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LEGAL AID BOARD

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Information on killing/attacks on army by the Taliban

A document released by the *Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit* in March 2016 notes:

“...the ANA under-recruited in 2014. In November of that year, the ANA increased its recruitment targets to 5,000 per month, but in the month of April, recruiting was found to be well below target...ANA recruitment continued to struggle in subsequent months...This is in all likelihood due to many villages falling under Taliban control between 2014 and 2015; the insurgents at the very least actively discourage recruitment into the ANA and Afghan National Police (ANP), and often severely punish soldiers they catch, as well as their families” (Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (March 2016) *The Afghan National Army After ISAF*, p.4).

ANA is an acronym for Afghan National Army.

The *Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction* states in a report released in April 2016 that:

“Since the international Operation Enduring Freedom mission ended in 2014, the Taliban have spread their fight across most of the country, forcing Afghan forces to spread their own assets thin...Afghan security officials report that ANDSF casualties have increased sharply since assuming full control of the security responsibilities from the Coalition forces at the start of last year. According to USFOR-A, the ANDSF suffered 6,637 personnel killed and 12,471 wounded in 2015...In the first two months of 2016, an additional 820 members of the Afghan security forces were killed in action and 1,389 were wounded...According to Afghan security officials, the Afghan army is enduring an average of four fatalities daily, mainly due to improvised explosive device (IED) attacks” (Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (30 April 2016) *Quarterly Report to Congress*, p.94).

ANDSF is an acronym for Afghan National Defense and Security Forces.

In April 2016 *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty* states in a report that:

“On April 11, a Taliban suicide bomber on a motorcycle killed at least 12 army recruits on a bus in eastern Afghanistan, hours after a similar attack killed two people in the capital, Kabul” (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (12 April 2016) *Afghan Taliban Announces 'Spring Offensive'*).

A report issued in April 2016 by the *United States Department of State* commenting on events of 2015 states:

“The Taliban and other insurgents continued to kill civilians and security force personnel using indiscriminate tactics such as improvised explosive devices (IEDs), car bombs, suicide attacks, rocket attacks, and armed attacks” (United States

Department of State (13 April 2016) *2015 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices – Afghanistan*).

This document also notes that:

“The majority of Taliban attacks targeted security forces, in particular ANP and ALP forces, notably in volatile areas” (ibid).

In March 2016 the *United Nations Secretary-General* states in a report that

“Reports indicate a substantial increase in casualties among the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces in 2015, the first year in which the forces confronted anti-government elements with much-reduced international military assistance. Critical shortcomings continue to hamper the Forces in effectively addressing the threat posed by anti-government elements, including insufficient recruitment, high attrition rates and insufficient logistics and planning and air support and coordination” (United Nations Secretary-General (7 March 2016) *The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security*, p.5).

In January 2016 a document published by the *European Asylum Support Office* points out that:

“On 22 April 2015, the Taliban announced its spring offensive, named Azm, and indicated the following targets: ‘foreign occupiers especially their permanent military bases, their intelligence and diplomatic centres, as well as government officials and Afghan security forces...The offensive started off with almost simultaneous attacks in 22 provinces in Afghanistan...’ (European Asylum Support Office (January 2016) *Afghanistan: Security Situation*, p.20).

Reuters in April 2016 notes:

“The insurgency has gained strength since the withdrawal of international troops from combat at the end of 2014, with the Taliban stronger now than any point since they were driven from power by U.S.-backed forces in late 2001” (Reuters (30 April 2016) *Afghan forces launch push against Taliban*).

A document issued in April 2016 by the *UNHCR* notes that:

“Afghan security forces, particularly the ANP, continue to be the object of targeted campaigns” (UNHCR (19 April 2016) *UNHCR Eligibility Guidelines for Assessing the International Protection Needs of Asylum-Seekers from Afghanistan*, p.36).

This report also includes commentary on “exclusion from International Refugee Protection” where it states that:

“The applicability of the exclusion clauses will need to be considered in relation to members of the ANSF, in cases where there are indications that they may have been associated with serious abuses of human rights and/or violations of humanitarian law” (UNHCR (19 April 2016) *UNHCR Eligibility Guidelines for Assessing the International Protection Needs of Asylum-Seekers from Afghanistan*, p.97).

ANSF is an acronym for Afghan National Security Forces.

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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