
<sup>1077</sup> Sarwary, B., (@bsarwary), [Twitter], posted on: 18 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1078</sup> AAN, Menace, Negotiation, Attack: The Taliban take more district Centres across Afghanistan, 16 July 2021, [url](#)

## Displacement

UNOCHA collected data for the period 1 March 2021 – 9 August 2021, reporting 2 947 persons displaced from Paktya. Of those displaced, 2 464 or 84% were displaced within the province, in Gardez capital district. 70 persons headed to Kabul and 413 persons sought refuge in Paktika province. During the same period, no displacement was reported to Paktya from other provinces.<sup>1079</sup> Between 14 and 20 June 2021, 1 519 IDPs received humanitarian assistance in Paktya, Paktika and Daykundi provinces.<sup>1080</sup>

## 2.28 Panjsher



Map 28: Afghanistan – Panjsher province, source: UNOCHA<sup>1081</sup>

As of 31 August 2021, an assessment of the LWJ mapping Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information, considered all the districts of Panjsher province to be under NRF's control.<sup>1082</sup>

On 18 August 2021, Panjsher province reportedly remained the “last free region” in Afghanistan<sup>1083</sup> with an estimated number of 2 000 to 2 500 fighters.<sup>1084</sup> According to BBC, on 23 August 2021, the Taliban claimed that they have encircled and besieged NRF's ‘stronghold’ in Panjsher.<sup>1085</sup>

According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021 there was 1 security incident recorded in Panjsher, which was coded as a battle.

<sup>1079</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1080</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (14-20 June 2021), 23 June 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>1081</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan Panjsher Province - District Atlas, April 2014, [url](#)

<sup>1082</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 31 August 2021), [url](#)

<sup>1083</sup> France 24, In Panjsher, ‘last free region’ in Afghanistan, Saleh claims caretaker presidency, 18 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1084</sup> New York Times (The), Biden says U.S. forces will stay in Kabul to get all Americans out, 18 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1085</sup> BBC, Anti-Taliban group says it has thousands of fighters, 23 August 2021, [url](#)

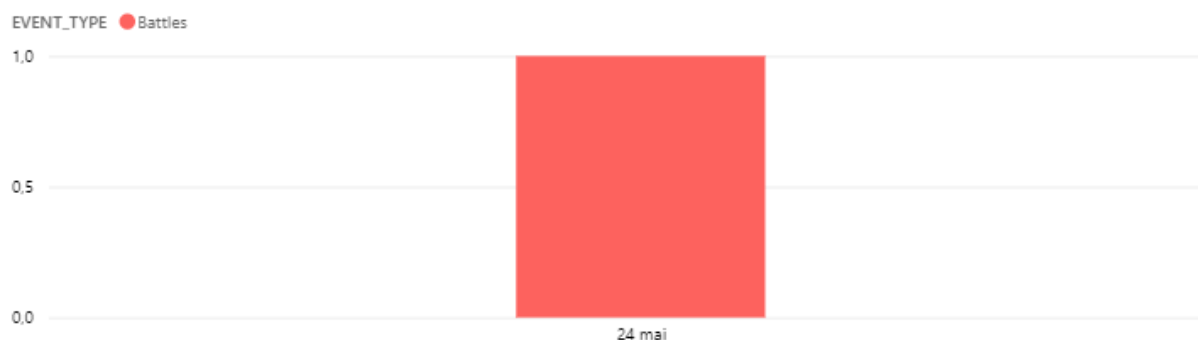


Figure 29. Panjsher province - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>1086</sup>

As of April 2021, Panjsher was listed as one of the 15 Afghan provinces where AQ was reportedly present.<sup>1087</sup>

The WHO did not record any attacks related to health care provision in Panjsher province in the first six months of 2021.<sup>1088</sup>

Panjsher province lacks an operational domestic airport.<sup>1089</sup>

### Displacement

UNOCHA collected data for the period 1 March 2021 - 9 August 2021, reporting 338 persons displaced to Panjsher province, all of them settling in Bazarak district. They came from a variety of provinces including Nuristan, Baghlan, Badakhshan, Laghman and Kunduz. During the same period, no displacement was reported from Panjsher to other provinces.<sup>1090</sup>

<sup>1086</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

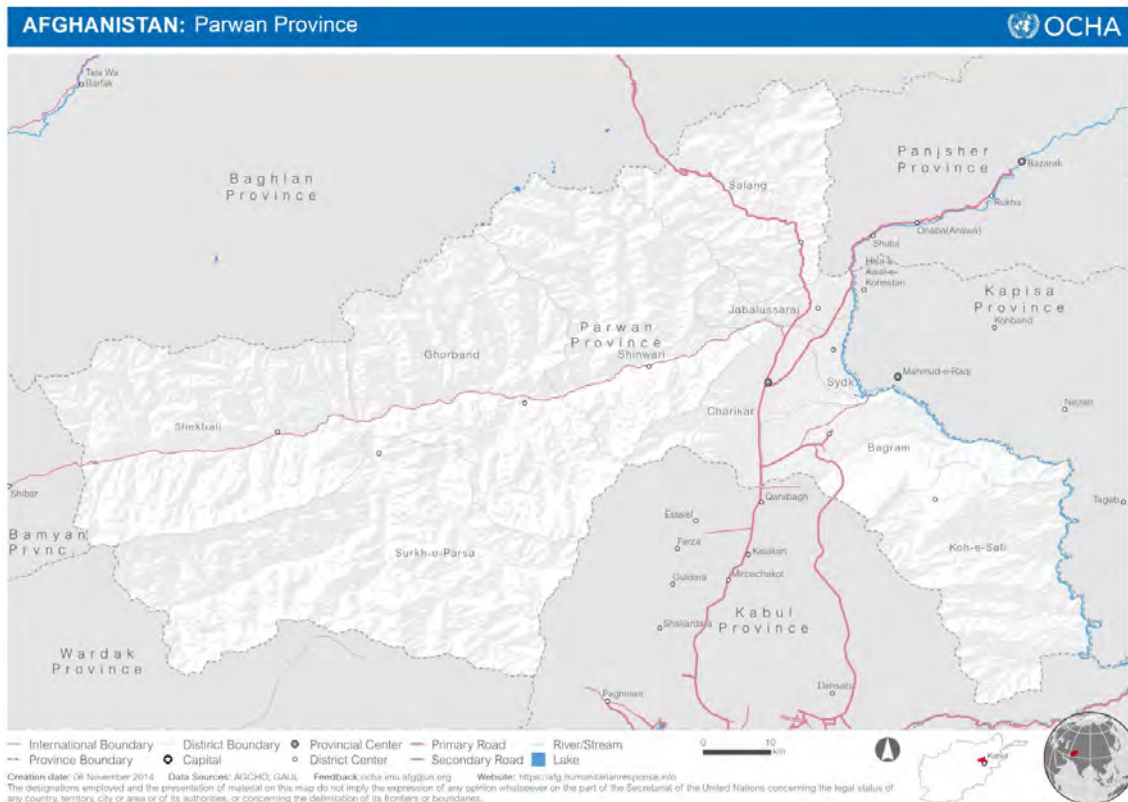
<sup>1087</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486, 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 42

<sup>1088</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (January-July 2021), 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1089</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1090</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, [url](#)

## 2.29 Parwan



Map 29: Afghanistan – Parwan province, source: UNOCHA<sup>1091</sup>

As of 31 August 2021, an assessment of the LWJ mapping Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information, considered all the districts of Parwan province to be under Taliban control except Saland, which was considered to be contested, and Chaharikar, which was considered to be under NRF's control.<sup>1092</sup>

According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021 there were 74 security incidents recorded in Parwan, of whom 46 were coded as battles, 20 remote violence and 8 incidents of violence against civilians.

