



موسسه مصونیت و کاهش بجران

Safety and Risk Mitigation Organization

Civic Space Quarterly Report

July – September 2022

SRMO Afghanistan Civic Space Quarterly Report July to September 2022

Context and summary

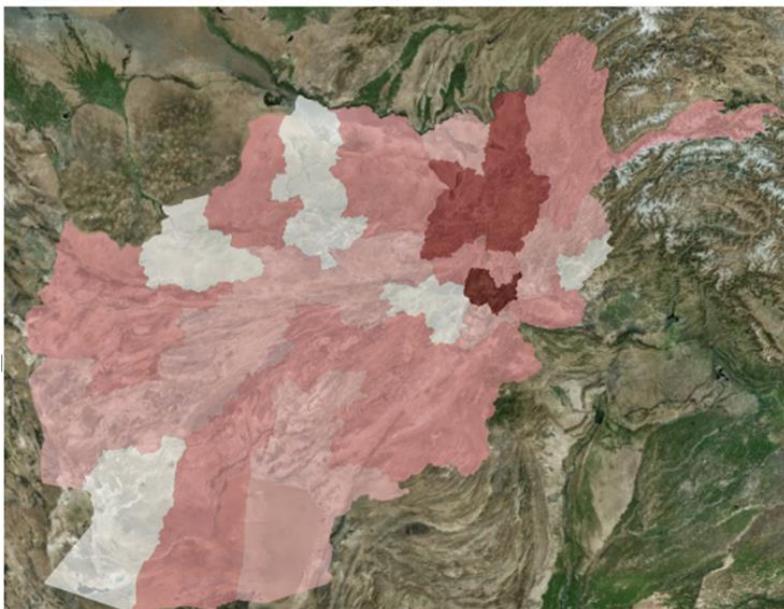
The Taliban continued its stranglehold on civic space during the reporting period (1 July to 30 September), but mounting frustration with the de facto authorities nevertheless resulted in a growth in protest activity. Women’s human rights defenders (WHRDs), human rights defenders (HRDs), civil society activists (CSAs) and media workers continued to face threats and violence for carrying out their peaceful activities. From July to September, SRMO’s database logged at least 25 incidents (killings, arrests, beatings, harassment) affecting civil society activists, local media and NGOs.

In addition, at least four peaceful protests by Afghan women were violently broken up by Taliban troops. During these incidents, protesters were routinely beaten with rifle butts, whipped, sprayed with pepper spray and insulted. Detentions are also common, both of protesters, media workers trying to cover the protests, and bystanders who take photos or video of the rallies. No progress was made during the reporting period over the Taliban’s national level policy towards women’s rights to employment and girls’ right to education – rights that the Taliban had agreed to respect prior to seizing power the second time.

In the leadup to the one year anniversary of the Taliban’s armed seizure of power in August 2021, the Taliban’s Supreme Leader issued a decree outlining additional media restrictions in July. The decree outlawed criticism of government officials and the spreading of ‘false news’. In September, Taliban officials imposed still more limitations on media workers, banning male and female presenters from co-hosting television programs. The reporting period also saw the continuation of attacks on former government officials, prosecutors and former security forces.

The previous SRMO reporting period had seen a significant escalation in serious abuses taking place in the context of the Taliban’s crackdown on growing resistance operations against them. This trend

Number of times mentioned in report 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8



Provincial map of Afghanistan showing number of incidents by province July to September 2022. Note a single incident can involve multiple human rights violations eg mass arrests, multiple extra judicial executions. See below for detailed case information.

has continued through July – September, which saw a further jump in cases, including multiple alleged extra judicial executions of resistance fighters as well as of ordinary civilians.

SRMO has documented dozens of reported arrests, extra judicial killings and forced evictions of people accused of sympathizing with armed resistance against Taliban rule. These abuses have been most concentrated in the provinces of Panjshir, Baghlan (Andarab district), Sar-i-pul (Balkhab district) and Takhar, though smaller scale abuses against alleged opposition supporters are reported countrywide.

Afghans have also faced a wave of terrorist attacks, the majority of which have targeted the minority Hazara community. Most recently on 30 September, a brutal suicide attack on the Kaaj Education Center in the Dasht-e Barchi area of the capital Kabul killed at least 52 people and injured 63 more. Most of the victims were girls who were taking a practice university entrance exam. It was the second attack on the same education centre within two years, in a part of Kabul that has seen repeated bombings targeting the Hazara community.

I. Legal and governance framework

The de facto authorities continue to operate in a legal and governance vacuum in which local Taliban leaders' rule is based on their own interpretation of sharia or Islamic law. Sharia is not codified and is open to widely varying interpretations. Deputy Minister of Justice Abdul Karim Haider on September 4th said, during a press conference, that Afghanistan 'does not need' a constitution or political parties in the current context.¹ He elaborated that if the Taliban's Supreme Leader decided a constitution was necessary, then it would be drawn up based on the Qur'an, Hanafi law, and the Sunnah.

