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UN Department of Safety and Security, Afghanistan Security Situation Report, Week 32, 6 – 12 August 2010

JOINT WEEKLY SECURITY ANALYSIS

Following the onset of the Holy Month of Ramadan on 11 August incidents levels decreased country wide. Apart from the SER and ER where there were higher numbers of security incidents recorded, all other regions experienced declines or consistent levels of activities. While the majority of the incidents related to armed conflict such as armed clashes, IEDs and stand-off attacks have dropped significantly, asymmetric actions against the local population remained at significant levels. Not unexpectedly on their website the Taliban released a critical statement on the UNAMA Human Rights Report on Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, calling the basis for the report “*political expedience, exaggeration and propaganda*” and referring to the UN as an organization “*playing a major role for the American imperialism*”. Such ascriptions are recurrent and in line with previous released statement on the same and other subjects.

While incidents affecting the aid community decreased, the assassination of 10 members of a mobile medical team in Kuran Wa Munjan Distruct of Badakhshan Province, reported by ACBAR as the “*worst crime targeting of the humanitarian community that has ever taken place in Afghanistan and most likely among one of the worst attacks against the NGO community in recent humanitarian history*”, has shaken the wider aid community. Both the Taliban and HIG took credit for the assassinations claiming that they had killed the medical workers because they were proselytizing. Later Taliban statements said they were killed because they were “spies”. While the motive remain unclear and perpetrators unknown, Taliban and HIG claims may encourage local commanders to carry out similar attacks to gain internal recognition within insurgents ranks and exert control over the local population. In another development in the NR, an INGO vehicle travelling along Nahri Shahi District of Balkh Province was shot at by two armed individual attempting to stop it, the driver managed to avoid the ambush.

Another two incidents affected the UN; both were intimidation of UN national staff members. In Kunduz City a UN national staff member was threatened to quit his job or face dire consequences; another member of his family previously employed by another UN office quit his job in 2008 as a result of similar threats. In the SR another UN national staff member received a phone call alleging accusations of spying for infidels and warning him to quit his job and or face consequences.

Asymmetric attacks targeting the population remain consistent with the previous week with seven incidents of intimidation, nine abductions involving 12 individuals, and 10 individuals assassinated. AGE intimidation continued throughout the country with set up of illegal check posts where travellers are screened for their affiliation to the GoA, the IM and NGOs, and forced collection of illegal taxation. In the NER a mullah was shot dead in a mosque during prayers and a public minibus was stopped by an armed individual and searched for GoA and NGO employees. In the NR a large group of AGE coerced the local population to pay “ushr” and resorted to beating those refusing to obey. In the WR a vehicle stopped at an illegal CP was set ablaze upon allegation that the driver was spying for the IM, and in the SR, Zaranj City a hand grenade was thrown into the family residence of an ANSF officer. Overall intimidation, abduction and assassinations levels remain high and continue to undermine support for the GoA throughout the country.

Three suicide attacks were recorded countrywide: one each in the WR, ER and CR. In addition a suicide vest exploded while being assembled by insurgents in a mosque in the WR. Types, location and weekly average remain in line with 2010 trends. In Kabul City the motive for the double BBIED attack against a PSC compound remain unclear.

SIOC – Afghanistan: UNITED NATIONS CONFIDENTIAL

Incidents related to the upcoming Parliamentary Elections remain relatively low, with five occurrences recorded in the NER, SER and CR. In the SER and CR candidates were targeted in IED attacks, in the NER Taliban commanders warned locals and religious leaders to avoid the election process.

RISK ANALYSIS

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

Significant Incidents after the end of the reporting period

On 13 August, Kabul Province, Kabul City, PD 13, Qalai Qazi /Koh Koragh mountain rural area, at about 0800 hrs, approximately 2500 people of Hazara ethnic group went to the above mention area to distribute some land among them. The Kuchi residents of the area got involved in verbal argument with Hazara resulting in to a violent clash. During the clash one Hazara was killed and three others injured while five Kuchi were also injured. Reportedly 143 houses and 50 tents of Kuchi were burnt by Hazara group at the mentioned site. ANP reinforcement arrived at the site and brought the situation under control. However at about 1400 hrs, Hazara ethnic group reorganized themselves and started a violent demonstration in the area and attacked PD 13 Center and also attacked/burned two ANP CPs at Dashti Barchi and PD 6, Puli Surkh area during the incident one ANP officer was killed and 24 ANP were injured. The area was handed over to ANA at about 1845 hrs. The protests continued on 14 August when there was a fresh demonstration in PD 13. This resulted in to some violence but was quickly brought under control. Another attempt to have a demonstration in the same district in the afternoon was foiled by ANSF.