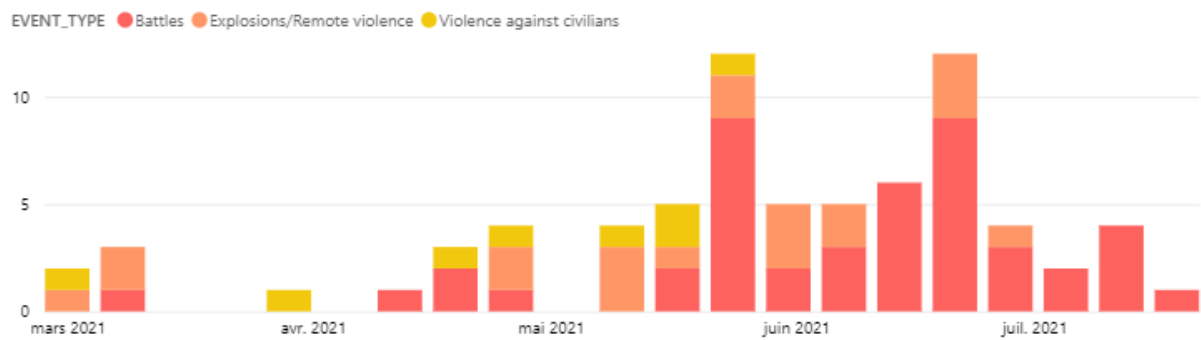


Figure 30. Parwan province - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>1093</sup>

<sup>1091</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan Parwan Province - District Atlas, April 2014, [url](#)

<sup>1092</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 31 August 2021), [url](#)

<sup>1093</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

ISKP attacked electricity pylons and fuel tankers in Parwan in the first half of May 2021.<sup>1094</sup> At the end of May 2021 the Islamic State claimed responsibility for a roadside bomb that hit a bus transporting university students and lecturers that killed at least four and wounded a further 11.<sup>1095</sup>

Targeted assassinations, Taliban attacks on security outposts and roadside bombs were documented in the reporting period.<sup>1096</sup> On 28 April 2021 in Bagram a Taliban attack on a security outpost killed one police and wounded two more and on 30 April 2021 a bomb planted in a mosque inside Bagram airbase killed one Afghan soldier and wounded 25 others.<sup>1097</sup> On 11 May 2021 in Salang district the communication manager of the provincial Hajj and Religious Affairs Ministry was assassinated and on 23 May 2021 a religious scholar was shot dead in Saydkhel district, both by unknown assailants.<sup>1098</sup> Taliban attacks on security outposts in Shinwari and Sayah Gerd caused casualties to security force members and on 26 June 2021 the Taliban attacked and captured the latter, killing four police officers and abducting 120 security force members.<sup>1099</sup> UNOCHA reported that towards the end of June 2021, rockets launched in Koh-e-Safi district hit residential areas, killing four civilians and damaging several houses.<sup>1100</sup> In early July 2021 the central region was described as having become ‘increasingly unstable and unpredictable’, with reports of increased activities and violence against civilians by non-state armed groups in Parwan.<sup>1101</sup> The following week UNOCHA described reports of increased non-state armed group activity and that the ANSF reportedly retook control of several districts in Parwan.<sup>1102</sup>

Regarding the security situation in the main urban centre/provincial capital Charikar, on 24 April 2021 a police officer was shot dead and on 28 April 2021 three traffic police officers were killed by a roadside bomb in the Deh Qazi area.<sup>1103</sup> On 1 June 2021, a magnetic bomb targeted a vehicle transporting NDS officers, killing three officers and one civilian and injuring three officers and one civilian.<sup>1104</sup> On 24 July 2021 a Taliban attack on security outposts killed four police officers and the Taliban retreated after hours of fighting.<sup>1105</sup> Similarly on 2 August 2021 the Taliban were pushed back after attacking security outposts which killed four police officers.<sup>1106</sup>

As of April 2021, Parwan was listed as one of the 15 Afghan provinces where AQ was reportedly present.<sup>1107</sup>

The WHO did not record any attacks related to health care provision in Parwan province in the first seven months of 2021.<sup>1108</sup> According to national power utility Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat 35

<sup>1094</sup> UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General, The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security A/75/926-S/2021/570, 15 June 2021, [url](#), para. 21

<sup>1095</sup> BBC, Afghanistan: Bus blast kills three university staff, 29 May 2021, [url](#); AP, Government, Taliban blame each other for shell that kills 7, 30 May 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1096</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1097</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1098</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1099</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1100</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (21-27 June ), 1 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>1101</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (5 -11 July 2021, 15 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>1102</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (12-18 July 2021), 23 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>1103</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1104</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1105</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1106</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: August 2021, updated 5 August, [url](#)

<sup>1107</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486 , 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 42

<sup>1108</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (January-July 2021), 12 August 2021, [url](#)



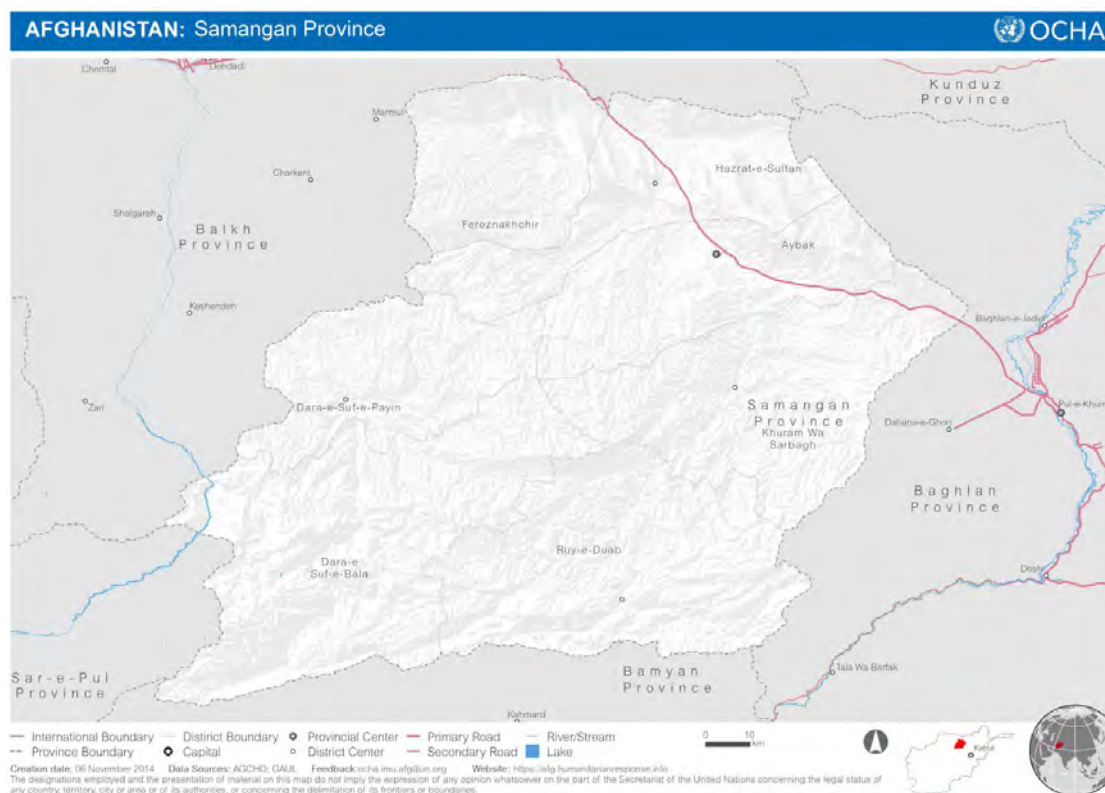
electricity pylons were damaged or destroyed in the first six months of 2021<sup>1109</sup>, including one in Parwan at the end of June 2021.<sup>1110</sup>

Parwan province lacks an operational domestic airport, but hosts Bagram airfield.<sup>1111</sup> On 12 July 2021 the US evacuated its headquarters from Bagram.<sup>1112</sup>

### Displacement

UNOCHA collected data for the period 1 March 2021 - 9 August 2021, reporting 658 persons displaced within Parwan province. By district, displacement was recorded during the reference period from Shekhali, Ghorband and Shinwari. All recorded IDPs were displaced within the province to Charikar district, except 28 IDPs who fled to Kabul. During the same period, a further 280 persons sought refuge in the province in Charikar district from Badakhshan, Nuristan and Baghlan province. 83% (231) of those who headed to Charikar district came from Baghlan.<sup>1113</sup> Between 31 May and 6 June 2021, 5 334 people were reportedly displaced by conflict in Logar, Parwan and Paktika provinces.<sup>1114</sup>

## 2.30 Samangan



Map 30: Afghanistan – Samangan province, source: UNOCHA<sup>1115</sup>

<sup>1109</sup> Reuters, Violence intensifies across Afghanistan's central and northern provinces, 28 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1110</sup> SIGAR, Quarterly report to the United States Congress, 30 July 2021, [url](#), p. 140; Sarwary, B., (@bsarwary), [Twitter], posted on: 26 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1111</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#), p. 9

<sup>1112</sup> New York Times (The), An Iconic Bridge Sees U.S. Allies Flee Afghanistan as the Soviets Did, 16 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1113</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1114</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (31 May 2021- 6 June 2021), 8 June 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>1115</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan Samangan Province - District Atlas, April 2014, [url](#)

As of 31 August 2021, an assessment of the LWJ mapping Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information, considered all districts to be under Taliban control.<sup>1116</sup>

According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021 there were 65 security incidents recorded in Samangan, of whom 51 were coded as battles, 12 remote violence and 2 incidents of violence against civilians.

