

**Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale**

<b>Bilagsnr.:</b>	<b>1708</b>
Land:	Afghanistan
Kilde:	Asylos research for asylum
Titel:	Afghanistan: The situation of individuals who worked for the former government, international forces, or the judiciary under the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (2004 - 2021)
Udgivet:	oktober 2025
Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet:	21. januar 2026



Afghanistan: The situation of individuals who worked for the former government, international forces, or the judiciary under the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (2004-2021)

October 2025



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Please help us to improve and to measure the impact of our publications. We would be extremely grateful for any comments and feedback as to how the reports have been used in the refugee status and statelessness determination process, or beyond. If you would like to provide feedback, please contact: [info@asylos.org](mailto:info@asylos.org)

## Who we are

Asylos is a global network of volunteers providing free-of-charge Country of Origin Information (COI) research for lawyers helping people seeking international protection with their claim. Asylos works to ensure that people seeking international protection and their legal counsel have access to crucial sources and data to substantiate their claim. Asylos volunteers and staff use their research and language skills to access detailed information. More information can be found on [Asylos' website](#).

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# Purpose

This compilation of Country of Origin Information has been produced by members of the Asylös network who identified a demand for up-to-date information. This report focuses specifically on the Taliban's treatment of individuals who worked for the former Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in government and security roles, those who worked within the judiciary and those who, through their work, were associated with international forces.

## Disclaimer

This Country of Origin Information (COI) report is intended as background reference material for legal representatives and those assisting people seeking asylum. The COI report should be used as a tool to help identify relevant COI. Legal representatives are welcome to submit relevant excerpts cited in this document to decision makers (including judges) to assist in a protection claim. We are COI research experts and adhere to strict research principles in order to provide relevant, transparent, timely and reliable research. We therefore strive to include discoverable relevant information, whether or not supportive of any individual case. It is imperative that legal representatives and those assisting asylum seekers read the whole COI report and consider how they wish to make use of the material in any specific case.

Please also note that it may be appropriate for legal representatives to seek additional individualised information. The information cited in this document is illustrative, but not exhaustive of the information available in the public domain. It is not determinative of any individual human rights or asylum claim. Submissions should always be complemented by case-specific COI research. For COI research that is bespoke to an individual case, legal representatives may wish to consider submitting a research request to Asylös' [free-of-charge COI research service](#). While we strive to be as comprehensive as possible, no amount of research can ever provide an exhaustive picture of the situation. It is therefore important to note that the absence of information should not be taken as evidence that an issue, incident or violation does not exist.

## A note on access to information

Reports indicate that there are significant limitations on access to information about conditions in Afghanistan due to a number of factors, including restrictions on freedom of expression and press freedom, alongside efforts by the Taliban to conceal information about human rights violations or information that may be critical of its regime. Such efforts have included the prevention of access to prisons for monitoring, and a ban from entering Afghanistan placed on the UN Special Rapporteur on Afghanistan. The following selection of sources (though not exhaustive) provide some information on the context:

- Rawadari, [Afghanistan Human Rights Situation Report 2024](#), (pp. 6-7), 19 March 2025
- Schweizerische Flüchtlingshilfe, [Afghanistan : persécution des membres de la famille par les talibans](#), (available in French, see p. 4-6), 20 February 2025
- European Union Agency for Asylum, [Afghanistan Country Focus](#), (p.12), November 2024
- UNAMA, OHCHR, [Media freedom in Afghanistan](#), November 2024

## Acknowledgements

This report was researched and written by Juan Vega Esteve and Adriana Vega. The report was edited by Juan Vega Esteve and Emily Wilbourn.

## Sources

### Research timeframe

The earliest source dates from September 2024 and the most recent source dates from August 2025.

### Sources cited

Sources were consulted between **July and October 2025**.

#### 1. International Organisations

- » **United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA)**
- » **United Nations General Assembly**
- » **United Nations Human Rights Council (UN HRC)**
- » **United Nations Security Council**

#### 2. (Inter)governmental sources

- » **European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA)**
- » **United States Department of State (USDOS)**

DISCLAIMER: Recent reforms under the current US administration have had an impact on the scope and content of the information produced by the United States Department of State in its 2024 country reports on human rights, as discussed by various [sources](#) or in Asylos' [blog](#). In this instance, Asylos has chosen to cite the 2024 USDOS report on the human rights situation in Afghanistan because it has continued to provide coverage on the situation of profiles that are relevant to this COI report. Asylos also notes [Human Rights Watch's](#) assessment in relation to the USDOS 2024 report on Afghanistan that *"numerous human rights abuses are being credibly reported."*

- » **Courts of New Zealand**

#### 3. (I)NGOS and think tanks

- » **Amnesty International**
- » **Rawadari**

Rawadari is an Afghan human rights organisation that aims to deepen and grow the human rights culture of Afghanistan, ultimately reducing the suffering of all Afghans, especially women and girls. Rawadari helps build an Afghan human rights movement, monitors human rights violations, and pursues justice and accountability for violations. Rawadari works with individuals and collectives inside and outside Afghanistan. ([Rawadari](#))

- » **National Association of Women Judges**

National Association of Women Judges describes its mission as *"to promote the judicial role of protecting the rights of individuals under the rule of law through strong, committed, diverse judicial leadership; fairness and equality in the courts; and equal access to justice."* It is a membership organisation, including *"trial and appellate, administrative, tribal and military judges, on federal, state and tribal courts at every level of the judiciary, from throughout the country, and international tribunals, as well as attorneys, law clerks, law students and law professors committed to our mission. As members of the International Association of Women Judges (IAWJ), which NAWJ founded, we meet and interact with judges from all over the world."* (See [About NAWJ](#))

» **Refugee Legal Support**

Refugee Legal Support is a registered charity in England, and a non-profit company in Greece. It offers “clients legal support, casework, strategic litigation, outreach, training and partnerships.” It advocates for “safe migration and oppose[s] discriminatory immigration systems and policies”. ([Refugee Legal Support](#))

» **The Law Society of England and Wales**

The Law Society of England and Wales describes itself as “the professional body for solicitors in England and Wales” and states “We’re here to represent solicitors, and advocate for access to justice and the rule of law.” (See [About Us](#))

**4. Media**» **BBC**

The BBC is the UK’s public service broadcaster.

» **NPR**

NPR is based in the United States and describes itself as an “independent, nonprofit media organisation that was founded on a mission to create a more informed public.” ([NPR](#))

» **Hasht e Subh Daily / 8AM MEDIA**

8AM MEDIA describes itself as “an organisation that has a variety of activities in its portfolio. Its activities are composed of operating an online newspaper, research, events, awards, music, and publications. Its online newspaper, Hasht e Subh Daily, is an independent, non-profit, and the most popular newspaper in Afghanistan. Founded in June 2007 by prominent Afghan journalists and human rights defenders, Hasht e Subh focuses on citizen journalism and civic education.” ([Hasht e Subh](#))

» **KabulNow**

KabulNow describes itself as “an online newspaper affiliated with the Etilaatroz. Based in the United States, covers South-Central Asia and the Middle East. The paper spent its early years of formation in Kabul, Afghanistan, where it got its name. After the political crisis of 2021 that sent the main chunk of Afghanistan’s intellectual community and professional capital to exile, KabulNow found a new base in Silver Spring, Maryland.” ([KabulNow](#))

» **PassBlue**

PassBlue describes itself as an “independent, women-led nonprofit news company that closely covers the US-UN relationship, women’s issues, human rights, peacekeeping and other urgent global matters playing out in the world body. We report from our base in the UN press corps in New York City and are read throughout the US and Canada and overseas [...] We are a member of the Institute for Nonprofit News, from which we derive our 501 C3 status.” ([PassBlue](#))

» **The Telegraph**

The Telegraph provides news reporting and analysis. It describes itself as “right of centre, in support of free markets and deregulation.” ([The Telegraph](#))

» **The Times**

The Times describes itself as the oldest national daily newspaper in the UK and states that it “has supported both New Labour and the Conservatives in recent times and supported Remain in the 2016 EU referendum.” ([The Times](#))

» **Al Jazeera**

Al Jazeera describes itself as “the first independent news channel in the Arab world”. It states that it is independent, and that it is part-funded by the Qatari government. ([Al Jazeera](#))

**» The Guardian**

The Guardian states that it has an “*independent ownership structure*”, and that “[i]t *guarantees our journalism and our editor stay independent from any outside influence, whether financial, political or commercial.*” ([The Guardian](#))

**» Law News New Zealand**

Law News New Zealand is the official news outlet of the Law Association of New Zealand, an independent membership organisation for New Zealand’s legal profession. ([The Law Association of New Zealand](#))

**» JuristNews**

JURIST describes itself as “a non-profit news organization that highlights rule-of-law issues around the globe and empowers tomorrow’s legal leaders. At JURIST, we harness the collective power of law students worldwide to serve a dual purpose:

- to inform the global community about critical rule of law issues in clear, accessible language; and
- to cultivate a generation of service-oriented legal professionals dedicated to shaping a more just world.” ([JuristNews](#))

**» Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty (RFE/RL)**

RFE/RL states that it “provides uncensored, trusted news to audiences in 23 countries where a free press is under threat.” It states that its mission is to “promote democratic values by providing accurate, uncensored news and open debate in countries where a free press is threatened and disinformation is pervasive.” ([RFE/RL](#))

**5. Other****» Manara Magazine**

Manara – “Lighthouse” – describes its aims as to “foster critical conversations on the Middle East and North Africa region through the voices of established and emerging specialists in politics, international relations, Middle East studies, public policy, sociology and other fields.” ([Manara Magazine](#))

## Findings

The findings in this report are presented in reverse chronological order.

### 1. Targeting by the Taliban of individuals associated with international forces and their relatives

In October 2025, the charity Refugee Legal Support published a submission to the UK Defence Select Committee Inquiry into the Afghan Data Breach and Resettlement Schemes. The submission contained data from a survey conducted by Refugee Legal Support, with support from academics Professor Canning (Lancaster University) and Professor de Jong (University of York), concerning the situation of Afghans who have been directly affected by the Afghan data breach. The voluntary survey was disseminated by "Afghan resettlement stakeholders" between 23rd September and 5th October 2025, and received 350 valid responses from Afghans affected by the data breach, who worked in security roles or in various roles for international forces. The following data relates to the impact of the data breach and the types of risks and threats experienced. The statistical data on risks and threats was not disaggregated by respondents' profession.

- There were 49 reported killings of family members or former colleagues among survey respondents. The survey did not include information on whether the perpetrators were Taliban, other or unknown.
- There were 210 reported incidents of house searches by the Taliban, concerning either the survey respondents own home, or the home of a family member.
- There were 121 reported incidents of family or friends being directly threatened in Afghanistan as a consequence of the data breach. 99 respondents reported that a direct threat to their life had been made.

The same submission includes a number of quotes from survey respondents describing Taliban targeting following the data breach:

- *"A couple of weeks after publication, I was recognised by the Taliban and badly beaten up."*  
Respondent ID 43, Afghan National Army and ANSF, currently residing in Afghanistan.

*'It [data breach] has intensified the threats against my family and made them a target, exposing them to being killed without excuse by the terrorist group (Taliban) that rules Afghanistan.'*  
Respondent ID 78, occupation undisclosed, currently residing in Afghanistan.