II. Operating environment for civil society: Freedom of expression, association and public assembly severely curtailed

The Taliban continue to obstruct Afghans' fundamental rights to freedom of expression, freedom of association and freedom of assembly. The de facto authorities use violence and intimidation to silence Civil Society and deny them the opportunity to meet, organize or disseminate their views. The clampdown has not only affected people involved in organized civil society activities; individuals expressing frustrations with the current circumstances in Afghanistan on social media have also faced incommunicado detention and other abuses.

With the exception of occasional street protests, Women human rights defenders (WHRDs), human rights defenders (HRDs) and civil society activists (CSAs) have practically disappeared from Afghan society as it has become too dangerous for them to operate openly. With a handful of exceptions (for example activists or commentators whose status or family connections grant them a level of protection), speaking out against the Taliban or even posting mild criticism of the status quo online has resulted in arrests, beatings and disappearances.

Between July and September, 9 detentions of civil society and NGO personnel by the Taliban were logged in SRMO's database. Three CSAs and one family member were detained by the Taliban in Balkh province on 7 July. Two CSAs were detained in July in separate incidents in Kandahar and Helmand provinces for posting criticism of the Taliban on social media.

Another CSA was detained on 8 September in Khost province after he praised the reopening of secondary schools for girls in Paktia province on his facebook page and called on people to support girls education. There were unconfirmed reports of additional arrests linked to the Paktia school opening and the Taliban's overruling of that decision (see below).

A political activist was reportedly arrested by intelligence officials on 20 July. The activist had reportedly criticized the Taliban on social and regular media platforms before his arrest, after which he was taken away to an unknown location.

¹ <https://tolonews.com/afghanistan-179697>

An aid worker working for an international relief agency was reportedly badly beaten on 18 September by a local Taliban commander who is also the local police chief. The beating reportedly took place after the aid worker refused the commander's demands over where an aid project should take place.

During the reporting period, two NGO personnel were also killed by unknown attackers. One NGO staff member was killed in their office in Farah City on 19 July, while a second local NGO worker working for the Red Crescent was killed on 20 August in Kabul. The motives for the two murders are unclear.

III. Protest activity

The reporting period saw an increase in protest activity. The most high profile demonstrations took place in Kabul and Gardez by women and girls demanding their rights to education and employment.² On the eve of the one year anniversary of the Taliban takeover, a group of women on 13 August held a rally during which they shouted slogans calling for 'work, bread and education'. Taliban troops responded with force, breaking participants' mobile phones and firing live bullets in the air. In another protest in the capital on 31 August, a group of women calling themselves the Afghan Women's Unity and Solidarity Group rallied in support of a student who claimed she was raped and forcibly married to a Taliban official (see below).

The following month, Taliban troops used force to break up protests by school girls in Gardez, Paktia province on 10 September.³ Local elders had gone against Taliban regulations and decided to reopen five secondary schools for girls after consultation with religious figures and the local community. After only a few days Taliban officials forced the schools to close again, prompting rallies by school girls. The Taliban used force to disperse the gatherings and reportedly made numerous arrests of parents and journalists who had tried to cover the events.

Afghan women also rallied outside the Iranian embassy in Kabul on 29 September in support of a wave of protests by Iranian women prompted by the killing of an Iranian woman after she was arrested by the morality police for not wearing her hijab 'properly'. Taliban soldiers hit women with rifle butts, fired in the air and destroyed banners to disperse the gathering.⁴

The risk of violence at street protests has prompted some groups of women's rights activists to hold indoor rallies, during which they take photos and videos which are then distributed online.

Taliban violence against local communities in areas that have seen armed resistance against the de facto authorities also sparked protests. These included a large demonstration in the Andarab district of Baghlan province on 21 July that took place after a young local man was allegedly beheaded by the Taliban. In early September a group of women protested in Panjshir against forced evictions of local communities. The women also complained about detentions, torture and harassment of local villagers after the Taliban had lost men in resistance attacks. In a third example, local residents in Nuristan province rallied on 29 September after the Taliban allegedly killed a popular local leader, reportedly forcing Taliban soldiers out of two districts and taking control of administrative buildings.

