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The situation in Afghanistan

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The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security

Report of the Secretary-General

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political conditions

Summary

After five years of Taliban rule, the de facto authorities continued to centre governance on promoting the Taliban leader Haibatullah Akhundzada's vision of an Islamic system and loyalty to him. Armed opposition groups conducted limited attacks that did not significantly challenge the control of the de facto authorities, while cross-border hostilities between Afghanistan and Pakistan continued, with reports of civilian casualties, displacement and damage to critical infrastructure. Through the comprehensive approach, and working groups on counter-narcotics and the private sector established under the Doha process with the aim of building confidence, advancing Afghanistan's reintegration into the international system and meeting its international obligations, the United Nations facilitated engagement between the de facto authorities and the international community. Taliban policies continued to raise serious human rights concerns, including denial of rights affecting women and girls, restrictions on both men and women, arrests of journalists, reported violations of the general amnesty protecting members of the previous Government, and the continued imposition of corporal punishment. The Taliban also maintained their ban on national female staff and other Afghan women entering United Nations premises. Food insecurity, malnutrition and public health concerns persisted, while



operational constraints, funding gaps and restrictions affecting women humanitarian workers continued to impede the delivery of assistance. Humanitarian needs remained acute amid severe funding shortages. The 2026 Afghanistan Humanitarian Needs Response Plan remained significantly underfunded, at 29.9 per cent (\$513 million of \$1.7 billion required).

I. Key developments

A. Political developments

1. On 15 August, the Taliban de facto authorities commemorated the fifth anniversary of their takeover with ceremonies in Kandahar and Kabul. At the ceremony in Kandahar, the leader of the Taliban, attributing their “victory” to unity and solidarity, urged the preservation, strengthening and development of the Islamic system and warned against enemy propaganda. At a separate ceremony in Kabul, the de facto Deputy Prime Minister for Administrative Affairs, Abdul Salam Hanafi, stated that the de facto authorities sought friendly and constructive relations with countries around the world based on mutual respect, cooperation and shared interests.
2. The governing structure in Afghanistan under the Taliban de facto authorities remains highly centralized, with key decisions made by the Taliban leader, Haibatullah Akhundzada. Institutional coherence is maintained through strict loyalty to him. Structures for consultation and deliberation are opaque. In lieu of a constitution, the pattern of decrees issued demonstrates the Taliban’s interpretation of sharia law. The de facto Ministry for the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice remains a key institution in enforcing this interpretation, particularly as regards strict social norms and the severe restrictions on women and girls.
3. From 5 to 13 July, de facto Minister for the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice, Mohammad Khalid Hanafi, held meetings in Balkh, Herat, Kunduz and Paktiya Provinces with scholars, tribal elders, media representatives and officials. On 16 July, in Kabul City, he engaged with representatives from Ghazni, Kabul, Kapisa, Logar, Maidan Wardak, Parwan and Panjshir Provinces. On 18 July, in Jalalabad City, he engaged with those from Kunar, Laghman, Nangarhar and Nuristan Provinces. During these meetings, he described the enforcement of the law on the propagation of virtue and the prevention of vice as a collective obligation linked to unity and the full implementation of the sharia, urged cooperation with inspectors, and rejected external pressure to eliminate those restrictions.
4. A verbal instruction by the Taliban leader was reportedly transmitted to military courts by the de facto General Directorate for Supervision and Follow-up of Decrees and Edicts banning the use of smartphones for civil servants and security personnel. On 9 June, military courts were instructed to brief civilian and military personnel before the enforcement of the instruction began on 16 June. The de facto Supreme Court subsequently directed eight regional military courts to enforce the restriction. Further, the Court stipulated that any exemptions would require the written approval from the Taliban leader, providing otherwise for confiscation, destruction and disciplinary or legal action. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) received reports indicating varying levels of implementation of these restrictions across locations, types of entities and the ranks and functions of de facto officials.
5. The Taliban leader continued to reshuffle and appoint male loyalists to leadership positions. At the national level, appointments included one de facto Minister of Communications and Information Technology and eight de facto deputy ministers for defence, hajj and religious affairs, the propagation of virtue and the prevention of vice, finance, information and culture, and mines and petroleum. Subnational appointments included six de facto provincial governors, respectively of Badghis, Baghlan, Faryab, Ghazni, Jowzjan and Khost Provinces; nine de facto deputy provincial governors, respectively of Baghlan, Farah, Helmand, Kandahar, Logar, Maidan Wardak, Paktika, Paktiya and Zabul Provinces; 17 de facto district governors, in Badakhshan, Badghis, Kabul, Nangarhar and Sar-e Pul Provinces; one de facto mayor, in Herat Province; seven de facto provincial chiefs of police,