NORTH EASTERN REGION

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

Analysis of the Week's Events

There were 23 incidents reported. This represents a 12% decrease from last week's 26. While in the previous week the majority of the incidents were reported in Baghlan and attributed to Operation Tawheed III, in this reporting period Kunduz has again recorded the highest number of incidents; 12 followed by Baglan with nine. 20 or 87% of all incidents were AGE related.

The incident involving the murder of eight international and two national aid workers in Tili Village, Kuran-wa-Menjan on 5 July was not reported last week because of the delay in confirming the incident. Due to the nature of the attack, unanswered questions relating to the motivation and perpetrators, and claims of responsibility by two groups many NGOs are re-assessing programmes in light of possible copy cat attacks and change in local perceptions of foreigners in the area.

During the period, there was one incident related to the UN and involved an indirect threat to a national staff member in Kunduz City to stop working for the international community. There was one election related incident and another that is not confirmed. In Burka District, Baghlan Province, two Taliban Commanders warned locals and religious elders to boycott the election. In addition, in Nawabad Village, Nahrin District, Baghlan, a convoy of a candidate for the parliamentary election was attacked. The candidate escaped

SIOC – Afghanistan: UNITED NATIONS CONFIDENTIAL

unhurt in the lead car while the driver of the second car was killed. While some have interpreted the incident as an attack on the candidate, security officials and others in the area suggest that the candidate was never threatened and the driver of the second car was in fact the intended target. The attack they claim represented a reprisal for the killing of an individual 12 years ago.

In Kunduz Province, the security situation remains tense. While the IM has taken a respite from offensive operations during the Ramadan, with a likelihood that ANSF will follow suit, it has been reported that AGE have returned to the areas in which operations were conducted over the last three weeks including Chahar Dara and Imam Sahib. Following the IM/ANSF operation in Imam Sahib last week in which ANSF took significant casualties, the withdrawal was hailed as a tactical victory by AGE. This lull in operations does not bode well for security ahead of the election as it is expected that AGE will use the opportunity to build combat power. Already, AGE have attacked pro-government militia positions twice and assassinated a Mulla. It is likely that this retribution and intimidation will continue and possibly intensify. While a consultative peace jirga was held in Kunduz and attracted wide attendance by government officials, religious leaders, community council members and tribal elders to discuss ways of reconciliation with AGE, there is pervasive doubt that the AGE can be contained or sufficiently coerced to negotiate a settlement.

In Baghlan, Operation Tawheed III which was launched on 29 July with the aim of clearing Dand e Shahabuddin and parts of Dehana e Ghorri has ended after two weeks. Like the earlier two phases, this operation was seen as having failed to significantly improve the security situation and may have actually temporarily dispersed AGE into areas that were previously unaffected. Insecurity remains in Baghlan particularly in Pul-i- Khumri along the main road; an ANP CP was attacked and a civilian was killed when an IED detonated. In an act of desperation, the ANP rearmed a HIG militia commander who surrendered in May to help fight AGE in Dand e Shabuddin.

In Takhar, the deterioration continues with reports of insurgent activity spreading due to weak government presence in districts of Darqad, Yangi Qala and Ishkamesh.

In Badakhshan there is an increased threat of IED in Faizabad City while the establishment of an illegal CP in Wardoj may confirm the reports by ANSF of a group of AGE who have entered the District.

Description of the Week's Significant Events

Attack/Armed Clash

Six armed clashes were reported; four in Kunduz and two in Baghlan. Significant incidents in Kunduz included the IM/ANSF operation in Qurghan Tepa, Imam Sahib in which six AGE were killed and seven injured. Also in Imam Sahib, Ismail Village, AGE attacked a pro-government militia position killing six including the commander and in Koldaman Village Imam Sahib AGE also attacked a pro-government militia. In Baghlan, Baghlan-e-Jadid, Pulchak Punjsharia area, AGE attacked an ANSF CP injuring two ANP.

Stand-Off Attack

On 11 August it was reported that AGE in Zadran Village, Chahar Dara fired RPG at over flying IM aircraft. Two insurgents were wounded by IM defensive fire.