*'Following the recent data leak, the Taliban searched my family home and continue to threaten my relatives. One of my family members is still under their pressure, and they question my family about me every day.'*  
Respondent ID 88, Interpreter 333/444 Triple Special Forces, currently residing in the UK. [...]

*'The Afghan data breach has significantly affected my physical and mental health. I live under constant fear for my life and the safety of my family due to repeated raids, threats from the Taliban and local intelligence groups, and the risk of forced marriage for my daughter. The ongoing stress, anxiety, and fear for my family's well-being have severely impacted my emotional and physical well-being.'*  
Respondent ID 30, 333/444 Triple Special Forces, currently residing in Afghanistan."

Source: Refugee Legal Support, "[Written evidence submitted by Refugee Legal Support](#)", 13 October 2025, last accessed: 28/10/2025.

In a July 2025 article, The Times reports the killing by the Taliban of the brother of a former Afghan soldier that worked with British forces. The soldier's lawyer attributed the killing to the information made available by the list of former US and British collaborators in Afghanistan and their family members, which was leaked in 2022.

- "The brother of an elite Afghan soldier who worked with British forces has been killed by the Taliban — after the serviceman's name appeared on a major data leak, it has been claimed.

Adnan Malik, the head of data protection for Barings Law, said he was representing a special forces soldier, in his forties, who came to Britain under the main Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (Arap).

On Friday, the man's brother was shot dead, leading the lawyer to claim the death was the result of the leak of the names of Afghans who helped the British Army.

The killing came days after a superinjunction was lifted, revealing that the details of over 50,000 Afghans had been leaked in 2023.

'The Taliban found out that the police officer was the brother of a Triple and they killed him on Friday,' he said. 'The guy that was on the list. I'm assuming the Taliban put two and two together and killed the brother. I don't think it's a coincidence.'

The 'Triple' units, made up of elite Afghan special forces soldiers, worked closely with British special forces, the SAS.

The units were set up, funded and run by the UK, and one of their objectives was to hunt down and kill Taliban insurgents.

Malik said: 'It shows that as a result of the breach being made public, as a result of the government cover-up for two years, people are paying with their lives. No amount of money will ever make that person's brother ever come back. The government has to learn lessons from this.'

At the time of publication, The Times was unable to independently verify details of the man's death."

The article also mentions another Barings Law client who is paying "protection money" to stop the Taliban from killing his son:

- "Another Barings client, an Afghan former general who came to live in the West Midlands under Arap, is paying protection money to stop the Taliban from killing his teenage son, Malik said."

Source: Publisher: The Times, Authors: Witherow, T., and Swinford, S., "[Brother of Afghan soldier 'killed by Taliban over data leak'](#)", 20 July 2025, last accessed: 03/09/2025.

In a July 2025 article, The Telegraph reports on a dossier that collected the names of more than 200 former police and soldiers killed after the list leak:

- "More than 200 Afghan soldiers and police murdered by the Taliban since a 'kill list' was leaked by the Ministry of Defence (MoD) have been named in a dossier.

Their names were compiled by independent caseworkers highlighting the plight of Afghans who worked with British and US forces.

But a court order imposed by a senior judge prevents The Telegraph from reporting whether the dead had first appeared on the MoD list, which was accidentally made public in February 2022.

[...] The dossier of 200 Afghans killed since the leak was put together by the independent caseworker – known only as Person A – who first raised the alarm over the data breach.

She sent an email to James Heapey, the Armed Forces minister at the time, in which she warned ‘how severe the negligence has been in terms of data security’.

She added: ‘The Taliban may well now have a 33,000-long kill list – essentially provided to them by the UK Government.’

She sent the email on Aug 15 2023, after an anonymous user on Facebook threatened to publish the leaked data.

It had been accidentally released 18 months earlier by a British soldier tasked with vetting Afghans seeking asylum under the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (Arap).

Person A was subsequently subject to the super-injunction in September 2023, which prevented her – along with newspapers – from even mentioning its existence.

The dossier compiled by Person A and other caseworkers was passed to The Telegraph after the super-injunction was lifted, to serve as a snapshot of Afghans who worked with coalition troops and are believed to have subsequently been targeted by the Taliban.

The identities of those killed were gleaned from posts in local Afghan press and on social media as well as through contacts on the ground. The Telegraph has been unable to verify independently the names contained in the dossier of those killed and the circumstances in which they died.”

Source: Publisher: The Telegraph, Authors: Mendick, R., and Makoi, A., “[Faces of the Afghans murdered by Taliban since ‘kill list’ leak](#)”, 16 July 2025, last accessed: 03/09/2025.

A July 2025 Telegraph article outlines the experience of an Afghan man who had formerly worked with the British army and was affected by the data leak:

- “Four months ago, the Mohammadi\* family were at home in Afghanistan when they received an email that was as chilling as it was businesslike.

The father of three young children opened his laptop and clicked on the message, which declared that it was from the Home Office of the British Government.

The email said he was on a list of those whom the UK had chosen to bring to Britain amid fears for their safety following a data leak.

For four years, the family had kept secret the fact that the father had worked with the British Army shortly after it began its protracted battle with the Taliban in 2014. As a trained English teacher, the father’s skills made him invaluable to British officers eager to gain local intelligence about the whereabouts of enemy commanders.

Like so many Afghan interpreters employed by the Army, he saw the arrival of the foreign forces as an opportunity to drag Afghanistan out of the grip of the oppressive regime imposed by the extreme religious intolerance of the Taliban.

The parents, in their late 20s, believed they could work with the UK soldiers to contribute to forging a better Afghanistan – as well as earning a regular income – and, importantly, were assured their safety would be guaranteed.

But, when the last remaining British troops ignominiously flew out from the Afghan capital in August 2021, the Mohammadis had no choice but to live in fear and harbour their secret.”

Source: Publisher: The Telegraph, Authors: Bird, S., and Sawyer, P., [“My husband was on the Taliban’s kill list. Thank you, Britain, for saving us”](#), 16 July 2025, last accessed: 03/09/2025.

A BBC article of July 2025 reports that the UK Defence Secretary was not able to say with certainty whether anyone had been killed as a consequence of the data breach:

- “The defence secretary has said he was ‘unable to say for sure’ whether anyone had been killed as a result of the data breach that revealed the details of thousands of Afghans who had supported British forces.

John Healey told the BBC it was ‘highly unlikely’ being on the list would now increase the risk of being targeted by the Taliban.”

Source: Publisher: BBC, Author: Ruth Comerford, [“Defence secretary ‘unable to say’ if anyone killed after Afghan data breach”](#), 16 July 2025, last accessed: 20/10/2025.

Another article of July 2025 reports that Taliban officials told The Telegraph that the list with information on those who previously worked with the British army had been in their possession since the data leak, and that the Taliban authorities have been using it for the purposes of actively searching for those on the list, surveillance of individuals and their relatives, and preventing those on the list from leaving Afghanistan:

- “Now Taliban figures claim to have had the list all along, potentially rendering the secret plot pointless. A senior Taliban official told The Telegraph: ‘We got the list from the internet during the very first days when it was leaked.’

The official said many individuals on the list had fled Afghanistan or gone into hiding, but that the Taliban had hired groups to monitor their homes and relatives’ houses around the clock.

‘A special unit has been launched to find them and make sure they do not work with Britain,’ the official added. ‘We’ve been calling and visiting their family members to track them down.

‘Senior figures in the establishment in Kandahar are pressuring officials in Kabul to find them. They believe these individuals are still working with the British, and say the problem must be dealt with.’

A second Taliban official told The Telegraph that the hunt for individuals named in the document had intensified in recent months, with names handed over to border forces to stop them from leaving the country.

Many only discovered they were on the list when they tried to cross Taliban-controlled borders.

‘The border forces have had the list for the past few months and have orders not to let anyone leave,’ the Taliban official said from Kabul. ‘These people are seen as traitors, and the plan has been to find as many of them as possible. Whoever leaked that file is actually helping us. There may be a general amnesty in place, but spies cannot escape justice.’”

Source: Publisher: The Telegraph, Author: Makoi, A., [“Taliban: We had the ‘kill list’ all alone – and are hunting them down”](#), 15 July 2025, last accessed: 03/09/2025.

In June 2025 the human rights organisation Rawadari published a report entitled “Torture and ill-treatment: the state of prisons in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan”. The report was based on interviews carried out between April and June 2025 with 34 individuals, including “former government employees, civil activists, journalists, and human rights defenders” who had experienced detention and imprisonment at various points since the Taliban takeover in August 2021. The report includes a number of excerpts from an interview with a person who was tortured by the Taliban for working with foreign forces (Interviewee n. 13):

- “After praying in the mosque, I was walking home when seven to eight armed men in a Ranger pickup and a dark-windowed Fielder stopped me. All were armed, wearing turbans and local clothes... They showed no arrest warrant. At first, I couldn’t tell which Taliban agency they belonged to, but later I realized that the DGI had arrested me.’  
[...] ‘They took me to an underground room. There was no carpet or chair, so they made me sit on the floor. They asked why I worked with Americans and infidels and why I implemented their projects. Then they threw me to the ground and beat my hands, legs, and entire body with a wooden stick that had iron inside it. They beat me so severely that I lost consciousness. It was three or four in the morning when I regained consciousness and realized I was still lying face down. My head, body, and especially my legs hurt a lot. My left leg was fractured, and I still suffer from the pain.’”

In the same report, this individual describes witnessing the death of another inmate and the torture and killing of two of his former colleagues in 2022:

- “One of my cellmates was a young man from Ragh district. When they tortured him, blood flowed from his ear. Two days later, he died. They said he committed suicide; but we saw his body taken out with broken hands and feet.’  
[...] ‘In 2022, the Taliban first arrested these individuals and then killed them with severe torture. They dumped both bodies somewhere. The intensity of the torture was so extreme that their entire bodies were black, and I personally observed clear signs of beatings.’”

The same interviewee told Rawadari how he was released after his family paid a large sum of money to the Taliban. However, the interviewee reports that the Taliban continued to demand more money even after his release, going so far as to confiscate property and going to his home and threatening his children:

- “My family helped my release from prison by paying the forty thousand dollars the Taliban demanded. Some money was at home, and the rest they borrowed from friends and acquaintances. I don’t know which specific local Taliban official took the money, but I know it was paid to the Taliban intelligence directorate.’  
[...] ‘When I was released, they took my phone number, and later, an intelligence agent texted me, demanding more money. Every week, they would message me, sometimes asking for four thousand dollars, sometimes five thousand, and sometimes ten, fifteen, and twenty thousand dollars. They threatened to rearrest and torture me if I didn’t pay. I was at my breaking point and had to pay another six or seven thousand dollars. The Taliban also confiscated two houses and three shops, which were my personal property. They have gone to my house several times and demanded money from my children with threats. Now I am deeply worried about my children’s safety and security.’”

Source: Rawadari, “[Torture and ill-treatment : the state of prisons in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan](#)”, pp. 13, 33, 61, 66, 68, 25 June 2025, last accessed: 15/08/2025.

A June 2025 article by the BBC describes the situation of a former US military employee who managed to reach the US after the Taliban takeover, but whose family is still trapped in Afghanistan and constantly on the run from the Taliban:

- “Mojo, who asked to be identified by his nickname, is one of the 200,000 Afghans who have already reached the US, because he worked directly for the US military. He is now a US citizen.  
His sister, however, remains in Afghanistan where she and her husband are ‘living in a hide and seek game’, he says. They change their address and city every couple months in order to stay safe.  
They passed the background and medical checks for refugee resettlement, but like the others who spoke to the BBC, they became trapped when the process was paused in January.”