respectively in Baghlan, Herat, Kabul, Logar, Maidan Wardak, Jowzjan and Nimroz Provinces; and at least 14 de facto provincial line department heads, in Badakhshan, Badghis, Bamyan, Farah, Herat, Jowzjan, Kabul, Kandahar, Paktika and Maidan Wardak Provinces.

6. From 10 April to 31 July, UNAMA field offices facilitated 89 outreach activities involving a range of stakeholders, including civil society representatives, tribal elders, journalists, entrepreneurs, de facto officials and women activists. Participants emphasized, among other priorities, the need to preserve civic space, expand education and employment opportunities for women and men, and improve socioeconomic conditions. UNAMA field offices also facilitated 26 outreach activities with young people, during which education, unemployment and economic conditions were discussed.

7. The United Nations continued consultations within the counter-narcotics and private sector working groups of the Doha process, including Afghan women and men experts, as part of the comprehensive approach (see [S/2026/431](#)). While their active participation in the working groups helped to advance discussion on both topics, the de facto authorities identified a continued gap in expectations and actions by members of the international community as regards the difficult political issues.

B. Security

8. From 1 May to 31 July, the United Nations recorded 2,947 safety and security-related incident reports, marking an 11 per cent increase compared with the same period the previous year.

9. Armed opposition groups were more decentralized, fragmented and locally focused. From 1 May to 31 July, the Afghanistan Freedom Front, the Green Unit of Afghanistan Green Trend, the newly emerged Afghanistan Guardians National Front, the Afghanistan Independence Front, the Afghanistan Liberation Movement, the Afghanistan Republican Front, the Afghanistan United Front, the Andarab Resistance Front, the Freedom and Justice Movement, the newly emerged Homeland Soldiers Front, the Islamic Liberation Front of Afghan People, the Islamic Liberation Movement of the People of Afghanistan, the National Mobilization Front and the National Resistance Front claimed responsibility for 88 incidents affecting 21 provinces. Of these, 55 incidents were verified, including a marked concentration of 30 attacks during July. The attacks mainly involved ambushes and checkpoint assaults targeting the de facto authorities' personnel and military facilities, including attacks on personnel of the de facto Ministry for the Propagation of Virtue and Prevention of Vice in Herat on 12 June and in Kabul on 22 June. On 5 June, a suicide bomb was detonated outside a boys' school in Kabul, near the residence of the de facto Deputy Governor. No group claimed responsibility. On 17 July, the Homeland Soldiers Front briefly seized administrative buildings in Yaftal-e Payin District, Badakhshan Province, before withdrawing. On 24 July, the Afghanistan Freedom Front attacked a checkpoint of the de facto security forces in Zaybak District, Badakhshan Province. The de facto authorities reportedly repelled the attack and maintained control of the area, despite reports of continued sporadic clashes.

10. From 1 May to 31 July, the Afghanistan-Pakistan border remained volatile due to drone surveillance, air strikes and retaliatory military activities linked to the alleged presence of Tehreek-e Taliban Pakistan, Hafiz Gul Bahadur Group and other groups in Afghanistan. Air strikes by Pakistan impacted Ghazni City on 10 and 13 May and Shultan District, Kunar Province, Sperah District, Khost Province, and Barmal District, Paktika Province, on 10 June. Pakistani air strikes were reported in Marawarah District, Kunar Province, on 28 June and in Chamkani District, Paktiya Province and Giyan