IED Detonated/Discovered

There were four IED incidents including three detonations and one discovery. In Khanabad District, Kunduz an ANP vehicle was struck; two ANP were killed and three injured while in Chap Village, Aliabad District, Kunduz an IED detonated prematurely along the main Kunduz-Baghlan highway damaging two passing cars. In Baghlan, Pul-i-Khumri District a road side IED exploded killing one person. A RCIED was discovered in Chahar Dara District Kunduz on a sub road and was later defused.

Assassination

AGE in Qalamguzar Village, Imam Sahib District, Kunduz shot and killed a Mulla in a mosque during prayer. It has to be mentioned as well the murder of eight international and two local aid workers, happened in Tili Village, Kuran-wa-Menjan on 5 July.

SIOC – Afghanistan: UNITED NATIONS CONFIDENTIAL

Abduction

An ANP who was briefly detained by AGE in Ishkamesh District, Takhar Province was released after the community intervention but AGE retained the policeman's AK-47 and VHF radio. In Baghlan Province, Burka District (between Burka and Iskkamesh District in Takhar) three Afghan nationals working for a telecommunication company were abducted. A red Toyota Surf belonging to the company is also missing.

Crime

Three murder incidents were reported in Baghlan; in Pul-i-Khumri, Baghlan-e-Jadid and Nahrin Districts.

Arrest

In Khanabad District, Kunduz, ANP during a search operation arrested four suspected AGE including three foreigners implicated in the assassination of two ANP at a CP on 25 July. In Chahar Dara District, Kunduz, IM during an operation arrested five suspected AGE.

Intimidation

Four incidents were reported. A UN national staff in Kunduz City, Kunduz Province received an indirect threat to stop working for the international community. In Burka District, Baghlan Province, two Taliban Commanders warned locals and religious elders to boycott the election. In Wardoj District, Badakhshan an armed group stopped a public bus and screened passengers while in Baghlan-e-Jadid District of Baghlan AGE established an illegal CP, stopped vehicles and questioned passengers.

NORTHERN REGION

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

Analysis of the Week's Events

The region witnessed a significant decrease in the number of security related incidents. Only 17 incidents were reported during the week compared to 30 reported on previous reporting period showing a 43% decrease. However 16 incidents were related to AGE activities.

11 armed clashes occurred during the week. Most significant of them, which also influenced UN activities, took place in Qaysar District of Faryab Province. Khwaja Kenti Village of the District witnessed heavy clashes between AGE and IM/ANSF, which ended when the IM/ANSF relocated their troops in order to allow the locals to return to their village and celebrate the beginning of Ramadan. AGE used this act of good will in their propaganda and claimed that they were the one, who forced the ANSF/IM out of the area.

The current security situation in Qaysar District is unstable as well as unclear as there are numerous conflicting reports about the presence of AGE in various villages however first conclusions can be made only after the ANSF/IM have finished their 'mop-up' operations in the District. Another armed clash, which can be considered as more significant, took place in relatively calm Fayzabad District of Jawzjan Province.

An ANP patrol was ambushed by a group of AGE while they were on their way to one of the villages close to the border of Chahar Bolak District in order to confirm some intelligence reports about the presence of AGE. During the clash five ANP were injured, among them District Chief of Police. Humanitarian community was affected in Balkh Province, Nahri Shahi District. Unknown perpetrators, believed to be AGE tried to stop one of the INGO vehicles. While the vehicle was speeding off from the area the insurgents opened fire on it and few shots hit the car however the staff members of an INGO managed to escape unharmed. The exact motivation of the attackers is yet unknown however it is assessed that the INGO vehicle had been under surveillance as the incident occurred while the INGO was returning from its destination back to Mazar City.

The number of IED related incidents decreased. Three incidents were reported compared to the eight incidents on previous week. Two IED detonated on the Mazar-Shiberghan road in Chahar Bolak District, Balkh Province. In the first attack the convoy of the Chief of Police of Sari Pul Province was targeted but no injuries to any of the travellers were reported. The second IED attack occurred days later and in this case

SIOC – Afghanistan: UNITED NATIONS CONFIDENTIAL

the target was one of the political candidates of the upcoming elections. The significance of those incidents comes from the fact that they both took place in a day light while there are numerous vehicles, including UN, on the road. These incidents show that the Mazar-Shiberghan Highway is continuously unsafe even during the day time.

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

Description of the Week's Significant Events

Attack/Armed Clash

11 armed clashes were reported in Faryab, Balkh and Samangan Provinces. Most significant of them are described above.

IED Detonated/Discovered

In total, three IED incidents were reported, all in Balkh Province. Two IED detonated on Mazar-Shiberghan main road and one was discovered in Chimtal District.

