

THE ANSO REPORT

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YOU NEED TO KNOW

- AOG garner attention through localized attacks in metropolitan centres—Kabul City & Lashkar Gah
- Touted ‘civilian surge’ will lead to further erosion of the humanitarian space
- NGO road projects targeted in climactic areas

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COUNTRY SUMMARY

In the wake of the London Conference, the buzz word is now ‘reintegration’, with initial information suggesting the establishment of a deep trust fund and a program that blends elements of DIAG and the Afghan New Beginning Program to tempt AOG defectors to the GoA side. The program is in too early a stage to yet determine an impact on NGO safety but will be closely monitored. A fully articulated plan should be available after the follow-on ‘Kabul Conference’ in early spring. The IEA issued a statement in response to the proposal, indicating that its fighters and leaders would not be induced by such incentives.

In the lead up to the London Conference, though, AOG attempted to draw attention back to Afghanistan through localised, high-profile attacks in Kabul City and Lashkar Gah.

In the case of the former event, AOG capitalised on international media desires for a story, as well as the ease in which opposition forces can naturally infiltrate into the capitol, by conducting a prolonged and multistage attack that resulted in ultimately only a handful of fatalities.

From an analytical perspective, the incident reinforced ANSFs’ ability to enact security cordons, while con-

versely also demonstrating their general inability or disinterest in tackling incidents in a surgical manner (the attack went on for hours, during which security forces merely lobbed volleys of ammunition toward AOG positions).

The ongoing reinforcement of US Government civilian personnel continues to draw concern from NGOs in relation to the erosion of humanitarian space and possible association of all aid to political objectives; yet, critical data on this issue has yet to emerge.

NGO DATA & TRENDS

ANSO-recorded NGO incidents during the reporting period demonstrated the hazards of taking part in high-risk programming, with all incidents being INGO road projects in generally contested areas: Daykundi, Paktya, Paktika, and Zabul. One should note that these incidents should not be misconstrued, lending one to believe that NGO’s are under fire in the field; rather, one must recognise the contested nature of the programming, hurdles in securing full acceptance for such programmes, and the general profile of implementing parties of such programmes—almost all onlookers would assume that the projects are undertaken by private businesses, which are almost always accompanied by PSCs. Nonetheless, as discussed in the last ANSO Quarterly, this is a mute point, because an organisation’s status is often irrelevant, with one only weighing deeds, image, and level of neutrality when deciding whether to target an NGO.

In all incidents, additionally, subcontractors for an INGO were targeted. In Zabul, an IED struck an inspection team that was operating in support of the contractor, killing five personnel. Likewise, in Paktika, an RCIED struck a PSC in support of a subcontractor, killing one. In Paktya, a subcontractor came under small arms fire, and the three related incidents in Daykundi were a mix of armed clashes and an IED discovery.

KABUL

Kabul was again the unwitting host of a complex attack which essentially shut down the centre of the city for five hours on 18 January. Success, always difficult to attribute, was claimed by both ANSF and AOG. The attack began at approximately 0940 hrs with a BBIED detonating at the southern gate of the presidential gate, where the swearing in of the confirmed members of the Afghan cabinet was taking place. Shortly afterwards, three AOG entered the Feroshgha Market opposite the entrance to the Ministry of Justice and began firing at ANSF, with a mixture of SAF, grenades and a reported RPGs from a fourth floor vantage point. Seemingly every branch of the ANSF descended on the area and directed fire on the building. At least one BBIED detonated in the building, and it is understood that two others were killed by ANSF fire. Firing continued intermittently until 1230hrs. It is understood, however, that the attackers were most likely killed within the first half an hour. The Feroshgha Market was home to several textile shops, which provided ample fuel for a fire which clouded the Kabul landscape until the early afternoon and left the building a burnt out shell.

Several hundred metres away at the Malik Asghar Square, a minibus with the word 'Ambulance'

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written on the side, detonated at approximately 1120 hrs in front of the Gulbahar Centre. The SVBIED had attempted to penetrate the ANSF cordon around Pashtunistan Square but was turned back and came under suspicion by ANSF at the square - not far from both the Ministries of Education and Foreign Affairs. A further IED under a bridge in the Cinema Pamir Area of PD1 added to the confusion on the day. No one was injured in the blast and, considering that the location was most likely the path which the AOG took prior to attacking, it could have been either a diversionary measure or abandoned explosives.

Around 1230hrs across the other side of Pashtunistan Square, three AOG in the Bamyán Hotel commenced firing onto the street. The hotel adjoins the Ariana Cinema and is situated at the back of the Ministry of Justice. Similar to the Feroshgha Market, the building provides poor defensive cover due to the large number of exterior windows. In response, ANSF occupied the Ariana cinema complex and from the street fired into the hotel. The firing stopped approximately two hours later, although similar to the market, it is highly likely that the attackers were killed or detonated early on in the exchange of fire.

As mentioned, success was claimed by both sides. ANSF were quick to claim that no GoA buildings were penetrated and that the attackers occupied soft targets, rather than directly attacking the ministries themselves, as occurred on 11 February 2009. The various branches of the ANSF arrived on the scene promptly, and the num-

ber of civilian casualties was limited considering the scope and length of the engagement. In addition, seven AOG were confirmed dead following the attack. In total, three ANSF and two civilians were killed and 71 were injured, including 35 civilians.

An AOG claim of responsibility in the press indicated that government ministries clustered around Pashtunistan Square were the intended targets. In penetrating the heart of the capital, the attack highlighted insecurity in the country ahead of the London Conference while the partial cabinet was being sworn in. Furthermore, excepting the attack on the IO guest-house, it was the first significant complex attack in the capital in almost a year and likely involved more than a dozen AOG in the planning, logistics and carrying out of the attack. Arrests reportedly associated with the attack were quick to follow in PD2 and PD8.

What perhaps is most remarkable about the attack is the relatively small number of civilian casualties. During the morning, Pashtunistan Square is full of hundreds of people, either shopping or in their cars, and in an attack of this nature a large number of civilians would typically be expected to become 'collateral damage', to use the clinical terminology. There were no reported NGO casualties; however, a number of NGO workers were trapped in ministries or GoA buildings for a number of hours as they went into lockdown. In instances where an AOG attack is underway or the security situation remains uncertain, NGOs are best advised to ensure all staff are in safe locations, rather than attempt to cross the city to extricate a staff member who is already in a safe location.

