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

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution [74/9](#) and Security Council resolution [2777 \(2025\)](#), in which the Secretary-General was requested to report every three months on the situation in Afghanistan and the implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), including at the subnational level.
2. The report provides an update on the activities of the United Nations in Afghanistan, including political, humanitarian and human rights efforts, since the issuance of the previous report, dated 21 February 2025 ([A/79/797-S/2025/109](#)).

II. Relevant developments

3. Amid media reports over internal tensions within the de facto authorities senior de facto officials in multiple public statements continued to contend that the presence of differences of opinion did not amount to disunity within the movement. The fiscal year started on 20 March with no reports of an approved national budget. There were, however, personnel reductions and salary delays across de facto ministries. A new school year started with secondary schools and higher education remaining closed for girls and women. Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant-Khorasan (ISIL-K) claimed several attacks, including a suicide attack at the de facto Ministry of Urban Development and Housing, while several armed opposition groups also claimed attacks. Neither ISIL-K nor the opposition groups seriously threatened the Taliban's hold on power and territory. As at mid-May, the Afghanistan Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan for 2025, targeting 16.8 million people out of an estimated 22.9 million in need, had received only 15.7 per cent of the \$2.42 billion required. As at 15 February, the United Nations Strategic Framework for Afghanistan for 2023–2025 had received 22 per cent of the \$2.78 billion required for 2025. On 23 April, the Strategic Framework was extended to December 2027.



A. Political developments

4. The Taliban leader, Haibatullah Akhundzada, held key meetings with de facto Cabinet officials in Kandahar during the reporting period. On 28 March, the Taliban leader reportedly convened senior de facto security officials, including the de facto Minister of Defence, Mohammad Yaqoub, the de facto Minister of the Interior, Sirajuddin Haqqani, the head of the de facto General Directorate of Intelligence, Abdul Haq Wasiq, and respective deputy ministers. According to the de facto authorities' statements, a consolidated security report was reviewed at the meeting in Kandahar, and directives were issued relating to operational planning, strategic priorities and institutional strengthening within the security sector.

5. On 30 March, in his Eid sermon, the Taliban leader issued several messages reaffirming his central authority, calling for allegiance to his leadership, rejecting democracy and urging full implementation of Sharia law, with a focus on the enforcement of the Law on the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice. On 10 April, UNAMA released a report on the impact, implementation and enforcement of the Law on the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice.¹ Six months into the implementation of the Law, UNAMA observed a determination by the leadership of the Taliban to ensure that its vision of a pure Islamic system is implemented nationwide, including increased restrictions on Afghans' personal and private spaces, women's and girls' access to public spaces, healthcare, dress code and travel, and on the business, health, education and media sectors.

6. In early March, amid media reports over internal tensions within the de facto authorities, the de facto Spokesperson acknowledged that differences in opinion existed within the de facto authorities. He acknowledged in particular the sensitivity of the issue of girls' education and stated that the divisions neither threatened national unity nor posed opposition to the de facto authorities. In a televised interview on 5 March, he addressed the issue of extended absences from the country by several de facto officials, including the de facto Minister of Interior, Sirajuddin Haqqani. In April, the de facto Minister of Interior returned to public view after a two and a half-month absence, meeting in Kabul with the de facto Minister of Refugees and Repatriation, Abdul Kabir, and other de facto officials on 12 April.

7. The de facto authorities' new fiscal year began on 20 March, without any reporting or publication of their approved national budget. Shortly afterwards, the de facto authorities initiated personnel reductions and salary delays across de facto institutions. Measures include proposed staffing cuts of up to 30 per cent in the education sector, with similar plans for public health. On 13 April, the Taliban leader reportedly ordered a 20 per cent reduction in security sector personnel. On 20 April, the de facto Minister of Defence chaired the de facto Security and Clearance Commission, where a phased approach to the staffing cuts was agreed.

8. The de facto authorities continued to appoint and reshuffle Taliban loyalists – all men – to leadership positions. At the national level, appointments included five de facto deputy ministers and two directors within de facto ministries. On 30 April, the media reported the Taliban leader's order to abolish the Office of the de facto Deputy Prime Minister for Political Affairs and create a new de facto entity named "Directorate for Integration of Sapidar Palace". The de facto Political Commission has not been convened since the appointment of the former de facto Deputy Prime Minister as de facto Minister of Refugees and Repatriation in January. Subnational appointments included 26 de facto district governors, seven de facto provincial capital city mayors, six de facto provincial chief of police, three provincial-level heads of the de facto

¹ See <https://unama.unmissions.org/report-implementation-enforcement-and-impact-pvpv-law-afghanistan>.

General Directorate of Intelligence and at least six provincial line department heads. On 18 February, 14 heads of jihadi madrasas were also reshuffled in 14 provinces.

