

2.2. Resistance groups opposing the Taliban

COMMON ANALYSIS | Last update: June 2026

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: Country Focus 2026, 2.1., 2.2.1., 2.3., 2.4., 4.3.1.; Country Focus 2024, 1.1., 1.2., 1.3.; COI Update 2024, 4.; Security 2022, 2.2.1.; Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

Armed resistance groups aligned with the former government emerged in Afghanistan as a response to the Taliban takeover. The main groups have been the National Resistance Front (NRF) and the Afghanistan Freedom Front (AFF). In addition, the Afghanistan Liberation Movement (ALM), the People's Sovereignty Front, the National Mobilization Front, the National Battle Front, and the Islamic Liberation Front have been noted as of October 2025. While many other groups have previously proclaimed their existence, their actual capacity has in some cases not extended beyond social media announcements. No armed resistance groups currently control territory or maintain overt presence in Afghanistan, and, according to UN reporting they do not pose significant challenge to the *de facto* authorities' territorial control.

The NRF is led from headquarters located in Tajikistan, and most of the group's members are ethnic Tajiks. The group was formed after the Taliban conquered Kabul in mid-August 2021 and reportedly consisted of former civilians, former ANDSF personnel, including many low-ranking ex-officers, and others who supported the previous Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. The NRF claims to have a strength of 5 000 men, present in 20 provinces, while other groups have previously been described as smaller than the NRF. However, it was not possible to corroborate NRF's claim, and no information on the size of other resistance groups was found. Additionally, it is reported that the NRF use children in 'direct hostilities', including to plant and detonate IEDs, carry weapons, spy and as guards.

Reportedly, resistance groups have been almost completely defeated including in NRF's former strongholds in Panjshir province and the district of Andarab in Baghlan province. In October 2024, it was reported that recent attacks have been relatively marginal and rarely noticed while it was stated in January 2025 that attacks by the NRF and AFF were increasing but underreported due to censorship. ACLED suggests that resistance groups targeted only the de facto security forces, while UNAMA has noted the harm of civilians by such groups in deliberate attacks.

For more information on the methods and tactics, see 4.3.3(a) Security situation in Afghanistan: recent events. See also 3.14.2. Child recruitment.

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