Separately in Kabul City, an SVBIED detonated on Jalalabad Road near an IMF foot patrol on the afternoon of 26 January. The detonation reportedly injured eight IMF and eight civilians. The attack is in line with targeted SVBIED attacks against IMF every four weeks. Again along Jalalabad Road, but on 28 January, IMF allegedly shot a civilian along the side of the road in an 'escalation of force' incident. The individual, an Imam, later died of his wounds and a protest was quick to form in Paktya Kot. There is a high level of residual anger in the area, with ANSF maintaining a presence several days after the shooting.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- SVBIED attacks around high profile GoA, IMF and foreign representation targets
- ACG abductions
- Car accidents

PARWAN

Parwan has remained relatively quiet over the last reporting period with few recorded incidents. Kohi Safi, comparatively calm for most of 2009, appears to have experienced an increase in the number of AOG infiltrating from

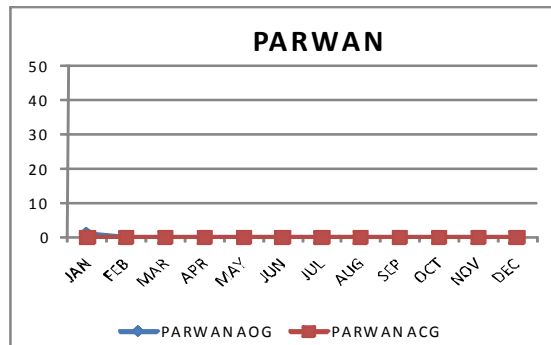
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Low intensity AOG activity in the Ghorband Valley
- ACG activity in Chaharikar
- Winter road closures through the Shibar and Salang passes

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Tagab in neighbouring Kapisa. The expansion of the conflict in Kapisa in the last several weeks appears to have led to an increase in occasional attacks against ANSF and the number of rockets launched against Bagram Air Base. On 20 January, IMF arrested three suspected AOG in Kohi Safi, most likely linked to the recent increase in incidents.

If NGOs are travelling to Bamyan through the Shibar Pass, ensuring proper vehicle maintenance and general winter precautions are



adhered to is strongly advised. The current road construction project from Chaharikar to Shibar and the possibility that the Shibar Pass may be closed due to snow necessitates that NGOs should check the road conditions at least 24 hours prior to setting out. The unseasonably warm weather cannot be guaranteed over the coming weeks.

DAYKUNDI

There has been a discernible increase in AOG activity in the district of Kijran during the last reporting period, which has been largely centred on the Kijran to Gizab road construction project. The project, supervised by an INGO, is largely implemented by local partners. (All three NGO incidents during the period resulted from this INGO's road projects). Along the road project, two RCIEDs were discovered on

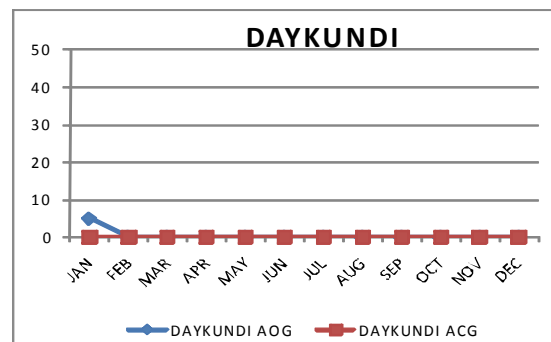
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- ACG/AOG abduction threat in Gizab
- Winter road travel
- Occasional banditry on roads leaving from Nili

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15 January and two separate AOG attacks using SAF and rockets were recorded on 17 and 18 January, injuring one local security guard. AOG tactics often include attacking road construction projects, as has been witnessed in neighbouring Uruzgan. The development of the road network will most likely attract further such attacks in the future.

Separately, and again in Kijran, AOG claimed responsibility for a roadside IED on 30 January in the Dowazda Imam Pass Area along the border with Uruzgan, which killed a local contractor for the ANSF while he was riding a motorcycle through the area. Two other IEDs were also found at the



location. The ANSF retain a light presence in the district, which is essentially under nominal AOG control. The limits of ANSF control of southern Daykundi was also evidenced with an attack on a Tamazan Pass ANP checkpoint in Nili on 26 January. The checkpoint delineates AOG/GoA authority and has been attacked on occasion, most likely to enforce the notion of the limits of ANSF control. The violence is unlikely to expand northward to the capital due to the lack of support among the local population. The rest of Daykundi remains calm, with most NGO operations retreating to the capital due to the winter weather.

GRAPHS: Please note, graphs in this report are current as of 27 January 2010.

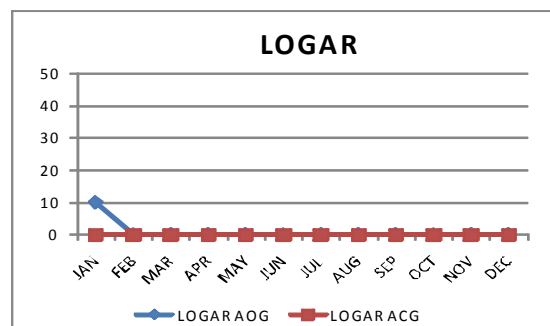
LOGAR

ANSF/IMF launched a series of operations across Logar, which resulted in a number of AOG arrests. It is understood that some of the more high profile attacks in Kabul City have been facilitated by supply routes through Logar. Muhammad Agha, in particular, has been the subject of numerous ANSF/IMF arrest or offensive operations aimed at IED or logistics experts or facilitators. Most recently, on 30 January ANSF and

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IMF arrested an alleged IED expert during the night. Such arrests in the past have resulted in a distinct downturn in the number of AOG initiated incidents in the weeks that follow. Other arrests were also reported in Puli Alam and Baraki Barak.

Also in Logar, AOG were reportedly responsible for the killing of a local religious leader in Shamarzar Area of Baraki Barak on 19 January. AOG attacks of a similar nature appear to take place in an effort to eliminate competing power structures or sources of legitimacy for the local community. Over the last several months



in Baraki Barak, the level of AOG activity appears to have dissipated as the ANSF, in conjunction with IMF, have established a greater degree of control over the district. This, however, has not translated into a greater degree of safety for any intended NGO programs as the district remains hostage to ANSF/IMF security operations and AOG IEDs. NGOs should ensure that community acceptance in the various implementation areas has been granted prior to the commencement or expansion of any programs.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- ACG/AOG abductions
- IMF operations
- AOG intimidation

WARDAK

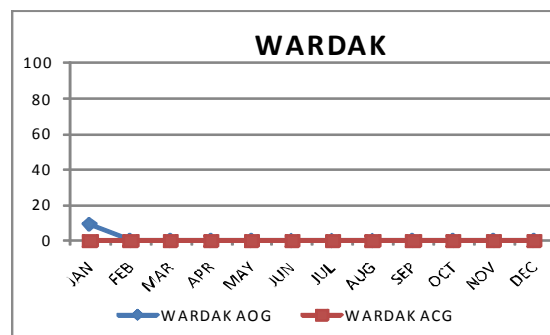
Wardak remains the central region's most volatile province; with the eastern districts of Chaki Wardak, Jaghatu, Jalrez, Nirkh and Saydabad all hosting either AOG or ANSF/IMF initiated incidents in the past two weeks. Highway One, a strategic priority for IMF, is where the vast majority of incidents are recorded as AOG attacks attempt to destabilize the route and ANSF/IMF endeavour to ensure its security for commercial traffic and the dozens of supply convoys that shuttle between Kandahar and Kabul every day. NGOs that remain in the province have long established com-

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munity relations and a track record of impartiality which allows them to implement programs throughout the province. There is, however, the ever present risk of exposure to AOG standoff attacks and ANSF/IMF operations that in the past have directly impacted NGO operations.