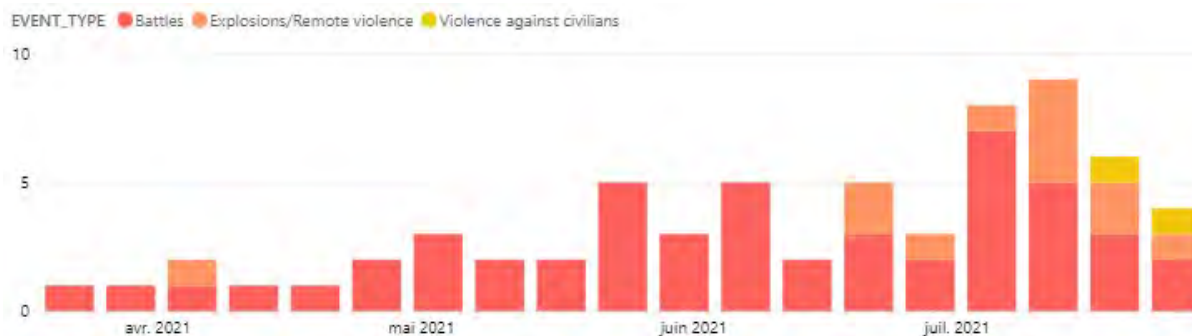


Figure 31. Samangan province - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>1117</sup>

On 8 May 2021 Taliban attacks on outposts in Dara-e-Suf Bala district killed two police officers and a member of the territorial army and injured four more.<sup>1118</sup> On 19 June 2021 the Taliban took over Dara-Suf-Payan district, following the killing of a pro-government militia member and wounding of three others and the retreat of 160 Afghan security force members and on 20 June 2021 Dara-ye Suf Bala fell, with ongoing fighting in Ruy-e-Duab district centre.<sup>1119</sup> The Taliban reportedly took control of Feroznakhchir district in late June 2021 after several days of fighting.<sup>1120</sup> On 28 July 2021 a Taliban attack on Dara-e-Suf Bala district killed one pro-government militia member and injured two more. The Taliban were repelled after hours of fighting but during their retreat they executed four Hazara civilians. On 30 July 2021 the Taliban attacked and captured an outpost in Feroznakhchir district killing eight pro-government militia members.<sup>1121</sup>

The WHO did not record any attacks related to health care provision in Samangan province in the first seven months of 2021.<sup>1122</sup> However in early April 2021 UNOCHA noted that 22 basic health facilities remained closed, with negotiations to reopen them ongoing.<sup>1123</sup>

Samangan province lacks an operational domestic airport.<sup>1124</sup> On 17 July 2021, a roadside bomb in in the first police district of Aybak, the provincial capital, killed one civilian and injured 10 more.<sup>1125</sup> On 9 August 2021 Aybak was reported to have been overrun by the Taliban without a fight.<sup>1126</sup> In mid-July 2021 fighting was reported on the main road between Mazar-e Sharif (Balkh province) and Aybak (Samangan Province), affecting aid agency trucks.<sup>1127</sup> In mid-July 2021 AAN noted that the Taliban

<sup>1116</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 31 August 2021), [url](#)

<sup>1117</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1118</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1119</sup> AAN, A Quarter of Afghanistan's districts Fall to the Taliban amid Calls for a 'Second Resistance', 2 July 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1120</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (28 June – 4 July 2021), 4 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2; New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1121</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1122</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (January-July 2021), 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1123</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (29 March -4 April 2021), 7 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1124</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#), p. 9

<sup>1125</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1126</sup> LWJ, Fifth northern Afghan capital falls to the Taliban, 9 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1127</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (12-18 July 2021), 23 July 2021, [url](#), p. 3

operated checkpoints on stretches of the road between Pul-e Khomri to Samangan and Samangan to Mazar-e Sharif.<sup>1128</sup>

### Displacement

UNOCHA collected data for the period 1 March 2021 – 9 August 2021, reporting 12 761 persons displaced from Samangan, of which 97 % (12 404) were displaced within the province. 357 were displaced to Kabul and Balkh provinces. Persons were displaced from Hazrat-e-Sultan, Aybak, Khuram Wa Sarbagh, Dara-e-Suf-e-Payin and Feroznakhchir district. During the same period, no displacement was reported to Samangan from other provinces.<sup>1129</sup> Between 12 and 18 July 2021, 10 213 people were assessed to have been displaced by conflict – over half (5 516 people) of which were displaced from Hazrati Sultan and Aybak districts in Samangan due armed clashes in the beginning of July 2021.<sup>1130</sup>

## 2.31 Sar-e Pul



<sup>1128</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (19-25, 29 July 2021, [url](#))

<sup>1129</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1130</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (12-18 July 2021), 23 July 2021, [url](#), p. 3

Map 31: Afghanistan – Sar-e Pul province, source: UNOCHA<sup>1131</sup>

As of 31 August 2021, an assessment of the LWJ mapping Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information, considered all districts in Sar-e Pul province to be under Taliban control.<sup>1132</sup>

According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021 there were 68 security incidents recorded in Sar-e Pul, of whom 44 were coded as battles, 21 remote violence and 3 incidents of violence against civilians.

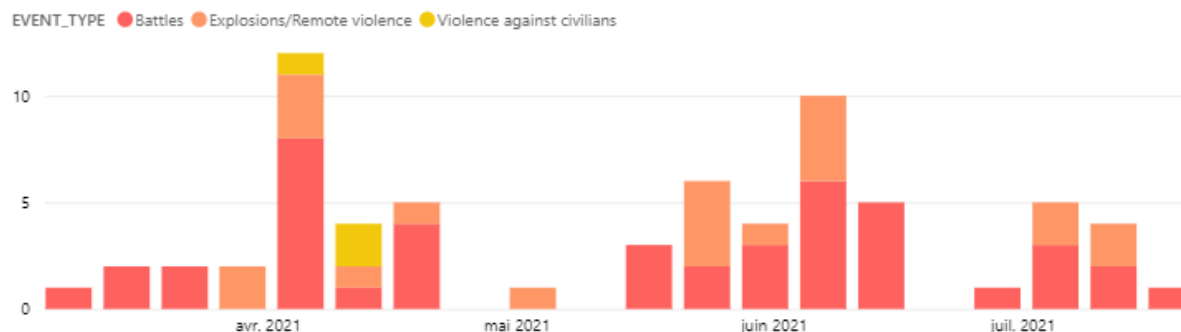


Figure 32. Sar-e Pul province - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>1133</sup>

On 31 March 2021 in Sayad district a roadside bomb hit a Humvee killing two territorial army members and injuring two more.<sup>1134</sup> In April 2021 two Taliban attacks on a security outpost in Sozmaqala district caused casualties to security force members.<sup>1135</sup> On 27 May 2021 in Sayaan district, an Afghan Air Force airstrike reportedly targeting a local Taliban leader's residence killed seven civilians and injured a further six.<sup>1136</sup> On 13 June 2021 a Taliban ambush on retreating ANSF killed 2 pro-government militia members, injured eight and 20 others were abducted.<sup>1137</sup>

Regarding the security situation in the main urban centre/provincial capital Sar-e-Pul city attacks on security outposts and roadside bombs were documented in the reporting period.<sup>1138</sup> On 23 March 2021 the Taliban attacked an outpost in the Sayed Abad area and killed a police officer and injured another.<sup>1139</sup> On 8 May 2021 a military vehicle was hit by a roadside bomb, killing three soldiers and wounding three others.<sup>1140</sup> On 6 June 2021 a triple roadside bomb in the second police district killed two civilians and wounded two others and a Taliban attack on a security outpost killed two soldiers and wounded two more.<sup>1141</sup> In mid-July 2021 AAN described Sar-e-Pul city as 'vulnerable'.<sup>1142</sup> At the end of July 2021 UNOCHA reported that non-state armed groups continued to carry out sporadic attacks around provincial capitals including Sar-e-Pul.<sup>1143</sup> On 3 August 2021 a Taliban attack on the first police district killed a commando and two pro-government militia members and wounded four more

<sup>1131</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan: Sar-e Pul Province – District Atlas, April 2014, [url](#)

<sup>1132</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 31 August 2021), [url](#)