9. The de facto authorities organized 17 de facto authority-registered madrasa graduation ceremonies in 11 provinces. Reportedly, 537 men and 6 women graduated from the de facto authority-registered madrasas. According to reports, senior de facto officials continued to use madrasa graduation ceremonies to call for people's adherence to sharia law, especially among young people, and national unity. Over the same period, one madrasa was inaugurated, with some reports indicating that several de facto provincial governors, including in Bamyan, Daykundi, Farah, Ghazni and Logar Provinces, asked communities to participate financially in the construction of madrasa buildings and facilities.

10. From 22 February to 22 May, there were some 12 demonstrations by civil service retirees in Kabul to reiterate their long-standing request for the resumption of pension payments. Many expressed concerns over continuing delays in pension payments, noting the difficulties that they face in meeting essential needs without regular income since 2021.

11. UNAMA engaged with male defence lawyers who described challenges that they face in providing services to clients. In Kandahar Province, defence lawyers stated that demand for their services had decreased following the Taliban takeover owing to financial hardships, restrictions on access to persons in detention and legal ambiguity. In Farah and Herat Provinces, defence lawyers observed that de facto judges resorting to confession statements to convict suspects reduced the lawyers' relevance and role. In Herat Province, defence lawyers criticized de facto judges for prioritizing defence lawyers who had begun to practise only after the Taliban takeover. Meanwhile, on 1 March, the de facto Ministry of Justice announced that 288 out of 419 male candidates had passed the examination held on 23 February to become defence lawyers.

12. The de facto authorities publicly reported that, from 22 February to 22 May, 43 local conflicts, including disputes related to family and community issues, as well as land and water rights, were resolved through mediation by local community elders, religious scholars and de facto authorities in 15 provinces. Local sources claimed that all parties involved were satisfied with the conduct of the conflict resolution processes.

13. High-level de facto officials conducted public outreach both in and outside of Kabul. From mid-April to early May, the de facto Chief Justice, Abdul Hakim Haqqani, engaged with local de facto officials in the western and southern provinces, advocating for the implementation of sharia law through de facto courts and de facto officials. From mid to late April, the de facto Deputy Prime Minister for Administrative Affairs, Salam Hanafi, visited the eastern and northern provinces to assess the situation of returnees.

14. From 22 February to 22 May, UNAMA field offices facilitated 115 meetings involving civil society, tribal elders, journalists, entrepreneurs, youth and women activists. The interlocutors stressed the need to preserve civic space and the importance of education for men and women, including in modern sciences, employment opportunities for youth and former government employees and healthcare facilities, irrigation and agriculture. Youth, in particular, expressed concern over the implementation of the Law on the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice, which they said had led to increased surveillance and exacerbated their economic hardship, unemployment and mental health issues.

15. Opposition figures convened under the fifth Vienna Process Conference for a Democratic Afghanistan, held in Vienna on 18 and 19 February, and at the twelfth

Herat Security Dialogue, held in Madrid on 24 and 25 February. On 22 April, the National Resistance Front (NRF), the Afghanistan Freedom Front (AFF) and the Jamiat-e-Islami Afghanistan political party announced their dissociation from the National Assembly for the Salvation of Afghanistan, which had been created abroad through the merger of 32 political parties in December 2024.

16. On 20 March, a United States of America delegation led by Adam Boehler, a United States government special employee working on hostage affairs, accompanied by the former United States Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation, Zalmay Khalilzad, met in Kabul with the de facto Minister for Foreign Affairs, Amir Khan Muttaqi. According to a statement by the de facto Foreign Ministry, discussions were focused on bilateral relations, detainee release and consular services for Afghans in the United States. On 20 March, in a press statement, the Secretary of State of the United States, Marco Rubio, announced that an American citizen, George Glezmann, had been released after more than two years of captivity in Afghanistan. On 29 March, the former United States Special Representative announced the release of another American citizen, Faye Hall, facilitated through Qatari mediation. On 22 March, according to United States Government websites, the United States had revoked bounties on the de facto Interior Minister and two other senior Taliban officials.

17. On 17 April, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation issued a press release on the suspension of the designation of the Taliban as a terrorist organization, reflective of a decision on the same date by the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation. The press release indicated that the decision of the Supreme Court does not entail changes in the international commitments of the Russian Federation regarding compliance with the Security Council regime of sanctions against individuals and legal entities associated with the Taliban, as well as other groups and entities.

18. Following the recommendations contained in the independent assessment pursuant to Security Council resolution [2679 \(2023\)](#) (S/2023/856, annex), discussions at the third meeting of special envoys on Afghanistan, held in Doha in 2024, and the subsequent launch of two working groups on counter-narcotics and on the private sector, aimed at addressing the basic needs of the Afghan people and identifying confidence-building measures, the United Nations Secretariat and UNAMA continued to engage Afghan and international stakeholders to advance a political road map for a more coherent, coordinated and structured multilateral engagement between the international community and the de facto authorities.

B. Security

19. From 1 February to 30 April 2025, the United Nations recorded 2,299 safety and security-related incident reports, marking a 3 per cent increase as compared with the same period in 2024. There were 175 robbery incidents, marking a 7 per cent increase as compared with the same period in 2024.