Intimidation

One incident was reported in Chahar Bolak District, Balkh Province where a group of AGE asked the locals to pay the Usher. One of the villagers, who refused to pay the taxes, was beaten up by insurgents.

WESTERN REGION

The security situation in Western Region remained stable.

Analysis of the Week's Events

The overall incident levels remained consistent as the previous week with increased activities in Badghis and Farah Provinces. Hirat Province recorded a decrease for the second consecutive week but witnessed a significant event of a suicide attack. Ghor Province also recorded a decrease in security incidents. There were 31 incidents recorded which corresponds to the exact number for the previous week.

Hirat Province, Guzara District recorded the second SVBIED along the ring road within the Security Box in three weeks. The ANP were the targets again similar to several other attempts within the Region. Suicide attack threat reporting remains high, indicative of unrelenting AGE intent.

There were four armed clashes reported as compared to nine the previous week. All the armed clashes were initiated by the AGE. A total of six AGE were killed, one wounded and one arrested whilst two ANP were killed during these attacks. In a joint IM/ ANSF Operation, IM carried out an air strike in Badghis Province, Murghab District where two AGE were wounded and one arrested with the seizure of 180 kg of opium by the ANSF. Two stand-off attacks were recorded in Farah Province similar to the same number the previous week. There was the re-emergence of grenade lobbing by motorcyclist in Farah City during the week. Four civilian were wounded as a result.

There were four IED detonations representing a marginal increase of one compared last week; three in Farah and one in Hirat. Of significance is the incident in Farah City where two AGE were killed in a Mosque whilst preparing their suicide vests. Four IED discoveries were reported representing an increase in relation to one last week.

SIOC – Afghanistan: UNITED NATIONS CONFIDENTIAL

Reports of assassinations, abductions and intimidation continue to be recorded. These included the public execution of a female for alleged acts of adultery by AGE in Badghis Province; abduction of a local civilian by AGE in Farah Province and the setting ablaze of a private vehicle by AGE in Hirat Province.

Generic threats reporting of possible AGE intent continue. Main threats to UN staff are assessed as: direct loss in suicide and IED attacks, collateral damage due to close proximity to IED, suicide attacks and abduction for political or criminal motives.

Description of the Week's Significant Events

Attack/Armed Clash

Four armed clashes and an air strike were reported. All the armed clashes were initiated by the AGE; Hirat Province recorded two, one each for Ghor and Badghis Provinces. The IM also engaged the AGE with an air strike carried out in Badghis Province.

Suicide Attack

One SVBIED attack was recorded in Hirat Province, Guzara District. The attacker and two ANP were killed. Four other ANP were wounded in addition to a fuel tanker in the vicinity being set ablaze as a result of the detonation.

Stand-Off Attack

Two stand-off attacks were recorded in Farah Province at Bala Buluk and Pusht Rod Districts. A total of two 107 mm rockets and three mortar rounds of unspecified caliber were fired by the AGE towards the IM/ANSF Base and the DAC respectively.

IED Detonated/Discovered

Four IED detonated; three in Farah and one in Hirat Province. Two AGE were killed in Farah City due to premature detonation of their suicide vests in a Mosque, causing partial damage to the building and five local civilians were wounded in Pusht Rod District as a result of IED strike. In Hirat Province, three ABP were killed and two others wounded when their vehicle struck an IED. Four IED discoveries were made; two in Farah and one each in Badghis and Hirat Provinces.

Mine/ UXO Incident

Two incidents of UXO were recorded in Ghor and Farah Provinces. Two children were killed and three others were wounded in both incidents.

Cache

ANP discovered and seized three mortar rounds in Chaghcharan District, Ghor Province.

Assassination

A local female was executed in public by AGE for alleged adultery charges.

Abduction

A local civilian was abducted in Farah City at an illegal CP established by AGE.

Crime

An incident of crime was reported in Farah Province.

Arrest

Five incidents of arrests were reported; two each in Hirat and Badghis and one in Farah Province.

Intimidation

One incident was reported attributable to the AGE.

Confrontation/ Dispute

One incident was reported in Ghor Province.

SIOC – Afghanistan: UNITED NATIONS CONFIDENTIAL

Information

ANP handed over an assortment of weapons and ammunition seized during different operations to DIAG authorities in Hirat Province, Karukh District

Other

A local female was killed in an accidental discharge of a weapon held by a family member.