District, Paktika Province, on 29 June. On 30 June, the de facto Ministry of Defence announced retaliatory drone attacks against alleged locations of Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant-Khorasan (ISIL-K) and anti-Taliban Afghan groups in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan Provinces in Pakistan, causing material damage and several casualties. The Pakistani authorities confirmed the crossing of drones into the territory of Pakistan and their successful interception. Intermittent cross-border shelling from Pakistan continued targeting districts inside Afghanistan, mainly Dand Patan, Pakiya Province; Terayzai, Khost Province; Barmal, Paktika Province; Kamdesh, Nuristan Province; and Shultan, Dangam and Marawarah, Kunar Province, causing civilian casualties and damage to infrastructure. Clashes between de facto security forces and Pakistani security forces were reported on 3 July in Registan District, Kandahar Province; from 5 to 9 July in Dur Baba District, Nangarhar Province; and on 29 July in Jaji District, Pakiya Province. Clashes also occurred in Mohmand Darah District, Nangarhar Province on 11, 13, 15 and 16 July, reportedly linked to the construction or reinforcement of checkpoints by one of the parties.

11. On 30 June, ISIL-K claimed an attack on a de facto military checkpoint in Waygal District, Nuristan Province, injuring several security personnel, and the killing of a de facto official near Faizabad City, Badakhshan Province, on 29 July.

12. From 1 May to 31 July, the United Nations documented 64 safety and security incidents directly affecting its personnel, compared with 62 incidents documented during the same period the previous year and 92 during the previous quarter.

C. Regional cooperation

13. On 28 April, defence ministers of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization discussed Afghanistan at their meeting in Bishkek; the Minister of Defence of the Russian Federation, Andrei Belousov, said that the country remained the main source of transnational crime and terrorist threats. On the margins of the International Security Forum held in Moscow from 26 to 29 May, the Secretary of the Russian Federation Security Council, Sergei Shoigu, and the de facto Minister of Defence, Mohammad Yaqub, signed a technical-military cooperation agreement whose details were not released. On 16 June, the Afghanistan-Central Asia Think Tank Forum met in Kabul with the participation of UNAMA and strategic research institutions. On that occasion, the de facto Minister for Foreign Affairs, Amir Khan Muttaqi, pledged cooperation with neighbouring States to address such shared security challenges as ISIL-K.

14. On 25 April in Balkh Province, the Minister of Health of Uzbekistan, Asilbek Khudayarov, and the de facto Minister of Public Health, Noor Jalal Jalali, agreed to simplify visa procedures for Afghan patients seeking medical care in Uzbekistan. From 19 to 21 June, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Economy of Kazakhstan, Serik Zhumangarin, visited Kabul, where he met with the de facto Prime Minister, Mohammad Hassan Akhund, the de facto Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs, Abdul Ghani Baradar, the de facto Minister of the Interior, Sirajuddin Haqqani, and the de facto Minister of Commerce and Industry, Nooruddin Azizi. Mr. Zhumangarin also opened the Kazakhstan Trade House in Kabul. On 26 July in Kabul, the Deputy Prime Minister of Uzbekistan, Jamshid Khodjayev, met the de facto Prime Minister and the de facto Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs to discuss expanding trade and investment, after which Afghan and Uzbek traders signed 22 trade agreements valued at \$200 million.

15. On 21 May in Ashgabat, the de facto Minister of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock, Ataullah Omari, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan, Rashid Meredov, discussed the construction of the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India Pipeline from Torghundi to Herat; Turkmenistan later reported that

construction was 67 per cent complete. On 4 July in Tehran, the de facto Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Abbas Araghchi, discussed strengthening bilateral cooperation. On 9 July in New Delhi, the de facto Minister of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock and the Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare of India, Shivraj Singh Chouhan, agreed to establish a joint working group on cooperation.

16. At its ninth Ministerial Conference on Women, held in Islamabad on 12 and 13 July, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation adopted the Islamabad Declaration, which expressed concern regarding the Taliban's continued restrictions on women and girls in Afghanistan, noting that they were inconsistent with Islamic values. The Declaration further emphasized the need to remove educational and professional barriers and ensure the full, equal and meaningful participation of all women and girls in the public life of Afghanistan.