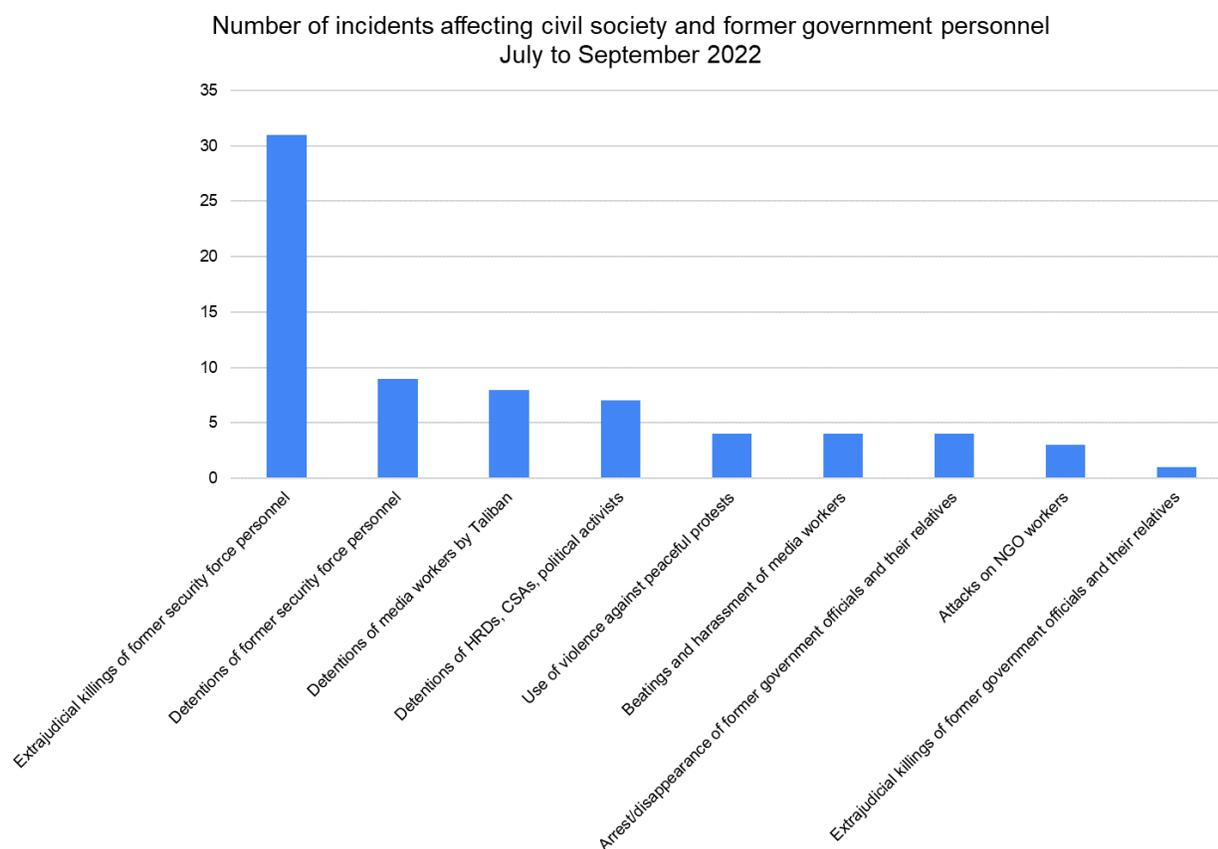
² A terrorist attack on 30 September targeting Hazara students prompted a wave of demonstrations across Afghanistan but these took place from 1 October onwards and as such will be covered in the next quarterly update.

³ <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/9/10/afghan-girls-protest-school-closure-in-eastern-city>

⁴ <https://www.voanews.com/a/taliban-disrupt-afghan-women-s-rally-supporting-iran-protests-/6768633.html>

IV. New media restrictions

Operating conditions for Afghan media remained extremely challenging during the last quarter because of both economic problems and extensive interference by the de facto authorities. The Taliban leadership issued additional limits on media workers in July and September, adding to multiple rules they had already handed down in September and November 2021. A 21 July 2022 decree⁵ stated that ‘defaming and criticizing government officials’ was forbidden by Islam and would be punished. During a press conference in September, new Education Minister Mawlawi Habibullah Agha warned Afghans that open criticism of the Taliban was forbidden.⁶ The same month Taliban officials informed television broadcasters that men and women presenters were no longer allowed to host joint programmes. Meanwhile the Ministry of Telecommunications announced on 17 September that they would ban TikTok and popular gaming app Pubg in the coming months.⁷



Taliban spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid said on 6 September that the mass media law was being reviewed by the Ministry for Information and Culture. He added that changes would be made to the culture and religion sections of the law, and that a revised version would be sent to the Supreme Leader

⁵ [Afghan YouTuber Arrested for Allegedly Insulting Quran \(voanews.com\)](https://www.voanews.com/news/afghanistan-taliban-arrests-youtuber-20220721)

⁶ [Afghan Analyst on Twitter: "#Taliban's new Minister of Education Mawlawi Habibullah Agha: "Open #criticism of the Islamic Emirate of AFG's officials, is forbidden. If they have any problem, you are not allowed to criticise them openly. You should report to/register your criticism with, related IEA offices." / Twitter](https://twitter.com/afghananalyst/status/1564444444444444444)

⁷ <https://www.khaama.com/taliban-to-ban-tiktok-and-pubg-apps-in-afghanistan-87943/>

for approval.⁸ During the same press conference it was announced that 150 books had been banned because they were ‘against Islam’ or ‘against unity’.