<sup>1133</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1134</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1135</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1136</sup> UNAMA, Afghanistan – Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, Midyear Report 2021, July 2021, [url](#), p. 9

<sup>1137</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1138</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1139</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1140</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1141</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1142</sup> AAN, Menace, Negotiation, Attack: The Taliban take more district Centres across Afghanistan, 16 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1143</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (19-25, 29 July 2021, [url](#)

and on 5 August 2021 a Taliban attack on a security outpost killed three pro-government militia members and injured eight others.<sup>1144</sup> Bilal Sarwary posted on Twitter on 8 August 2021 that an Afghan commander had told him that Sar-i-Pul was no longer in their hands.<sup>1145</sup> Security forces evacuated, thereby handing over control to the Taliban.<sup>1146</sup>

ISKP was assessed in April 2021 to have retained a small group in Sar-e-Pul, predominantly made up of local ethnic Tajiks and Uzbeks.<sup>1147</sup>

The WHO did not record any attacks related to health care provision in Sar-e Pul province in the first seven months of 2021.<sup>1148</sup>

Sar-e Pul province lacks an operational domestic airport.<sup>1149</sup>

### Displacement

UNOCHA collected data for the period 1 March 2021 – 9 August 2021, reporting 5 633 persons displaced from Sar-e Pul, 83 % (4 711) of whom were displaced within the province to Sar-e-Pul district. In the same period, 945 persons were displaced to Jawzjan province, all finding refuge in the Shiberghan district, while 7 persons were displaced to Faryab province. During the same period, 42 persons were displaced to Sar-e Pul from other provinces, including from Faryab, Jawzjan, Kandahar and Takhar.<sup>1150</sup> Between 15 and 21 March 2021, armed clashes between ANSF and an NSAG continued in Sar-e-Pul province. Interagency assessment teams identified 1 281 people affected by conflict in Balkh, Faryab, Sar-e-Pul, Samangan and Jawzjan provinces.<sup>1151</sup>

<sup>1144</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: August 2021, updated 5 August, [url](#)

<sup>1145</sup> Sarwary, B., (@bsarwary), [Twitter], posted on: 8 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1146</sup> New York Times (The), Fear Sets In as Taliban Seize Former Bastions of Resistance, 9 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1147</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486 , 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 62

<sup>1148</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (January-July 2021), 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1149</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#), p. 9

<sup>1150</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1151</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (15-21 March 2021), 24 March 2021, [url](#), p. 2



## 2.32 Takhar



Map 32: Afghanistan – Takhar province, source: UNOCHA<sup>1152</sup>

As of 31 August 2021, an assessment of the LWJ mapping Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information, considered all districts in Takhar province to be under Taliban control.<sup>1153</sup>

According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021 there were 180 security incidents recorded in Takhar, of whom 138 were coded as battles, 23 remote violence and 15 incidents of violence against civilians.

<sup>1152</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan: Takhar Province – District Atlas, April 2014, [url](#)

<sup>1153</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 31 August 2021), [url](#)



Figure 33. Takhar province - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>1154</sup>

The Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team report covering the period May 2020 and April 2021 noted that the Taliban moved forces into five northern provinces including Takhar, with the objective to deny the ANSF freedom of movement and to control road communications and border crossings to facilitate narcotic and mineral trade.<sup>1155</sup> In early July 2021 the Taliban was reported to control 13 of the province's 17 districts, which apart from Eshkashem, Bangi and Baharak, were given up without a fight.<sup>1156</sup>

Targeted attacks as well as Taliban attacks against security outposts continued to be documented in the reporting period.<sup>1157</sup> On 6 March 2021 two business men were shot dead in Chahab and on 11 March 2021 an unexploded ordnance in Hazarsumuch district reportedly killed three children.<sup>1158</sup> On 19 March 2021 the Taliban captured three villages in Rostaq district and during a recapture operation six pro-government militia members were killed and 10 more wounded.<sup>1159</sup> In April 2021 Taliban drone attacks targeting an army outpost in Dasht-e-Qala district killed three soldiers and wounded two more and in Bangi district killed seven pro-government militia members.<sup>1160</sup> On 2 and 4 May 2021 the Taliban shot and killed two tribal elders in Khwajabahawuddin district. May 2021 saw Taliban attacks in Darqad district and on 11 May 2021 the Taliban attacked the house of a pro-government militia commander in Rustaq district, killing him and his daughter.<sup>1161</sup> In June 2021 Taliban attacks on Eshk(a)mesh and Bahark caused security force casualties and forced the ANSF to retreat. On 20 June 2021 Namakab district fell to the Taliban after heavy fighting which killed four police officers and wounded 10 others.<sup>1162</sup> On 27 June 2021 the Taliban attacked Rostaq district, which was abandoned without a fight, killing one pro-government militia member and wounding three others.<sup>1163</sup>

Regarding the security situation in the main urban centre/provincial capital Takhar, on 31 March 2021 the head of the Ulama Council of Takhar was killed by a magnetic IED and three others wounded.<sup>1164</sup>

<sup>1154</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1155</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486, 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 32

<sup>1156</sup> AAN, A Quarter of Afghanistan's districts Fall to the Taliban amid Calls for a 'Second Resistance', 2 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1157</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1158</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (15-21 March 2021), 24 March 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1159</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1160</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1161</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1162</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1163</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1164</sup> Tolonews, Head of Takhar's Ulema Council Killed in IED Blast, 31 March 2021, [url](#)

On 3 April unknown gunmen killed the son of a provincial council members.<sup>1165</sup> On 3 May 2021 a school teacher was assassinated by unidentified gunmen in the Nahr-e-Chaman area.<sup>1166</sup> On 5 May the Taliban attacked a security outpost at the entrance of Taloqan killing eight pro-government militia members and abducting one other and on 21 May 2021 a Taliban mortar killed a child and injured two civilians.<sup>1167</sup> On 5 June 2021, members of a pro-Government armed group killed four and abducted 20 civilians, having accused them of supporting the Taliban.<sup>1168</sup> Battles with the Taliban were reported on the outskirts of Taloqan on 11 July 2021.<sup>1169</sup> On 14 July 2021 a Taliban attack on a security outpost in the first police district killed 10 pro-government militia, a police officer and wounded 20 others.<sup>1170</sup> On 3 August 2021 a Taliban attack killed two commandos, two police officers and two pro-government militia members and the Taliban was reported to have advanced on the east and northwest parts of the city, by which time the city was reported to have been under siege for two months.<sup>1171</sup> Bilal Sarwary posted on Twitter on 5 August 2021 that intense fighting was hitting Taloqan city, while the rest of the province had fallen to the Taliban.<sup>1172</sup> On 8 August 2021 the Taliban seized control of Taloqan city after 'vicious fighting', with the Taliban freeing hundreds of prisoners.<sup>1173</sup> According to local journalists, the Taliban had ordered the media to follow Sharia law.<sup>1174</sup>

As of April 2021, Takhar was listed as one of the 15 Afghan provinces where AQ was reportedly present.<sup>1175</sup>

The WHO did not record any attacks related to health care provision in Takhar province in the first seven months of 2021.<sup>1176</sup>

Takhar province has no operational domestic airport, but there is an airstrip located in Taloqan.<sup>1177</sup>

## Displacement

UNOCHA collected data for the period 1 March 2021- 9 August 2021, reporting 32 872 persons displaced from Takhar, of which about 32 025 (97%) were displaced within the province, 840 to Kabul and 7 to Sar-e-Pul provinces. During the same period, no displacement was reported to Takhar from other provinces.<sup>1178</sup> Between 12 and 18 April 2021, fighting between ANSF and an NSAG continued in Takhar province with 3 402 people displaced by conflict in Baghlan, Badakhshan, Takhar and Kunduz provinces identified to receive humanitarian assistance.<sup>1179</sup>

<sup>1165</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1166</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1167</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1168</sup> UNAMA, Afghanistan – Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, Midyear Report 2021, July 2021, [url](#), p. 12

<sup>1169</sup> Tolonews, Two districts Fall as Battles Continue Near 10 Cities, 11 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1170</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1171</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: August 2021, updated 5 August, [url](#)

<sup>1172</sup> Sarwary, B., (@bsarwary), [Twitter], posted on: 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1173</sup> Sarwary, B., (@bsarwary), [Twitter], posted on: 8 August 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Another provincial capital, Taloqan, falls to the insurgents on Sunday, 8 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1174</sup> Tolonews, Taliban Take Over Kunduz Airport, Media Restricted in Takhar, 11 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1175</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486, 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 42