Source: Publisher: BBC, Authors: Moench, M. and Drury, F., “[We were friends of the US: Fearful Afghans face Trump travel ban](#)”, 9 June 2025, last accessed: 24/08/2025.

A January 2025 article by NPR includes the testimony of a woman who worked for the US embassy in Kabul prior to the Taliban takeover, after which she fled to Pakistan with her children. She describes fearing prosecution and even death if she returns to Afghanistan:

- “Surayya's flight to the United States was already booked when President Trump ordered a pause on the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program. Not long after, her flight was canceled and her stomach dropped.

‘I don't know what to do,’ she said. ‘If I go back to Afghanistan, I will be prosecuted or even be killed by the Taliban.’

Surayya, who asked NPR not to use her full name for safety reasons, used to work on women's rights projects with the U.S. Embassy in Kabul. But when the Taliban took control of Afghanistan, Surayya and her children fled to neighboring Pakistan. There, she applied for resettlement in the U.S. and was approved.

Now, Surayya's future and safety look uncertain, along with tens of thousands of other Afghans who risked their lives working for the U.S. government or military.

[...] While Surayya currently resides in Pakistan, it is not a permanent solution. Over the years, Pakistan has deported hundreds of thousands of Afghans. Without a chance to move to the U.S., Surayya does not know where else to go.

‘Police of Pakistan are searching for Afghans,’ she said. ‘I am not safe here. And if I go back to Afghanistan, my life is not safe, my kids' life is not safe.’”

Another interviewee, an Afghan who formerly worked alongside American pilots, was unable to escape Afghanistan and now lives in hiding and on the run from the Taliban:

- “Many Afghans who worked for the U.S. but were unable to escape Afghanistan now live in hiding from the Taliban, like Roshangar, who asked NPR not to include his full name because he's been on the run.

Roshangar said he used to work alongside American pilots, helping review and approve airstrikes against Taliban fighters. He was on the last step of his application before the refugee program was suspended. Roshangar said he feels that the Trump administration turned its back to America's Afghan allies.

‘He is unfortunately putting our lives in grave danger,’ he said.”

Source: Publisher: NPR, Authors: Hadid, D. and Kim, J., “[Afghans who helped the U.S. are in dangerous limbo after Trump's order on refugees](#)”, 27 January 2025, last accessed: 27/08/2025.

Citing various sources, the November 2024 EUAA COI provides information on the targeting of individuals associated with international forces (readers are advised to maintain an awareness of the primary sources upon which the EUAA report was based, in order to understand the recency of the information and avoid false corroboration):

- “4.2. Persons formerly affiliated with foreign forces  
The Taliban's general amnesty extended to individuals affiliated with foreign forces.<sup>892</sup> Many such individuals however left Afghanistan during the evacuation efforts following the Taliban takeover,<sup>893</sup> and in media interviews, remaining persons have stated that they live in hiding,<sup>894</sup> apart from their families,<sup>895</sup> and moving location to escape the Taliban.<sup>896</sup> [...]

The UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan told Radio Sweden that people who used to serve foreign forces belong to one of the most vulnerable groups to human rights violations, being considered as having been ‘working for the enemy’.<sup>899</sup> [...]

A joint investigation by The Independent, Lighthouse Reports and Sky News, published in November 2023, verified 24 cases of former commandos working close to British forces being beaten, tortured or killed by the Taliban since August 2021. These cases included at least six killings, and among the victims were a former member of Commando Force 333 (CF333) who had surrendered his weapons to the Taliban and had received a letter ensuring his safety. In another case a former CF333 sniper was detained for three days in July 2023, and he was subjected to electric shocks and forced to sit in cold water. In a third case, a former member of the special unit Afghan Territorial Force 444 was arrested when visiting his family in 2022. The Taliban reportedly beat everyone in his family amid the arrest, including children, and took the former soldier to an unknown location where he was kept for two months. He was subjected to electric shocks and water torture. In a fourth case, a former group commander was arrested, put in a container in direct sun without windows nor AC. He was also beaten with electric cables and given electric shocks.<sup>901</sup> Rawadari reported on a former member of ‘the Special Unit of the Joint American and Afghan Forces’ being ‘mysteriously killed’ by unknown perpetrators on 10 March 2024 in the province of Khost.<sup>902</sup> According to a reportage of Radio Sweden, 50 persons who worked for the Swedish Armed Forces in Mazar-e Sharif were ‘left behind’ amid the evacuations. Former interpreters and a former female guard described how they lived in hiding and under death threats. Their family members were also reportedly in a precarious situation, receiving threats from the Taliban.<sup>903</sup>

- 892 AP, Afghanistan: more than 100 believed killed despite Taliban amnesty offer, says UN, 31 January 2022, url; BBC News, Amid violent reprisals, Afghans fear the Taliban's 'amnesty' was empty, 31 August 2021, url
- 893 Lighthouse Reports, France’s forgotten Afghan spies, 12 April 2023, url; EASO, Afghanistan – Targeting of individuals, August 2022, url, p. 74
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Source: EUAA, “[Afghanistan Country Focus](#)”, pp. 94-95, November 2024, last accessed: 06/10/2025.

## 2. Targeting by the Taliban of former police, security or military personnel associated with the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan government (2004 - 2021) and their relatives

In its Country Report on Human Rights Practices in Afghanistan in 2024, published in August 2025, the United States Department of State (USDOS) reports the killing of former ANDSF soldiers at the hands of the Taliban (for a brief assessment of the source, given recent changes in the report's scope and content under the current administration, please refer to the [Sources](#) section):

- “There were credible reports Taliban security personnel arbitrarily killed civilians in Panjshir, Kunduz, Kabul, Nimruz, Ghazni, Khost, Jawzijan, Faryab, Takhar, Sar-e-Pol, and Herat Provinces, allegedly as collective punishment against communities where the National Resistance Front (NRF) armed opposition group was active or in retaliation against Republic-era soldiers [...] in violation of the Taliban's general amnesty decree.

On February 6 [2024], media reported Taliban security officers killed a former ANDSF soldier and displayed his body in public for hours in northern Kunduz Province. The Taliban reportedly accused the former soldier of being a member of ISIS-K, but also told villagers in Kunduz the former soldier was a kidnapper. Political and civil society activists claimed the Taliban frequently exacted revenge against ANDSF soldiers [...] by alleging an affiliation with ISIS-K.”

Source: USDOS, “[Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Afghanistan](#)”, 12 August 2025, last accessed: 28/08/2025.

In July 2025, UNAMA released a report on involuntary returns to Afghanistan, based on monitoring of the situation and interviews conducted in 2024 with 49 individuals who had experienced involuntary return. The report points to the arrest, torture, and killing of former security personnel associated with the former government by the current de facto security forces and people associated with the Taliban following involuntary return.

- “A former Afghan National Army officer was arrested by de facto police days after returning to his village in late 2023. The house was raided by a group of de facto security forces in the middle of the night. They arrested him and took him to the provincial police detention facility where he said he was held for a week and was beaten with cables and punched. His leg was broken as a result of the torture inflicted on him. He said the de facto police asked him to hand over his weapons issued by the government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, which he no longer had. He was released after mediation by tribal elders. He now lives in hiding, and although de facto police have summoned him for further questioning, he decided not to report to them because he heard that friends of his were tortured and killed by de facto security forces and he is afraid.

[...] In addition to the interviews conducted for the purposes of this report, UNAMA has, through its human rights monitoring work, documented cases of the de facto authorities targeting individuals after their return to Afghanistan. This includes arbitrary arrests and detentions of former ANDSF personnel and former government officials.

UNAMA has also documented killings of such individuals after their return to Afghanistan. For example, on 19 August 2024 in Paktika province, a former Afghan National Police officer was summoned by the de facto GDI to visit their office. The next morning, his dead body was found in front of his home. He had returned from Iran shortly before the incident took place. On 10 December 2023, in Takhar province, a former National Directorate of Security (NDS) officer and his wife were shot and killed in their house, reportedly by relatives of an individual who was killed by the former NDS officer prior to the Taliban takeover of the country. The victim had fled to Pakistan after the Taliban takeover but had been forced to return to Afghanistan following Pakistan's announcement regarding the expulsion of undocumented Afghans. He was killed two days after returning to his village in Takhar.”

Source: UNAMA, “[No safe haven: Human rights risks faced by persons involuntarily returned to Afghanistan](#)”, pp. 17-18, July 2025, last accessed: 12/08/2025.

A July 2025 article by the Telegraph reports on the killing of former police and soldiers according to various sources:

- “Among the former Afghan special forces soldiers killed by the Taliban since the list was leaked are young and middle-aged men assassinated by the new regime in different parts of the country, some with their family members.

Col Toorjan, a police commander in southern Helmand, was killed with several family members as he was leaving a mosque on June 24 last year.

One month later, Taliban forces shot and killed another former government army officer in the eastern Khost province.

The Taliban executed Hamidullah Khosti on July 23 in the Alishar district. He had arrived there the previous day to attend a wedding ceremony.

Despite a general amnesty declared by Hibatullah Akhundzada, the Taliban supreme leader, the group has continued to arrest and kill former government military personnel and employees for nearly four years.

Another former government army officer was shot and killed by Taliban forces in Kapisa province in July 2022, five months after the list was leaked.

Muzamil Nejrabi was killed at night in Arbab Khil village in the Nejrab district of Kapisa province.

The young man had left his home at 10.30pm to irrigate his agricultural fields when he was shot by soldiers from the Taliban’s Fifth Battalion, First Brigade, stationed in Kapisa. He died on the way to the hospital.

Friends said he had got married three months before his assassination.

In February last year, the bloody corpse of Hayatullah Nizami, a former operations commander of the third security zone in northern Taloqan city, was discovered in the Bishkapa area, near the Taliban army brigade of the city in Takhar province.

According to a local source, Nizami, previously a member of the security forces, had been working as an employee at a company that collaborated with the Taloqan municipality following the fall of the Western-backed government.

He disappeared with his vehicle the night before, and his dismembered body was found the following day.

Local sources reported that, after the body was discovered, the Taliban named him as Hamidullah, a municipality employee, in order to conceal his military background.

On Aug 21 last year, Taliban fighters dragged Abdul Rahman Delawar, the former security commander of Shekhel district, from his home and killed him, according to local media.

Delawar had fled to Iran following the fall of Kabul and had recently returned to his ancestral village where he was living a normal life.

Sabaoon Omar, another former national police officer, was killed by the Taliban in October 2022.

His killing added to a growing number of reported executions of former government security personnel by Taliban forces, despite the group’s declared general amnesty for former officials.”

Source: Publisher: The Telegraph, Authors: Mendick, R., and Makoi, A., “[Faces of the Afghans murdered by Taliban since ‘kill list’ leak](#)”, 16 July 2025, last accessed: 03/09/2025.