The Commission on Media Violations (CMV) held its first meeting since the Taliban takeover on 26 September.⁹ The CMV has representatives from the Ministry of Information and Culture, Ministry of the Interior, The Ministry for the Prevention of Vice and the Promotion of Virtue, the intelligence service and the journalists union. The Afghan Journalists Safety Committee (AJSC) also took part in the meeting; they raised the difficult financial situation for media outlets and called for the release of jailed journalists. One of the journalists whose detention the AJSC raised during the meeting was actually released on 30 September, though it is not known if the two events are linked; his family and colleagues had been calling for his release for several months.

V. Incidents targeting media workers

During the reporting period, SRMO documented 10 arrests, 2 beatings and 2 cases of harassment of media workers. In an incident the day after the Supreme Leader issued his July decree on media restrictions, a female journalist was badly beaten by Taliban soldiers in Jalalabad, the capital of eastern Nangarhar province.¹⁰ The journalist had reportedly been threatened prior to the attack, but she had insisted on continuing her work for a local radio station. She was beaten until she became unconscious and needed hospital treatment for her injuries.

“Recent protests have been illegal and therefore filming and reporting on them is also illegal,” Zabiullah Mujahid, Taliban spokesman¹¹

In another incident, four local journalists were detained for several hours on 10 September after they attempted to cover a demonstration by schoolgirls in Gardez City, Paktia Province. The girls held a protest after Taliban officials closed down their schools a few days after local elders had reopened them. Foreign journalists and their Afghan crews have also been detained and beaten by Taliban troops. A Pakistani television reporter¹² and two of his Afghan colleagues were detained and beaten on 4 August, while an Arabic news channel crew were violently stopped from filming a few days later despite having all the correct paperwork and permits.¹³

VI. Violence against women

Violence against women in many different forms continued at an alarming rate between July and September. During the reporting period, SRMO registered reports of 11 murders of women, 3 rapes and

⁸ <https://www.voanews.com/a/taliban-claim-media-reform-as-journalists-decry-censorship/6735304.html>

⁹ <https://safety-committee.org/454/ajsc-participates-in-the-meeting-of-commission-on-media-violations>

¹⁰ [‘Open Fear’: Taliban Cracks Down On Afghan Media By Decree \(rferl.org\)](https://www.rferl.org/content/open-fear-taliban-cracks-down-on-afghan-media-by-decree/28271471.html)

¹¹ <https://www.voanews.com/a/taliban-claim-media-reform-as-journalists-decry-censorship/6735304.html>

¹² [RSF on Twitter: "Afghanistan: the Pakistani journalist @AnasMallick abducted and beaten for 21 hours in #Kabul on 4 August by the #Taliban, his team was detained for 42 hours. RSF condemns a new violation of press freedom and calls for an independent investigation. https://t.co/pfhAP7FdmR" / Twitter](https://twitter.com/RSF/status/1458444444444444444)

¹³ [RSF on Twitter: "Afghanistan: the Pakistani journalist @AnasMallick abducted and beaten for 21 hours in #Kabul on 4 August by the #Taliban, his team was detained for 42 hours. RSF condemns a new violation of press freedom and calls for an independent investigation. https://t.co/pfhAP7FdmR" / Twitter](https://twitter.com/RSF/status/1458444444444444444)

11 suicides. As with all the numbers in this report, the cases logged here represent just a sample and the true numbers of cases are likely to be far higher.

Although few confirmed details over the motives or perpetrators of the murders are available, most are likely to be a result of family disputes. Mechanisms established during the former government to provide protection, refuge and legal remedies to women victims of domestic violence have been dismantled. This total absence of support likely also contributed to the high number of suicides by women.

In two of the rape cases, the alleged perpetrators were Taliban officials. In one case in early September in Faryab Province, an allegation was made that a Taliban commander raped the wife of a military figure from the former government after summoning her for interrogation. In a second case that received significant media attention, a female student from the capital Kabul alleged that she was raped by a Taliban official after having been arrested for having photos of military personnel from the previous government on her mobile phone. She alleged that the Taliban official subsequently forced her to marry him, after which he beat her regularly.

Women were also violently attacked by Taliban soldiers for alleged infringements of Taliban morality rules. Examples include:

- Taliban soldiers reportedly publicly flogged a woman 20 times on 21 July for traveling to the bazaar alone without a chaperone. The incident took place in the Darqad district of Takhar province.
- Taliban soldiers on 24 August reportedly beat and insulted several women for not wearing ‘proper’ hijab and coming to the market without chaperones in the city of Taloqan, Takhar province.

VII. Morality arrests /corporal punishment

SRMO registered multiple reported incidents of corporal punishments being delivered between July and September; it is unclear what kind of legal process – if any – occurred before such punishments were carried out. During the reporting period, 5 men and 3 women were flogged for alleged adultery. A further 2 men and 2 women were killed after being alleged of the same. A man and a woman were arrested for walking in a public park together and forced to marry, while another couple were arrested after reportedly running away together.