17. UNAMA continued its engagement with regional stakeholders, arranging monthly meetings with Kabul-based ambassadors and participating in forums including the Termez Dialogue on Connectivity between Central Asia and South Asia, held in Uzbekistan from 4 to 6 June, and the meeting of European Union and Central Asian Special Representatives for Afghanistan, held in Kazakhstan on 15 June.

D. Human rights

18. The hostilities between Afghanistan and Pakistan caused 399 civilian casualties (57 killed and 342 injured) in Afghanistan between 1 April and 30 June.

19. Air strikes by Pakistan on 28 June in Kunar, Paktika and Paktiya Provinces killed 28 civilians and injured 189. Two air strikes in Paktiya Province killed 22 civilians (2 girls, 3 boys, 2 women and 15 men) and injured at least 185 others (5 girls, 13 boys, 11 women and 156 men). Most of the casualties were caused by the second air strike, which occurred as residents were attempting to rescue the victims of the first air strike. The Embassy of Pakistan to Afghanistan informed UNAMA that the air strikes "were directed exclusively at identified terrorist hideouts and support infrastructure linked to groups responsible for attacks inside Pakistan", stating that their actions "adhered to the principle of distinction and proportionality under international law". The de facto Ministry of Foreign Affairs informed UNAMA that it "categorically rejects Pakistan's allegations that armed militants were targeted or killed during these attacks".

20. On 8 and 9 May, in Argo district, Badakhshan Province, communities protested against the destruction of poppy fields during counter-narcotic operations conducted by the de facto authorities. On both days, the de facto security forces fired warning shots to disperse protesters. As they sought to flee, one boy (on 8 May) and one man (on 9 May) suffered falls and died.

21. Between 1 May and 31 July, UNAMA documented at least 12 killings, 13 arbitrary arrests and detentions and 3 instances of torture and ill-treatment against former government officials and members of the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces, contravening the general amnesty announced by the Taliban leader on 17 August 2021.

22. UNAMA documented 21 instances of corporal punishment carried out by the de facto authorities (against 8 women and 13 men) between 1 May and 31 July, none of which were announced publicly by the de facto Supreme Court, which most recently did so on 22 April. UNAMA verified, however, that punishments were carried out by de facto primary or district court officials in some provinces.

23. Between 1 April and 30 June, the country task force on monitoring and reporting on children and armed conflict in Afghanistan documented some 280 grave violations affecting around 220 children, including 87 girls. The most prevalent violation was killing and maiming, which accounted for 77 per cent of the violations, with explosive devices remaining the leading cause of child casualties.

24. The de facto authorities continued to arrest journalists and suspend media outlets for undisclosed reasons. For example, the de facto General Directorate of Intelligence detained three journalists for periods of between 19 days and two months and suspended the operations of two media outlets (one resumed operation after one week and the other remains suspended at the time of writing).

25. Between 6 and 7 June, in Herat City, the de facto Department for the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice and de facto police detained at least 30 women, accusing them of not complying with the dress code (a full-body cloak that covers the head, but not the face, and/or a face mask). They were released on 8 June. On 9 June, dozens of women and men protested against the detentions. Plain-clothes de facto security forces beat and shot at protesters, killing one boy and injuring at least four people. At least 17 protesters were also arrested. In July, the de facto authorities again enforced the dress code in Herat City and detained several women.

26. On 14 May, the de facto Ministry of Justice published decree No. 18, the “Code on the judicial separation of spouses”. The decree establishes limited grounds on which women may petition for judicial separation, most of which require the consent of the husband. It reinforces the authority of male guardians in arranging and validating marriages. Child marriage is implicitly permitted. On 20 May, the spokesperson of the de facto authorities defended the decree as being based on the sharia, rejecting criticism which he described as being based on other values.

27. According to an announcement by the de facto Office of Prison Administration, as at 20 July, its prison population stood at 30,300 detainees. On 26 May, the de facto Office announced that the de facto Supreme Court had pardoned and released 1,191 prisoners for Eid al-Adha. The de facto Office continued seeking support for detainees in relation to nutrition, health and training.