Separately, in Chaki Wardak, three commercial trucks carrying wheat for a 'food for work' NSP program were high-jacked in Lalakhel Area. It is understood that the drivers were released unharmed. In Jalrez, an AOG attack on an ANP checkpoint on 25 January wounded two civilians. The IMF base in the district was also the victim of a rocket attack, although no casualties were reported.

The Wardak Governor was visiting a development project on 22 January in Jaghatu when an IED detonated as his convoy was passing in Ghazi Muhammad Jahn



Khan Area. Four ANA were killed and another wounded in the vehicle that the governor had previously occupied that morning. Two other IEDs were found in the area prior to the arrival of the convoy. On the same day in Jaghatu, an IMF operation led to the arrest of the reported shadow governor of Jaghatu in Dahana Village. ANSF uniforms and an array of weapons were also seized.

In Saydabad, two incidents on 28 January with little impact for the security of NGOs received wide publicity. A personal dispute is believed to have escalated into a shooting on an IMF FOB leaving at least two IMF dead as well as an Afghan interpreter. Also on the same day, an airstrike was called in on an ANA checkpoint following a case of mistaken identity. Four ANA were killed and nine others injured, including two IMF.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG abductions
- AOG intimidation
- IEDs and SAF ambushes targeting IMF/ANSF and logistics convoys along Highway One

BAMYAN

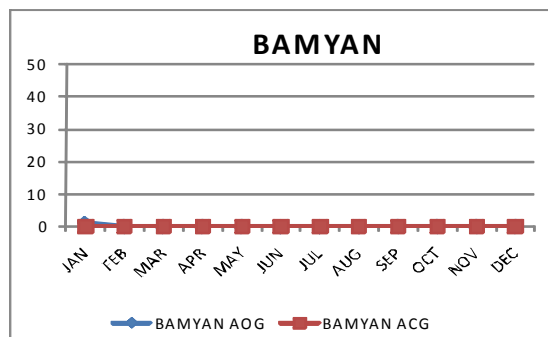
A new ANP checkpoint was reportedly established in the Ghandak Village in Shibar following a series of violent road robberies in the area. The static checkpoint is unlikely to reduce the threat in the

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Winter road closures
- ACG/AOG activity in the Shikari and Ghandak Valleys

	NGO Incidents
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intermediate term as the individuals undertaking the attacks appear well organised and have been able to avoid the ANP for a number of months. Separately in Bamyan, approximately 200 people gathered in the bazaar area to protest against the rejection of several cabinet nominees by parliament. A similar protest occurred in PD13 of Kabul City on 16 Janu-



ary. Further non-violent demonstrations may occur if similar nominations are again rejected by parliament.

KAPISA

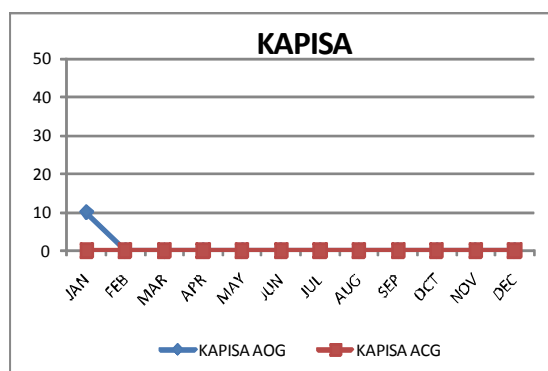
The eastern districts of Alasay, Nijrab and Tagab virtually monopolise the security incidents in Kapisa for 2010. The valleys in the east of the province provide

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Secondary exposure to clashes between AOG and ANSF/IMF in Tagab
- Low intensity factional disputes in Kohistan I & II
- Decentralized AOG activity in Alasay, Nijrab and Tagab

	NGO Incidents
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ample cover for small numbers of AOG to conduct standoff attacks against ANSF/IMF convoys and patrols. Tagab, well known for hosting AOG factions, has been at the centre of IMF operations. The Afghanistan and neighbouring Uzbek Valley have been at the heart of IMF operations in recent weeks as they attempt to extend their control over the smaller population centres. Ambushes and counter-ambushes by ANSF/IMF have dominated the list of security incidents. The western



districts of Kapisa, Hesa Awal Kohistan and Hesa Duwum Kohistan have few reported incidences beyond general low levels of factional violence and occasional criminality. NGOs operate in the areas with relative freedom of movement.

BAGHLAN

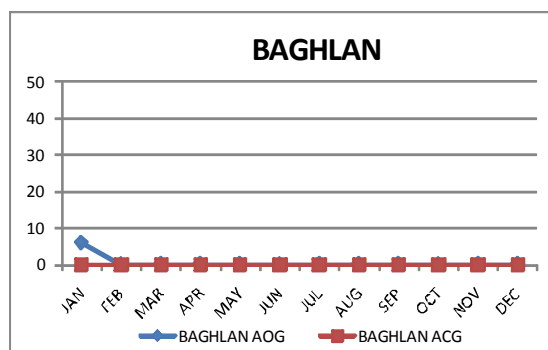
Clashes between security forces and AOGs, as well as ACGs, continue in Baghlan Province. AOG-ANSF/IMF clashes continue in Baghlani Jadid and Puli Khumri districts, with attacks on ANP checkpoints reported in Gerdab

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG-ANSF clashes
- ACG-ANSF clashes

	NGO Incidents
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Area, and attacks on joint IMF/ANSF patrols reported in Kok Chinar Area of the district, as well as Pouzza Ishan area of Puli Khumri District. The latter attacks were both responded to by IMF airstrikes, a seemingly regular practice now that introduces an increased risk of collateral damage in the areas. In Burka and Tala Wa Barfak districts, armed clashes



were reported between ACGs and ANSF, in which at least four ACGs and one civilian were killed.

JAWZJAN

Three significant incidents were reported in Jawzjan Province this period. In Qush Tepa District, an IED detonated targeting an ANA vehicle, injuring an ANA member. In the past, typical AOG activity in Qush Tepa and Darzab districts have included illegal checkpoints, intimidation of the population, and direct fire attacks on ANSF vehicles and checkpoints. Whereas IEDs in Jawzan have been typical of AOG activity in the north of the province, the use

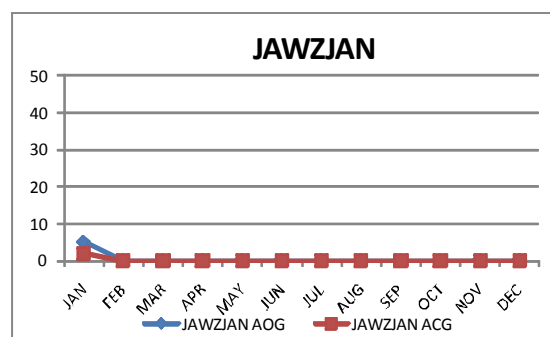
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG activity in Darzab and Qush Tepa
- Shootings in Aqcha

	NGO Incidents
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of IEDs in the province's southern panhandle has been quite rare, most recently reported in August of last year. Taking into account the incident last reporting period in which AOGs were obstructed from laying explosives to damage the main road in Darzab District, the use of stand-off explosives may continue in the area. Also in Qush Tepa District, Chaqma Qor Village, AOG members stopped a civilian vehicle in search of GoA employees and abducted a local civilian.