SOUTHERN REGION

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

Analysis of the Week's Events

The region experienced a significant decrease of 12% in the number of security related incidents. In that, 130 incidents were recorded compared to last week's 149. However, the nature of threats and target profile are in line with the regional trend. Hilmand and Kandahar Provinces continued to record the majority of the incidents. Hilmand Province saw 49 incidents while 41 incidents were recorded in Kandahar Province. Uruzgan and Zabul Provinces recorded 26 and 10 incidents respectively, while four incidents were reported from Nimroz Province.

The number of armed attacks/clashes slightly decreased to 44 from 49. The intensity of ongoing clashes between the IM/ANSF and the AGE in all provinces of the region remained high. Two thirds of the armed clashes in the SR were targeting the ANSF. It is of note that in the cases where the AGE engaged the ANSF or IM, very few casualties were reported. In the incidents where IM engaged the AGE, the number of reported casualties (invariably amongst AGE) is significantly higher. This highlights the tactical superiority of the IM in this type of engagement and the effectiveness of IM air assets often called in when IM/ANSF are engaging the AGE.

The prolonged armed clash near the Kandahar City Box on 11 August made evident that AGE can infiltrate into the city area with larger groups and/harass ANP patrols/checkpoints. Although the IM/ANSF gave a successful chase to the AGE with the use of IM air assets, the firefight close to the town has compounded perception of insecurity amongst many in the local population.

Stand-off attacks were recorded in Kandahar and Uruzgan Provinces. However, in most of the attacks the rounds either missed the intended targets or dropped short without causing damages or casualties. A significant one occurred on 8 August in District 1 of Kandahar City, when two rockets impacted a residential area and seven civilians including children were wounded.

The clear focus of AGE activity in the region is on asymmetric activities, given the high percentage of IED attacks. Consistent with last week's trend in Kandahar, Hilmand and Uruzgan Provinces, AGE used IED attacks as the preferred tactic, targeting IM, ANSF and civilians. IED detonations and/or discoveries again constituted the bulk of reported incidents, with 57 IED incidents being recorded. AGE continued to focus on planting IEDs rather than kinetic engagements with IM/ANSF.

AGE have apparently shifted their efforts to the roads frequently used by ANSF/IM in order to disrupt IM/ANSF operations and freedom of movement as well as intimidating the local population. The levels and intensity of these attacks would suggest that AGE activity is being sustained at a higher level and that reports of regular infiltration by IED experts into Kandahar, Hilmand, Uruzgan and Zabul are further confirmed. The recent arrests of four AGE with IED making expertise in Shajoy District of Zabul Province, also substantiates those reports.

Abduction, assassination and intimidation incidents continued during the week. Abduction of an off-duty ANP officer was reported in District 1 of Kandahar city. At least, five people were assassinated in the region, with all the incidents reported in Kandahar Province. These included the killing of two ANP officers,

SIOC – Afghanistan: UNITED NATIONS CONFIDENTIAL

a tribal elder and his son, as well as a civilian, all seemingly being perceived as insufficiently supportive of insurgency. There was an act of intimidation in Hilmand Province, Nahri Sarraj District, where a group of AGE set on fire two civilian trucks conveying IM logistical supply. The burning of the trucks indicates the intent of the insurgents to damage/destroy assets of anyone being perceived as insufficiently supportive of insurgency.

In Kandahar Province, a UN national staff member received threats on his mobile phone from an unknown caller, warning him to quit his job or face dire consequences.

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

Description of the Week's Significant Events

Attack/Armed Clash

There were 44 reported armed clashes/attacks over the period; a decrease compared to 49 reported the previous week.

Stand-Off Attack

Three stand-off attacks were reported during the week; a decrease compared to four reported the previous week.

IED Detonated/Discovered

36 IED detonations were reported during the week; a decrease compared to 40 reported the previous week. 21 IED discoveries were made. They were all defused by EOD teams.

Assassination

Four incidents were recorded during the week.

Abduction

One incident was reported in Kandahar Province.

SOUTH EASTERN REGION

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

Analysis of the Week's Events

The SER security incident statistics registered a slight increase in the number of security incidents with a total of 82 reported (including nine late reports), as compared to 75 incidents recorded during the week before. Ghazni accounted for a total of 41 incidents (32 reports the week before), 17 incident reports were received from Khost (same as during the previous week), 14 incidents occurred in Paktika (15 during the preceding week), while 10 incidents took place in Paktya as compared to 11 the week before. The major drop in the number of security incidents during the last several weeks could be attributed, among other things, to believed underreporting.