20. From 1 February to 30 April 2025, activities of the armed opposition posed no significant challenge to the Taliban's control of the national territory. NRF and AFF claimed to have carried out 56 and 16 attacks, respectively. The Afghanistan Liberation Movement claimed three attacks, all in April. Another 11 attacks remained unclaimed. Three verified attacks that targeted the de facto Ministry of Interior in Kabul, Nijrab district centre in Kapisa Province, and Bagram Airfield in Parwan Province resulted in an unconfirmed number of casualties. AFF is the only armed opposition group to have declared a ceasefire during the month of Ramadan.

21. From 1 February to 30 April 2025, ISIL-K attacks continued against de facto authority targets. Notably, ISIL-K claimed an attack in Kunduz City, on 11 February, against de facto security forces collecting their salaries. Nineteen men (4 civilians and 15 de facto authority members) were killed; the number of wounded remains unknown. On 13 February, ISIL-K claimed responsibility for a suicide attack at the de facto Ministry of Urban Development and Housing in Kabul, killing 3 men and injuring 10, all employees of the de facto Ministry, including the de facto Deputy Minister.

22. From 1 February to 30 April 2025, multiple armed incidents involving de facto security forces and Pakistani security forces were reported. Apart from one incident in Dishu, Helmand Province, most were in border districts of Nangarhar (Goshtah, Naziyan, Lal Pur and Mohmand Darah), Kunar (Khas Kunar, Dur Baba) and Khost (Tere Zayi, Gurbuz and Jaji Maidan) Provinces, and both sides significantly increased their security forces' border presence in eastern, south-eastern and southern regions. On 22 February, in Nangarhar, armed clashes resulted in the closure of the Torkham border crossing between Afghanistan and Pakistan, and the de facto authorities instructed civilians and humanitarian actors to evacuate the area. After negotiations between local delegations from the de facto authorities and Pakistan, the crossing reopened on 19 March for commercial traffic, and on 22 March for regular pedestrian movements.

23. On 16 February, in Kunar Province, Sar Kani District, a senior Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) commander was reportedly shot and critically injured by unknown perpetrators while attempting to cross the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan. On 11 March, another TTP commander was killed by unknown assailants in Kunar Province. On 22 April, in Paktika Province, Barmal District, 18 alleged militants were killed and an unknown number injured while attempting to cross the border from Afghanistan into Pakistan. On 27 April, Pakistani security forces killed 54 alleged TTP militants attempting to infiltrate from Afghanistan, according to Pakistan.

24. From 1 February to 30 April, the United Nations documented 22 safety and security incident reports directly affecting its personnel. United Nations personnel were relocated from the Torkham border area on 29 January at the advice of the de facto authorities after tensions there escalated.

25. UNAMA developed a risk reduction framework for small arms and light weapons to assist stakeholders in pursuing practical measures to address threats from illicit arms flows in Afghanistan and the region. Notwithstanding the development of a monitoring plan by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), accessing all necessary data from stakeholders remains a challenge to the Mission's efforts in relation to small arms and light weapons.

C. Regional cooperation

26. From 13 to 15 February, the de facto Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs, Abdul Ghani Baradar, travelled to Doha, where he met with the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Qatar, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani, to discuss strengthening of bilateral relations and investment. On 22 and 23 February, the de facto Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs visited Uzbekistan and met with the Prime Minister of Uzbekistan, Abdulla Aripov, to discuss enhancing trade, energy and infrastructure. From 19 to 21 February, the de facto Governor of the Central Bank, Ahmad Zia Agha, attended the Cybersecurity in Finance forum in Yekaterinburg, Russian Federation. On 6 March, the de facto Minister of Justice, Abdul Hakim Sharaf, attended the Global Conference for Building Bridges between Islamic Schools of Thought and Sects, in Saudi Arabia.

From 9 to 14 March, the de facto Minister for Foreign Affairs travelled to Muscat for bilateral meetings, including with the Foreign Minister of Oman, Badr bin Hamad al-Busaidi. From 28 April to 4 May, the de facto Minister for Foreign Affairs visited Qatar, where he met the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs to discuss the latest developments in Afghanistan and ways to support its people.

27. Regional delegations visited Afghanistan to engage with the de facto authorities. On 22 February, the Minister of Defence of Pakistan, Khawaja Muhammad Asif, visited Kabul and met with de facto officials, including the de facto Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs, to discuss regional security and counter-terrorism efforts. From 21 to 23 March, the Special Representative for Afghanistan of Pakistan, Mohammad Sadiq, visited Kabul and met with the de facto Foreign Minister, the de facto Minister of Commerce and Industry, Nooruddin Azizi, and the de facto Deputy Minister of Defence, Yaqoob Mujahid, to discuss the necessity of a structure to resolve disputes between the two countries. On 16 April, Mr. Sadiq visited Kabul again for bilateral engagements, including co-chairing a meeting of the Joint Coordination Committee, a platform to address mutual concerns, including cross-border security and refugee repatriation. On 19 April, the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Mohammad Ishaq Dar, travelled to Kabul to meet with de facto officials, including the de facto Prime Minister Mohammad Hassan Akhund and the de facto Foreign Minister, to discuss the promotion of bilateral cooperation. On 21 April, the Deputy Prime Minister and National Economy Minister of Kazakhstan, Serik Zhumangarin, met in Kabul with the de facto Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs and the de facto Foreign Minister to discuss enhancing economic cooperation. On 23 April, the Russian Presidential Special Envoy for Afghanistan, Zamir Kabulov, visited Kabul and met with de facto officials, including the de facto Foreign Minister and the de facto Interior Minister, to discuss strengthening the countries' bilateral relations. On 27 April, the Joint Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs of India, Anand Prakash, visited Kabul and met the de facto Foreign Minister to discuss bilateral political relations, trade, transit and recent developments in the region.