On the main road in Aqcha District, two unknown armed individuals riding on a motorcycle shot and killed a village represen-



tative of Fayzabad District who had been travelling in his private vehicle. It has not been determined whether the incident was AOG-initiated; however, attacks on GoA targets in Fayzabad District have occurred within the past year, including a similar shooting of a village representative in August of last year.

In Shibirgan District, seven members of a known ACG were arrested. The group is suspected of being behind a large number of ACG incidents in Jawzjan and Sar-e Pul provinces.

KUNDUZ

In the past two weeks, incidents in Kunduz have increased due to an increase in ANSF/IMF operations and retaliatory AOG activity. While incidents were reported in every district except for Qalai Zal, the majority of activity was reported in Kunduz and Chahar Dara districts. These were characterized by ANSF/IMF operations and airstrikes, as well as AOG-initiated incidents including short-range SAF and RPG attacks, IEDs, and an unusual employment of long-range mortar and artillery fire within Kunduz City.

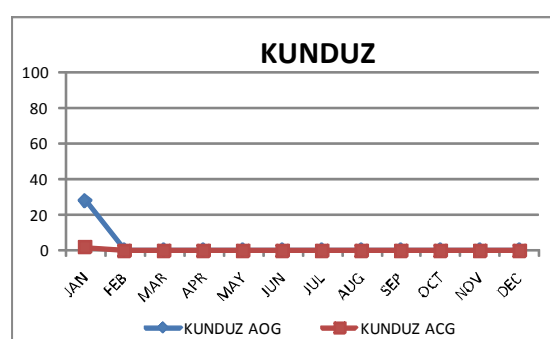
A large-scale two-day ANSF/IMF operation targeting Gorteppa Area aimed at clearing a well-

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IEDs
- IMF airstrikes
- AOG-ANSF/IMF clashes

	NGO Incidents
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known AOG stronghold, while in Chahar Dara and Aliabad districts, IMF air operations resulted in the deaths of six AOG members. Civilian casualties reported this period include two deaths as a result of cross-fire between IMF/ANSF and AOGs in Chahar Dara District, one death and one injury reported in an "escalation of force" incident on the Kunduz-Chahar Dara main road, and six injuries due to a roadside IED in Kunduz District. While no injuries were caused by AOG employment of mortar fire and long-range artillery on targets within Kunduz City, civilians are notably placed at risk by this tactic, which had not been reported since August of last year. Equivalently, civilians are also placed at risk by IMF airstrikes in the province.



Elsewhere in the province, AOG attacks against pro-government militias continued in Imam Sahib District, while AOG attacks on ANSF and IMF checkpoints and convoys were reported throughout the province. Also, several IED incidents were reported this period: multiple IEDs were discovered and defused on the Chahar Dara-Imam Sahib Road in Archi District; an IED detonated in a trash can in Kunduz City; IEDs destroyed two bridges in Kunduz and Aliabad districts; and as mentioned above, a roadside IED injured six civilians in Kunduz District. In Khanabad District, an attack on a checkpoint near a telecommunications tower in Chugha Area shows a continuation of AOG intent against similar targets in the area.

FARYAB

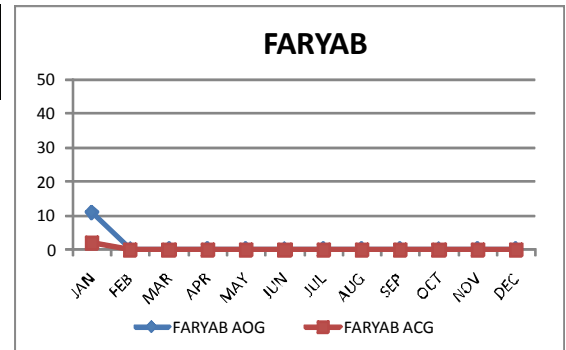
Faryab Province reported some typical and atypical AOG activity this period. In Qaysar District, two international employees of a construction company were abducted along with two national drivers and security guards. The national staff were subsequently released, but negotiations are still ongoing for the release of the international staff. While attacks on construction companies are common, due to their perceived connection to the GoA, abductions of internationals are generally rare in any case, as they are difficult to conceal and transport, particularly in areas without local support for AOG activity. A second AOG

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Abduction
- UXO
- Rare AOG attacks

	NGO Incidents
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attack on an international construction company took place in Qaysar District later in the reporting period. Also in the western districts of Qaysar and Almar, a slate of UXO-related incidents resulted in the deaths of 8 young people, as well as a few safe discoveries and removals of the material left over from previous conflicts. These incidents underscore the ongoing risk that UXO presents to noncombatants, regardless of their proximity to the current conflict. In Bilchiragh District, AOG members attacked a pro-government militia checkpoint. Attacks on pro-government militias have only been reported in Bilchiragh District of Faryab, suggesting that their presence is intended to combat the presence of AOGs in the Darzab, Qush Tepa and Sayyad district cluster. In Ko-



histan District, AOGs attacked the ANP headquarters. While no injuries or damage was caused, it is an unusual deviation from typical activity in the province, usually consisting of criminally motivated attacks and robberies. An unusual AOG attack was also seen in Maymana District, injuring two ANP at a checkpoint in Almalik Village. AOG activity in Maymana District is rare, suggesting a possible infiltration of AOGs from the southwest of the province. Also in the north, unknown armed individuals believed to be AOGs attacked the Qurghan District Administrator's residence with SAF. Previous indications of AOG presence in the area have been limited to a few arrests made by ANSF.

TAKHAR

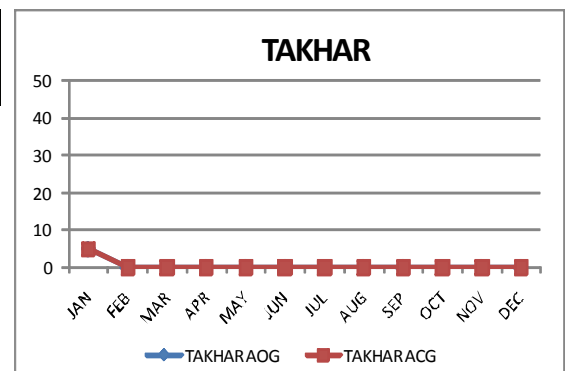
This reporting period, several ACG members known to be operating in Rustaq District surrendered themselves to the government. This comes on the heels of a low-level ANSF search operation which commenced last re-

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- ACG activity
- AOG presence

	NGO Incidents
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porting period in the district. ACG activity continues elsewhere, with two roadside robberies reported in Baharak District, and a hand grenade hurled into a private residence in Taloqan City. AOG activity continues in Darqad District, where AOGs attacked the local NDS office in the area with SAF and reportedly gathered local civilians in Maida Tepa Area to demand financial support. An



AOG member was also abducted and executed as a result of an internal dispute among AOGs in the district.