28. In June and July, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the International Organization for Migration and UNAMA consulted 892 Afghan women across 34 provinces and 254 men across 20 provinces regarding the gendered impacts of climate change. Women reported that climate-related shocks – worsening water scarcity, floods and severe winters – were compounding food insecurity and unemployment, amid declining humanitarian assistance and the absence of support from the de facto authorities. Restrictions on women’s movement, including *mahram* requirements, impeded timely access to early warning information, healthcare, humanitarian assistance and livelihood opportunities, deepening vulnerability and undermining adaptive capacity. Women remained excluded from decisions on resource use, preparedness and response, despite their local knowledge.

E. Economic development, donor coordination and aid effectiveness

29. According to estimates by United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, nearly 1.15 million Afghan returnees arrived between 1 January and 22 August, including 686,200 from Pakistan, 465,000 from the Islamic Republic of Iran, and some 1,300 deportees from Tajikistan, in addition to the return of approximately 2.9 million individuals in 2025. A large share of the returns were involuntary. These large-scale returns continue to place significant pressure on local labour markets and

the absorptive capacity of communities in areas of return, thereby undermining prospects for sustainable reintegration.

30. The closure of the border with Pakistan since October 2025 negatively affected local economies and customs revenue. As the Islamic Republic of Iran provides Afghanistan's other direct outlet to seaports, the conflict in the Middle East disrupted trade flows and increased transportation and transaction costs, raising prices for food and non-food commodities. According to the World Bank, headline inflation reached 7.8 per cent in May. Food inflation reached 8.2 per cent, while non-food inflation remained unchanged. These pressures weakened household purchasing power.

31. Despite these pressures, the de facto authorities made efforts to improve the overall economic environment by encouraging the private sector. On 12 July, the de facto authorities announced tax concessions favouring microenterprises, private healthcare providers and the construction sector. Those concessions were intended to foster resilience, encourage activity and cut costs.

32. Resource-related conflicts, including violent incidents, were reported in Badakhshan, Baghlan and Sar-e Pul Provinces. Those conflicts undermined livelihoods and the provision of basic services. De facto ministries reported the planting of saplings, industry inspections, environmental preservation activities, and support for infrastructure such as dams and canals, including feasibility studies.

33. The Afghanistan Coordination Group, co-chaired by the European Union, UNAMA and the World Bank Group, convened in Istanbul, Türkiye, on 28 and 29 April. Participants expressed deep concern over Afghanistan's worsening humanitarian, health-related, economic and protection environment. The Group reaffirmed support for engagement with the de facto authorities through the Doha process, while emphasizing that the de facto authorities bore primary responsibility for the welfare and rights of the Afghan people and that restrictions on women and girls remained the principal obstacle to greater international support and resource mobilization. The Group called for the reversal of restrictions on women and girls, enhanced cooperation with international partners and continued engagement on basic human needs and durable solutions. As at mid-March 2026, the United Nations Strategic Framework for Afghanistan required \$2.16 billion for basic human needs and development programming, of which \$1.08 billion, or 50 per cent, was available.

34. The climate, water and environment task force co-chaired by Norway, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, UNAMA and the World Bank Group met on 23 July to discuss the status of climate finance in Afghanistan. Participants, including donors and international and national non-governmental organizations, discussed the importance of reinstating climate finance to Afghanistan, particularly from the Green Climate Fund and the Adaptation Fund. During the reporting period, \$8 million was allocated for Afghanistan from the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The allocation is aimed at addressing biodiversity, land degradation and climate change, pending the approval of proposals by the Council of GEF.

35. In order to advance implementation of a common risk-management approach in Afghanistan, the United Nations country team endorsed a contractor information sharing protocol, which establishes a common framework for systematic contractor- and contract-related information-sharing.

36. The Afghanistan Credit Guarantee Foundation and partner institutions, supported by the United Nations, facilitated the disbursement of 23,789 loans valued at \$71.3 million, backed by \$52.8 million in guarantees, with an average loan size of \$2,997. Women-owned businesses accounted for 33 per cent of all loans disbursed. As at mid-August, the scheme generated 47,632 full-time jobs, with 35 per cent held by women.