28. On 8 May, a joint statement of the Russian Federation and China included the Parties' intention for "facilitating the establishment of Afghanistan as an independent, neutral, united and peaceful State, free from terrorism and drugs, coexisting in peace and harmony with all neighbouring countries". On 10 May, the Special Envoy on Afghan Affairs of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of China, Yue Xiaoyong, and the Special Representative for Afghanistan of Pakistan met with the de facto Foreign Minister to discuss the next trilateral Foreign Ministers' dialogue.

29. UNAMA continued to engage with and facilitate regional cooperation efforts. The Mission's engagements included organizing meetings with Kabul-based diplomatic missions and bilateral engagements with visiting diplomats. At a regular ambassadorial-level meeting in Kabul on 26 March, participants discussed how to further promote cooperation following General Assembly resolution [79/268](#), adopted on 4 March, on the establishment of the United Nations Regional Centre for the Sustainable Development Goals for Central Asia and Afghanistan in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

III. Human rights

30. Improvised explosive device attacks claimed by ISIL-K and AFF, as well as some unclaimed attacks, resulted in civilian casualties. At least seven civilians (six men and one woman) were killed, and at least 39 others (38 men and 1 boy) were wounded.

31. Cross-border armed violence between Pakistani security forces and de facto security forces caused civilian casualties. On 1 February, in Paktika Province, an air

strike impacted a mosque, killing three civilian men. The Embassy of Pakistan in Afghanistan informed UNAMA in writing that “no strike was conducted by Pakistan” in that area and that “civilian casualties in the area have no linkage with any activity from the Pakistan side”. During the night of 3 March, in Nangarhar Province, firing by Pakistani security forces wounded one boy and one civilian man. On 5 March, in Nangarhar Province, firing by Pakistani security forces wounded three male journalists. In response to the incidents from 3 to 5 March, the Embassy of Pakistan in Afghanistan informed UNAMA in writing that “in the early hours of 3 March 2025, Afghan forces resorted to unprovoked and indiscriminate firing across the border at Torkham (Khyber District), with heavy weapons. The firing continued until 5 March 2025, resulting in several casualties on the Pakistan side, including those of civilians, because of which, Pakistani forces were compelled to respond”. On 28 March, in Paktika Province, an air strike carried out by Pakistani security forces impacted a house, killing seven civilians (one adult male, one adult female, two boys and three girls).

32. Unexploded ordnance continued to cause harm to civilians, mostly children. During the reporting period, a total of 16 civilians were killed (six men, two girls and eight boys) and 35 were wounded (3 men, 1 woman, 9 girls and 22 boys).

33. During the reporting period, UNAMA documented at least four killings and 10 arbitrary arrests and detentions of former government officials and former members of the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces.

34. The de facto authorities carried out four public executions on 11 April, in Badghis (two men), Nimroz (one man) and Farah (one man) Provinces. All were convicted of murder, and their sentences were confirmed by all three de facto courts (Primary, Appeal and Supreme) and approved by the Taliban leader. Senior de facto officials attended the executions and reportedly attempted unsuccessfully to encourage the families of the murdered victims to forgive the convicted individuals and not implement the death penalty. In response to a social media post by UNAMA condemning the executions, the de facto Ministry of Foreign Affairs released a statement on 15 April, in it stating that it considered the implementation of Sharia-prescribed punishments to be a religious obligation and that it was imperative for UNAMA to refrain from engaging in such remarks.

35. On 20 March, the academic year commenced, marking the fourth consecutive school year in which women and girls were excluded from education beyond grade six. The de facto authorities have not made any announcements on the reopening of education to girls and women.

36. On 19 March, the de facto authorities published a new decree of the Taliban leader on the prevention of improper customs during weddings and funeral ceremonies and upon return from Hajj and Umrah. The decree reaffirms the de facto authorities’ decree of 3 December 2021 on women’s rights by stating that it is unlawful to compel a woman to marry and that “forcibly marrying or violating a woman’s rights should be prosecuted in the courts of the Islamic Emirate”. The decree also states that courts are obliged to handle complaints in accordance with the decree of 3 December 2021 on women’s rights. During the reporting period, UNAMA received reports of survivors of gender-based violence experiencing significant barriers to access to justice, including in cases such as forced marriage, prohibited by the 2021 decree.

37. On 13 February, in Kabul, the de facto Ministry of Information and Culture instructed media outlets to suspend the broadcast of political talk shows. Prior to this instruction, media outlets broadcast prerecorded political content which had been approved by the de facto Ministry.

