

3.1. Members of the security institutions of the former government

COMMON ANALYSIS

Last update: May 2024

This profile includes members of the former ANDSF, including former Afghan Local Police (ALP) and pro-government militias.

COI summary

During the years of the conflict, ANDSF personnel, both on and off-duty, was a priority target of the Taliban. Attacks against government forces at army bases, police stations and checkpoints, deliberate killings, executions, abductions and torture against detainees, including ANDSF personnel, were reported, and explicitly legitimised by the Taliban *Layeha* (code of conduct) [[Anti-government elements 2020](#), 1.2.1., pp. 13-15; 2.5., pp. 21-22; 2.6.1., pp. 22-23; [State structure](#), 2.1., pp. 26-27; [Security 2020](#), 1.1.1., p. 20; 1.3., pp. 30-31; 1.5.2, p. 51]. During the summer of 2021, cases were reported in which the Taliban committed killings of ANDSF members who had surrendered or were detained [[Targeting 2022](#), 2.1., p. 56]. Sources reported that, as of June 2022, former ANDSF members, including former ALP and pro-government militias, continued to be a primary target of Taliban violence [[Targeting 2022](#), 2.1., pp. 57-63; 2.7., p. 72].

After the takeover, the Taliban issued an amnesty for all who fought against them. The content of the amnesty has not been available beyond general reference to its existence, including from senior Taliban officials, leading to uncertainties around the temporal scope and consequences for breaching it. Sources suggest that the Taliban do not have any policy in place of targeting former Afghan security forces. Nevertheless, there have been continuous claims of Taliban members breaching the amnesty and subjecting former ANDSF members and their relatives to human right violations across the country, including killings, enforced disappearance, and torture [[Country Focus 2023](#), 4.1.1., p. 56].

Although the Taliban have called upon their members to respect the amnesty, there is limited information on individuals facing any consequences for breaching it. Despite the fact that certain elements have been identified as possibly playing a role in the targeting, such as 'revenge culture', personal disputes, and retaliation following the conflict, it is not possible to discern any clear patterns on who is being targeted among former government personnel and who is not. Sources emphasised that it has been hard to discern motives behind the killings, and that people may be targeted due to personal disputes. The Taliban have also claimed that violations of the amnesty have taken place due to personal animosities. One source further reported that the most important thing for the Taliban is that individuals are loyal to them today, rather than their allegiances from before the takeover [[Country Focus 2023](#), 4.1.1., p. 56; 4.1.3., p. 59].

Available data over killings and ill-treatments include victims who held different positions within the former government's security forces. The Taliban's practices towards former officials have been 'inconsistent', '*ad hoc*' and a 'mixture of contradictory policies'. On one hand, some former security personnel have been able to work in the Taliban's *de facto* forces, return from abroad through the Taliban's return commission, and stage open protests against the non-payment of pensions. On the other hand, some former security personnel

have been living in hiding since the takeover, while killings and various forms of ill-treatment have occurred. Moreover, single sources have suggested that some killings have been carried out with the ‘tacit approval’ of senior Taliban commanders, and that Taliban operations against resistance groups and the ISKP might in fact be a way to target former ANDSF members [[Country Focus 2023](#), 4.1.2., pp. 56-57].

As of 30 June 2023, according to UNAMA, since the takeover the *de facto* authorities had committed at least 800 cases of human rights violations against former civilian and military personnel. Violations recorded included 218 killings, 14 instances of enforced disappearance, 424 arbitrary arrests and detentions, 144 instances of torture, and multiple threats. Most cases took place in the 4 months immediately following the takeover in 2021, however killings and other human rights violations have continued in 2022 and 2023. In 2022, the NGO Safety and Risk Mitigation Organization (SMRO) recorded 76 killings and 57 detentions of former security forces, while an increase was noted in 2023 with 27 killings and 55 detentions recorded in the first quarter alone. In the second quarter of 2023, SMRO logged 2 instances of rape, 15 killings and 35 detentions of former security forces personnel in multiple provinces [[Country Focus 2023](#), 4.1.2., pp. 58-59].

The Taliban also declared that they wanted former Afghan National Army (ANA) personnel to join their ranks and launched campaigns to recruit former ANDSF personnel. Although some former ANDSF members did join the Taliban ranks, it was reported that these efforts were of little success due to fear of retribution. Many former personnel remained in hiding or left the country [[Security 2022](#), 1.2.2., p. 27; 2.1.2., pp. 39-41; [Targeting 2022](#), 2.3., pp. 65-66; 2.5., pp. 69-70].

Efforts were made by Taliban members to track down former security officials through local informants, registration campaigns of former ANDSF personnel and possibly the use of former governments databases. In February 2022, the Taliban began to conduct house-to-house searches in different parts of the country which, according to some sources also focused on finding former government employees and members of ANDSF [[Security 2022](#), 1.2.4., p. 33; [Targeting 2022](#), 2.2., pp. 63-65].

Cases of non-fighting army personnel being detained and killed have also been reported [[Targeting 2022](#), 2.4., p. 68].

There were reports of targeting of former female members of the ANDSF by the Taliban or by their own relatives [[Targeting 2022](#), 2.8, p. 73].

There have also been sporadic reports of family members of former ANDSF members being killed, detained, forcibly disappeared, tortured, and raped. Some family members were reportedly ‘caught up’ in Taliban raids targeting former ANDSF members, while others were targeted in the search for such individuals [[Country Focus 2023](#), 4.1.2., p. 58-59; 4.1.5., pp. 62; [Targeting 2022](#), 2.1., pp. 5, 63; 2.2., p. 64; 2.4.-2.7., pp. 67-73; [Security 2022](#), 3.2.(c), pp. 68-69; [Country Focus 2022](#), 2.5., p. 46].

Conclusions and guidance

Do the acts qualify as persecution under Article 9 QD?

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



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

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

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



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

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



Exclusion considerations could be relevant to this profile (see the chapter [7. Exclusion](#)).