

2. Security situation

2.1. Recent security trends

Following the Taliban takeover in 2021, levels of armed violence[539] and civilian harm declined significantly compared to previous years of conflict.[540] UN sources have described the subsequent period as marked by a ‘relative absence of armed conflict’[541] and a ‘virtual halt of active conflict’.[542] In 2022, UCDP assessed that the intensity of the conflict in Afghanistan no longer met its threshold to be classified as a ‘war’.[543] Similarly, Bertelsmann Stiftung reported in 2024 that there was ‘no indication of systematic or scattered combat’.[544]

Nevertheless, the de facto government has faced armed opposition from resistance groups (see section 2.2.1) and the ISKP.[545] While violence from such groups has generally decreased[546] after peaking in 2022,[547] resistance groups have continued to carry out low-intensity attacks,[548] targeting mainly the de facto authorities.[549] Until 2024, dozens of explosions and suicide attacks were reported annually,[550] targeting the de facto authorities[551] and civilians.[552] Many attacks were claimed by the ISKP,[553] while some remain unattributed.[554]

De facto security forces have also clashed with Pakistani border forces, causing casualties on both sides.[555] Pakistan has faced recurring attacks that they attribute to Tehreek-e-Taliban (TTP, ‘the Pakistani Taliban’), and they accuse the Afghan de facto authorities of harbouring this organisation. In December 2024, tensions resurged as Pakistan carried out airstrikes in Paktika Province. While Pakistan claimed to target the TTP, the Afghan de facto authorities stated that nearly 50 civilians were killed in the attack.[556] Following a TTP attack against the Pakistani military in a border area on 9 October 2025,[557] Pakistan carried out an airstrike against Kabul City.[558] In the following days the de facto security forces fired at Pakistani posts along the shared border, and Pakistan responded with mortar fire and drone strikes,[559] including airstrikes against Kabul City,[560] the border town of Spin Boldak in Kandahar Province,[561] and in Paktika Province.[562] On 19 October 2025, Pakistan and the Afghan de facto authorities agreed on a ceasefire,[563] but negotiations ended without a long-term settlement,[564] and sporadic cross-border incidents continued to be reported in November 2025.[565]

There are conflicting assessments of Al-Qaida’s presence in Afghanistan.[566] The UN Sanctions and Monitoring Team noted reports of Al-Qaida maintaining presence, although it had limited resources and ‘drastically downsized’. It also noted reports of Al-Qaida training camps across the country, although ‘small and rudimentary’, as well as alleged links with the TTP.[567] Some sources have questioned some of the reports noted by the UN Sanctions and Monitoring Team, in particular claims of Al-Qaida running overt training camps in Afghanistan.[568]

A comparison of ACLED data covering the same January–November period in 2024 and 2025 suggests a decrease in violence levels, from 958 events down to 684 events. The same trend could be noted as regards events codified as ‘battles’ (from 371 down to 222 events) and ‘violence against civilians’ (from 493 down to 337). In contrast, the number of events codified as ‘explosions/remote violence’ increased from 94 to 125 events, and was mainly driven by Pakistani airstrikes, but also increased activity of the Afghanistan Freedom Front (AFF) and the National Resistance Front (NRF).569 As regards violence against civilians, UCDP data covering 2025 (as of November), compared to data covering the same period in 2024 suggest a 33 % decrease in civilian deaths (down to 287 from 426 deaths).570 Rawadari also noted a decrease in civilian casualties from ‘explosive and suicide attacks’, with 11 civilian deaths and 35 injured recorded in the first six months of 2025, respectively constituting a 33.3 % and 50 % decrease from the same period in 2024 and 2023.571

Figure 1. Conflict data covering 1 October 2024–30 November 2025

Source	Total no. events	Battles	Explosions and remote violence	Violence against civilians	Civilian deaths
ACLED	971	336 (35 %)	168 (17 %)	467 (48 %)	N/A
UCDP	682	N/A	N/A	N/A	412

Source: EUAA table based on ACLED and UCDP data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan covering the period
1 October 2024–30 November 2025, as of 10 December 2025, url; UCDP, data covering the period 1 October 2024–30 November 2025, provided by courtesy of UCDP in an email, 8 December 2025.

It should be noted that within the reference period of this report (1 October 2024–30 November 2025) ACLED codified 467 events as ‘violence against civilians’. Event details suggest that at least 80 % of events involved de facto security forces as the perpetrating actor; this included arrests based on various motives, and the use of excessive violence in various situations, including in combatting crime but also situations where de facto officials exploited their position to exert violence. Moreover, about 104 cases were related to the enforcement of *sharia*, including floggings, and in addition, 92 events were related to arrests and killings of former government officials and their family members, although the motive was often unclear. A handful of cases concerned arrests of individuals suspected of being affiliated with opposition groups, and in one case the de facto security forces assaulted and beat up civilians in Nahreen District in Panjsher Province, following clashes with the NRF.572

Afghanistan is moreover highly contaminated with landmines and explosive remnants of war573 especially in the countryside.574 Children make up the majority of victims,575 and in the period 9 September 2024–5 September 2025, the UN recorded 49 civilian deaths due to unexploded ordinances (UXOs), and injuries to 29 boys, 8 girls, and 12 men, and 151 civilians, including 76 boys, 28 girls, 32 men, and 15 women.576

Figure 2. Events and civilian deaths by month, 1 January 2024–30 November 2025

Events and civilian deaths by month, 1 January 2024–30 November 2025

Source: EUAA table based on ACLED and UCDP data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan covering the period 1 January 2024–30 November 2025, as of 10 December 2025, url; UCDP, data covering the period 1 January 2024–30 November 2025, provided by courtesy of UCDP in emails, 8 December 2025 and 3 October 2024.

Figure 3. Events by actor (as 'actor 1'), 1 October 2024–30 November 2025

Events by actor (as 'actor 1'), 1 October 2024–30 November 2025

Source: EUAA table based on ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Afghanistan covering the period
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