37. Under the framework of the private sector working group of the Doha process, the United Nations Development Programme partnered with nine microfinance institutions, increasing the availability of microfinance services from 16 to 24 provinces, thereby expanding access to credit, particularly for women entrepreneurs and rural households.

38. On 11 August, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization announced that an estimated 2.4 million Afghan girls were systematically excluded from secondary education five years after the Taliban took over the country. A study published on 28 April by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) found that restrictions on women's education and labour force participation were estimated to cost Afghanistan an annual economic loss of at least \$84 million, or 0.5 per cent of the 2023 gross domestic product. These losses compounded the long-term effects of the ban on human capital and the well-being of women and children.¹

F. Humanitarian assistance

39. The humanitarian situation continued to deteriorate due to many underlying drivers of need and their effect of exacerbating fragility. The needs remained acute, compounded by the large number of returns of Afghans from neighbouring countries, funding shortfalls, conflict in the Middle East, trade disruptions and climate shocks. During the reporting period, heavy rainfall and flash floods impacted the eastern, south-eastern and central regions of Afghanistan, causing widespread humanitarian consequences across multiple provinces.

40. Between January and May, United Nations organizations and their partners provided 6.8 million people with at least one form of assistance, including 685,000 people who received three or more types of support. Assistance included food security and livelihood support for 4.3 million people, healthcare for 2.5 million, protection services for 2.1 million, nutrition assistance for 1.5 million and water, sanitation and hygiene services for 711,000.

41. During the reporting period, 61 per cent of humanitarian organizations faced increased *mahram* requirements for women personnel, who had previously travelled alone within city boundaries, an 8 per cent increase since February; 46 per cent reported that women could not access offices; and 29 per cent reported restrictions on field travel, according to monitoring by UN-Women. Sixteen per cent of women staff were now working from home, an increase from 14 per cent in February. Funding shortfalls led to nearly half of surveyed organizations discontinuing measures to support women's participation as employees. In Herat Province, heightened *mahram* and dress-code enforcement was accompanied not only by the above-mentioned detentions, but also by the closure of at least eight women's and girls' spaces and further restrictions on assistance.

42. Large-scale returns, largely in adverse circumstances, strained border systems and absorption capacity. United Nations and humanitarian partners maintained services at major crossings and assisted approximately 135,300 vulnerable returnees. Funding constraints forced the World Food Programme (WFP) to phase out returnee cash assistance in June, leaving more than 400,000 vulnerable returnees without cash-for-food support. The high share of undocumented returns has also driven up in-country protection needs, including documentation, psychosocial support, mine-risk

¹ See www.unicef.org/innocenti/reports/cost-of-inaction-afghanistan-2026.

education and child protection, stretching the United Nations and partners amid significant funding shortfalls.

43. Humanitarian operations were constrained by regional instability and supply-chain disruptions. Partners increasingly relied on alternative corridors through the “lapis lazuli route” to Türkiye and Europe in order to restore the movement of critical supplies. During the reporting period, an arrangement reached between Afghanistan and Pakistan allowed for the entry of 687 humanitarian cargo trucks into Afghanistan.

44. One in three Afghans faced acute food insecurity, with 13.8 million people projected to be in Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) phase 3 (crisis) or phase 4 (emergency). An IPC stakeholder exercise projected that a total of 3.7 million children under the age of 5, and 1.2 million pregnant and breastfeeding women, face acute malnutrition in 2026. Funding and supply constraints limited the response, with WFP expecting to reach only one in seven acutely malnourished women and children; deliveries made it possible to assist 80,000 children and 25,000 women. UNICEF supported more than 3,300 service points, admitting for treatment 141,300 children with severe wasting and 90,500 children at risk. To support food production and long-term nutrition outcomes, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations reached 323,000 people (73 per cent of them women and girls) and vaccinated 3.9 million animals against diseases.

45. Afghanistan’s weak public health system is heavily dependent on international funding, which continued its decrease of almost 20 per cent during this year from the reduced funding received in the first eight months of last year. Between 1 April and 30 June, more than 520 communicable disease alerts were reported, including 42,600 cases of acute watery diarrhoea, 812 cases of Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever and 762 cases of dengue. Funding shortfalls resulted in the suspension or closure of approximately 150 health facilities between January and June alone. Emergency medical kits, basic health centres and outpatient screenings by the World Health Organization and partners helped to address some needs.