GHOR

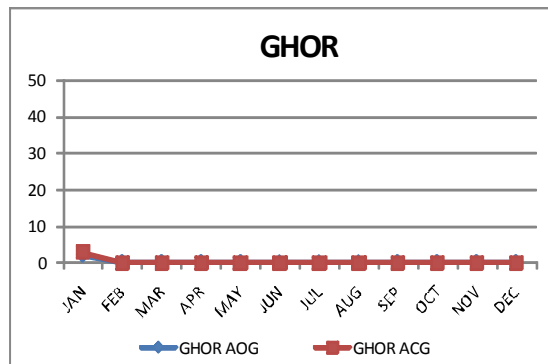
Criminal activity, particularly armed robbery, remains a concern in Ghor Province. On 23 January in Chagcharan City, a group of unknown armed men broke into a money changer's office and stole a large amount of cash. In the same district, on 26 January, two individuals robbed an inhabitant of his cash and valuables.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Criminal activity
- Armed robberies

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Security forces have conducted several operations throughout the province linked to criminal, as well as AOG, activity in the area. For instance, following the search operation in different areas of Saghar, Taywara, and Pasaband districts that took place on the beginning of this reporting period, ANSF arrested one suspect and seized 14 weapons. During another search operation, but on the 24th in Du Layna District, NDS personnel discovered one



RCIED, 20 mortars, and explosives. Moreover, several suspects allegedly involved in various criminal activities were arrested in Chagcharan City on 26 January following two separate police operations in the usually quiet district of Lal Wa Sarjangal.

HERAT

Renewal of AOG activities has already been recorded in Chisthi Sharif over the past weeks. During the present reporting cycle this renewal manifested itself in an AOG ambush on the District Governor's convoy. The ambush, which occurred on 17 January, killed him along with five other officials. NGOs should be aware that the majority of recently recorded incidents in the area took place on the main Herat City-Chagcharan Road (crossing Chisthi Sharif, Obe and Pashtun Zarghun districts). The worrying situation along this road was again illustrated in the latter district, this time on 22 January, when AOG established a temporary check point. The group stopped a few passing vehicles in this area, but

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

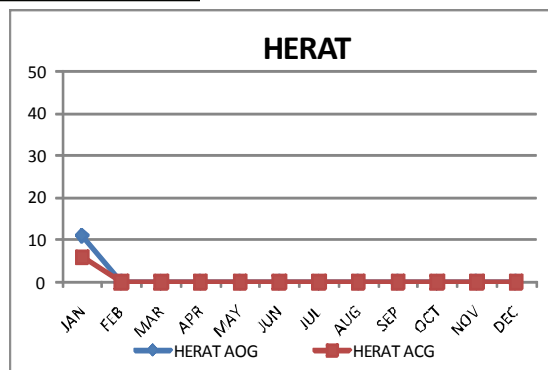
- IED/RCIEDs
- Herat-Obe and Chisthi Sharif roads
- Military operations in Chisthi Sharif and Kushki Kunha

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one private car did not stop at the check point, causing the armed men to shoot and kill the driver. Of note, since September last year, this has been the first ANSO recorded AOG check point in this district.

The increase in AOG activities in Chisthi Sharif and an AOG presence in Pashtun Zarghun might correspond with information indicating that two prominent AOG commanders who were close to reconciling with the government have ultimately returned to the opposition. Usually, one of them operates in Chisthi Sharif, whereas the second one operates in some areas of Pashtun Zarghun.

AOG activity mainly targeting ANSF/IMF was relatively common in other districts of Herat Province during the present cycle. For instance, on 22 January in Gulran (another area of concern for NGO operations), an armed clash erupted between an ANP patrol and an AOG in the area. On 26 January, in Kushki Kunha District, AOG attacked with



RPGs and SAF an ANBP post which was under construction. On 19 January in Adrasan District, the DAC came under AOG attack, and in Shindand District on the main Herat-Kandahar Road, an ANP contracted vehicle was hit by an RCIED.

In Herat City, the security situation remains relatively calm despite another indirect attack that occurred on 18 January. During the night, AOG fired one rocket which impacted in an open area, near the Herat airport. Of note, criminal activity is still prevalent in the city. For instance, a hand grenade was thrown into a private residence in District 5, and an IO national staff was robbed of his money and valuables by two armed men in District 9. In the same district, on 29 January, four armed men abducted a local civilian. On a positive note, though, a dependant of an IO national staff who was abducted on 14 January managed to escape and return home, two days later, apparently unharmed.

BADGHIS

On January 24th in Qadis District, AOG abducted two national staff employed by a for-profit development organisation whilst they were en route from Qala-i-Naw to the Qadis DAC. They were released the following day after the mediation of tribal elders.

According to ANSO reporting, the said district has been witnessing an increase in AOG activity over the past few months. Worth

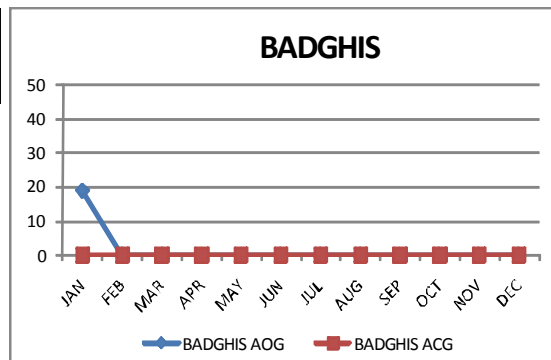
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG-ANSF/IMF clashes
- AOG presence around Qala-i-Naw City
- Abduction

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

noting, during this reporting cycle there have been another two cases of abduction in the area. On 27 January, AOG abducted an official en route from Qala-i-Naw City to Qadis District, and on 20 January, an ANP was abducted in Ghormach District.

Besides abductions, AOG activity targeting ANSF/IMF convoys and facilities still continues in Ghormach, Muqur and traditionally unstable Murghab districts. Of note, in the latter district, along with frequent close range attacks on ANSF/IMF convoys and check posts which remains AOGs' favourite tool (along with IEDs/RCIEDs), rocket attacks



have become common in the area over the past few weeks. For instance, on 17 and 18 January AOG fired seven BM1 rockets towards an IMF/ANSF base located in the area of the Murghab DAC. As observed in the previous reporting period, similar attacks against this base occurred on 7 January. Of note, on 30 January in Murghab District AOG attacked an IO contracted food convoy en route from Qala-i-Naw to the Murghab DAC, setting fire to eight trucks and taking another to an un-

FARAH

ANSF/IMF searches continued throughout Farah Province, particularly in Bala-Buluk and Bakwa districts. Regarding the latter, on 18 January ANSF conducted an operation, killing 11 AOG members. In Bala-Buluk, on 16 January, security forces arrested one prominent AOG commander. Another person was also arrested

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

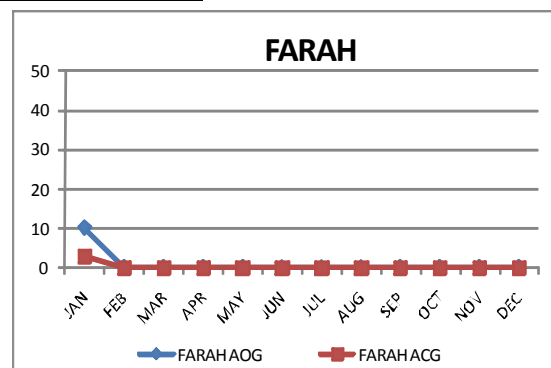
- IEDs/RCIEDs
- Armed clashes
- Criminal activity/smuggling

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

in Farah City with suspected links to AOGs.

