

## 1.2. Former State actors and resistance to the Taliban

### COMMON ANALYSIS

Last update: November 2021

\*Minor updates added: April 2022

This section and the terminology used herein is without prejudice to the legal status of the former government or the current 'de facto' government by the Taliban.

(Former) Afghan State actors include, for example, members of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) and other authorities from the three State branches (executive, legislative and judiciary). Pro-government militias (PGMs) were also considered State actors.

The **ANSF** or Afghan National Defence and Security Forces (ANDSF) were comprised of the Afghan National Army (ANA), including the Afghan Border Force, Afghan Air Force, Afghan National Civil Order Force and the recently established Afghan Territorial Army as local security force, the Afghan National Police (ANP), which included the Afghan Local Police (ALP) and the National Directorate of Security (NDS), which included the Afghan Special Forces [[State structure](#), 2.1; [Security June 2021](#), 1.2.1].

Afghan State authorities and their associates were reported to have committed a wide range of human rights violations. Sources reported on extrajudicial killings, forced disappearances, arbitrary detention, kidnapping, robbery, looting, torture, and ill-treatment. Moreover, family members of Taliban fighters were intentionally killed by ANSF in retaliation for Taliban attacks against them. A high level of civilian harm from the use of force during search operations ('night raids') by NDS Special Forces was also documented, including the intentional killing of civilians, some of which amounted to summary executions [[Security June 2021](#), 1.2.1;

[State structure](#), 2.1, 2.1.1, 2.1.4].

In addition, the ANP have been involved in extortion and organised crime, in particular near key smuggling routes. Recruitment and sexual exploitation of boys (bacha bazi) committed by Afghan security forces, in particular by the ALP, were also observed, as well as sexual exploitation of girls [[State structure](#), 2.1.2, 2.1.4; [Security June 2021](#), 1.2.1; see also the section [2.13.1 Violence against children: overview](#)].

Different former State agents such as ministers, governors and ANSF personnel were reported to have acted beyond the scope of their legal authority. Moreover, police and judicial authorities were susceptible to the influence of powerful individuals [[Conflict targeting](#), 2; [Key socio-economic indicators 2017](#), 3.4.4.1, 3.5.3, 3.5.4].

A number of **PGMs** were fighting on the side of the government against Taliban and ISKP, although the former government had disbanded militia groups and stopped paying them. Such militias included the National Uprising Movements, also referred to as public uprising forces, a community-based defence initiative, the Kandahar Strike Force, Paktika's Afghan Security Guards, the Khost Protection Force and Shaheen Forces in Paktya, Paktika and Ghazni provinces. However, following the final Taliban offensive and their advancement throughout the country in the summer months, these militias could not resist the Taliban forces and soon dissolved or joined the Taliban [[Security September 2021](#), 1.3.4].

After the Taliban takeover, a resistance force emerged in Panjshir, under the name **National Resistance Front (NRF)**. NRF consists of militia fighters and former government soldiers loyal to the previous administration and opposed to the Taliban rule. The force is led by Ahmad Massoud, son of the late Tajik commander Ahmad Shah Massoud. Another prominent leader of the resistance movement is former vice president Amrullah Saleh who proclaimed himself acting president of Afghanistan on 17 August 2021. The group was controlling the Panjshir Valley, where armed confrontations took place between the opposition forces and the Taliban. Nevertheless, it is unclear whether fighting is ongoing. The Taliban announced the seizure of Panjshir on 6 September 2021, although Ahmed Massoud claimed the fighting was still ongoing [[Security September 2021](#), 1.1.2; [Country Focus 2022](#), 3.1].



For further information on human rights violations committed by the (former) Afghan State and pro-government elements and their relevance as potential exclusion grounds, see [6. Exclusion](#).

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