In June 2025 the human rights organisation Rawadari published a report entitled “Torture and ill-treatment: the state of prisons in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan”. The report was based on interviews carried out between April and June 2025 with 34 individuals, including “former government employees, civil activists, journalists, and human rights defenders” who had experienced detention and imprisonment at various points since the Taliban takeover in August 2021. The report describes torture perpetrated against members of the former Afghan government’s security forces and military personnel. The following interviewee, (interviewee n. 23), shared his experience of detention and torture at the hands of the Taliban as a consequence of political retaliation:

- “A former military officer, who returned to Kabul under the Taliban’s general amnesty, was identified and arrested by the GDI. He shares this: ‘I had gone to my village to visit friends and relatives. As I was returning to Kabul, several armed Taliban on motorcycles swiftly passed our car, and I felt scared. So I went to a relative’s house. When I was heading back to Kabul, a Taliban intelligence agent who knew me saw me. In a deserted area, near a pass, six armed Taliban on three motorcycles ordered my car to stop. In front of my family, they forcibly pulled me out and took me with them...’

[...] ‘They threw me to the ground and beat me with rifle butts, fists, and kicks. One said we should shoot him in the head and kill him here. The second disagreed, saying the sound of gunfire would expose us. The third said we’d beat him to death like a dog, and at that moment, he delivered a severe blow to my head, and I lost consciousness, not knowing what happened next’”

Another of the individuals interviewed by Rawadari, (interviewee n. 9), who was accused of ties to the National Resistance Front (NRF), describes various forms of torture and an absence of medical attention for the injuries sustained during imprisonment.

- “‘There was no medicine or treatment. Any wound you got had to either dry up on its own or get infected. I had a fever many times. I just wanted to die and be free.’

[...] ‘My eyes were blindfolded, and my hands were chained. Two people hit me with a cable from both sides, on my legs, back, and shoulders. They said, ‘Confess you had ties to the Resistance Front.’ I said I had no cooperation, what could I say when there was nothing? They didn’t care and didn’t want the truth.’

[...] A former security force member, tortured in various ways by the Taliban, recounted a painful experience: ‘...Another time, they pulled out my nails one by one. I screamed, not knowing if it was from pain or humiliation. I pleaded, swearing to God I was innocent. But it was useless; the torturers enjoyed it. One of them laughed loudly every time I screamed.’”

The same interviewee also describes torture against an elderly man on the basis of having a picture with a former army soldier:

- “An old man from Jurm district of Badakhshan was tortured so severely for having a photo with an army soldier that he forgot how to speak.”

Source: Rawadari, “[Torture and ill-treatment : the state of prisons in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan](#)”, pp. 26, 32, 34, 59, 25 June 2025, last accessed: 15/08/2025.

A June 2025 report of the UN Secretary-General, covering “the activities of the United Nations in Afghanistan, including political, humanitarian and human rights efforts, since the issuance of the previous report, dated 21 February 2025”, reports on the killing, arbitrary arrest and detentions of former ANDSF members (as well as former government officials):

- “33. During the reporting period, UNAMA documented at least four killings and 10 arbitrary arrests and detentions of former government officials and former members of the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces.

[...] 74. Continued reports of extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests and detentions and the torture and ill-treatment of former government officials and members of the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces are deeply troubling.”

Source: UN General Assembly, UN Security Council, “[The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security Report of the Secretary-General \[A/79/947-S/2025/372\]](#)”, pp. 7, 13 11 June 2025, last accessed: 29/08/2025.

A June 2025 article by the BBC describes the situation of a former Afghan military employee and his son, who were on the run from the Taliban at the time of the article, and are unable to access medical or educational services, or find employment:

- “Ahmad has been hiding in Afghanistan for years. The former Afghan military employee is living in fear of being found by the Taliban, which seized power in 2021 as US forces withdrew from the Central Asian nation. As a result, Ahmad is unable to get a job or access medical care, relying on donations from friends outside the country to survive. His son, 12, is unable to go to school. If they are found, Ahmad says, the Taliban “will remove” him.”

Source: Publisher: BBC, Authors: Mallory Moench and Flora Drury, “[“We were friends of the US’: Fearful Afghans face Trump travel ban”](#)”, 9 June 2025, last accessed: 24/08/2025.

In a response article for 8am Media, former General Director of the Crime Investigation Department (CID) at the Ministry of Interior Affairs Besmillah Taban claims to have recorded many arrests, enforced disappearances, torture, and killings of former security and defence personnel. He also describes a recent abduction and disappearance of a former police officer:

- “Certainly, you are unaware, but in my personal database, since the Taliban came to power, I have recorded nearly 800 cases of arrests, enforced disappearances, torture, and killings of former security and defence personnel, many of whom had cooperated with U.S. forces or studied at U.S. academy institutions. Most of these individuals were arrested in Kabul, and some were killed or disappeared even after returning to the country under Taliban return commissions. The Taliban identify and directly imprison former security and defence personnel deported from neighbouring countries or Turkey through biometric checks at all land and air borders.

[...] As I write this, I have received a message that the Taliban violently abducted a former national police member from his home in Shahjoy district of Zabul province, and no information about his fate is available.”

Source: Publisher: 8am Media, Author: Besmillah Taban, “[Return to the Killing Fields: A Critical Look at the Optimism About the Return of Afghan Refugees](#)”, 26 May 2025, last accessed: 25/08/2025.

Rawadari’s Annual Human Rights report on the situation in Afghanistan in 2024 was published in March 2025. The report is based on regular documentation of human rights violations by a documentation team using questionnaires and in-person and telephone interviews with local sources, including survivors and their families and eyewitnesses. The report explains that other sources are consulted for the purposes of verification and that cases which cannot be verified are excluded from the report. The report notes multiple limitations in accessing information relating to human rights violations and states “[...] this report represents a portion of the numerous human rights violations that Rawadari has been able to document during 2024 considering the limitations on access to information” (see pages 6-7 on Limitations on Access to Information). The report describes various cases of former soldiers being killed by the Taliban or unidentified individuals. As noted by Rawadari, while the Taliban attribute some of these killings to unidentified individuals, no action has been taken to identify any of the perpetrators:

- “In October 2024, two former soldiers were killed by unidentified armed individuals in Ismail Khel Manduzi District of Khost Province. One of them was killed near a Taliban security base, and the other was killed in front of his home. In another incident, in November 2024, the Taliban detained a former Afghan National Army soldier in Aryub Zazi District of Paktia Province, and his dead body was found a few days later.

In October 2024, a former soldier was stabbed to death by unidentified armed individuals in Shighnan District of Badakhshan Province, and the Taliban handed over his dead body to his family. After the fall of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, he had been driving a taxi to support his family. Additionally, in August 2024, a former military employee of the previous government was mysteriously killed in Tishkan District of Badakhshan Province. Local sources reported that unidentified armed individuals took him from his home and killed him, but the Taliban claimed he died of natural causes.

In August 2024, a former soldier was killed in Charikar City of Parwan Province, and a former local police commander was killed in Esmidan Village, Balkhab District, of Sar-e Pol Province. In September 2024, a former soldier was killed in

Ghor Province. The victim's family stated that the Taliban were responsible for his killing. Similarly, in November 2024, a former soldier was shot dead by the Taliban in his home in Do Laina [Dowlina] District of Ghor Province. In another similar incident, on 16 December 2024, Taliban intelligence arrested a former police officer from his home and shot him on the way to Firoz Koh city.

In July 2024, a former soldier was mysteriously killed in Faryab. His family blames a local Taliban commander for the killing. Additionally, in December 2024, another former soldier was killed by unidentified armed individuals in this province.

A former soldier from Panjshir Province was killed by the Taliban in Kabul city on charges of collaborating with the National Resistance Front. In another case, a former security forces soldier from Khost Province was mysteriously killed in December 2024. He had been detained and tortured multiple times by the Taliban intelligence before his murder.

Furthermore, in August 2024, a former military commander was killed by the Taliban in Sheikhabad District of Paktika Province. This individual had fled to Iran after the fall of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and was detained by the Taliban upon his return to the country. A day later, his dead body was found in front of his home. In March 2024, two former soldiers were brutally killed with axes and hatchets by unidentified individuals in Pasaband District of Ghor Province.

The Taliban often attribute these incidents to unidentified armed individuals. However, Rawadari has not been able to obtain information about any action taken by the Taliban to arrest or punish those responsible for the killings of former government employees."

Rawadari also reports on the arbitrary detention of former military personnel at the hands of the Taliban:

- "On 9 August 2024, the Taliban detained a former military officer in Bamiyan province and transferred him to an undisclosed location. Since then, despite his family's efforts, there has been no information available about the fate of this former officer, and the Taliban have not provided any details regarding his situation or whereabouts.

[...] On 11th November 2024, the Taliban intelligence detained a former military officer and his brother in Ghor province. The families of these two individuals have stated that they have no information about their fate and whereabouts, and the Taliban have not declared the reason for their detention and the charges against them.

[...] In 2024, a total of 142 former government employees, including both civilian and military personnel, were illegally detained and imprisoned, primarily by the Taliban's intelligence agency. A comparison of the data shows that the number of arbitrary arrests and detentions of former government employees increased by 20.3% compared to 2023, when there were 118 cases."

The report describes the following cases of arbitrary detention against former security personnel in 2024. In some cases, the Taliban detained family members and tortured the detainees:

- "On 28 September 2024, two individuals, a jihadist commander and a former military officer were arrested by the intelligence department in Khost district, Baghlan province. The Taliban have not provided any explanation for their arrest. Moreover, in November 2024, the Taliban imprisoned a former military officer on charges of having ties and collaborating with the National Resistance Front. The relatives of the detainee have denied any connection to Taliban's opposition groups and claim that the former officer was engaged in personal business and was, in fact, arrested for his employment with the previous government. In a similar incident in this province, the Directorate of Intelligence of Taliban arrested another former military officer in December 2024. He had been deported from Iran to Afghanistan, and according to his family, the Taliban have not provided them with any information regarding his situation.

Similarly, on the 30 December 2024, the GDI summoned and then arrested a former military officer in Nangarhar province. He was released from prison after a few days following the intervention of local elders. This former commander was mistreated and tortured by the Taliban in detention.

On 19 November 2024, the Taliban arrested a former military officer in Bamiyan province. Additionally, three former military officers were arrested in October 2024 in Jabal Saraj district 2024 118 Cases 142 Cases 20.3% increase 2023 19 Afghanistan Human Rights Situation Report 2024 of Parwan province, on charges of possessing weapons and collaborating with the National Resistance Front. Furthermore, two of these former officers were arrested and imprisoned in Baghlan province on 28 September 2024. Local residents have stated that every time opposition forces show military activity in an area, former military personnel are immediately arrested and imprisoned. Rawadari's findings indicate that the Taliban have arrested and tortured several former military officers of the previous government who had been invited back to the country in 2024. For example, in December 2024, a former police commander in Paktia who had returned home at the Taliban's invitation was arrested in a night raid. He disappeared for 10 days, and after repeated efforts by his family, it eventually became clear that he was being held in a detention facility of the GDI. The Taliban had previously arrested and tortured his brother as well."

The Taliban has also prohibited gatherings of former security personnel under threat of arrest and punishment:

- "Furthermore, since the beginning of 2024, the Taliban have banned any gatherings of former security and defence personnel, including social night gatherings, in Kandahar province, particularly in Arghandab and Panjwai districts. They have warned that any violations will result in arrest and punishment."

Source: Rawadari, "[Afghanistan Human Rights Situation Report 2024](#)", pp. 12-13, 15-16, 18-19, March 2025, last accessed: 29/08/2025.