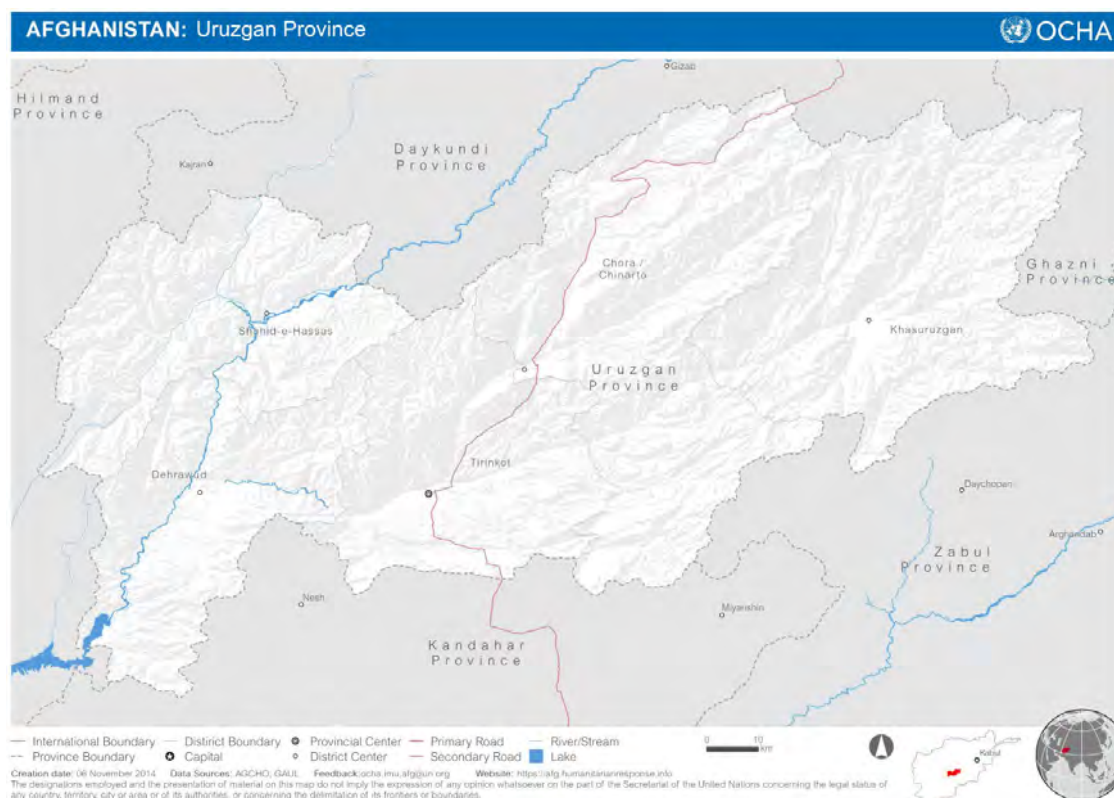
<sup>1176</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (January-July 2021), 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1177</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#), p. 6

<sup>1178</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1179</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (12-18 April 2021), 21 April 2021, [url](#), p. 2

## 2.33 Uruzgan



Map 33: Afghanistan – Uruzgan province, source: UNOCHA<sup>1180</sup>

As of 31 August 2021, an assessment of the LWJ mapping Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information, considered all districts in Uruzgan province to be under Taliban control.<sup>1181</sup>

According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021 there were 95 security incidents recorded in Uruzgan, of whom 77 were coded as battles, 13 remote violence and 5 incidents of violence against civilians.

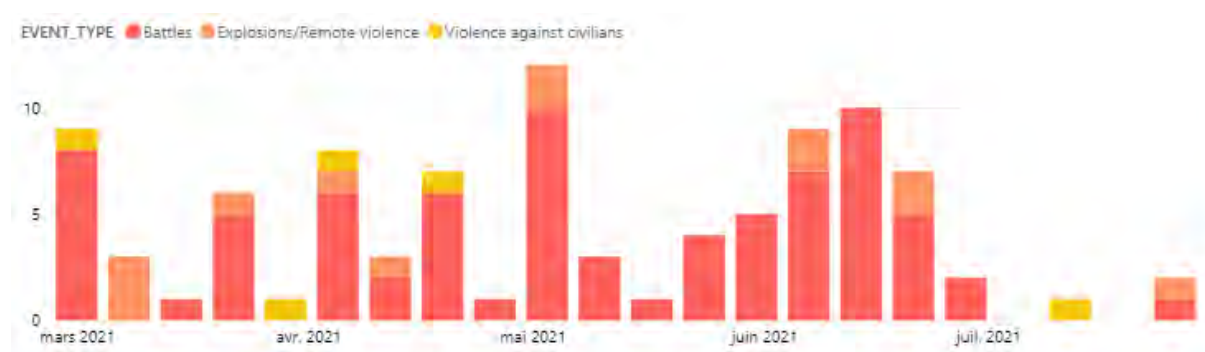


Figure 34. Uruzgan province - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>1182</sup>

<sup>1180</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan: Uruzgan Province – District Atlas, April 2014, [url](#)

<sup>1181</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 31 August 2021), [url](#)

<sup>1182</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)



On 7 June 2021 the Taliban besieged Gizab district, taking over the district headquarters, bazaar, police headquarters and the NDS compound, trapping over 60 soldiers.<sup>1183</sup> Further fighting in Gizab the following week reportedly left 13 civilians dead and wounded nine more.<sup>1184</sup> On 5 August 2021 a poet and writer was abducted and shot dead in Chora district, the Taliban denied involvement.<sup>1185</sup> Regarding the security situation in the main urban centre/provincial capital Tarinkot, on 5 March 2021 a Taliban attack on a security outpost killed a police officer and injured one other.<sup>1186</sup> In mid-April 2021, two civilians were reportedly killed by IEDs.<sup>1187</sup> On 4 May 2021 a magnetic bomb tied to a police vehicle killed a police officer and wounded a civilian.<sup>1188</sup> On 23 June 2021 airstrikes in the Mehrabad area reportedly killed eight civilians and injured three more.<sup>1189</sup> On 15 July 2021 unidentified gunmen shot dead a prosecutor.<sup>1190</sup> Tarin Kot was captured by the Taliban on 13 August 2021.<sup>1191</sup>

As of April 2021, Uruzgan was listed as one of the 15 Afghan provinces where AQ was reportedly present.<sup>1192</sup>

The WHO did not record any attacks related to health care provision in Uruzgan province in the first seven months of 2021.<sup>1193</sup>

There is a domestic airport in Tarinkot, that is located 1.6 km south of the city.<sup>1194</sup> As of end July 2021, Kam Air offered scheduled passenger services between Tarinkot and Kabul.<sup>1195</sup> As of 29 August 2021 flights were scheduled to and from Kabul.<sup>1196</sup> Bilal Sarwary posted on Twitter on 29 July 2021 that the Taliban had asked private airlines not to fly to Tarinkot.<sup>1197</sup> On 30 August 2021, Reuters cited the US FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) reporting on the absence of 'air traffic services and a functional civil aviation authority in Afghanistan'.<sup>1198</sup> In mid-March 2021 a road side IED killed three civilians and wounded three others on the road connecting Kandahar to Tarinkot.<sup>1199</sup> UNOCHA reported in early July 2021 that primary and secondary roads to provinces and districts in the south were reportedly being intermittently blocked by a non-state armed group which was affecting civilian movements as well as the transportation of food and other basic items.<sup>1200</sup>

## Displacement

UNOCHA collected data for the period 1 March 2021 – 9 August 2021, reporting 1 086 persons displaced within Uruzgan province. During the time frame, all persons displaced were from the Chora/Chinarto district, seeking refuge in Tirinkot. During the same period, no displacement was reported to Uruzgan from other provinces.<sup>1201</sup> Between 29 March and 4 April, 630 people were

<sup>1183</sup> Ariana TV, At least 60 soldiers under siege in Uruzgan's Gizab district, 7 June 2021, [url](#); ACLED, Regional Overview: South Asia and Afghanistan 29 May-4 June 2021, 10 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1184</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (31 May - 6 June 2021), 8 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1185</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: August 2021, updated 5 August, [url](#)

<sup>1186</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1187</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (12-18 April 2021), 21 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1188</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1189</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (21-27 June ), 1 July 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>1190</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1191</sup> LWJ, Afghan government on verge of collapse as Taliban capture 4 more cities, 13 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1192</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486 , 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 42

<sup>1193</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (January-July 2021), 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1194</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#), p. 504