46. Explosive ordnance contamination continued to endanger children and communities across Afghanistan, with the reporting period showing a heightened threat along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. On 8 June, in Barmal District, Paktika Province, one item of unexploded ordnance caused 13 casualties, including 10 children. Mine action capacity declined by 38 per cent since the previous reporting period, impacting the response to emergency requests from communities. Of the 235 hotline calls received by the Mine Action Technical Cell in June, 65 requests received no immediate response.

47. Between 1 April and 30 June, partners reported 159 incidents of constraints on humanitarian access by the de facto authorities, which suspended 86 activities, compared to 307 incidents affecting 242 activities from January through March. Interference in programme implementation accounted for most incidents. Twenty-three incidents involved violence against humanitarian personnel, assets or facilities, including the detention of 21 humanitarian workers. The de facto Ministry for the Propagation of Virtue and Prevention of Vice was associated with 40 incidents, including 27 in Herat Province. Overall, there were 24 incidents of restrictions to the participation of women humanitarian workers or women’s access to assistance.

G. Counter-narcotics

48. According to the *World Drug Report 2026* of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), published on 26 June, opium poppy cultivation and production in Afghanistan has remained at historically low levels since the de facto

authorities banned narcotics in 2022.² Heroin and opium seizures are fewer and smaller in scale, largely reflecting the depletion of stocks. Meanwhile, seizure data indicate that methamphetamine trafficking originating in or transiting through South-West Asia, particularly Afghanistan, continues to increase.

49. During the reporting period, the United Nations supported 76 facilities for people affected by drug use across 19 provinces, delivering treatment services to 63,340 people (of whom 18,141 were women). In addition, the United Nations assisted 89,068 beneficiaries (of whom 21,042 were women) through agricultural and livelihood interventions in nine provinces.

50. Under the framework of the counter-narcotics working group established under the Doha process, UNODC convened a policy workshop on 20 May with senior officials from the de facto ministries of public health and the interior on the topic of drug demand reduction. On 29 July, UNAMA convened a subgroup meeting, in a hybrid format, with the participation of 12 Member States, one international organization and seven Afghan women and men experts, to take stock of work since the February meeting and into the future.

H. Mission support

51. As at 30 June, vacancy rates in UNAMA were 18 per cent for international staff, 5 per cent for international United Nations Volunteers, 17 per cent for national United Nations Volunteers, 16 per cent for National Professional Officers and 9 per cent for national staff, compared with approved rates of 10.4 per cent, 4 per cent, 5 per cent, 14.8 per cent and 10.7 per cent, respectively. The proportion of women staff was 36 per cent for international staff, 37 per cent for international United Nations Volunteers, 11 per cent for national United Nations Volunteers, 9 per cent for National Professional Officers and 12 per cent for national staff.

II. Analysis

52. The appearance of relative stability in Afghanistan through the de facto authorities' overall territorial and administrative control masks the accumulating risks that could impact the country's stability over the short and long term. These risks include human rights violations, lack of inclusivity, acute economic pressure and increasing inability to provide basic services, increased involuntary returns and out-migration, and continuing concerns about the use of Afghan soil as a safe haven for terrorist groups. While the de facto authorities have so far maintained relative stability, many of their policies undermine the country's capacity to manage the multitude of current and foreseeable challenges.

53. Foremost among those policies are the ongoing institutionalized and increasingly enforced denial of the rights of women and girls, and the authoritarian nature of the political system, which both block Afghanistan's reintegration into the international system and have direct negative short- and long-term effects on Afghan society and the country's development.

54. The de facto authorities' violations of rights of women and girls constitute a central obstacle to further resource mobilization, as they have limited the ways in which the international community can provide essential support to the Afghan people, including women and girls. Afghanistan cannot fully participate in international technical forums, access financial resources, or receive aid and technical

² See www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/world-drug-report-2026.html.

assistance directly, due to the non-recognized status of the de facto authorities as the government of Afghanistan.