In a February 2025 article, KabulNow reports on the killing of a former policeman. One source alleged the killing was linked to a former Taliban intelligence chief, meanwhile another source and a Taliban spokesperson denied this:

- "KABUL, AFGHANISTAN – Local sources in Ghor province report that Khairullah, a former police commander under the previous government, was killed in the Teyora district on Saturday.

A source told KabulNow that Khairullah was shot in front of his home in Pai Hisar village by individuals under the command of Saifurrahman Saber, the former Taliban intelligence chief in the district. However, another source stated that Saber denied any involvement in the killing.

According to the source who blamed the Taliban, the alleged perpetrator was relocated by individuals linked to Saber. The Taliban had previously imprisoned Khairullah who was later released on bail.

The Taliban governor's spokesperson in Ghor dismissed allegations of Taliban involvement, attributing the killing to a 'personal dispute.' He claimed that Taliban forces had arrested the suspected killer."

Source: KabulNow, "[Taliban Accused of Killing Former Security Officer in Western Afghanistan](#)", 24 February 2025, last accessed: 03/09/2025.

A February 2025 report of the UN Secretary-General, covering "the activities of the United Nations in Afghanistan, including political, humanitarian and human rights efforts, since the issuance of the previous report, dated 6 December 2025", reports on the killing, arbitrary arrest and detentions, and ill-treatment and torture of former ANDSF members (as well as former government officials):

- "[...] 36. Human rights violations against former government officials and former members of the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces continued to be reported, despite the 2021 general amnesty. UNAMA documented at least 1 killing, 37 arbitrary arrests and detentions, and 18 instances of torture and ill-treatment of former government officials and former members of the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces.  
[...] 75. Continued reports of extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests and detentions and the torture and ill-treatment of former government officials and members of the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces, despite the de facto authorities' publicly stated commitment to their general amnesty, are deeply concerning."

Source: UN General Assembly, UN Security Council, "[The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security; Report of the Secretary-General \[A/79/797-S/2025/109\]](#)", pp. 7, 15, 21 February 2025, last accessed: 29/08/2025.

In a February 2025 report, the Special Rapporteur for Afghanistan on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan, Richard Bennett, also highlights the ill-treatment of former government and security officials, quoting a former member of the military who lives in hiding:

- “76. The Special Rapporteur recognizes the long history and important role that Iran (Islamic Republic of), Pakistan and Türkiye have played in hosting the vast majority of Afghan refugees. Nonetheless, Afghans who reside in those countries have frequently reached out to the Special Rapporteur to express their fear of persecution if forced to return to Afghanistan. That includes individuals who require heightened international protection, such as [...] security personnel [...]

[...] In addition to de facto court-sanctioned corporal and capital punishments, the Special Rapporteur remains concerned about torture and ill-treatment occurring in detention centres, including unofficial places of detention, especially during interrogations, despite clear prohibitions having been issued by the de facto authorities. [...] former members of the military and police are at particular risk of arbitrary arrest and detention, torture and ill-treatment, as well as extrajudicial execution, despite a declared amnesty. Many former officials, including women who served in the police, have appealed for resettlement abroad for their own and their family’s safety, but their appeals often go unheeded. The Special Rapporteur has received reports of former officials living in hiding for years. A former member of the military who lives in hiding in central Afghanistan told the Special Rapporteur: ‘I have been moving from place to place for months. But the Taliban still came by my parents’ house last week to ask them where I was.’”

Source: UN HRC, "[Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan – Advance edited version \[A/HRC/58/80\]](#)", 20 February 2025, last accessed: 18/08/2025.

In a December 2024 article, online news outlet KabulNow reports the detention of a former ANDSF member after he was deported from Iran. The article also mentions the detention of at least seven other ANDSF members in November alone, according to the outlet’s own data.

- “KABUL, AFGHANISTAN – The Taliban has detained a member of the former Afghanistan National Defense and Security Forces (ANSDF) after he was deported from Iran, according to local sources.

The sources identified the former military personnel as Abdul Ghafar, originally from the northeastern Panjshir province, who was detained in the border region between Afghanistan and Iran in Nimruz province on Monday.

According to the sources, Abdul Ghafar was an employee of the National Directorate of Security (NDS) during the previous government. Fearing Taliban retaliation, he, like thousands of former ANDSF members, fled Afghanistan following the Taliban’s return to power in 2021.

The Taliban authorities have not yet commented on the matter.

[...] Former ANDSF members from Panjshir province, a stronghold of armed anti-Taliban groups, have been particularly vulnerable to the Taliban crackdown. In most cases, the regime accuses them of collaborating with the armed groups or possessing weapons.

According to KabulNow data, the Taliban detained at least seven former ANDSF members in November alone, mostly in Panjshir province. Some cases remain unreported due to Taliban media restrictions, especially in remote areas.”

Source: KabulNow, "[Taliban Detains Former ANDSF Member Following Deportation from Iran, Sources Say](#)", 2 December 2024, last accessed: 27/08/2025.

Citing various sources, the November 2024 EUAA COI provides information on the targeting of former police, security and military personnel (readers are advised to maintain an awareness of the primary sources upon which the EUAA report was based, in order to understand the recency of the information and avoid false corroboration):

- “4.1.4. Victim profiles

Victims of targeted killings and other abuse recorded since the Taliban takeover have been both military/security personnel and civilian personnel of the former government.<sup>827</sup> [...] Among the killings of former government employees recorded by HRRL in the period October 2022–June 2023 were: police officers [...] employees of the former intelligence service, former soldiers and officers of the former national army [...].<sup>833</sup>

The international journalist and the international analyst reckoned that it is not possible to draw any conclusions or identify any patterns as regards who is being targeted and who is not among civil and security personnel of the former government.<sup>834</sup> The international journalist stated that the targeting depended on the local contexts and whether the amnesty was upheld there or not, rather than an individual's previous role in the former government. In one area, for example, a former local NDS director was appointed head of the Taliban-approved valley shura.<sup>835</sup> HRRL also found that respect of the amnesty depended on arrangements with local authorities.<sup>836</sup> [...]

- 4.1.5. Family members of former civilian and security personnel

According to a human rights expert interviewed by the Norwegian COI Unit Landinfo, family members of former government officials may face various reactions from the Taliban, including harassment, arrests, and, in some instances also killings. A well-informed analyst told Landinfo that there were some isolated incidents of family members being targeted right after the Taliban takeover, but the source was not aware of any such cases after late autumn 2021.<sup>839</sup> Rawadari reported on family members of former government employees being arrested in 2023 (21 cases),<sup>840</sup> and in 2024 the organisation reported that family members of former civil and military government employees were also among victims of killings. No breakdown of the data was provided by victim profile, although four examples of family members being killed were outlined.<sup>841</sup> Testimonies collected by Rawadari in the period 1 January–30 June 2023<sup>842</sup> and by HRRL in the period October 2022–June 2023<sup>843</sup> described how family members of individuals who had left Afghanistan were being targeted.<sup>844</sup> These cases included the wife of a former soldier, who was tortured and killed by the Taliban,<sup>845</sup> the wife of a former intelligence officer who was killed in her home by unknown persons, and the wife and four children of a former intelligence officer, who were kidnapped and killed by unknown armed men.<sup>846</sup> HRRL also recorded arrests and subsequent killings of brothers of former police officers,<sup>847</sup> [...] and the son of a former intelligence officer.<sup>850</sup> Moreover, Rawadari and HRRL have recorded cases of family members being detained<sup>851</sup> and killed together with former military officials.<sup>852</sup>

<sup>827</sup> UNAMA, A barrier to securing peace: Human rights violations against former government officials and former armed force members in Afghanistan, 22 August 2023, url, pp. 6–9; UNAMA, Update on the human rights situation in Afghanistan: April – June 2024, 24 July 2024, url, p. 6; Rawadari, Afghanistan, Human Rights Situation Report 2023, March 2024, url, p. 12

<sup>833</sup> HRRL, Those We Left Behind, November 2023, url, pp. 46–47, 49–51, 53, 55–56, 58, 61–62, 64, 68

<sup>834</sup> International analyst, interview 8–9 June 2023, and email communication, 10 October 2023; International journalist, online interview, 3 October 2023

<sup>835</sup> International journalist, online interview 3 October 2023

<sup>836</sup> HRRL, Those We Left Behind, November 2023, url, p. 69

<sup>839</sup> Norway, Landinfo, Afghanistan: Familiemedlemmer til personer med tilknytning til republikke, 20 November 2023, url, pp. 2–3

<sup>840</sup> Rawadari, Afghanistan, Human Rights Situation Report 2023, March 2024, url, p. 16

<sup>841</sup> Rawadari, The Afghanistan Mid-Year Human Rights Situation Report, August 2024, url, pp. 9, 11–12

<sup>842</sup> Rawadari, Human Rights Situation In Afghanistan: Mid-year Report 1 January to 30 June 2023, August 2023, url, p. 5

<sup>843</sup> HRRL, Those We Left Behind, November 2023, url, p. 13; Rawadari, Human Rights Situation In Afghanistan: Mid year Report 1 January to 30 June 2023, August 2023, url, p. 5

- 844 Rawadari, Human Rights Situation In Afghanistan: Mid-year Report 1 January to 30 June 2023, August 2023, url, pp. 4, 11–12, 14–18; HRRL, Those We Left Behind, November 2023, url, pp. 46–49
- 845 Rawadari, Human Rights Situation In Afghanistan: Mid-year Report 1 January to 30 June 2023, August 2023, url, p. 12
- 846 HRRL, Those We Left Behind, November 2023, url, pp. 47, 60
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- 851 Rawadari, Human Rights Situation in Afghanistan, August 2023, url, pp. 16, 18; HRRL, Those We Left Behind, November 2023, url, pp. 39, 52, 54 60
- 852 Rawadari, The Afghanistan Mid-Year Human Rights Situation Report, August 2024, url, p. 11; HRRL, Those We Left Behind, November 2023, url, p. 49”

Source: EUAA, “[Afghanistan Country Focus](#)”, pp.89, 90, 91, November 2024, last accessed: 20 October 2025.

In an October 2024 article, KabulNow reports on the killing of a former military general in a Taliban vehicle attack:

- “KABUL, AFGHANISTAN – General Abdul Rauf Mohtaj, a former senior military official under the previous government, was killed after being ‘deliberately’ run over by a vehicle carrying Taliban members, sources confirmed to KabulNow. The incident occurred on Friday morning, October 11 [2024], in the Khair Khana area of Kabul. According to eyewitnesses, Mohtaj was conducting his routine morning exercise when a Taliban vehicle struck him with intent, resulting in his death. Mohtaj had reportedly been warned some time ago that the Taliban were planning to target him. As a precaution, he halted his morning exercises for about ten days but eventually resumed after downplaying the threat. Sources suggest that the Taliban had carefully planned the attack, which they executed on Friday. Taliban authorities in Kabul have not yet commented on the killing.”

Source: KabulNow, “[Former Military General Killed in Taliban Vehicle Attack in Kabul](#)”, 13 October 2024, last accessed: 03/09/2025.

In a September 2024 article, local sources described to media outlet NPR how the Taliban used intimidation tactics to find the location of former police and soldiers linked to the previous government. A former Afghan National Army soldier also describes the disappearance of two police officers in the summer of 2024.