<sup>1195</sup> KamAir, Route Map, n.d. (accessed 28 July 2021), [url](#)

<sup>1196</sup> Flightradar24, Tarinkot Airport Live Air Traffic n.d. (accessed 29 August 2021), [url](#)

<sup>1197</sup> Sarwary, B., (@bsarwary), [Twitter], posted on: 29 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1198</sup> Reuters, FAA says Kabul airport uncontrolled now, U.S. carriers barred from flights, 30 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1199</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (8-14 March 2021), 16 March 2021, [url](#)

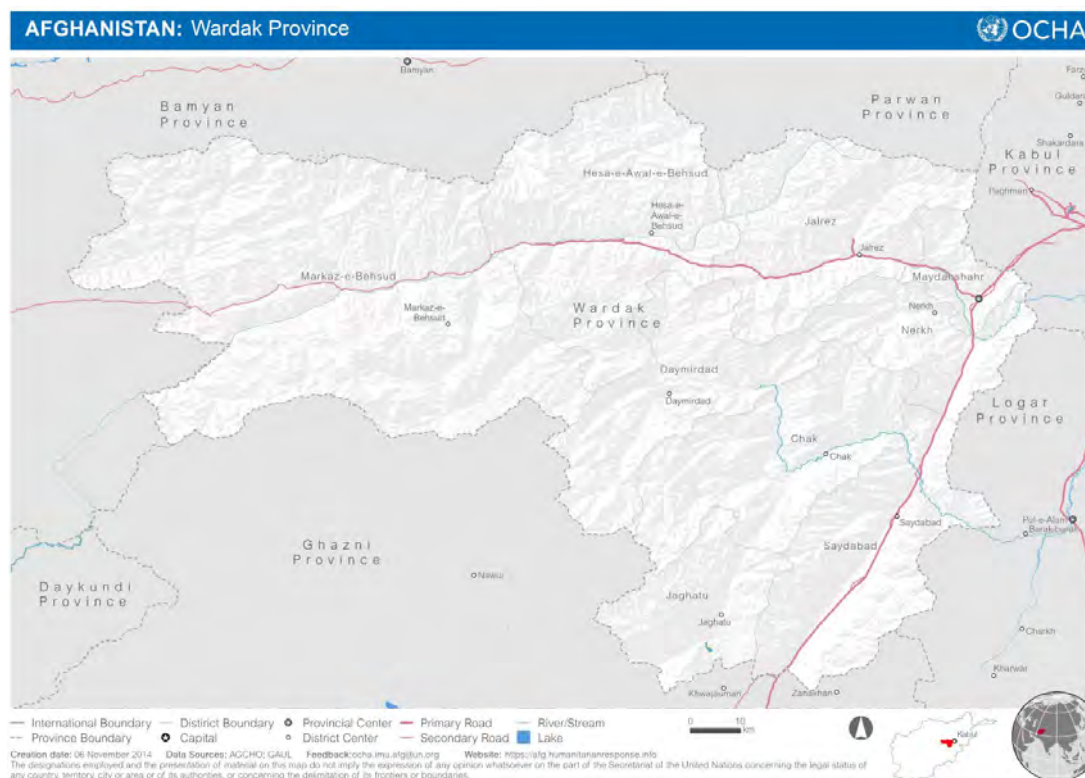
<sup>1200</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (28 June – 4 July 2021), 4 July 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>1201</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, [url](#)



displaced from Gizab, Chora and Dehrawud districts to Tirinkot.<sup>1202</sup> Between 3 and 9 May, the security situation in Uruzgan deteriorated affecting civilians.<sup>1203</sup> Between 31 May and 6 June, armed clashes near the Gizab DAC reportedly resulted in civilian displacements.<sup>1204</sup>

## 2.34 Wardak



Map 34: Afghanistan – Wardak province, source: UNOCHA<sup>1205</sup>

As of 31 August 2021, an assessment of the LWJ mapping Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information, considered all the districts of Wardak province to be under Taliban control.<sup>1206</sup>

According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021 there were 185 security incidents recorded in Wardak, of whom 142 were coded as battles, 36 remote violence and 7 incidents of violence against civilians.

<sup>1202</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (29 March 4 April 2021), 7 April 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>1203</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (3-9 May 2021), 12 May 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>1204</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (31 May 2021- 6 June 2021), 8 June 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>1205</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan Wardak Province - District Atlas, April 2014, [url](#)

<sup>1206</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 31 August 2021), [url](#)

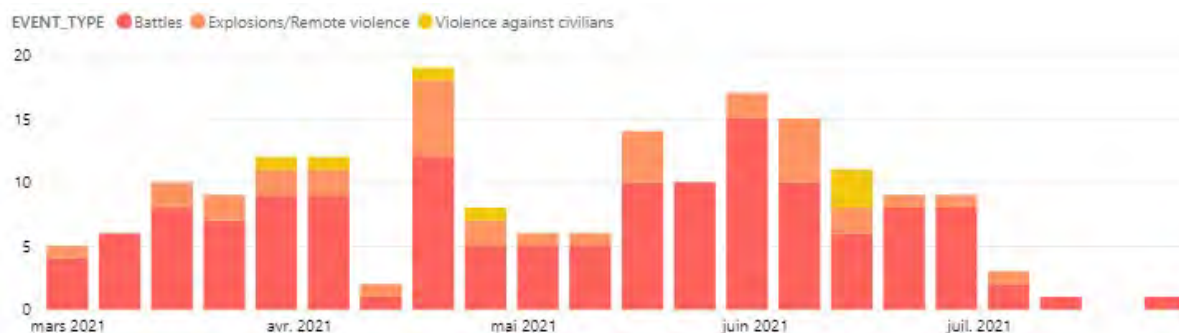


Figure 35. Wardak province - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>1207</sup>

On 10 April 2021 it was reported that the ANSF started a clearing operation on the Wardak-Kabul highway, during which they were fired on by the Taliban from a house which was subsequently bombed by the air force.<sup>1208</sup> On 21 April 2021 at an outpost in Jalrez district, five police officers surrendered to the Taliban but were all beheaded. On 25 April 2021 an airstrike in Zorlang village, Jalrez district killed eight members of one family and in Saydabad district, a mortar killed four people and wounded three others.<sup>1209</sup> On 8 May 2021 a Taliban car bomb directed at a military base in Sayedabad district killed 12 soldiers and wounded eight more.<sup>1210</sup> An 11 June 2021 Taliban attack on a base in Saydabad district killed four soldiers and wounded 18 more.<sup>1211</sup> In mid-May 2021, the Taliban captured Nerkh, located just outside of Kabul city, and Jalrez districts.<sup>1212</sup> In mid-July 2021 UNOCHA described the central region of Afghanistan as having become 'increasingly unstable and unpredictable', with reports of increased activities and violence against civilians by non-state armed groups in Wardak.<sup>1213</sup>

Regarding the security situation in the main urban centre/provincial capital Maydan Shar, on 16 June 2021 mortar fire hit a house killing a civilian and wounding another and on the next day a Taliban attack in killed a civilian and wounded another.<sup>1214</sup> Battles with the Taliban were reported on the outskirts of the city on 11 July 2021.<sup>1215</sup> On 1 August 2021 the Taliban attacked security outposts and checkpoints, killing six police officers.<sup>1216</sup>

Abdul Ghani Alipoor (Commander Shamshir) has established a militia known as Hizb-e-Wahdat-e-Islami Afghanistan (the Islamic Unity Party of Afghanistan) faction of Abdul Ali Mazari which in March 2021 was reported to have around 2 000 armed men in a Behsud district (not specified) and the support of Hazara locals.<sup>1217</sup> On 18 March 2021 in Behsud district the militia shot down an Afghan air force helicopter killing nine security force members. Retaliatory airstrikes on 20 March 2021 killed one civilian and wounded two others.<sup>1218</sup>

<sup>1207</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1208</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1209</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (19-25 April 2021), 28 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1210</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1211</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1212</sup> Reuters, Taliban capture key district near Afghan capital, 11 May 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1213</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (5 -11 July 2021), 15 July 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>1214</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1215</sup> Tolonews, Two district s Fall as Battles Continue Near 10 Cities, 11 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1216</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: August 2021, updated 5 August, [url](#)

<sup>1217</sup> Tolonews, Who is Alipoor, aka Commander Shamshir? 21 March 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1218</sup> Tolonews, Who is Alipoor, aka Commander Shamshir? 21 March 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