No major changes have been noted in the general security situation trend with 82 percent of the security incidents believed to be AGE initiated. The recent heavy precipitations throughout the region have had a definite disruptive effect on the IM / ANSF counterinsurgency operations. While the AGE tactics remained a variety of complex / armed / standoff / IED attacks targeting IM / ANSF / GoA facilities / supply convoys, road construction companies, local population as well as targets of opportunity, more incidents directly related to the upcoming parliamentary elections were reported – which could be an integral part of the AGE population intimidation campaign aimed (among other things) at upsetting the elections. Major cell phone providers continue shutting down their repeaters throughout the region at night.

SIOC – Afghanistan: UNITED NATIONS CONFIDENTIAL

The districts of Qarabagh, Ghazni, and Waghaz of the Ghazni Province, the Khost (Matun), and Sabari Districts of the Khost Province, the Gardez District of the Paktya Province as well as the Gayan District of the Paktika Province were the most active during the last week.

A report of a direct security threat to the UN compound in Khost received on 10 August has resulted in implementation of enhanced mitigation measures – this threat still remains in effect.

At least 83 people were killed, 43 wounded, and 14 arrested as a result the security incidents reported during last week in the SER (the number casualties is yet to be verified independently).

Description of the Week's Significant Events

Suicide Attack

An attempted complex/SBBIED attack targeting an IM/ANA base was reported on 6 August in Gayan Paktika, which resulted in SBBIED detonation at the base's main entrance wounding two ANA personnel, the other four attackers were reported killed following a subsequent IM air strike while trying to escape.

Attack/Armed Cash

A total of 24 armed clashes reported (21 last week), the majority of which remaining of the hit-and-run attacks aimed at harassing IM / ANSF / targets of opportunity.

Air Strike

A total of four air strikes reported (compared to one the week before), which resulted in at least 48 suspected AGE reported killed (number of the casualties is yet to be verified independently).

Stand-Off Attack

A total of 14 incidents recorded – as compared to 18 during the preceding week, including two rocket attacks targeting FOB Ghazni in the Ghazni City.

IED Discovered/Detonated

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

Assassination

One such incident reported (same as the week before) when a body of a parliamentary candidate recently abducted in Qarabagh Ghazni was found on 6 August in Ab Band Ghazni.

EASTERN REGION

Analysis of the Week's Events

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

The region recorded a total of 105 security incidents during the reporting period representing an 8% increase over the 97 incidents recorded for the past period. The tempo of activity in the region has been maintained for the fourth successive week with an approximate daily average increasing from 14 to 15 incidents for the current reporting period. This is however expected to reduce as focus is shifting to the observation of the holy month of Ramadan. The trend has been the same through the years except that the numbers for each given period for 2010 compared to the same period of previous years have been higher implying a further decline in the security situation in the region over the previous years.

Armed Clash was the prime incident type recorded for the week with 48 incidents, representing a slight increase over the 46 recorded in the past week. Out of the total, 45 (i.e. 94%) occurred in Kunar Province alone. Nangarhar and Laghman provinces recorded two and one respectively. AGE continued to demonstrate their daring stance reported in recent weeks as 73% of AGE attacks were conducted against

SIOC – Afghanistan: UNITED NATIONS CONFIDENTIAL

static ANSF /IM bases and OPs as well as DAC while 17% were against convoys; IM/ANSF initiated operations accounted for the remaining 10%. There were reports of several civilian casualties as a result of some of the clashes in Kunar Province. In one of the attacks on an IM base, one boy was killed and three others were injured when an RPG round impacted in a residential area. One of the injured infants is the daughter of a UN staff member. Following the heavy losses to the ANSF in a failed operation reported on in the past period, the IM and ANSF conducted joint operations in Badpash, Galoch and Shahgulyan Villages of Mihtarlam District in Laghman Province on 11 August and arrested 14 AGE including six commanders one of who was Mullah Hazrat, a high ranked and influential principal.

Although the number of IED incidents has not increased, they continued to be a major concern to UN AFP as they occurred on the MSR used regularly by the UN and other international agencies. The most significant IED attack occurred in Bar Kunar in Asmar District of Kunar Province, which targeted security armed guards of a construction company resulting in the death of nine guards. An international de-mining agency convoy was also struck by an IED and ambushed by AGE when they were returning to their base after defusing an IED that had been placed along the road leading to the Nurgaram DAC in Nuristan Province. IED and armed attacks are expected to increase on the MSR in the coming weeks in view of the increased operational movement of the IM and ANSF between the provincial capital and the several DAC.