- “The Taliban are also using intimidation as a tactic, sources tell NPR - bribing or threatening local village elders to give up the location of men like Hayatullah. When two police officers disappeared from a neighboring village this summer, Hayatullah says, he knew he was next. The village elders also warned him. ‘You are not safe here anymore,’ he says they told him. He is also hiding in Kabul, where he feels safer, because of the sheer number of residents.

Men like Hayatullah and Mohammad are still at risk. They cannot work legally to support their families. Identifying themselves to any employer would put them in grave danger. They live off loans from their extended family, hoping they’ll be able to repay them one day, if they can find a way to leave Afghanistan.”

Source: Publisher: NPR, Author: Monika Evstatieva, “[Three years after the U.S. withdrawal, former Afghan forces are hunted by the Taliban](#)”, 25 September 2024, last accessed: 24/08/2025.

### 3. Targeting by the Taliban of former government officials, civil personnel roles, associated with the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan government (2004 - 2021) and their relatives

In July 2025, UNAMA published a report on involuntary returns to Afghanistan, based on monitoring of the situation and interviews conducted in 2024 with 49 individuals who had experienced involuntary return. The report points to the arrest and torture following involuntary return of former government officials associated with the previous government by the current de facto security forces and people associated with the Taliban.

- “A former government official who returned in late 2023 said that two months after his return, he was arrested by a de facto official. The de facto official came from the same province as the man and had previously made threats against him during the Republic Era. The man said he was arrested while on his way to the grocery store and was detained in a house for two nights where he was severely tortured, including: beatings with sticks, cables and wood, waterboarding, had his hair cut off and was subjected to a mock execution. His leg was broken as a result.

[...] In addition to the interviews conducted for the purposes of this report, UNAMA has, through its human rights monitoring work, documented cases of the de facto authorities targeting individuals after their return to Afghanistan. This includes arbitrary arrests and detentions of [...] former government officials.”

Source: UNAMA, “[No safe haven: Human rights risks faced by persons involuntarily returned to Afghanistan](#)”, p. 17, July 2025, last accessed: 12/08/2025.

In June 2025 the human rights organisation Rawadari published a report entitled “Torture and ill-treatment: the state of prisons in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan”. The report was based on interviews carried out between April and June 2025 with 34 individuals, including “former government employees, civil activists, journalists, and human rights defenders” who had experienced detention and imprisonment at various points since the Taliban takeover in August 2021. The following interviewee (interviewee n. 16) was arrested under the pretext of possessing weapons. He describes the conditions in detention and a lack of appropriate care for the injuries he sustained during detention:

- “Information from victim interviews reveals that the Taliban often arrested and harassed former government employees on various pretexts, including possessing weapons. As one tortured interviewee stated: ‘One day, the GDI staff came to my house and said someone had filed a complaint against me and I had to go with them. They handcuffed me and took me. Later, they asked, “Where is your weapon? How many years did you work for the previous government, and how many Taliban members did you kill?”

[...] ‘I was in detention for four hours, but I didn’t know where I was because they kept a black bag over my head the whole time. Sometimes, I touched the walls and floor with my tied hands; they were tiled. I don’t know anything else about my location of my detention.’

[...] ‘On the third night of detention, my leg was bleeding because they had tied it tightly to discarded batteries in the corner of the cell. There was no first aid, and they tied my leg with a scarf to stop the bleeding.’”

Another former government official (interviewee n.18) describes being violently arrested, and subject to many forms of torture:

- “As mentioned earlier, most victims suffered torture from the moment of arrest, aimed at obtaining information, intimidation, or punishment. One victim stated: ‘...I was arrested from my home. 40 to 50 armed men with several vehicles arrived. Many rushed me and began beating me. They hit every part of my body with fists, kicks, and rifle butts. A powerful blow from a rifle butt broke my kneecap. After that, I remember nothing and was unconscious for a while. When I regained consciousness, I felt severe pain in my face, chest, and legs.’

[...] ‘They would strip me naked, pour water on my body, one person would sit on my legs, and another would hold my head tightly. They would beat me so severely I would beg, “God, just death, I want death every moment.” Sometimes they would take off my clothes and hit my back with a chain tipped with thorns that would tear my skin. Each blow would cause blood to gush, and I’d lose consciousness. Three or four times when I resisted, they tortured me with that same chain.’

[...] “A former government employee, who endured this method despite in addition to other forms of severe torture, stated: ‘In the final stage, they hung me by my feet for approximately two hours and beat me like a punching bag. They hit my stomach and legs, asking, “Why don’t you confess?” Finally, they said, “We will execute you in public to make an example for American spies.” They tortured me like this, and every moment I wished for death. I told them, “It doesn’t matter to me at all, do it as soon as possible because I can’t bear this suffering and torture anymore.” [...]’

The same interviewee describes being kept in inhumane conditions:

- “‘Twice every 24 hours, they brought a piece of bread with a bowl of dirty water that was absolutely undrinkable. It was as if they were bringing food for a dog or an animal. I couldn’t even swallow a single bite of that bread; honestly, I had no appetite, nor was I in a state to even think about hunger. I was in such a state that I had completely forgotten about eating.’

[...] ‘After being arrested, they first transferred me to an old house, where I thought no other houses existed nearby. Seven to eight armed men were present, and I was imprisoned in a small room within that house for 21 days. For two days and nights, they didn’t allow me to use the toilet. Every time I screamed, they would come and hit me with the butt of their rifle and say, “Eat your own urine and faeces here...” On the other hand, the psychological pressures were very severe, and I was forced to urinate and defecate in my clothes right there. Then they transferred me to another place in a basement that had a toilet and a messy kitchen with some dirty dishes. This place had two rooms where various torture tools such as chains and handcuffs, electric batons, and broken chairs could be seen.... Both locations were actually secret and unofficial detention centres.’”

He also reports being subjected to psychological torture, including death threats against him and his family:

- “Threatening prisoners with execution or other forms of killing is a clear instance of psychological torture that causes severe harm to victims’ mental health. The following narratives are just a few examples of the countless experiences of prisoners subjected to this type of torture: ‘When they transferred me from the first detention place to the second, they said, “Perform ablution and pray, because we will shoot you.” I said, “There’s nothing left for me, whatever you do, do it quickly because I can’t bear this torture anymore.” Then I recited my kalima (declaration of faith) and waited to be killed.’

[...] ‘They would say, “We’ll arrest your son and behead him in front of you.” When I recall that scene, I feel sick.’

[...] ‘They would tell me to confess, or else they would divorce my wife, or give her to someone else. Sometimes they would say they would wipe out my lineage.’”

The interviewee reports being prevented from engaging in religious practices:

- “‘For the first two days, they didn’t allow me to pray. After the second day, I told them, “I am also a Muslim; please allow me to use the restroom and perform ablution so I can pray.” They responded, “You are an infidel,” and cursed and swore at me.’”

The interviewee describes serious psychological consequences from the experience:

- “‘Fear, nightmares, and restlessness are always with me. The tortures I experienced torment my mind and soul every moment, and their effects never leave me. Even my family and children suffer severely from this situation.’”

Source: Rawadari, "[Torture and ill-treatment : the state of prisons in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan](#)", pp. 19, 23, 25-26, 30-31, 39, 43, 45, 48-49, 53, 63, 25 June 2025, last accessed: 15/08/2025.

A June 2025 report of the UN Secretary-General, covering "the activities of the United Nations in Afghanistan, including political, humanitarian and human rights efforts, since the issuance of the previous report, dated 21 February 2025", reports on the killing, arbitrary arrest and detentions of former government officials (as well as former ANDSF members):

- "33. During the reporting period, UNAMA documented at least four killings and 10 arbitrary arrests and detentions of former government officials and former members of the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces.

[...] 74. Continued reports of extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests and detentions and the torture and ill-treatment of former government officials and members of the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces are deeply troubling."

Source: UN General Assembly, UN Security Council, "[The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security Report of the Secretary-General \[A/79/947-S/2025/372\]](#)", 11 June 2025, pp. 7, 13, last accessed: 29/08/2025.

In its Country Report on Human Rights Practices in Afghanistan in 2024, published in August 2025, the United States Department of State (USDOS) reports the killing of former government officials at the hands of the Taliban (for a brief assessment of the source, given recent changes to the scope and content of the report under the current administration, please refer to the [Sources](#) section):

- "There were credible reports Taliban security personnel arbitrarily killed civilians in Panjshir, Kunduz, Kabul, Nimruz, Ghazni, Khost, Jawzijan, Faryab, Takhar, Sar-e-Pol, and Herat Provinces, allegedly as collective punishment against communities where the National Resistance Front (NRF) armed opposition group was active or in retaliation against Republic-era [...] government officials in violation of the Taliban's general amnesty decree. UNAMA also recorded cases in which former government officials were arrested or detained on accusations of affiliation with the NRF. In many of these instances, relatives or victims themselves said the allegations were false and that the primary reason for their arrest was their affiliation with the pre-August 2021 government.

[...] Political and civil society activists claimed the Taliban frequently exacted revenge against ANDSF soldiers and Republic-era government employees by alleging an affiliation with ISIS-K."

Source: USDOS, "[Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Afghanistan](#)", 12 August 2025, last accessed: 28/08/2025.

In its 2025 annual report on the state of the world's human rights (covering 2024), Amnesty International reports that former government officials were subject to arbitrary arrest, unlawful detention, forcible disappearances, torture and ill-treatment, and extrajudicial executions at the hands of the Taliban.

- "The Taliban's arbitrary arrests, forcible disappearances, torture and other ill-treatment and extrajudicial executions of former government employees [...] The Taliban continued using arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances and unlawful detention against people perceived as political opponents. These included former government employees [...]. Detainees, including members of the former government and those critical of the Taliban, remained at risk of torture and other ill-treatment and extrajudicial executions."

Source: Amnesty International, "[The State of the World's Human Rights: Afghanistan 2024](#)", pp. 70-73, April 2025, last accessed: 29/08/2025.

In March 2025, Rawadari published its Annual Human Rights in Afghanistan report on the situation in Afghanistan in 2024. The report is based on regular documentation of human rights violations by a documentation team using questionnaires and in-person and telephone interviews with local sources, including survivors and their families and eyewitnesses. The report explains that other sources are consulted for the purposes of verification and that cases which cannot be verified are excluded from the report. The report notes multiple limitations in accessing information relating to human rights violations and states “[...] this report represents a portion of the numerous human rights violations that Rawadari has been able to document during 2024 considering the limitations on access to information” (see pages 6-7 on Limitations on Access to Information). The report describes cases of detention, torture and killings against former government officials and their family members.

- “[...] Rawadari’s findings indicate that former government employees and their family members have continued to be subjected to arbitrary detentions, torture, killings, enforced disappearances, and other acts of retaliation. The rate of targeted, mysterious, and extrajudicial killings of former government employees in 2024 has increased by 9%, while their arbitrary and unlawful detentions rose by approximately 20%.”

The report discusses targeted, mysterious and extrajudicial killings of former government employees, and its findings point to an increase in the deaths of former government officials in 2024 when compared to 2023 as a result of targeted attacks:

- “Victims of targeted, mysterious, and extrajudicial killings include former government employees (both military and civilian), supporters of the previous government, [...] These individuals have been killed using firearms and cold weapons such as knives, axes, and hatchets.