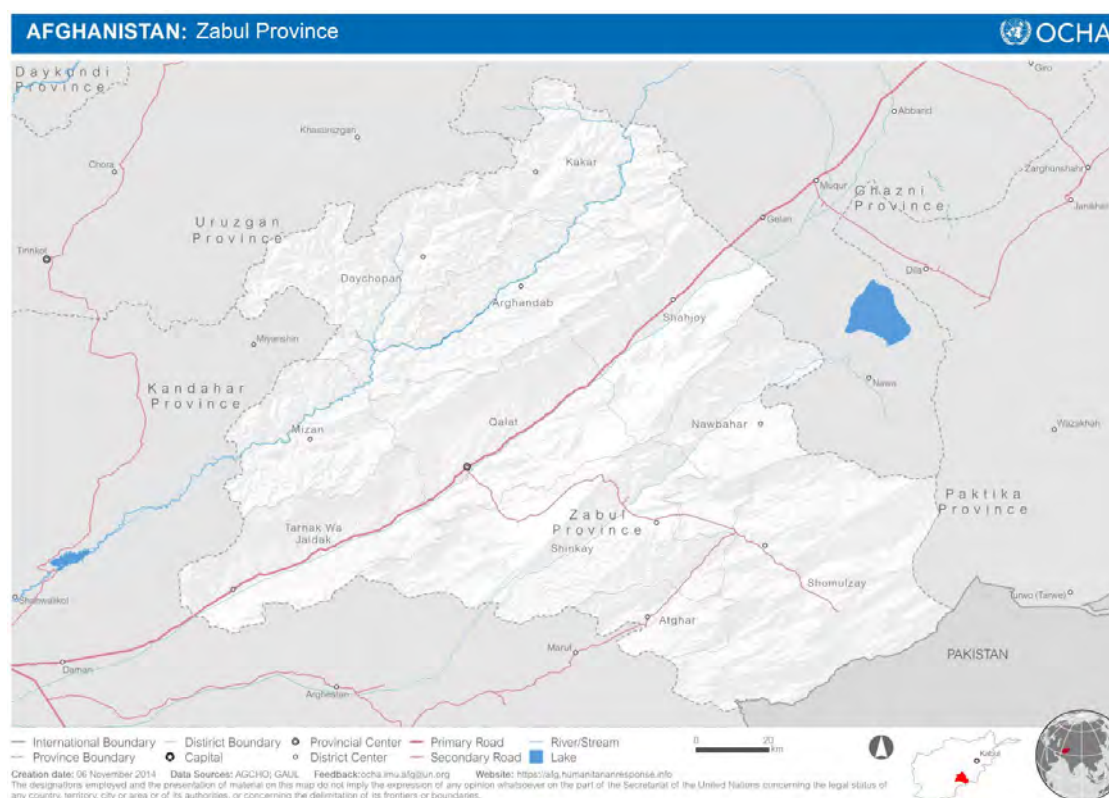
The WHO did not record any attacks related to health care provision in Wardak province in the first seven months of 2021.<sup>1219</sup>

Wardak province does not have an operational domestic airport.<sup>1220</sup>

### Displacement

UNOCHA collected data for the period 1 March 2021 - 9 August 2021, reporting 19 727 persons displaced from Wardak province, of which 92% (18 158) were displaced within the province itself (with 14 581 persons travelling to Hesa-e-Awal-e-Behsud district). The remaining 1 569 persons displaced from Wardak who sought shelter outside the province did so in Kabul, Bamyan and Herat provinces. The peak displacement during the reporting period took place on 15 March 2021 when 17 843 persons were displaced from Wardak. No conflict-induced internal displacement to Wardak province from other provinces was reported by UNOCHA during the same period.<sup>1221</sup> Between 10 and 16 May, 490 people were newly displaced in Wardak province due to fighting.<sup>1222</sup> Between 17 and 23 May, the unstable security situation in the central part of the country resulted in 4 900 people newly displaced in Wardak and Khost provinces.<sup>1223</sup>

## 2.35 Zabul



Map 35: Afghanistan – Zabul province, source: UNOCHA<sup>1224</sup>

<sup>1219</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (January-July 2021), 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1220</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#), p. 6

<sup>1221</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1222</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (10-16 May 2021), 19 May 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>1223</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (17-23 May 2021), 23 May 2021, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>1224</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan: Zabul Province – District Atlas, April 2014, [url](#)

As of 31 August 2021, an assessment of the LWJ mapping Taliban control in Afghanistan in a frequently updated map and based on open-source information, considered all districts in Zabul province to be under Taliban control.<sup>1225</sup>

According to ACLED data, between 1 March and 30 July 2021 there were 170 security incidents recorded in Zabul, of whom 123 were coded as battles, 43 remote violence and 4 incidents of violence against civilians.

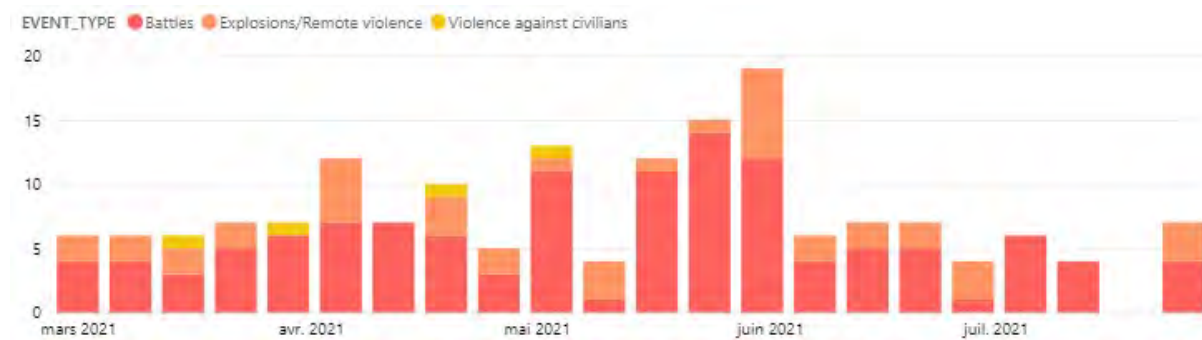


Figure 36. Zabul province - Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians from 1 March to 30 July 2021, based on ACLED data<sup>1226</sup>

In mid-March 2021, a rocket landed on a house in the Nawarak area killing three civilians and wounding three others and on 24 March 2021 a Taliban attack on Shinkai district killed one soldier and wounded two others.<sup>1227</sup> On 15 April 2021 a Taliban car bomb attack on a military base in Shahjoy district and resulting fighting killed ten soldiers.<sup>1228</sup> On 9 May 2021 in Tarnak Wa Jaldak district, a passenger bus travelling from Kabul to Kandahar hit a pressure-plate IED, killing 11 civilians and injuring a further 40.<sup>1229</sup> At the end of May 2021 UNOCHA assessed that the security situation had intensified in Zabul with regular armed clashes in Qalat, Tarnak Wa Jaldak, Shahjoy and Shinkay districts.<sup>1230</sup> At the end of June 2021, a roadside bomb in in Shahr-e Safa district (Tarnak Wa Jaldak) hit a vehicle killing two civilians and wounding four more.<sup>1231</sup>

Regarding the security situation in the main urban centre/provincial capital Qalat, on 15 March 2021 a magnetic bomb in Qalat killed one civilian and wounded another.<sup>1232</sup> In May 2021 Taliban attacks on security checkpoints caused casualties to security forces.<sup>1233</sup> Fighting was reported to intensify in Qalat city in mid-June 2021<sup>1234</sup> and by mid-July 2021 AAN described Qalat as 'vulnerable'.<sup>1235</sup> On 29 July 2021 a mortar shell hit a house killing five civilians and wounding 14 more.<sup>1236</sup> Qalat was captured by the Taliban on 13 August 2021, without a fight and local elders were reported to be negotiating a full handover.<sup>1237</sup>

<sup>1225</sup> LWJ, Mapping Taliban Contested and Controlled districts in Afghanistan, n. d., (accessed 13 August 2021), [url](#)

<sup>1226</sup> EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1227</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (8-14 March 2021), 16 March 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1228</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: April 2021, updated 30 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1229</sup> UNAMA, Afghanistan – Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, Midyear Report 2021, July 2021, [url](#), p. 7