During this reporting cycle AOG active in the province targeted security forces in the form of close range and RCIED attacks on military convoys and facilities.

Gulistan, Pusht Rod, Bala-Buluk, Bakwa and sporadically Khaki Safed districts remain areas of concern due to significant AOG activity. For instance, on the 18th in Gulistan District an RCIED struck an IMF patrol. On 25 January in Bakwa, AOG attacked an ANP post with RPGs and SAF on



the main Herat-Kandahar Road. On the same day, but in Khaki Safed, AOG ambushed an ANSF/IMF patrol. Of note, on the 18th AOG established an illegal checkpoint on the main road in Bakwa District. An ANP patrol engaged the AOG, killing four AOG members. Reporting indicates that one ANP was also killed during the fire fight.

KUNAR

During this reporting period, AOG activity throughout Kunar Province increased significantly with 55 AOG-initiated incidents recorded. Next to the common AOG tactic of direct attacks against ANSF/IMF, counting for over 75% of all recorded AOG incidents, Kunar witnessed a surge in abductions in several districts in late January, with four such cases reported.

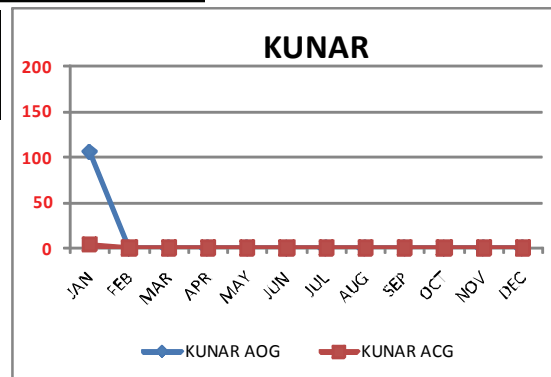
For instance, on 18 January in Marawara District, unknown gunmen abducted six national staff members of a de-mining agency while they were working in the

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

area. Through the mediation of local elders, the captives were released on 21 January. In another incident, on 23 January in Shegal District, AOG managed to abduct the District Chief of Police along with two other ANP officers from the ANP HQ within the District Administration Centre.

AOG intimidation of locals associated with GoA/ANSF/IMF continues throughout the province. For example, on 15 January in Marawara, AOG killed two local labourers for working in the IMF base. The same day in Wata Pur District, a local civilian was killed by AOG for spying for GoA.

Road security along the Jalalabad-Asadabad Highway became critical during this period, with several



attacks on the road and significant AOG activity in Nurgal and Chawkay districts. For example, on 26 January in Chawkay, AOG ambushed an IMF convoy on the road. Just a bit later that day, in Nurgal District, AOG attacked another IMF convoy. During the assault, an IMF vehicle lost control and struck several private vehicles, injuring at least one civilian.

Kunar remains a violent and dangerous environment for NGO operations. In particular, the high frequency of direct attacks against security forces inheres the risk of being targeted collaterally.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG abductions
- Attacks along the Jalalabad-Asadabad Highway

NANGARHAR

On 17 January, in Bihsud District, around 15 unknown gunmen broke into the residence of a UN local staff member and robbed him of a huge sum of money and several assets, without harming any family member. A few days later, the UN staff member received a night letter, warning him to cease all efforts to recover his lost money and threatening him with severe consequences.

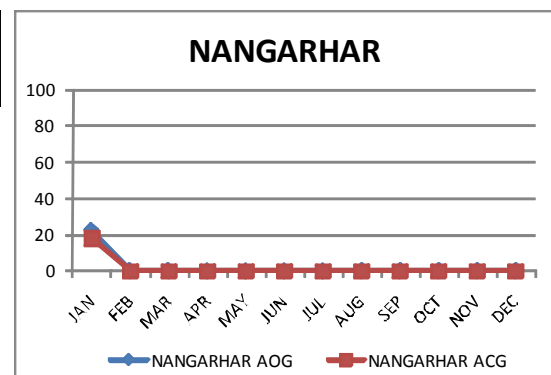
In another incident, on 15 January in Rodat, unidentified gunmen

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

abducted a local businessman along with his car. These incidents, while believed to have a criminal nature, underline again that criminality remains a key concern for operations in Nangarhar.

In context to this, and as seen in previous reporting cycles, the huge bulk of security incidents recorded during this period were again related to the high level of criminality and to security force operations.

Only 15 out of 51 reported incidents in Nangarhar were attributed to AOG. The level of IED-related incidents increased in late January with 14 devices detonated or discovered in Chaparhar, Khogyani, Bihsud, Jalalabad City, Pachir Wa Agam, Dih Bala, and



Surkh Rod districts. With five incidents related to explosive devices, particularly Surkh Rod has seen a surge in IED deployment during this cycle. For instance, on 27 January, an IED struck the vehicle of the District Chief of Police.

Next to high levels of criminality, the security environment in Jalalabad City remains relatively calm. Only one AOG-initiated incident was observed in the city during this period. Namely, on 21 January, an IED detonated in the vicinity of Sharq TV/Radio, killing one civilian.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IEDs, particularly in southern districts
- ACG abductions
- Criminality

KHOST

Khost saw an increase in AOG activity and particularly IED incidents during this reporting cycle. Although the general level of emplaced explosive devices in Khost Province is already high when compared to other provinces in the ER, AOGs' IED capabilities have again increased in recent weeks.

In late January, 37 devices were located or detonated throughout Khost which displays an increase of around 90% compared to the

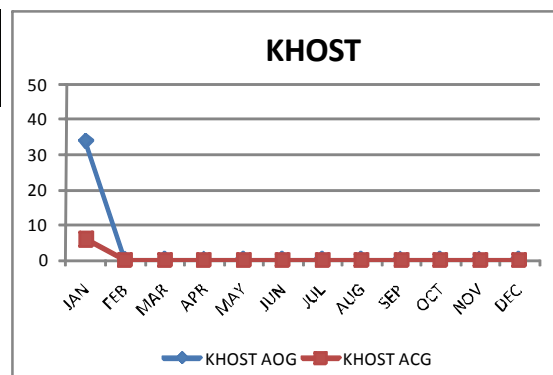
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IEDs/RCIEDs, particularly in Khost City
- AOG presence

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	0

last period. Particularly of note is that several IEDs were discovered in Mando Zayi District, an area which has been relatively calm within the last months. The efficiency of emplaced explosive devices, as seen in previous cycles, remains rather limited with a pre-detonation discovery rate by security forces of over 50%. However, the frequency of IED assaults in Khost is significantly higher than in other areas in the Eastern Region and poses challenges to NGO travel and operations.

The recently reported surge in IED-related strikes against high-profile targets continued during this reporting period. For in-



stance, on 16 January in Bak District an IED struck the vehicle of the Bak District Administrator, wounding at least one person.