Some victims, including former government employees and individuals accused of collaborating with opposition groups, were arrested by the Taliban and later executed. However, in certain cases, the Taliban claim that the perpetrators of these killings are unknown armed groups or individuals. The Taliban do not share any public information on these killings and do not report on any legal prosecution and punishment of perpetrators of targeted, mysterious and extrajudicial killings. Additionally, the Taliban officials also prohibit families and survivors from expressing their opinion about the perpetrators [sic.] or providing information.

[...] Evidence suggests that these killings are systematic and widespread. Since the Taliban’s return to power in August 2021, former government employees and, in some cases, their family members across Afghanistan have been targeted and killed as acts of revenge, regardless of their ethnic or religious background. [...] In 2024, at least 91 former government employees and their family members were killed or injured in targeted, mysterious, and extrajudicial attacks. In 2023, 83 former government employees were killed or injured as a result of targeted attacks. A comparison of the two figures shows a 9.63% increase in the number of targeted killings of former government employees and their family members during this reporting period.”

Rawadari reports a general increase in enforced disappearances compared to 2023. It also reports an increase in the arbitrary arrests and detentions of former government employees in 2024, when compared to 2023:

- “The findings of this report indicate that during 2024, at least 51 individuals in 10 provinces of Afghanistan disappeared after being detained by the Taliban. This figure represents a 70% increase compared to 2023, when there were 30 cases. Victims include former government employees and their family members [...]

The rise in enforced disappearances suggests that the Taliban are systematically using this practice as a tool to retaliate against former government employees, opponents and critics.

[...] Former government employees [...] are among those who have been arbitrarily and unlawfully arrested and imprisoned by the Taliban throughout 2024.

[...] In 2024, a total of 142 former government employees, including both civilian and military personnel, were illegally detained and imprisoned, primarily by the Taliban's intelligence agency. A comparison of the data shows that the number of arbitrary arrests and detentions of former government employees increased by 20.3% compared to 2023, when there were 118 cases.

Rawadari's findings indicate that during 2024, the Taliban carried out the highest number of arbitrary and unlawful arrests of former government employees in the provinces of Ghor and Takhar. In Ghor province, 50 individuals were arrested and imprisoned, while in Takhar province, 22 individuals were detained during this period."

Rawadari also reports on harassment of former low-ranking former government officials by the Taliban:

- "Additionally, there have been cases of harassment against lower-ranking employees of the previous government who are currently working in Taliban-controlled state offices. For instance, in Kandahar, Nimruz, Herat, Ghazni, and Ghor provinces, the Taliban have harassed several former government employees under various pretexts, forcing them to leave their jobs."

Source: Rawadari, "[Afghanistan Human Rights Situation Report 2024](#)", pp. 5, 11, 15, 17-19, March 2025, last accessed: 29/08/2025.

A February 2025 report of the UN Secretary-General, covering "the activities of the United Nations in Afghanistan, including political, humanitarian and human rights efforts, since the issuance of the previous report, dated 6 December 2025", reports on the killing, arbitrary arrest and detentions, and ill-treatment and torture of former government officials (as well as former ANDSF members):

- "[...] 36. Human rights violations against former government officials and former members of the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces continued to be reported, despite the 2021 general amnesty. UNAMA documented at least 1 killing, 37 arbitrary arrests and detentions, and 18 instances of torture and ill-treatment of former government officials and former members of the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces.

[...] 75. Continued reports of extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests and detentions and the torture and ill-treatment of former government officials and members of the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces, despite the de facto authorities' publicly stated commitment to their general amnesty, are deeply concerning."

Source: UN General Assembly, UN Security Council, "[The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security; Report of the Secretary-General \[A/79/797-S/2025/109\]](#)", pp. 7, 15, 21 February 2025, last accessed: 29/08/2025.

In a February 2025 report, the Special Rapporteur for Afghanistan on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan, Richard Bennett, also highlights the ill-treatment of former government officials:

- "76. The Special Rapporteur recognizes the long history and important role that Iran (Islamic Republic of), Pakistan and Türkiye have played in hosting the vast majority of Afghan refugees. Nonetheless, Afghans who reside in those countries have frequently reached out to the Special Rapporteur to express their fear of persecution if forced to return to Afghanistan. That includes individuals who require heightened international protection, such as [...] former civil servants [...].

[...] 84. In addition to de facto court-sanctioned corporal and capital punishments, the Special Rapporteur remains concerned about torture and ill-treatment occurring in detention centres, including unofficial places of detention, especially during interrogations, despite clear prohibitions having been issued by the de facto authorities. Former government officials [...] are at particular risk of arbitrary arrest and detention, torture and ill-treatment, as well as extrajudicial execution, despite a declared amnesty. Many former officials, including women who served in the police, have appealed for resettlement abroad for their own and their family's safety, but their appeals often go unheeded. The Special Rapporteur has received reports of former officials living in hiding for years."

Source: UN HRC, “[Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan – Advance edited version \[A/HRC/58/80\]](#)”, pp. 12-13, 20 February 2025, last accessed: 18/08/2025.

A December 2024 report of the UN Secretary-General, covering “the activities of the United Nations in Afghanistan, including political, humanitarian and human rights efforts, since the issuance of the previous report, dated 9 September 2024”, reports on the killing, arbitrary arrest and detentions, and ill-treatment and torture of former government officials (as well as former ANDSF members).

- “[...] III. Human rights

[...] 29. Human rights violations against former government officials and former members of the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces continued to be reported in violation of the general amnesty announced by the de facto authorities in August 2021. UNAMA documented at least 5 killings, 14 arbitrary arrests and detentions and 4 instances of torture and ill-treatment of former government officials and former Afghan National Defence and Security Forces members. [...] VIII. Observations [...]

68. The persistent targeting of former government officials and Afghan National Defence and Security Forces members, despite the de facto authorities’ publicly stated commitment to their general amnesty, is deeply concerning. It is critical to ensure the protection of these individuals and, when violations of the amnesty occur, to carry out thorough and transparent investigations leading to accountability for perpetrators. [...]”

Source: UN General Assembly, UN Security Council, “[The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security; Report of the Secretary-General \[A/79/675-S/2024/876\]](#)”, pp. 7, 15, 6 December 2024, last accessed: 29/08/2025.

Citing various sources, the November 2024 EUAA COI provides information on the targeting of civil personnel of the former government (readers are advised to maintain an awareness of the primary sources upon which the EUAA report was based, in order to understand the recency of the information and avoid false corroboration):

- “4.1.4. Victim profiles

Victims of targeted killings and other abuse recorded since the Taliban takeover have been both military/security personnel and civilian personnel of the former government.<sup>827</sup> [...] Among the killings of former government employees recorded by HRRL in the period October 2022–June 2023 were: [...] civil servants [...] a former cleaning lady working at the former police office, a former cook working at the former police headquarters, a case of a woman formerly working in the houses of wealthy former high officials [...].<sup>833</sup>

The international journalist and the international analyst reckoned that it is not possible to draw any conclusions or identify any patterns as regards who is being targeted and who is not among civil and security personnel of the former government.<sup>834</sup> The international journalist stated that the targeting depended on the local contexts and whether the amnesty was upheld there or not, rather than an individual’s previous role in the former government. [...] HRRL also found that respect of the amnesty depended on arrangements with local authorities.<sup>836</sup> Rawadari reported that the Taliban ‘continuously harass low-ranking employees from the previous government who still work in the administration’, and outlined three examples where civil servants had been pushed to leave their jobs, arrested and then had charges of ‘administrative corruption’ brought against them.<sup>837</sup> According to a report of Hasht-e Subh, local de facto officials reportedly had replaced ‘government office employees’ with Taliban fighters at various de facto directorates, ‘citing various reasons for their removal’, including the heads of the local de facto Civil Registry and de facto Land Authority who has been accused of ‘abuse of their duties’.<sup>838</sup> [...]

- 4.1.5. Family members of former civilian and security personnel

According to a human rights expert interviewed by the Norwegian COI Unit Landinfo, family members of former government officials may face various reactions from the Taliban, including harassment, arrests, and, in some instances also killings. A well-informed analyst told Landinfo that there were some isolated incidents of family members being targeted right after the Taliban takeover, but the source was not aware of any such cases after late autumn 2021.<sup>839</sup> [...] Rawadari reported on family members of former government employees being arrested in 2023 (21 cases),<sup>840</sup> and in 2024 the organisation reported that family members of former civil and military government employees were also among victims of killings. No breakdown of the data was provided by victim profile, although four examples of family members being killed were outlined.<sup>841</sup> Testimonies collected by Rawadari in the period 1 January–30 June 2023<sup>842</sup> and by HRRL

in the period October 2022–June 2023<sup>843</sup> described how family members of individuals who had left Afghanistan were being targeted.<sup>844</sup> [...] HRRL also recorded arrests and subsequent killings of brothers of [...] high-ranking government employees,<sup>848</sup> [...]

- 827 UNAMA, A barrier to securing peace: Human rights violations against former government officials and former armed force members in Afghanistan, 22 August 2023, url, pp. 6–9; UNAMA, Update on the human rights situation in Afghanistan: April – June 2024, 24 July 2024, url, p. 6; Rawadari, Afghanistan, Human Rights Situation Report 2023, March 2024, url, p. 12
- 833 HRRL, Those We Left Behind, November 2023, url, pp. 46–47, 49–51, 53, 55–56, 58, 61–62, 64, 68
- 834 International analyst, interview 8–9 June 2023, and email communication, 10 October 2023; International journalist, online interview, 3 October 2023
- 836 HRRL, Those We Left Behind, November 2023, url, p. 69
- 837 Rawadari, The Afghanistan Mid-Year Human Rights Situation Report, August 2024, url, p. 16
- 838 Hasht-e Subh, Taliban Purge in Ghazni Province: Former Government Employees Face Insults, Dismissals, and Detentions, 11 December 2023, url
- 839 Norway, Landinfo, Afghanistan: Familiemedlemmer til personer med tilknytning til republikke, 20 November 2023, url, pp. 2–3
- 840 Rawadari, Afghanistan, Human Rights Situation Report 2023, March 2024, url, p. 16
- 841 Rawadari, The Afghanistan Mid-Year Human Rights Situation Report, August 2024, url, pp. 9, 11–12
- 842 Rawadari, Human Rights Situation In Afghanistan: Mid-year Report 1 January to 30 June 2023, August 2023, url, p. 5
- 843 HRRL, Those We Left Behind, November 2023, url, p. 13; Rawadari, Human Rights Situation In Afghanistan: Mid year Report 1 January to 30 June 2023, August 2023, url, p. 5
- 844 Rawadari, Human Rights Situation In Afghanistan: Mid-year Report 1 January to 30 June 2023, August 2023, url, pp. 4, 11–12, 14–18; HRRL, Those We Left Behind, November 2023, url, pp. 46–49
- 848 HRRL, Those We Left Behind, November 2023, url, pp. 52, 60”

Source: EUAA, “[Afghanistan Country Focus](#)”, pp. 89-90, November 2024, last accessed: 20/10/2025.

#### 4. Targeting by the Taliban of former members of the judiciary, including women members of the judiciary, associated with the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan government (2004 - 2021) and their relatives

An August 2025 report by Amnesty International stresses that, after the Taliban's 2021 takeover, women who served in the judiciary had to exile or go into hiding, a situation that remains to this day:

- “Before the Taliban’s take-over, women were actively serving as judges, prosecutors, and lawyers.