38. The de facto authorities’ prohibition on journalists cooperating with media operating outside Afghanistan continued to be enforced. For example, on 4 February,

the de facto General Directorate of Intelligence and the de facto Ministry of Information and Culture arrested two male staff of Radio Begum, accusing them of providing media content to a television channel based outside Afghanistan. They have since been convicted of disseminating “anti-Taliban propaganda” and remain in detention.

39. Inspectors of the de facto Ministry of the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice monitored compliance with, and enforcement of, the Law of the same name using their broad and discretionary powers. Monitoring and enforcement took place at a variety of locations and involved verbal warnings, arbitrary arrests and detentions, physical beatings and other punishments. De facto inspectors continued to restrict women’s freedom of movement and deny women without a mahram access to health clinics, markets and public transportation. In some provinces during Ramadan, individuals who failed to attend prayers in mosques or who kept their businesses open were arbitrarily detained or ill-treated. On 20 April, in Kabul, the de facto Minister for the Propagation of Virtue and Prevention of Vice, Mohammad Khalil Hanafi, told a gathering of inspectors to work on people’s mindsets without the use of force.

40. From 1 February to the end of March, the de facto Office of Prison Administration announced the pardon and release of almost 1,300 prisoners and sentence reductions for approximately 1,550 detainees. On 29 March, the Supreme Court announced that, further to the approval of the Taliban leader, 2,463 prisoners were being released, and the sentences of 3,152 others reduced, on Eid al-Fitr. At the end of April, the de facto Office of Prison Administration reported that the prison population was more than 27,000.

41. Consultations conducted from 9 to 28 April 2025 by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and UNAMA documented nationwide experiences of the impact of the de facto authorities’ policies on women and men. Participants highlighted that restrictions, including mahram requirements, the ban on girls’ education and employment barriers, compounded the difficulties which women face. Women reported that loss of access to public spaces has had a harmful effect on their ability to make informed decisions about their own lives and to obtain basic services. A negative impact on women’s perceived legitimacy and influence over decision-making was also reported. These dynamics, the participants warned, foster a culture of disempowerment, leading to further isolation and growing mental health challenges for women in Afghanistan.

IV. Economic development, donor coordination and aid effectiveness

42. According to the World Bank, the Afghan economy grew modestly during the fiscal year from March 2024 to March 2025, although insufficiently to improve social indicators. Poverty, unemployment and limited purchasing power persist. The economic outlook is fragile, constrained by policy uncertainty, financial isolation and trade and aid volatility. Core inflation reached 1.9 per cent. Since the start of the fiscal year, prices have dropped 4.6 per cent, largely owing to falling food prices. The Afghani appreciated against the currencies of its primary trading partners, leading to a 3.5 per cent increase in the nominal effective exchange rate from February to March. The Afghani appreciated 3.6 per cent in March to 71.1 Afghani per dollar, supported by Central Bank dollar auctions and seasonal inflows. Year on year, it appreciated 9.4 per cent.

43. The World Bank also reported that the trade deficit widened by 48.2 per cent over the fiscal year, to \$9.4 billion (45.4 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP)). Exports fell by 21.3 per cent from February to March 2025 and 12 per cent year on year, to

\$1.79 billion, led by sharp drops in coal and textiles (-64 per cent and -14 per cent, respectively). Food exports rose 4 per cent, owing mainly to Chinese tariff exemptions. Pakistan remained the top destination for exports. Imports climbed to \$11.16 billion in the fiscal year from \$8.14 billion, driven by rising demand for capital goods, intermediate inputs and consumer goods (+49 per cent, +43 per cent and +30 per cent, respectively). The Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan and China were the top sources of imports. Revenue collection reached 241.3 billion Afghani (\$3.4 billion, 16.6 per cent of GDP), up 14 per cent year on year and 6 per cent above the target. For the fiscal year, domestic tax revenues rose 28.5 per cent, customs 29 per cent and non-tax revenues 31.2 per cent. Nevertheless, the de facto authorities indicated signs of fiscal constraints which resulted in salary payment delays and staff reductions.

44. According to the annual review by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on Afghanistan of 30 April 2025, 75 per cent of the population faced subsistence insecurity, up from 69 per cent in 2023, underscoring the deteriorating socioeconomic situation. Access to adequate housing, healthcare and essential goods declined, while shocks intensified. Economic shocks impacted 90 per cent of households, with female-headed households affected at 97 per cent. Seven per cent of women were employed outside the household, compared with 84 per cent of men. Rural areas, home to 71 per cent of the population, experienced 15 per cent higher subsistence insecurity than urban areas, with acute shortages in sanitation, healthcare and heating fuel.

45. Pursuing the stated goal of self-sufficiency, the de facto authorities advanced revenue-funded projects, including large-scale infrastructure such as the Qush Tepa Canal. On 15 April, the de facto Economic Commission approved a five-year national development strategy.

