



RELEASE OF KUNDUZ PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS REPORT

KABUL, 12 December 2015 – The UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) today released Human Rights and Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict in Kunduz province. This special report documents civilian harm and human rights concerns in Kunduz province from 28 September to 13 October 2015 – the period covering the Taliban’s attack and temporary occupation of Kunduz city, the counter-offensive by pro-Government forces up to the point they regained control of the city, as well as the conflict elsewhere in the province.

The report documents civilian deaths and injuries during the reporting period and presents preliminary findings on arbitrary killings, abductions, assault and other forms of violence, including threats and widespread criminality, the use of child fighters during the conflict, the impact on access to education, health, and freedom of movement.

The report provides a preliminary figure of 848 civilian casualties (289 deaths and 559 injured) that occurred in Kunduz province between 28 September and 13 October. The vast majority of these casualties resulted from ground fighting that could not be attributed solely to one party. These figures include 67 casualties (30 deaths and 37 injured) resulting from an airstrike carried out by international military forces on a Médecins Sans Frontières hospital on 3 October, an event that is also examined in the report. Additional information on civilian casualties from the period covered by this report will be detailed in the 2015 Annual Report on Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, also produced jointly by UNAMA and OHCHR.

The report addresses key human rights concerns that arose during what was the first prolonged urban combat situation in Afghanistan since 2001, and outlines key recommendations to mitigate civilian casualties and protect civilians from harm, promote respect for international human rights and humanitarian law, and promote accountability.

UNAMA is mandate under UN Security Council resolution 2210 (2015) “to monitor the situation of civilians, to coordinate efforts to ensure their protection, to promote accountability and to assist in the full implementation of the fundamental freedoms and human rights provisions of the Afghan Constitution and international treaties to which Afghanistan is a State party, in particular those regarding the full enjoyment by women of their human rights.”

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