



**Safety and Risk Mitigation Organization**

**Civic Space Quarterly Report**

**April – June 2023**

## SRMO Afghanistan Civic Space Quarterly Report April to June 2023

### Summary

*From April to June 2023, SRMO's database logged:*

- *28 reported abuses (5 killings, 23 detentions and 2 cases of harassment/beatings) directly targeting members of civil society and their relatives - this includes civil society activists, local media workers, university lecturers, NGO workers, poets, singers and civilians arrested for posting criticism of the Taliban on social media.*
- *1 former judge was killed and 3 officials from the former government were detained (including a former provincial council chief, a former military prosecutor and a former mayor)*
- *15 former members of the security forces were killed and a further 35 detained.*
- *8 prisoners were reportedly killed by the Taliban in extrajudicial executions after being captured during fighting between the Taliban and resistance groups; a further 311 people were detained for allegedly having links to resistance actors.*
- *18 murders of women, 14 suicides of women and 6 rapes*

### Operating environment for civil society

Two relatives of an WHRD, one NGO worker and one singer were killed during this reporting period. In addition, a total of 23 members of civil society and family members were arrested between April and June, and at least 4 more remain in detention since SRMO's previous quarterly report.

The hostile environment for members of civil society under the Taliban regime was underlined in comments made at an event in Kandahar on 12 March by Acting Taliban Minister for Higher Education Neda Mohammad Nadeem. He stated that "those who destroy the system, whether by speech, pen, or action, are all rebels and obligated to be killed.... Those of you who create problems for the people with the schemes of foreigners, God willing, we are ready to confront and suppress you."<sup>1</sup> He made similar comments during a meeting with the Pakistani ambassador to Kabul on 22 May.

In early April, the Taliban declared that women were no longer permitted to work for UN agencies. UN staff had previously been exempted from a December 2022 ban on women working for NGOs and INGOs. On 11 April, the UN requested all its staff not to report to work, 'for their own safety, especially for our female staff.'<sup>2</sup> Since then, differences of opinion over how to respond to the crisis have prevented a coordinated response, thus weakening agencies' bargaining power with the de facto authorities.

<sup>1</sup> <https://kabulnow.com/2023/03/taliban-minister-those-who-undermine-our-government-deserve-to-be-killed/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2023/04/14/1169682995/the-taliban-again-bans-afghan-women-aid-workers-heres-how-the-u-n-responded>

As with the ban on NGO employees, implementation of the ban on women working on UN projects appears varied in different parts of the country, with some agencies negotiating local level agreements that have allowed some women to continue their work. However, many others are blocked from contributing to life saving activities at a time when the humanitarian situation remains dire.

The de facto authorities are also trying to stamp out the last remaining civil society actors that had continued operating. For example, in April, Taliban officials closed down the offices of a women's NGO and a civil society group in Herat, for among other things conducting 'suspicious activities'. NGO closures were also reported in April in Balkh.

### **Abuses targeting W/HRDs and CSAs**

Two relatives of a WHRD were killed on 2 April in Kabul. The WHRD had been detained by the Taliban for taking part in anti-Taliban protests and reportedly criticized the Taliban after her release. Her refusal to stay quiet – as she had been threatened to do – resulted in the Taliban trying to re-arrest her. They went to her uncle's house believing that she was hiding there and shot dead her uncle and cousin.

Mojib Zia, a former civil society activist, was detained at Kabul airport on 16 May. He had worked as a media consultant for the Rahmani Foundation during the previous government but had been living in Iran since the Taliban takeover. He had returned to Afghanistan when his father died and was detained as he made his return journey to Iran. He was released in early June.

A resident of Panjshir province was detained on 10 May, reportedly for posing criticism of the Taliban on Facebook. He was sentenced to two years in prison by a local Taliban court.

Human rights defender Shams al-Rahman Raheeq was detained for the second time on 3 June in the Guzargah area of Kabul by Taliban intelligence officials. His cousin's son was arrested alongside him. The exact reason for their detention is not known but local reports suggest it is in connection with Mr Raheeq's human rights work.

According to local reports in May, Nurail Kalewal, a social activist from southern Afghanistan, has been detained in Taliban custody for several months for his peaceful activism.