46. Following a meeting of the working group on the private sector on 13 February, UNAMA convened a preliminary technical consultation on 27 March on a holistic approach for sustainable private sector support, with Member States and United Nations entities. UNAMA conducted technical bilateral consultations with United Nations entities, Member States, de facto authorities and private sector representatives to prepare for the next meeting of the private sector working group, focusing on delivering tangible outcomes.

47. On 13 March, the Global Environment Facility approved an \$8.9 million project of UNDP to boost climate-responsive livelihoods and forestry in two provinces, benefiting 80,000 people. On 24 March, a technical meeting of the informal Afghanistan Climate Dialogue Platform was held in Kabul, co-chaired by Norway and the de facto authorities, and with United Nations support. More than 60 multi-stakeholder participants discussed technical issues related to climate change.

48. On 9 and 10 April, the Afghanistan Coordination Group, co-chaired by the European Union, the United Nations and the World Bank, met in Istanbul, Türkiye, to discuss the impact of funding cuts to humanitarian and basic human needs assistance to the Afghan people. The Group launched a coordination architecture review aimed at aligning the principled approach of basic human needs assistance, the humanitarian response and ongoing political processes.

49. On 8 April, the Steering Committee of the Special Trust Fund for Afghanistan aligned its terms of reference with the extended United Nations Strategic Framework – and endorsed the concept “Rebuilding together” for Kunduz and Baghlan Provinces, focusing on the reintegration of returnees. The Steering Committee received \$6.9 million from Denmark for 2025, and the Republic of Korea joined as the fourteenth contributor, with \$1 million.

50. On 3 February, the United Nations endorsed the common risk assessment for 2025, enhancing collaboration and improving risk identification, leading to better data, decision-making and efficiency. In reaction to the Transparency International 2024 Corruption Perceptions Index, released on 11 February, which ranked Afghanistan 165 out of 180 countries, the de facto Deputy Spokesperson dismissed the report as inadequate and based on unreliable sources.

51. On 1 May, the United Nations and partners launched the 2025 Integrated Response Plan for Afghan Returnees from Pakistan, aimed at providing immediate assistance at border points and support reintegration. The plan is costed at \$350 million.

52. In March, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) commenced sourcing quality-assured medicines from the local and regional markets, to build supply chains and longer-term sustainability.

53. In March, the Afghanistan Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Network piloted a project in five provinces, with awareness sessions reaching 4,648 women focused on tangible livelihood support, including the distribution of 750 sewing machines and skill-building for those at risk.

V. Humanitarian assistance

54. In 2025, 22.9 million people in Afghanistan require life-saving assistance owing to persistent food insecurity and malnutrition, population movements, natural hazards and climatic shocks, a strained economy and limited access to basic services. Funding shortfalls had far-reaching impacts on humanitarian operations, affecting projects and staffing and prompting partners to reprioritize assistance. As a result, hundreds of health facilities were closed, essential malnutrition services for children were limited, critical protection services for vulnerable Afghans were cut, cash programmes supporting thousands of families were suspended, and tens of water systems supporting hundreds of thousands of people were left unrepaired. In the light of this funding crisis, the Afghanistan humanitarian country team undertook an urgent prioritization of the 2025 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan, identifying 12.5 million people of the initial 16.8 million targeted as being the most severely in need and for whose support \$1.62 billion of the overall \$2.35² billion is required.

55. In March, the Gender in Humanitarian Action Working Group and the Humanitarian Access Working Group conducted their eleventh survey on the impact of the bans on Afghan women working for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the United Nations and other restrictions. Findings showed a drop in the mobility of women staff, with only 40 per cent able to visit field sites (down from 52 per cent in December). Half of the humanitarian partners surveyed highlighted fewer projects targeting the needs of women and girls owing to funding shortfalls – nearly one third of organizations reported that they could no longer cover mahram-related costs or maintain gender-responsive arrangements. Only 43 per cent reported they were fully operational with women and men, a 19 per cent reduction, attributed to both restrictions and funding shortfalls.

56. From January to March, humanitarian partners reached 7.6 million people with at least one form of assistance, including 1 million people who received at least three different types of sectoral support. This included 6.5 million people reached with food and livelihood support, 2.3 million with healthcare, 1.7 million with water, sanitation and hygiene, 1.4 million children and pregnant and lactating women with nutrition

² This total excludes \$65.1 million for aviation and coordination and common services. The total initial ask of the 2025 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan was \$2.42 billion.

assistance, 1 million people with protection services, 465,000 children with education support and 188,000 with emergency shelter and non-food items.

57. Multiple challenges continued to contribute to widespread food insecurity and malnutrition, with some 14.8 million people facing crisis or emergency levels of food insecurity (Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) 3 and above) and 3.5 million children projected to fall into malnutrition in 2025.³ From January to March, the World Food Programme assisted 6.9 million people with food, nutrition, cash and livelihood assistance.

58. From 1 January to 31 March, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) supported 670,084 beneficiaries through a range of livelihood interventions. FAO established 1,121 community-based groups to promote climate-smart agricultural practices, rehabilitated 81 structures under 12 irrigation schemes, supported land conservation on 15,000 hectares, vaccinated 1.96 million ruminants and poultry and conducted locust surveys across 11 provinces.