They made up between 8% and 10% of the judiciary, and nearly 1,500 women were registered as lawyers and legal advocates with the Afghanistan Independent Bar Association (AIBA), comprising about a quarter of its total membership. Today, most of them have been forced into hiding or exile after being dismissed from their positions following the Taliban’s take-over.

[...] A former female judge, who had served on a family court in Kabul and is now in exile, said: ‘There is no judicial independence, no fair trial procedures, and no access to defence lawyers. We had built a legal system with rules, and overnight [the Taliban] turned it into something frightening and unpredictable.’”

Source: Amnesty International, [“Afghanistan: Authorities must reinstate formal legal frameworks, rule of law and end four years of injustice and impunity”](#), 15 August 2025, last accessed: 14/09/2025.

In a blog published by PassBlue, an “independent, women-led nonprofit news company that closely covers the US-UN relationship”, Marzia Babakarkhail, a former Afghan judge advocate, who reported surviving assassination attempts by the Taliban, provides an assessment of the situation of former Afghan women judges:

- “[...] approximately 45 women judges remain trapped in limbo. Some live in hiding inside Afghanistan, unable to resume work or normal life. Others are stranded in countries like Pakistan, where they face expired visas, a lack of legal status and looming deportation risks. Their future is increasingly precarious.

‘I served as a judge for over a decade,’ one woman in Islamabad, Pakistan’s capital, told me. ‘I have waited years for my refugee application with the US but received no updates. My children cannot attend school. I cannot legally work. We survive in fear and silence.’

Another judge, still living in Kabul, spoke quietly, saying: ‘I sent a Taliban member through the rule of law to prison. He commands the Taliban. I barely speak above a whisper. I do not leave my home. I am alive, but I am not living.’”

Source: Publisher: PassBlue, Author: Marzia Babakarkhail, [“Four Years After the Taliban’s Return, Afghan Women Judges Go Deeper Underground”](#), 7 August 2025, last accessed: 20/10/2025.

A news piece by Laws News NZ describes the situation of a female judge who after offering interviews for Western media outlets was put at serious risk when these outlets revealed her identity and location:

- “Attaee [Nangarhar’s only female judge at the Primary Court of Elimination of Violence Against Women] fled to Kabul with her young family as soon as she heard that the Taliban were back in charge, but a few days later she received a terrifying phone call. It was the same man who had threatened in her courtroom to kill her. He told Attaee he had her personal details and knew where to find her. [...]

She moved house several times in Kabul because the Taliban kept tracking her down. But the worst was yet to come. A few western media outlets interviewed her and while she had asked for her identity to be kept secret for security reasons, the media revealed not only her name but also her location.

‘After that, my colleague from Nangarhar called me and said “you interviewed against the Taliban and you don’t know how bad they are, and now they can find you” [...]’

Source: Law News NZ, “[Targeted by the Taliban: three Afghan judges, now living in New Zealand, can finally tell their stories](#)”, 31 July 2025, last accessed: 22/09/2025.

A June 2025 report of the Special Rapporteur, Richard Bennett, on “Access to justice and protection for women and girls and the impact of multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination” states:

● “[...] C. Impact and consequences for women and girls

1. Removal of women from the justice sector

[...] 39. Today, there are no women judges or prosecutors and no officially registered female lawyers, leaving women and girls with fewer safe channels to report abuse or seek redress. [...]

40. Women legal professionals who formerly practised have faced threats and harassment. Some have sought exile, and those who remain in Afghanistan suffer severe economic hardship, especially those who were the primary earners for their household. Nevertheless, women lawyers continue to provide informal legal support, preparing cases and providing legal advice outside of judicial settings. In some instances, they have also accompanied clients to court, although never as officially registered lawyers.”

Source: UN HRC, “[Access to justice and protection for women and girls and the impact of multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination; Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan, Richard Bennett \[A/HRC/25\]](#)”, 16 June 2025, last accessed: 6/10/2025.

In an interview for Manara Magazine, Marzia Babakarkhail, a former family law judge in Afghanistan during the 1990s (whose blog published by PassBlue is also cited above), describes the situation of exclusion and persecution of former members of the judiciary. She points out that female judges are especially vulnerable in this context as a result of the restrictions imposed on women by the Taliban, including on freedom of movement:

● “EDITORIAL TEAM: How has the Afghan judicial system changed since the Taliban regained control, and what effects have these changes had on justice and human rights in Afghanistan?”

MARZIA BABAKARKHAIL [former family law judge in Afghanistan during the 1990s]: Afghanistan’s legal system has effectively been dismantled. The judiciary branch now operates without clear legal standards, rights protections, or due process. All former judges were removed and replaced by Taliban members educated in religious schools, with muftis acting as key advisors in legal proceedings. Women have been entirely excluded from judicial roles.

The independence of the legal profession has also been severely undermined. The Afghanistan Independent Bar Association (AIBA) was abolished, and the Taliban took over tasks to oversee lawyers. Under the new rules, male lawyers must pass a religious exam if they want to renew their licenses, while women are altogether banned from obtaining or renewing their legal credentials. Many lawyers with backgrounds in human rights, criminal law, or international work have been denied licenses altogether.

Legal professionals, particularly women, face systemic persecution, including death threats, attacks, arbitrary arrests, and enforced disappearances. Some have been executed, while others have been forced into hiding or exile. Female legal professionals are also at risk of domestic violence, forced marriages, and economic hardship.

What specific dangers and obstacles do female judges who remain in Afghanistan face?

Since the Taliban’s return to power, female judges in Afghanistan have faced significant challenges. Many of these judges played an essential role in upholding the rule of law and protecting human rights under the previous government. The

Taliban's sweeping reforms have negatively affected their safety, professional standing, and overall well-being. Female judges have faced threats as a result of their past rulings, particularly those related to criminal law, human rights, and gender-based violence. Retaliation from individuals they had once sentenced is a risk they now have to contend with.

In addition to this, the general restrictions placed on women's participation in public and professional life have created further obstacles. Women's access to legal work, financial independence, education, and even free movement within the country has been blocked."

Source: Manara Magazine, "[The Struggles of Afghan Female Judges and Prosecutors Under Taliban Rule](#)", 3 April 2025, last accessed: 22/09/2025.

A February 2025 report of the Special Rapporteur, Richard Bennett, observes that judges and prosecutors are among those profiles with heightened international protection needs:

- "[...] G. Refugees [...]"

[...] 76. The Special Rapporteur recognizes the long history and important role that Iran (Islamic Republic of), Pakistan and Türkiye have played in hosting the vast majority of Afghan refugees. Nonetheless, Afghans who reside in those countries have frequently reached out to the Special Rapporteur to express their fear of persecution if forced to return to Afghanistan. That includes individuals who require heightened international protection, such as [...] judges, prosecutors [...]"

Source: UN HRC, "[Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan – Advance edited version \[A/HRC/58/80\]](#)", pp. 12-13, 20 February 2025, last accessed: 18/08/2025.

Citing various sources, the November 2024 EUAA COI report summarises information on the situation of prosecutors and judges (readers are advised to maintain an awareness of the primary sources upon which the EUAA report was based, in order to understand the recency of the information and avoid false corroboration):

- "4.1.6. Former judges and prosecutors

[...] Many prosecutors and judges left Afghanistan after the Taliban takeover or went into hiding.<sup>864</sup> Among the 800 human rights violations documented by UNAMA in the period 15 August 2021–30 June 2023, 2 % targeted former judges and prosecutors.<sup>865</sup> Later human rights reporting from UNAMA do not provide any breakdown by victim profile.<sup>866</sup> In February 2024, the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in Afghanistan however stated that former members of the judiciary had been targeted despite the Taliban's amnesty, and that former judges and prosecutors faced 'dire circumstances', being without jobs and 'fearing for their lives'. According to the same source, 20 prosecutors (18 men and 2 women) had been killed across Afghanistan in the period 1 January 2023–31 January 2024.<sup>867</sup> All female judges, attorneys and prosecutors have been barred from working within the de facto justice system, and the association of female judges is inactive.<sup>868</sup> In the initial months after the Taliban takeover, women judges were particularly reported to live in hiding,<sup>869</sup> fearing reprisals from the Taliban or released prisoners seeking revenge.<sup>870</sup> In February 2024, the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan reported that women judges still feared reprisals from former prisoners released amid the Taliban takeover.<sup>871</sup> During the previous government, over 250 women served as judges.<sup>872</sup> [...] Justice Mona Lynch, who also engages in and coordinates evacuation efforts of Afghan women judges, assessed that, as of September 2024, 36 were still in Afghanistan.<sup>874</sup>

- 864 Clark, K. and Shapour, R., What do the Taliban Spend Afghanistan's Money on?, AAN, March 2023, url, pp. 36-37; Independent (The), The female Afghan judges trapped in hiding, fearing reprisal from the Taliban, 7 April 2024, url; Times (The), 'Afghanistan has fallen off the agenda and been put on hold', 7 March 2024, url
- 865 UNAMA, A barrier to securing peace: Human rights violations against former government officials and former armed force members in Afghanistan, 22 August 2023, url, pp. 5-6
- 866 UNAMA, Update on the human rights situation in Afghanistan: April – June 2024, 24 July 2024, url; UNAMA, Update on the human rights situation in Afghanistan: January – March Update, 1 May 2024, url; UNAMA, Human rights situation in Afghanistan, October – December 2023 Update, 22 January 2024, url
- 867 UN Human Rights Council, Situation of human rights in Afghanistan, 29 February 2024, url, para. 85
- 868 Austria, Austrian Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum, Afghanistan: Afghan legal system under the Taliban, 9 April 2024, url, p. 7
- 869 EASO, Afghanistan – Targeting of Individuals, August 2022, url, p. 81
- 870 New York Times (The), Afghan Women Who Once Presided Over Abuse Cases Now Fear for Their Lives, 20 October 2021, url; RFE/RL, Afghanistan's Former Prosecutors Hunted By Criminals They Helped Convict, 21 September 2021, url
- 871 UN Human Rights Council, Situation of human rights in Afghanistan, 29 February 2024, url, para. 85
- 872 UN OHCHR, UN experts: legal professionals in Afghanistan face extreme risks, need urgent international support, 20 January 2023, url, p. 1 [...]
- 874 HRW, Afghanistan's Women Judges, Three Years After the Taliban Takeover, 19 September 2024, url "

Source: EUAA, "[Afghanistan Country Focus](#)", p. 92, November 2024, last accessed: 6/10/2025.

A statement from the Afghan Women Judges Committee describes the situation of female judges who, after the Taliban takeover, had to flee or go into hiding to save their and their families:

- "When the Taliban reached Kabul on August 15, 2021 the position of the women judges became untenable. All of them lost their jobs as it is contrary to the beliefs of the Taliban that women be judges and more particularly sit in judgment of men. Many of them sat on courts, like the domestic violence and anti-terrorism courts, that the Taliban believed were hostile instruments of the Western agenda. The women judges became targets, and the death threats they received were not just from the Taliban. The Taliban had emptied all of the prisons across Afghanistan as they took over the regions. The released prisoners sought personal revenge against the judges who sentenced them to prison terms. Other former litigants sought revenge against the women judges for ruling against them in family cases. The women judges of Afghanistan were forced to flee their homes and go into hiding with their families in order to save their lives and the lives of their families."

Source: National Association of Women Judges, "[Statement from the Afghan Women Judges' Committee On the Third Anniversary of the Fall of Kabul](#)", 04 September 2024, last accessed: 22/09/2025.



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