VIII. Abuses targeting former security forces and police

Attacks on people who worked for the army, intelligence services and various police forces that were set up under the previous government continued over the last quarter. 12 killings of former security force personnel or their close relatives by the Taliban were logged in SRMO’s database between July and September. Of these, 11 were former security forces and 1 was a family member. One of these cases involved a former policewoman from Ghazni province who had worked at a women’s prison. She was reportedly shot dead in mid-September after being instructed to come to the district centre to collect some aid.

Pointing to the scale of extra judicial executions that have been taking place since August 2021, a mass grave was reportedly discovered on 20 September in Logar province. Local sources said that at least 10 bodies of ex-military personnel had been found, though it is unclear when they had been killed.

The Taliban claim that ‘revenge’ killings of people who worked for the police or army under the previous government is not a centrally directed policy and is not being condoned by the Taliban leadership. However, while they have made some arrests of Taliban soldiers responsible for revenge

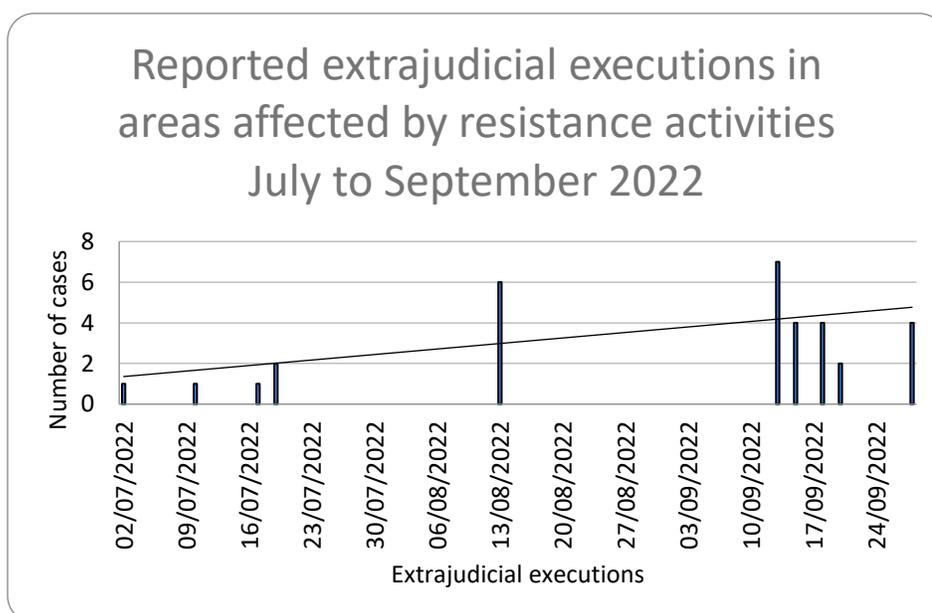
attacks they have made no concerted effort to stamp out the practice. Killings of this type continue to be reported on a weekly basis.

A further 11 former security force personnel and one of their relatives were detained during the reporting period, making a mockery of the Taliban’s supposed ‘general amnesty’ for people who worked under the former government.

IX. Abuses linked to resistance activities

Attacks on the Taliban by the National Resistance Front (NRF) and other resistance groups escalated during the reporting period. These have caused significant Taliban casualties and the de facto authorities have been accused of retaliating with serious abuses against resistance fighters and ordinary civilians.

During the reporting period, SRMO received credible reports of extra judicial killings, summary executions, arbitrary detentions, torture and forced evictions from Panjshir, Baghlan, Samangan, Helmand, Kapisa and Takhar provinces. Reported cases logged in the SRMO database during this period include 50 alleged extra judicial executions and 459 detentions.



Examples of these incidents during the reporting period include:

Extra judicial executions:

- 13 September: Local sources reported that Taliban soldiers summarily executed 7 resistance fighters after they were captured during fighting in the Shaba area of Panjshir province.
- 2 July: Taliban soldiers reportedly arrested a local shepherd named Mirza in the Andarab district of Baghlan province. He was then shot and killed.
- 10 July: The Taliban reportedly shot dead a young man called Amanullah who had previously worked as a civil servant. He had been arrested in the Khost district of Baghlan province several days before on charges of collaborating with the National Resistance.