The overall operational environment for NGOs in Khost has deteriorated in recent weeks, with increasing AOG activity and spill over tendencies of violence to relatively calm areas such as Mando Zayi and Nadir Shah Kot. For example, on 22 January in Nadir Shah Kot District, AOG attacked an ANP CP for about half an hour.

PAKTYA

On 20 January, in Jaji District, staff members of an INGO's subcontractor that is working on the INGO's road project were assaulted with small arms fire by criminal gunmen while working in the area. Security personnel in support of the subcontractor responded. During the subsequent firefight, the subcontractor's security officer was injured, one ACG was killed, and an additional ACG was wounded. Such criminal ac-

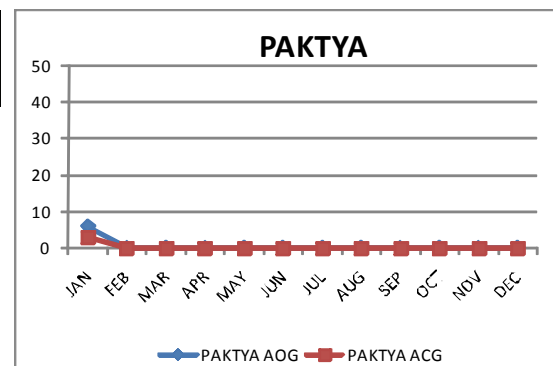
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG activity in Gardez City
- IEDs in Zurmat District

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	1

tivity is rather unusual for Jaji. In recent months, the security environment in the district was relatively calm with only one recorded incident since November 2009.

After a series of complex attacks in Paktya, particularly in Gardez City in late December and early January, this reporting period saw only relatively little AOG activity throughout the province. Three AOG-initiated incidents were reported, namely direct attacks against ANSF in Gardez and Zurmat districts. Additionally, IMF discovered two explosive devices



in Zurmat's District Administration Centre, on 23 January.

Although the recorded amount of security incidents is currently rather moderate, the security environment in Paktya remains volatile and, at least in several areas, dangerous for NGO operations. In recent months, well-coordinated assaults across the province underlined AOGs' capabilities several times.

NURISTAN

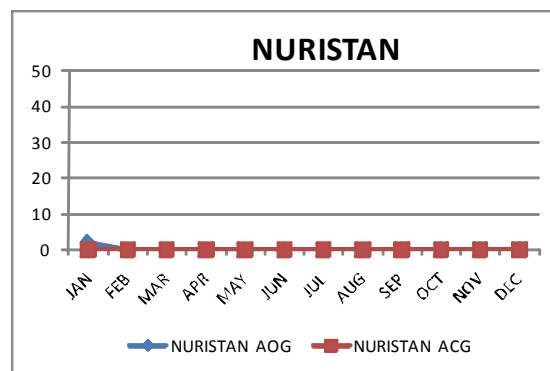
Nuristan remains isolated with little accurate information available. The number of reports received from the province is marginal with only one incident recorded during this reporting cycle.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG at large
- Winter road closures in Waygal and Kamdesh

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

Namely, on 18 January in Kamdesh District, AOG attacked an ANBP CP for about half an hour. In context to a similar assault in early January, and having in mind the abduction of an INGO staff member in Waygal District in late December, ANSO ER recommends extreme caution throughout Nuristan. As underlined in previous reports, ANSO would



greatly appreciate any information, however trivial, regarding any known incidents, threats, or possible rumours from this province.

LAGHMAN

The overall level of recorded security incidents in Laghman Province is slightly increasing with eight of them reported this period. Five of these incidents were attributed to AOG, two were security force operations, and one was an IED discovery in Alishing District.

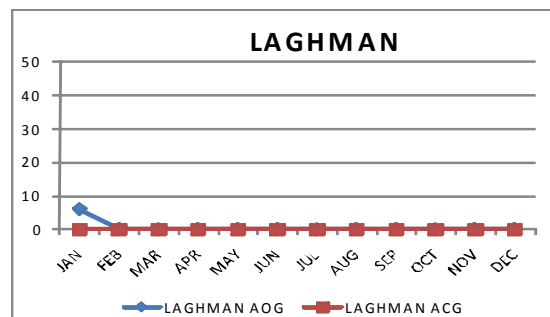
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IEDs in Alishing and Alingar Valleys
- SAF ambushes targeting ANSF/IMF as well as supply convoys along Highway 1

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

The AOG-incidents were reported from Alishing, Alingar and Qarghayi districts, namely two IED detonations and three direct attacks. As reported in previous cycles, the IED assaults occurred in Alingar and Alishing districts, both detonating against IMF vehicles. Road security in Laghman deteriorated during this reporting period, particularly through direct attacks along main roads.

On 19 January in Alishing, AOG attacked an IMF convoy while it was patrolling the main road. Additionally, two AOG direct assaults in Qarghayi along Highway



1 were recorded, which displays an increase of 100%. The first incident occurred on 19 January, when AOG attacked a fuel convoy. The second attack along the main Jalalabad-Kabul road happened on 30 January, when AOG assaulted an IMF supply convoy. These attacks along the highway targeted ANSF/IMF as well as supply convoys and occurred on a low level; hence, they do not necessarily pose significant challenges to NGO travel on the road.

ZABUL

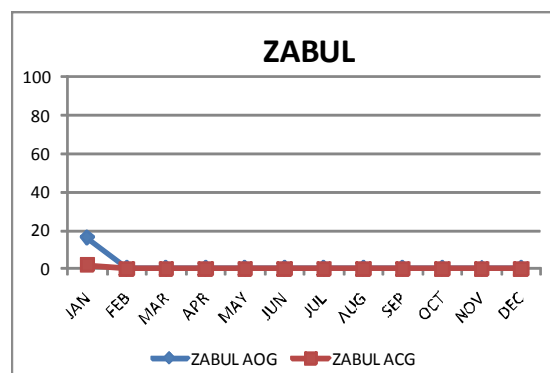
Zabul experienced its first NGO-related incident for 2010 when an IED struck a subcontractor that was working on an NGO road

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IEDs
- Ambush
- AOG Intimidation

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	1

project in Shamulzayi District, killing five and wounding an additional six. IEDs, moreover, were the only notable pattern in the province, with IEDs striking IMF, ANBP, ANA, and ANP in 5 separate strikes that killed nine security force personnel, also in the above-mentioned district. According to ANSO records for the period,



other actors in the province were generally dormant.

HELMAND

Contrary to the most recent previous reporting periods, AOG appeared to dominate incidents within the province, confronting security forces throughout the province. In the most prominent—not the most effective—AOG attack, AOG struck within Lashkar Gah City during the morning of 29 January. During the attack that lasted approximately eight hours, AOG conducted a somewhat similar style attack to the 18 January Kabul

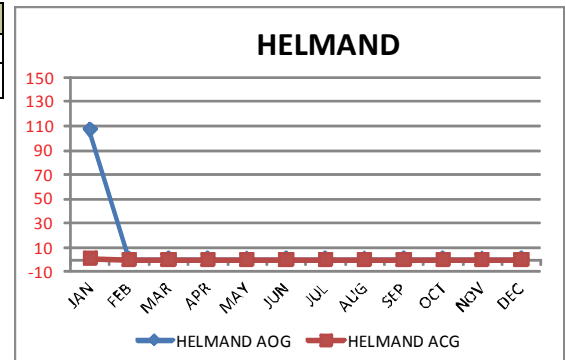
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Ambushes
- IEDs
- AOG prevalence

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

City strike, employing BBIED attackers and armed operatives against ANSF and GoA personnel within the Nangarhar Jada area of the city. According to reporting, five of the AOG were killed, one arrested, and the remaining member fled the scene, while only four ANSF were wounded.