59. From 1 January to 29 March, the World Health Organization (WHO) recorded 21,533 cases of acute watery diarrhoea with dehydration, 115 suspected dengue fever cases, 68 suspected Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever cases, 28,618 suspected measles cases, 81,304 confirmed malaria cases and 517,000 acute respiratory illness/pneumonia cases. UNICEF provided essential health services to more than 19 million people through 2,400 supported facilities. More than 6 million children were vaccinated against polio, 1 million children received micronutrient powder, and 4,000 children received case services.

60. From January to March, the WHO trauma care programme supported 288,624 beneficiaries. During this period, 134,577 children suffering from severe acute malnutrition were treated at 147 inpatient and 3,106 outpatient facilities, and 288,262 children with moderate acute malnutrition were reached through programmes. In February, 434 mobile health and nutrition teams delivered more than 471,700 primary healthcare consultations.

61. From 1 January to 30 April, 426,793 (38,168 women, 258,313 men and 130,312 children) undocumented Afghans returned to their country, including 117,442 from Pakistan and 222,163 from the Islamic Republic of Iran. Of these, 172,105 were deported, with 91,970 undocumented Afghan returnees receiving assistance at IOM reception centres. From 1 January to 12 May, the total number of Afghans returned from Pakistan comprised 132,610 undocumented individuals and 18,519 documented, with 72,081 assisted by IOM. From 1 January to 5 May, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) supported some 13,237 registered refugee returnees with protection services. Daily returns from Pakistan averaged 8,000 as at mid-April, driven by the stated intention of the Government of Pakistan to return all Afghans to the country. Previously, from January to March, daily returns from Pakistan amounted to fewer than 100 people. Increases in undocumented returns from the Islamic Republic of Iran were observed, linked to a continued deterioration of the protection space.

62. Some 300 humanitarian access-related incidents were recorded from January to April, a 52 per cent decrease from the same period in 2024. The primary challenge was interference in humanitarian activities by the de facto authorities, comprising 70 per cent of incidents. Other challenges included physical environment, violence against humanitarian workers, including detentions of 76 aid workers (including 13 United Nations personnel), movement restrictions, ongoing military operations and denial of the existence of humanitarian needs. These incidents led to the temporary

³ See Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, “Afghanistan: acute malnutrition situation for June–October 2024 and projection for November 2024–May 2025”, 7 January 2025.

suspension of 150 activities and the temporary closure of three facilities. Gender-related access incidents comprised 17 per cent of recorded incidents during the period.

63. Mine action teams reduced by one third to 176 active teams in order to continue delivery until the end of June. Following a suspension in January, owing to funding constraints, the United Nations-led Mine Action Technical Cell resumed in February with a 70 per cent reduction in staff, leading to decreased capacity for quality assurance, database management and coordination. In February and March, teams provided seven assessments to humanitarian partners, nine coordination meetings and 430 request responses for explosive ordnance disposal, with safe destruction of 1,007 ordnance items.

64. From January to March, UNICEF completed 23 solar-powered water systems with 4,141 household connections and supported more than 11,694 households with pregnant or lactating women and young children through cash transfers, benefiting 66,000 people. More than 436,000 individuals were engaged through community networks as part of UNICEF accountability to the affected population.

VI. Counter-narcotics

65. On 12 March, UNODC released *Afghanistan Drug Insights Volume 4: Drug Trafficking and Opiate Stocks*. According to the report, opiate trafficking has fallen sharply since the 2022 narcotics ban. Heroin seizures were at half the 2021 level. About 13,200 tons of opiates remain in the country – enough to meet global demand through 2026 – largely stockpiled by major traffickers. Farmers bore the brunt of seizures as income from opium plunged 92 per cent, from \$1.36 billion in 2022 to \$110 million in 2023. Scarcity drove up prices, keeping residual trafficking highly profitable. By contrast, methamphetamine flows have risen 75 per cent since 2021. The report provides policy recommendations, including alternative development and health response measures.

66. From 15 February to 30 April, UNODC assisted 2,472 farming households (30 per cent women-headed) in nine provinces, including with inputs such as seeds and training, and supported a nationwide network of treatment, therapy and vocational training centres and health services for women in two prisons. During the reporting period, UNDP supported alternative livelihoods reaching more than 3,000 people.

67. UNAMA, UNODC and relevant United Nations entities continued to engage the de facto authorities, Member States and technical experts under the working group on counter-narcotics, including efforts to further operationalize the joint action plan on alternative livelihoods and advance the work of the small groups on drug use treatment and prevention and law enforcement.

VII. Mission support

68. As at 30 April 2025, vacancy rates in UNAMA were 17 per cent for international staff, 8 per cent for international United Nations Volunteers, 11 per cent for national United Nations Volunteers, 16 per cent for National Professional Officers and 12 per cent for national staff, compared with approved rates of 8.3 per cent, 9.3 per cent, 5 per cent, 15.5 per cent and 11.2 per cent, respectively. The proportion of women staff was 34 per cent for international staff, 36 per cent for United Nations Volunteers, 9 per cent for National Professional Officers and 11 per cent for national staff.