Stand-Off Attacks continued to be a source of worry for the local populace as well as the UN community. Although the number of incidents reduced by approximately 33%, the number of rounds used continued to be high; 30 rounds were fired in the eight incidents recorded and some of the attacks occurred close to UN locations in Jalalabad and Asadabad Cities. An armed attack against the Nangarhar PRT in Jalalabad City by a small group of AGE was preceded by the firing of five rockets, two of which impacted in the PRT; the NPRT is about 1.5km from WFP. Almost all rockets fired towards the PRT in Asadabad go over the UNAMA compound thus present an inevitable source of stress to staff.

Reports were received regarding increased activity of a group of Pakistani AGE along the main Jalalabad-Asadabad Road. The group, noted for the establishment of road blocks, has been responsible for several abductions in Chawkay, Narang, Sirkanay, and Khas Kunar, as well as multiple direct attacks on vehicles travelling along that road. Other reports received towards the end the week indicated a threat of attack against an INGO, an ANP QRF base and UN compound in Asadabad; the threat prompted the deployment of additional ANP to secure all these entities that are co-located.

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

Description of the Week's Significant Events

Attacks/Armed Clash

Forty eight incidents were reported, most of it occurring in Kunar Province and inflicted varied levels of casualty on civilians including one daughter of a UN staff member; the child is reported to be well.

Air Strike

Three air strikes were conducted by the IM in Kunar Province; two civilians were wounded in one incident on 11 August in the Sawo area of Ghaziabad District.

Stand-Off Attack

Eight incidents were reported and targeted at IM bases and ANP locations; however most of the 30 rounds missed their targets except two that landed in the NPRT compound.

Abduction

Two incidents were reported and targeted five ordinary civilians. ANP are investigating the motives.

Crime

Eleven incidents were reported; an increase by four. All except one occurred in Nangarhar Province.

SIOC – Afghanistan: UNITED NATIONS CONFIDENTIAL

IED Detonated/Discovered

Twelve incidents were reported, four were detonations and eight were discoveries.

Mine/UXO Incident

One incident was reported. A boy was injured when an UXO he was handling as scrap metal detonated.

Cache

Two incidents were reported but both caches did not comprise of any significant amount of munitions.

Arrest

Nine arrests were reported; all except two were crime related.

Assassination

One incident was reported and the victim was a local employee of a private construction company. The motive is not known and ANP are investigating.

Information

Seven pieces of information were reported. Two were updates on IM/ANSF ongoing operations in Badpash, Galoch and Shahgulyan villages of Mihtarlam District; one was a threat warning against UNAMA and other entities in Asadabad, another was the release of an abducted male and the remaining were reports of AGE infiltrations into three districts of Laghman Province.

Others

One incident was reported and was the case of two ANP officers who abandoned their post for unknown reasons.

CENTRAL REGION

The security situation in the Central Region remained unstable with the provinces of Wardak, Logar and Tagab District of Kapisa Province rated as volatile. The provinces of Parwan and Panjsher remained relatively calm. Kabul Province and Kabul City remained calm but unpredictable.

Analysis of the Week's Events

The reporting period saw a second successive decrease in the number of security incidents in CR, with 43 incidents reported, compared to the 63 reported last week. A significant reduction and the lowest levels of activity since mid-May. There appears to be no apparent reason for the reduction, as there have been no significant military operations during the week.

Wardak and Logar Provinces remained active although at reduced levels from previous weeks. Insurgent activities in Kapisa, Parwan and Panjsher Provinces were at a much lower level. In Kabul City majority of the incidents involved security forces operations to include criminality and narcotic related crimes.

The decrease in the insurgent activities was witnessed in most types of incidents including armed attacks and IED attacks/discoveries. However insurgents in Wardak and Logar Provinces are gradually covering larger areas with their activities.

Abductions of Government officials and locals continued with consistency. During the week three abduction incidents were reported. On a positive note, ANSF secured the release of a minister's son abducted earlier and a UN national staff member abducted on 3 August in Wardak was released after intervention of local elders.

The reporting period was marked with a failed suicide attack in Kabul City wherein two suicide bombers' attempt to penetrate the premises of a private security company were thwarted by alert security personnel. The failed attempt resulted in the killing of two security personnel in addition to the two suicide bombers. This was the first attack on a PSC after August 2004.

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Into the holy month of Ramadan, the region is expected to witness a lower level of activity during the next reporting period.