Another attack which likely sought to demonstrate an evident AOG ability to penetrate the city was the murder of four ANP within the city on 25 January. Apparently, the targeted ANP had welcomed AOG, masquerading as ANP, into the Information and Cultural Department—the four



ANP were ultimately shot dead by their visitors.

When looking at all AOG incidents during the period, 53% were IED strikes that led to 8 security force fatalities and 19 injuries.

Although AOG dominated reporting, IMF purportedly continued efforts to target AOG IED capabilities in a 23 January strike within Nahri Sarraj that led to the fatalities of 26 AOG members involved in IED manufacturing.

KANDAHAR

58% of AOG attacks during the period were IEDs, occurring in Kandahar City, Maywand, Arghandab, Dand, Zhari, Panjwayi, and Daman districts. AOG also conducted targeted killings, some-

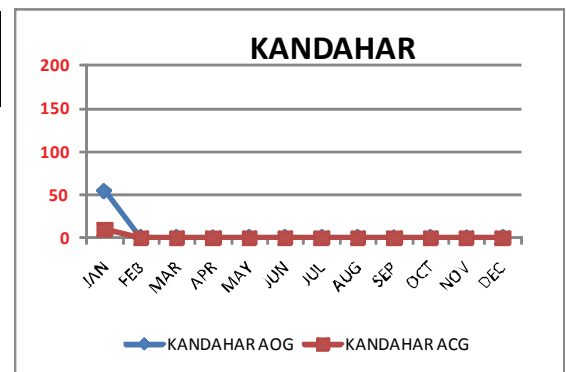
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IEDs
- Abduction
- AOG prevalence

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	0

times unsuccessfully, in Kandahar City and Zhari. Out of the 24 AOG-initiated incidents in the province, approximately seven security force personnel were killed. Similarly, reported AOG casualties within the province were low, with only 3 fatalities being recorded.

IMF targeted AOG IED capabilities in two separate raids in Pan-



jwayi and Arghandab, while ANSF orchestrated at least 20 IED discoveries.

NOTICE: ANSO has brought on board a new South RSA who will be reaching out to NGOs operating in the South. See the last page for more information.

URUZGAN

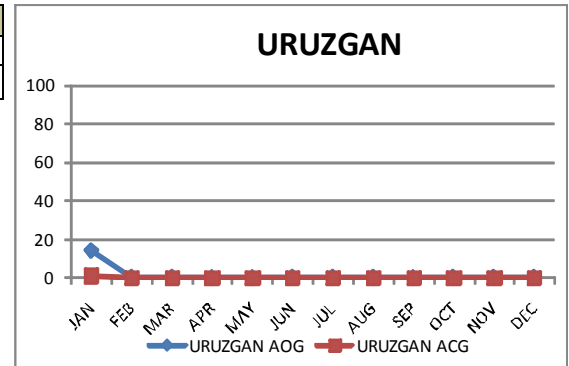
Similar to Zabul, and past patterns displayed in the province, AOG

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IEDs
- Suicide Attacks in Dihrawud
- AOG prevalence

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

primarily relied on IEDs to target security forces during the period. With this, AOG employed IEDs in Tirin Kot, Dihrawud, and Char Chino. Additionally, AOG conducted abductions of civilians and security forces in Chora and Char Chino, respectively.



GHAZNI

In the morning of 23 January, the ability for localised discontent to bring about clashes with security forces was witnessed in Nanai, Ghazni District, when approximately 200 people congregated to protest believed civilian casualties

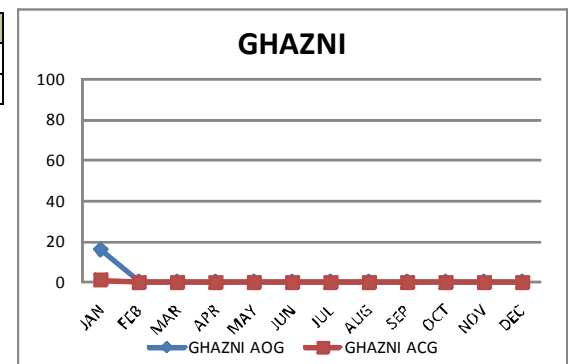
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IEDs
- Ambushes

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

that may have resulted from a 20 January IMF raid in Baran Qala, Qarabagh District. As seen in previous security force actions in the South and East, for unknown reasons ANP opened fire on demonstrators, wounding three. Similar demonstrations, albeit less hazardous for the participants, occurred also on the 22nd and 24th.

Besides demonstrations, another notable pattern was AOG attacks



on ANSF which led to actual ANSF casualties in Andar and Muqur districts.

NOTICE: Your input is invaluable for the production of this report. While we appreciate information on incidents, we also need general information on the security situation in your area. So please remember to call or email us regularly.

Contact details of ANSO staff are provide on the last page.

ANSO: “..by NGOs for NGOs..”



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ANSO is managed by an NGO
Board. If you have any
feedback, good or bad, let
them know on:
ansoab@yahoo.com

ANSO ACRONYMS

ACG-Armed Criminal Group /
AEF-Afghan Eradication Forces
/ **ANA**-Afghan National Army /
ANBP-Afghan National Border
Police / **ANP**-Afghan National
Police / **AOG**-Armed Opposition
Group / **APPF**-Afghan Public
Protection Forces (local depu-
tised militias) / **DC**-District
Centre / **GOA**-Government of
Afghanistan / **IDF**-Indirect Fire
(ex: mortars) / **IED**-Improvised
Explosive Device / **IMF**-
International Military Forces /
NDS-National Directorate of
Security (Intelligence) / **PRP**-
Previous Reporting Period /
PSC-Private Security Company
/ **RPG**-Rocket Propelled Gre-
nade / **SAF**-Small Arms Fire /
VBIED-Vehicle Borne Impro-
vised Explosive Device

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MISSING

This report ANSO
could not provide
analysis for the prov-
inces of:

Panjshir
Badakhshan
Balkh
Samangan
Sar-e Pul
Nimroz
Paktika

This is because we
do not know enough
about the area to
comment on the sig-
nificance of the inci-
dents occurring
there.

If you can help us
understand the prov-
ince better, please
contact us.

ANSO Staff Changes

ANSO welcomes back its Director, Nic Lee, from his sabbatical and welcomes aboard its new South RSA, Peter Dimitroff. Peter will be reaching out to NGOs operating in the Southern Region in the coming weeks. Additionally, Peter will be hosting Security Roundtables in Kabul to help facilitate information exchange for NGOs operating in the Southern Region. NGOs operating in the said region are encouraged to contact him at their convenience.