- 17 July: A Taliban sniper reportedly shot and killed a woman who was carrying food and water to her husband who was collecting firewood from a nearby mountain. The incident occurred in the Abshar district of Panjshir province.
- 19 July: Taliban soldiers reportedly arrested two locals in Aybak city, Samangan province on charges of having relations with resistance forces. The detainees were later publicly executed in a public square.
- 13 August: Local sources reported that the Taliban shot and killed six men for unknown reasons in Jalalabad, Nangarhar province and left their bodies by a road.
- 18 September: Local sources reported that Taliban soldiers shot and killed two women and two men in Lashkar Gah, Helmand province. Four other family members were wounded during the incident, which took place during Taliban house-to-house searches. The women reportedly tried to stop the Taliban entering the house when they were shot and killed.
- 20 September: Taliban soldiers reportedly shot and killed two young men in Takhar province; the men had reportedly protested against the Taliban's decision to forcibly displace local people and give their homes to members of the Kochi group.
- 28 September: Local sources reported that the Taliban shot and killed four civilians on charges of having connections with NRF forces. The victims, from the Chal district of Takhar province, had reportedly just returned from Iran to live with their families.
- 15 September: Four civilians were reportedly arrested and then shot dead by Taliban soldiers in the Nijrab district of Kapisa province. The incident took place at a time when the Taliban was conducting a search operation to collect weapons.

Detentions

- 19 July: Local sources reported that the Taliban had arrested 13 local people in the Abshar district of Panjshir province on charges of having connections with resistance forces.
- 22 July: Local sources reported that Taliban soldiers arrested 90 youths on various charges during house-to-house searches in Aybak city, Samangan province. The detainees were reportedly held under the supervision of the police chief and the Taliban's intelligence agency.
- 28 July: The Taliban reportedly arrested a tribal elder in the Jabal Saraj district of Parwan province on charges of collaborating with the National Resistance Front. The victim's family claimed that he had no affiliation with any armed group.
- 11 August: Local reports said that Taliban soldiers detained 8 local people on charges of having relations with resistance forces. The arrests took place in the Farkhar district of Takhar province.
- 11 August: 10 civilians were reportedly arrested for having links to resistance forces in the Khost Frenk district of Baghlan province.
- 27 August: Taliban soldiers reportedly detained and beat more than 30 local people in the Dara district of Panjshir province. The 30 locals were reportedly imprisoned at the Mirza Malik School.

- 29 August: Taliban soldiers reportedly arrested four youths from the Hazara ethnic group in Bamiyan city, Bamiyan province. Taliban intelligence claimed the young people were involved in resistance activities.
- 16 September: Taliban soldiers arrested 20 local residents in the Dara district of Panjshir province. The detainees had reportedly held a gathering to discuss a recent Taliban order that they should evacuate their houses. The Taliban violently beat the villagers and took them to an unknown location.
- 18 September: The Taliban arrested three civilians in Salang district, Parwan province. The detainees were reportedly relatives of a National Resistance Front commander. Local people claimed the detained civilians were a shepherd, a driver and a farmer.
- Local sources reported that following a row between Kochis and local residents in the Khadir district of Daikundi province, Taliban soldiers arrested 40 local leaders and influential people from a number of non-Kochi villages.

Forced evictions:

- 21 July: Local sources reported that the Taliban have forced 150 families to leave their houses after heavy fighting between the Taliban and NRF forces in the Andarab area of Baghlan province. Most of the affected families are from the villages of Anamak, Tirgaran, Bagh Dara, Tghanak, Nobahar, Lakermar, Tajican, Ahangaran, Larbaj and Dara Jar Qasan in Deh Salah District.
- 1 August: Local sources reported that the Taliban had demanded residents of Hesarak, Panjshir province leave their houses because of a military operation. According to locals, the Taliban told residents to collect their crops and evacuate the area as soon as possible. There are about 200 families in the village.
- 22 August: Reports indicate that the Taliban are settling Kuchis in Tajik areas in the Khwaja Bahauddin district of Takhar Province. According to local sources, about 100 Kochi families have resettled in the province in recent days after moving from Pakistan and southern provinces.
- 23 August: Local sources reported that the Taliban had ordered villagers in the Paryan and Dara districts of Panjshir province to evacuate their houses. A large number of Taliban reinforcements had recently arrived in the area.
- 27 September: Local sources reported that the Taliban were evicting local residents in Bamiyan city, Bamiyan province who live inside caves near the famous Buddah statue. So far, eight families have reportedly been forced to move.

SRMO Database Summary: July to September 2022

HR Abuses targeting civil society	
<i>Incident Type</i>	<i>Cases¹⁴</i>
Detentions of HRDs, CSAs, political activists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Three CSO activists and one of their brothers detained by Taliban in Balkh province on 7 July ● Two CSAs detained in separate incidents in Kandahar and Helmand provinces for posting criticism of the Taliban on social media. Both reportedly took place on 21 July. ● One CSA detained on 8 September in Khost province after he praised the reopening of secondary schools for girls in Paktia province on his facebook page and called on people to support girls education. There were unconfirmed reports of additional arrests linked to the Paktia school opening and the Taliban’s overruling of that decision. ● A political activist was reportedly arrested by intelligence officials on 20 July. The activist, who was the head of Justice and Advancement Party, had reportedly criticized the Taliban on social and regular media platforms before his arrest , after which he was taken away to an unknown location.
Attacks on NGO workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● An aid worker working for an international relief agency was reportedly badly beaten on 18 September by a local Taliban commander who is also the local police chief. The beating reportedly took place after the aid worker refused the commander’s demands over where an aid project should take place. ● A NGO staff member was killed in their office in Farah City on 19 July by unknown attackers. Motive unknown. ● A second local NGO worker was killed on 20 August in Kabul by unknown attackers. The worker was employed by the Red Crescent and a woman passerby was reportedly injured in the incident.
Use of violence against peaceful protests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Taliban troops used force to break up protests by women and girls on 13 August in Kabul ● Taliban troops used force to break up protests by women and girls in Kabul on 31 August; the protesters had been angered by allegations of rape and forced marriage by a Taliban official ● Taliban troops used force to break up protests by school girls in Gardez, Paktia province on 10 September ● Taliban troops used force to break up protests by women and girls outside the Iranian embassy in Kabul on 29 September