55. The hostilities between Afghanistan and Pakistan have added to instability, despite efforts by regional countries to mediate. As reported by the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team, many Member States continue to point to evidence that terrorist groups exist and are protected inside the Afghan national territory (see [S/2026/651](#)). Nevertheless, the de facto authorities publicly reiterate assertions that they will not allow Afghan territory to be used by terrorist groups against other countries and claim to be seeking positive relations with countries in the region and the wider international community.

56. The gaps created by the limited relationship between the de facto authorities in Afghanistan and the international community have been partially addressed through the political and economic engagement of countries in the region. These regional engagements are seen as having a positive effect on the economy, but they are unlikely, on their own, to be sufficient to guarantee Afghanistan's long-term stability. While a wider international effort is required in order to yield benefits for the citizens, this will ultimately depend on cooperation from the de facto authorities on key issues that they have so far been unwilling to address.

III. Implications

57. UNAMA works toward helping create conditions under which Afghanistan can be reintegrated into the international community, with Afghanistan taking responsibility for its international commitments. To this effect, the United Nations and UNAMA continue to facilitate dialogue, including through the multilateral Doha process, involving Member States from the region and the wider international community, to build confidence between the de facto authorities and the international community, and to encourage all engagements that benefit the Afghan people. Such engagements have not legitimized de facto authorities' policies that undermine the rights of Afghans and, in particular, violate the rights of women and girls. Rather, these engagements provide a coordinated and structured framework to address the major issues that block Afghanistan's reintegration into the international community. As a result of these efforts, limited progress has been made in developing mutual confidence, including in relation to private sector development and counter-narcotics. UNAMA also continues to engage in outreach with all Afghan stakeholders, including at the national and subnational levels and with civil society, to maintain the possibilities for dialogue.

58. The generally more stable security environment has allowed United Nations entities and partners to continue to aid the most vulnerable Afghans despite significantly reduced funding and some operational interference. Joint structures of cooperation between the international community and the de facto authorities have been created to effectively resolve several issues in the delivery of assistance. Bans affecting Afghan women personnel of the United Nations, women humanitarian workers and humanitarian operations, along with a narrowing civic space, affect the Mission's capacity to engage more broadly across Afghan society and support the delivery of assistance.

59. Despite unresolved issues, ongoing discussions at all levels between United Nations entities and the de facto authorities demonstrate a willingness by the de facto authorities to work with international institutions within certain boundaries. The fundamental issue is that key aspects of Afghanistan's international obligations remain outside these boundaries and impede further implementation of the mandate of UNAMA in relation to political engagement and human rights.

IV. Consolidated conclusions, recommendations and other proposed actions

60. I call upon the de facto authorities to take concrete steps to address Afghanistan's international obligations and protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all Afghans. An immediate need is to lift restrictions and bans that discriminate against women and girls; remove barriers to their full access to education, employment and public life; and allow United Nations national women personnel and women humanitarian workers to return to their places of work. I further urge the de facto authorities to respect the freedom of expression and media freedom, ensure due process and the rights of detainees, prevent violations of the general amnesty, end the use of corporal punishment, and ensure that the use of force complies strictly with international human rights law, including the principles of legality, necessity and proportionality.

61. I remain concerned about the continuing hostilities between Afghanistan and Pakistan and urge all parties to comply fully with their obligations under international law, including international human rights law and, as applicable, international humanitarian law, and to respect and protect civilians. International humanitarian law requires that, in the conduct of military operations, all parties respect the principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution in the conduct of military operations. International humanitarian law also requires that medical personnel be respected and protected. Attacks directed against them are prohibited and may constitute war crimes.

62. I call upon Member States to uphold their international protection obligations, including non-refoulement, and ensure that returns to Afghanistan are voluntary, safe, dignified and supported by sustainable reintegration efforts.

63. I call upon the participants of the Doha process to recommit to their engagement in a comprehensive approach that serves the Afghan people and supports the eventual reintegration of Afghanistan into the international community. It is imperative for Member States to maintain a collective commitment to Afghanistan aimed at advancing avenues of principled and pragmatic engagement for the benefit of the Afghan people and the country's stability.