<sup>1230</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update ((24 – 30 May 2021), 2 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1231</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: June 2021, updated 1 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1232</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: March 2021, updated 1 April 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1233</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: May 2021, updated 3 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1234</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (31 May - 6 June 2021), 8 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1235</sup> AAN, Menace, Negotiation, Attack: The Taliban take more district Centres across Afghanistan, 16 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1236</sup> New York Times (The), Afghan War Casualty Report: July 2021, updated 5 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1237</sup> LWJ, Afghan government on verge of collapse as Taliban capture 4 more cities, 13 August 2021, [url](#); New York Times (The), Three more major cities are under Taliban control, as the government's forces near collapse, 13 August 2021, [url](#)



As of April 2021, Zabul was listed as one of the 15 Afghan provinces where AQ was reportedly present.<sup>1238</sup>

The WHO recorded one attack related to health care provision in Zabul province in the first seven months of 2021, which killed a healthcare worker.<sup>1239</sup> UNOCHA reported that on 24 March 2021, a rocket damaged Suri Comprehensive Health Centre and an ambulance.<sup>1240</sup> On 1 May 2021 a health worker was killed in crossfire.<sup>1241</sup>

There is an airport in Qalat, that is located 3.2 km northwest of the town of Qalat.<sup>1242</sup> As of 29 August 2021, domestic flights were not scheduled.<sup>1243</sup> On 30 August 2021, Reuters cited the US FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) reporting on the absence of 'air traffic services and a functional civil aviation authority in Afghanistan'.<sup>1244</sup> UNOCHA reported that in early July 2021 that primary and secondary roads to provinces and districts in the south were reportedly being intermittently blocked by a non-state armed group which was affecting civilian movements and the transportation of food and other basic items.<sup>1245</sup> In mid-July 2021 AAN noted that Taliban controlled all the district centres along the ring road from Qalat to Herat, except Tarnak Wa Jaldak (Zabul), and Daman, Kandahar city and its district, and Zheray (Kandahar province).<sup>1246</sup>

## Displacement

UNOCHA collected data for the period 1 March 2021 – 9 August 2021, reporting 2 050 persons displaced from Zabul, all within in the province itself. Displaced persons originated from Mizan (269) and Shahjoy (1 781) districts. No displacement from other provinces was registered to Zabul province in the same period.<sup>1247</sup> Between 10 and 16 May, approximately 4 200 people were displaced within the Takir area in Mizan district.<sup>1248</sup> Between 7 and 13 June, fighting intensified around Qalat City leading to displacement to the city centre. In the same period, 3 458 people were reportedly displaced within and from Shinkay, Shahjoy and Shinkai (also known as Seori, Seyuri) district to Qalat district.<sup>1249</sup>

<sup>1238</sup> UN Security Council, Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan, S/2021/486 , 1 June 2021, [url](#), para. 42

<sup>1239</sup> WHO, Afghanistan: Attacks on Health Care (January-July 2021), 12 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1240</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (22-28 March 2021), 31 March 2021, [url](#)

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<sup>1242</sup> Afghanistan, ACAA, Aeronautical Information Publication, 20 May 2021, [url](#), p. 428

<sup>1243</sup> Kam Air, Flight schedule, n.d. (accessed 29 August 2021), [url](#)

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<sup>1245</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan- Weekly Humanitarian Update (28 June – 4 July 2021), 4 July 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>1246</sup> AAN, Menace, Negotiation, Attack: The Taliban take more district Centres across Afghanistan, 16 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1247</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Conflict Induced Displacements in 2021, updated 29 August 2021, [url](#)

<sup>1248</sup> UNOCHA, Afghanistan - Weekly Humanitarian Update (10-16 May 2021), 19 May 2021, [url](#), p. 1

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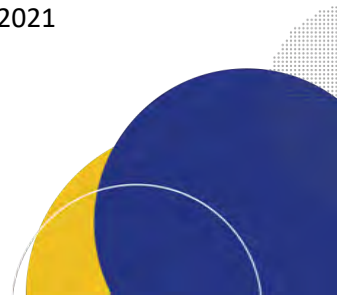
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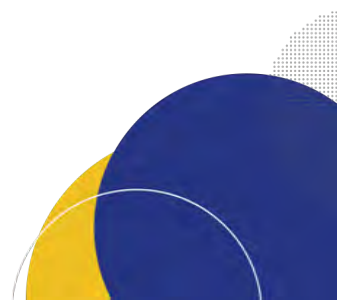
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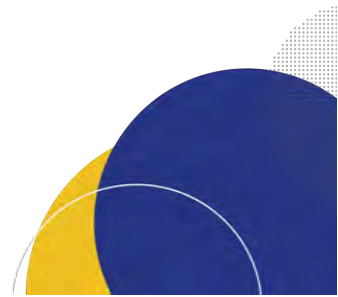
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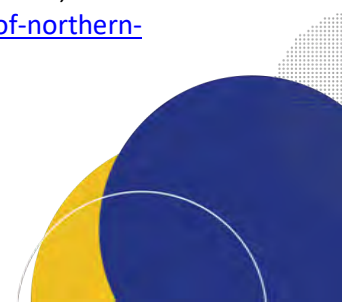
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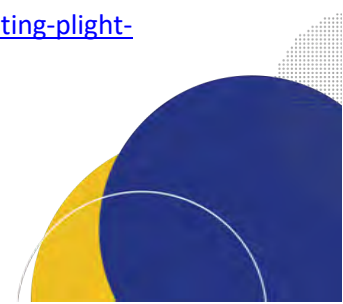
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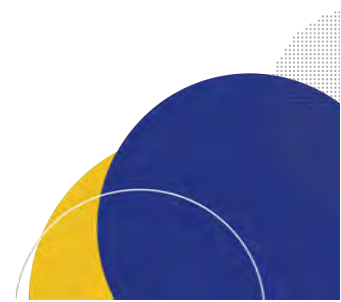
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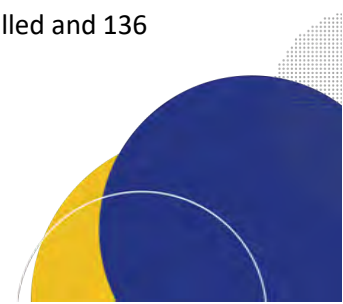
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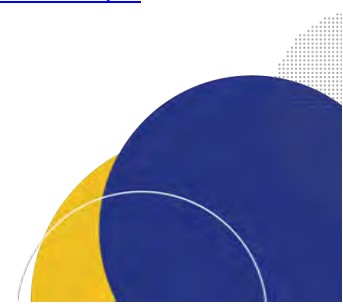
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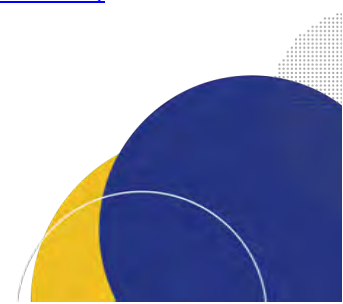
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## Annex 2: Terms of Reference

General description of latest developments and observed trends **during the reference period March – August 2021:**

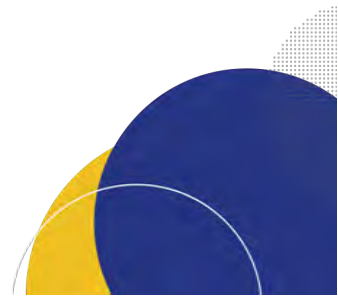
- Status of withdrawal of US and other international forces
- Status of peace negotiations and political developments
- Involvement of new international actors
- Changes in the presence and control of different actors (if possible, include information from most recent map/maps of control, such as by LWJ)
- Recent developments on emerging actors (e.g. former mujahedeen factions, warlords and their militias, Jamiat-e Islami, foreign fighters, etc. (including whether there are shifts in their support/resistance to the GoA or against the Taliban)
- Intensity of the conflict in the country and in different regions/provinces
- Number of security incidents and civilian casualties (overview) and observed trends
- New trends in nature of violence and methods primarily used by the actors
- Conflict-induced displacement

Information to be made available per province

- Shifts of control in (areas of) the province, noting the situation in the provincial capital
- Developments in the presence of other actors (pro-government armed groups and different AGEs)
- ACLED number of incidents and number of fatalities [to be provided by EASO as Annex, not included in the page count]
- Number of civilian casualties if available [reference period may differ, e.g. based UNAMA mid-year report]
- Nature of the violence and examples of representative security incidents
- Road security
- Reported conflict severity (UNOCHA reporting)
- Conflict-induced displacement
- Further impact of the violence (closure of healthcare facilities, schools, infrastructure and housing damage, etc.)

\*For Kabul, Herat, and Balkh, there should be additional focus on the capital city, covering to the extent possible the same elements as for the provinces.

In addition, information on the location (which district), current operability (international flights), and security of the international airports' area should be provided.





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