¹⁴ Unless specified otherwise, case details come from the SRMO database (see Methodology section below). See <https://srmo.org/> for further details about the organization.

<p>Detentions of media workers by Taliban</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A journalist working for a local television station was arrested by the Taliban on 17 July in Mazar-e Sharif, Balkh province. ● Afghanistan's Journalists Center reported that a local journalist was briefly detained and interrogated on 25 July in Maymana city, Faryab province. ● Pakistani journalist Anas Malik was arrested and beaten in Kabul on 4 August; two of his colleagues were also detained and beaten. ● The head of a local radio channel in Ghazni city, Ghazni province was arrested and beaten on 27 August. During his detention he was threatened and told to close his radio station. ● Taliban forces arrested four local journalists on 10 September in Gardez, Paktia province for covering a demonstration by school girls. The journalists were interrogated, threatened and released after four hours.
<p>Beatings and harassment of media workers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A local journalist from Takhar province who has fled to Iran because of threats to his life reported on 2 July that his family continues to be harassed by Taliban soldiers. He has made a complaint to the Taliban Director of the Information and Culture Department who promised him his family would be safe, but despite this his family continues to be harassed. Taliban soldiers reportedly knock at the door of the family home regularly asking the journalist's wife about his whereabouts. ● A media worker covering for a local television channel in the western city of Herat was beaten on 4 September while covering a funeral. The Taliban director of Information and Culture was reportedly angry at being filmed. ● A local journalist in Parwan province reported that five unknown armed men entered his house on 10 August claiming to be Taliban soldiers. The intruders tied up his family members and threw him in a separate room. They took all the valuables including cash from the house before fleeing. ● A local radio journalist and midwife was beaten up by Taliban soldiers on 22 July in Jalalabad city, Nangarhar province. She fell unconscious and was taken to the hospital for treatment.
<p>HR Abuses targeting former government officials</p>	
<p>Extrajudicial killings of former government officials and their relatives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A former national security prosecutor was killed on 18 July in Khost province. He was allegedly detained, beaten and then shot by the Taliban.
<p>Arrest/disappearance of former government officials and their relatives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A former prosecutor was reportedly detained by the Taliban intelligence agency on 12 August in Daykundi province. ● A former government official and his son were reportedly detained by the Taliban on 3 July in the capital Kabul.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A spokesman for the former government was reportedly detained by the Taliban on 10 July in Ghor province.
HR Abuses targeting civilians	
Cruel and inhuman punishments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Taliban on 1 August reportedly publicly flogged two men and a woman in Jalalabad, Nangarhar province for alleged adultery. ● Local sources reported that the Taliban on 7 August flogged three men and two women in Zabul province on charges of adultery and theft. ● Local sources reported that a man and a woman were shot dead by the Taliban on 22 August in Faryab province for allegedly committing adultery. ● Local sources reported that the Taliban on 23 August arrested and then killed a young girl and boy who they accused of having a relationship outside of marriage. The incident took place in Badakhshan. ● A Taliban security commander in Takhar province said on 31 August that they had arrested a married man and woman on charges of running away from home and having an affair. ● Local sources in Badakhshan reported on 2 August that the Taliban had arrested and beaten a young boy and a teenage girl for allegedly going to a public park together. They were reportedly forced to marry each other in a courtroom before being released.
HR Abuses targeting former security forces	