Description of the Week's Significant Events

Suicide Attack

There was one failed suicide attack in Kabul City as described above.

Attack/Armed Clash

There were 10 reported armed clashes/attacks over the period. Nine of these were initiated by AGE against IM/ANSF, civilian and logistics convoys while one AGE commander was killed by unknown gunmen. At least two AGE, two ANA and one civilian driver were killed, one ANP, one civilian and one AGE were wounded in the course of the attacks. IM also arrested two AGE during one incident.

Stand-Off Attack

There were three stand-off attacks during the period. Of note is the attack of Wardak Provincial HQs which has experienced very frequent attacks during the year. Also of note is the attack on Shakar Dara DAC in Kabul which was the first one since 2001. No reports of casualties were available.

IED Detonated/Discovered

There were three reports of IED detection. All the devices were subsequently defused by EOD teams. There were six reports of IED detonation. At least four PSC personnel were killed and one civilian, three PSC and two ANA soldiers were wounded in those attacks.

Mine/UXO Incident

One local was killed and two others were wounded in two separate mine/UXO incidents.

Cache

ANP discovered one cache and seized two rockets, approximately 20 meters of detonating cord and a battery.

Assassination

On 11 August, AGE shot and killed an ANP officer and a local resident in Zarghun Shahr area under Muhammad Agha District, Logar.

Abduction

There were three reports of abduction incidents during the week. The UN national staff member (IC contract) abducted last week was released with the intervention of local elders.

Crime

On 11 August, unknown perpetrators threw a hand grenade into the election campaign office of a candidate. One local was wounded in the incident.

Arrest

At least 12 suspected AGE and five criminal were detained during search operations across the region.

Demonstration

Three demonstrations were reported during the week, one of which turned violent in Saydabad District of Wardak Province blocking the ring road for a while.

Narcotic Incident

ANP seized a quantity of narcotics and arrested two locals in PD 5, Kabul City.

CENTRAL HIGHLANDS REGION

The security situation in Central Highlands Region remained unstable with Kajran District raised by strong

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AGE presence in the neighboring Baghram District of Helmand Province in Southern Region. All other Districts remained calm during the period.

Analysis of the Week's Events

There was a slight decrease in the number of security related incidents when compared with the previous week's total of five. A total of two incidents, three information and one other were recorded during the period.

What is disturbing is the fact that AGE have blocked the roads from Helmand, Uruzgan and Kandahar to Kajran District which now faces lack of food and fuel supply.

Shikary Valley continues to stay unstable due to AGE and IAG activity against IM and GoA. It connects Bamyan and Baghlan Province of NER. Daikundi Province again recorded a crime related incident. Kajran District remained out of bound for UN staff, and given the security situation in Ghorband area in Central Region, road mission Bamyan – Kabul, both directions, are suspended up to further notice. UN accessibility in the rest of the region remains open for activities.

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

Description of the Week's Significant Events

Mine/UXO Incident

On 6 August, Bamyan Province, Bamyan Province Centre, Gorwana Village, at about 0800 hrs, an aircraft bomb (remnant of war), was discovered by locals in the area. The bomb was obviously lugged by the flush floods which were recorded few days ago. The device was later on safely defused by ANP EOD Team.

Crime

On 7 August, Daykundi Province, Khadir District, Kitti Village, at unknown time, one local was shut dead in a personal dispute. ANP is investigating the case.

Information

On 6 August, Daykundi Province, Miramor District, Palas Valley, Lahor and Karkarag Villages, at about 1300 hrs, two female and one male died in flush floods in the area. On 6 August, Daykundi Province, Shahristan District, Kharbeed Village, at unknown time, one male corpse was found in the river. It is believed to be killed by flush floods.

On 12 August, Daykundi Province Kajran District Centre, reportedly unknown number of AGE gathered in Qala-e- Zal Khan and Bazaar Mushtarak Villages of Bughran District of Helmand Province in order to attack police posts and government offices in Kajran District. The security situation in the district is unstable. Kajran District faces shortage of food and fuel supply since all roads from Helmand, Uruzgan and Kandahar to Kajran have been blocked by the above mentioned AGE.

Other

On 10 August, Daykundi Province Shahristan District, Sad Khanah Valley, Bandy Burlan Bazaar, at around 0800 hrs, a UN vehicle was involved in a traffic accident with a motorcycle. The motorcyclist was slightly injured and was immediately transported to Nili Provincial BDN clinic.

END OF REPORT

EM/CP