VIII. Observations

69. The people of Afghanistan continue to suffer from multiple challenges, including widespread and increasing poverty, persistent unemployment, limited access to basic services and frequent natural disasters, made worse by de facto governing institutions that remain non-inclusive and increasingly oppressive. The continuing strict implementation of restrictive policies and practices by the de facto authorities, due in particular to the Law on the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice, has negatively impacted the economic, social and personal lives of the Afghan population, especially women and girls. Decreasing international financial assistance has exacerbated the dire economic situation of millions of Afghans and their families across the country. The people of Afghanistan cannot address these formidable challenges alone.

70. In support of the objective stated in Security Council resolution [2721 \(2023\)](#) of an Afghanistan at peace with itself and its neighbours, fully reintegrated into the international community and meeting international obligations, and the Council's emphasis on the importance of an engagement architecture and a political road map, the United Nations continued to work towards a political pathway to address the interests and concerns of all stakeholders – the Afghan people, the de facto authorities and the international community. Through principled engagement, the two working groups on counter-narcotics and on the private sector are addressing issues of critical relevance to the livelihoods of Afghans. More engagement among the international community, de facto authorities and Afghans will be required to comprehensively address the complex issues that stand between the current situation of Afghanistan and its potential reintegration into the international community, not least of which are human rights, including women's rights. These issues require the consensus of various groups of stakeholders, are interlinked and will take time to progress. They include adherence to international obligations that all Member States of the United Nations must uphold.

71. The implementation of the Law on the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice by the de facto authorities infringes upon the enjoyment of a wide variety of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of movement, expression and religion and the right to privacy. The law, and its enforcement, are fundamental impediments to the full reintegration of Afghanistan into the international system.

72. Afghanistan remains the only country in the world where girls are systematically barred from secondary and higher education. Access to education is an essential right that underpins the realization of many other rights. I again urge the de facto authorities to rescind all decisions to ban women and girls from education at all levels.

73. I am concerned at the de facto authorities' prohibition on the broadcast of political programmes, further eroding media freedoms. Political debates enrich public policies and are essential for good governance. It is deeply concerning that journalists and media workers continue to be subjected to arbitrary arrests and detentions.

74. Continued reports of extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests and detentions and the torture and ill-treatment of former government officials and members of the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces are deeply troubling. After having issued their general amnesty upon taking power, the de facto authorities must uphold their obligations to protect the right to life by ensuring the safety of these groups and conducting thorough and transparent investigations to hold perpetrators to account.

75. I am alarmed by the public executions that were carried out on 11 April. The Human Rights Committee, in its general comment No. 36 (2018) on the right to life, relating to article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to

which Afghanistan is a Party, noted that States parties that had not abolished the death penalty must respect article 7 of the Covenant, under which certain methods of execution are prohibited. Failure to respect article 7 would inevitably render the execution arbitrary in nature and thus also in violation of article 6. The Committee has opined that public executions are contrary to article 7. I urge the de facto authorities to establish an immediate moratorium on executions, with a view to their abolition.

76. I urge all parties to comply with their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law, and in particular to respect and protect civilians.

77. The current funding crisis – prompted by cancellations and reductions in humanitarian budgets from humanitarian donors – has created significant financial and operational uncertainty for aid partners in Afghanistan. Without adequate levels of funding, several million people will receive less assistance in 2025. Humanitarian partners have highlighted that they will also deliver fewer projects targeting the needs of women and girls in Afghanistan. In the absence of support for mine clearance efforts and awareness-raising, the tragic loss of life, lifelong injuries and trauma, predominantly impacting of children, because of unexploded ordnance will continue. To navigate these funding challenges, I urge all donors to step up their financial support or prioritize funding that is flexible, predictable and sustained, so that essential, life-saving humanitarian work and resilience building can continue. To avert the termination of the mine action programme on 1 July, I call on donor countries to provide financial support to United Nations mine action coordination.

78. I encourage countries hosting Afghan refugees to continue to extend protection and provide appropriate documentation to those in need and abide by their international obligations, ensuring that any returns to Afghanistan are voluntary, safe and dignified, and to continue bilateral and tripartite discussions to this effect. I remain concerned about the challenges in scaling up capacities to assist the growing number of returnees and to enable their sustainable reintegration. Returnees face immense challenges in reintegration in Afghanistan, in particular in securing housing, employment and access to basic services. I call upon the international community to support efforts to strengthen the absorption capacities in Afghanistan to mitigate the risks of further destabilization and potential outflow.

79. The United Nations presence and engagement in Afghanistan remains crucial in delivering on humanitarian and basic human needs as well as in advancing a political process to bring together all stakeholders to achieve sustainable stability in the country. I extend my deep appreciation to all United Nations personnel in Afghanistan under the leadership of my Special Representative, Roza Otunbayeva, and to NGO partners for their continued dedication and service to the people of Afghanistan in an extremely challenging environment.