Extrajudicial killings of former security force personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Unidentified gunmen on 1 July shot and killed a retired military man and tribal elder in Pul-I Khumri district, Baghlan province. Unidentified individuals riding on a motorbike shot and killed a former police chief on 6 July in the Dehrawood district of Uruzgan province. <p>Unknown armed men on 17 July raided the house of a former police officer, dragged him out of his house and shot and killed him. The attack took place in Qalat, Zabul province. A former police officer and a former National Directorate of Security officer were killed on 17 July in the Alishing district of Laghman province. Both the victims had recently returned home from overseas.</p> <p>Local sources reported that the Taliban on 18 July arrested a retired army officer and shot dead his cousin in the Andarab district of Baghlan province.</p> <p>Taliban soldiers reportedly shot and killed a former military officer near his home in Kapisa province on 19 July. A former police officer was reportedly dragged out of his house on</p>
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	<p>19 July and shot dead by Taliban soldiers. The incident happened in the Hessa-e Awal district of Kapisa province.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A former police commander was reportedly killed by unknown gunmen on 29 July in the Chisht-e Sharif district of Herat province. ● A former police officer reportedly died in Taliban custody on 4 August as a result of torture. The incident took place in the Nava Mesh district of Daikundi province. ● Taliban soldiers on 20 August reportedly shot and killed a former military officer who was originally from Panjshir province. The shooting took place in the Chamgari area of Kunduz province. ● Local sources reported that Taliban soldiers on 23 August dragged a former military officer from his car and shot him dead. The killing happened on the highway between Farkhar and Warsej districts in Takhar province. ● A former district security chief in Tajqurghan, Samangan was reportedly killed on 24 August after being released from a Taliban prison. The victim was shot dead by unknown men riding motorbikes. ● Taliban soldiers on 9 September arrested a former military officer who was subsequently shot and killed. His body was delivered to his family. The incident happened in the Seyahgird district of Parwan province. ● A Taliban soldier reportedly shot dead a former soldier on 11 September in the Khair Kot district of Paktika province. ● A former military officer died in Taliban custody on 11 September in the Kama district of Nangarhar province. He reportedly died after being tortured. ● A former NDS officer was reportedly killed on 11 September in the Sorobi district of Kabul after being detained and tortured by the Taliban. The officer's son, who had also worked for the NDS under the former government, was arrested with his father and reportedly remains in Taliban detention. ● Taliban soldiers reportedly shot and killed a former police-woman on 12 September in Ghazni, the capital of Ghazni province. The victim used to work at the women's prison in the city. Local sources reported that the Taliban had identified the woman and instructed her to come to the district centre to collect some aid. ● A mass grave was reportedly discovered on 20 September in Logar province. Local sources said that at least 10 bodies of ex-military personnel had been found, though it is unclear when they had been killed. ● A former military officer and influential local leader was reportedly killed on 28 September on the Nuristan highway in Nuristan province. He was detained by the Taliban, tortured and killed,
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	<p>prompting large riots against the de facto authorities by local residents.</p>
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<p>Detentions of former security force personnel</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A former police officer was reportedly arrested on 27 August in the Jani Khel district of Paktika province. Local sources reported that he was tortured after his arrest. ● A former member of the security forces was reportedly detained on 31 July in the Nawa Mish district of Daikundi province. He had previously fled to Iran but returned home after Taliban soldiers took his 10-year-old-son hostage. ● A former military officer was reportedly arrested by Taliban troops on 27 July in Qalat, Zabul province. His family were unable to find out where he had been taken. ● A former military officer was reportedly arrested on 19 July in Andarab district, Baghlan province at a Taliban check-post. He was detained after he had been identified as a member of the security forces under the previous government. ● A former military officer was reportedly arrested by the Taliban on 13 July in Arche Mazar village, Andarab district, Baghlan province. ● Three former military officers were reportedly arrested on 17 July in the Sholgara district of Balkh province. The three had recently returned home from Iran and their families declared that the Taliban had demanded weapons and cash in order to secure the detainees' release. ● A former military officer was reportedly arrested on 3 July in the Khaikhana area of the capital Kabul. The officer had been working at the Ministry of Defence's foreign relations directorate. According to his family he was arrested by the Taliban's intelligence service and the family have not been able to find out any information about him since his detention.
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SRMO

The [Safety and Risk Mitigation Organization \(SRMO\)](#) is an Afghan-led NGO. It was established in May 2013 to provide protection and training for grassroots Human Rights Defenders (HRDs). SRMO's main objective is to empower HRDs so they can safely continue their crucial work. SRMO has particularly focused its assistance on local and grassroots' HRDs and WHRDs, recognizing their utmost vulnerability as being at the frontline of defending human rights.

SRMO monitors and tracks human rights abuses affecting human rights activists and civil society. The organization also provides regular training on Hostile Environment, Security, Digital and Cyber security, First aid and other topics. In addition, SRMO distributes regular and vital security information and mitigation advice to hundreds of HRDs and WHRDs in the provinces across Afghanistan. The

organization provides emergency assistance, including emergency relocation and medical assistance for HRDs at risk. Since the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan in August 2021 SRMO has continued to provide support both to HRDs inside the country and to those who have fled and are now living in exile.

Methodology

This quarterly report is designed to provide a brief summary of the situation for human rights defenders in Afghanistan between July and September 2022, along with an overview of the broader human rights environment. It is based on information and cases gathered as part of SRMO's ongoing human rights monitoring work. SRMO maintains a database of incidents and rights abuses affecting human rights activists, civil society more broadly, and Afghan civilians. Cases are only included in the SRMO database if they have been verified via SRMO's networks inside Afghanistan.