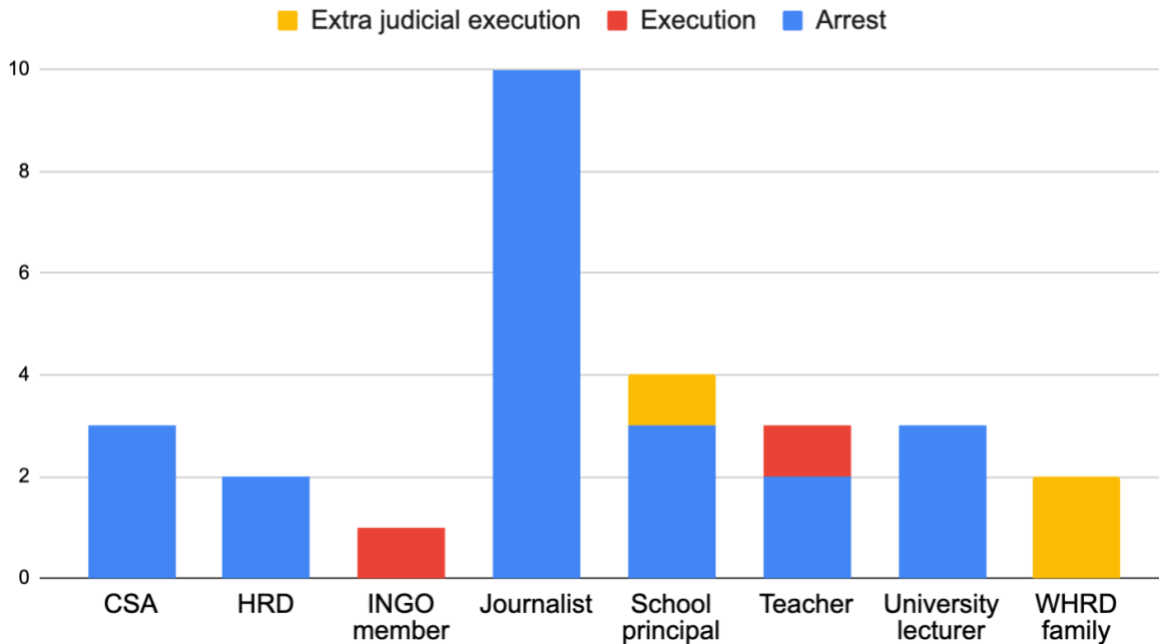
Another WHRD, Nargis Sadat, was released on 10 April after nearly two months in detention. She was reportedly in poor physical and mental health after being tortured and kept in poor conditions.

Education activist Matiullah Wesa remains in detention three months after his arrest on 27 March. His family has not been allowed to visit him or challenge the reasons for his detention via any legal process. Another civil society activist - Hamza Arefi Alfat – remains in custody at the time of writing. Mr Alfat is reportedly being held by department 40 of Taliban intelligence. His family have only been able to see him once since his detention four months ago. He had apparently criticized the Taliban's ban on girls' education prior to his arrest.

The director of an exhibition of women's handicrafts and agricultural products was detained on 1 June after Taliban officials raided the event in Herat city. Taliban security personnel reportedly objected to the fact that male journalists and other male attendees had entered the women's section of the exhibition.

A former employee of GIZ, a German NGO, was reportedly killed in Kabul on 18 June. He had left Afghanistan during the evacuation process after the Taliban takeover but had reportedly returned to the country after the Taliban kidnapped one of his sons.

### Incidents targeting civil society



### Members of civil society and political activists overseas remain at risk

Even HRDs, CSOs and political activists who have fled overseas and their family members remain at risk of retaliation for speaking out against Taliban rule. An HRD who is currently living outside Afghanistan said that his house in Kabul was raided on 21 June after he had criticized the Taliban in the media. Relatives still living in the house were threatened with detention if the HRD continued to speak out.

In another case, a political activist was reportedly stabbed on 16 May outside his residence in Istanbul, Turkey, after criticizing the Taliban. The incident occurred after Saeed Khosti, a former spokesperson for the Interior Ministry, on 2 May called on Taliban supporters abroad to kill Taliban critics; writing on Twitter, Khosti said: ‘kill the fugitives one by one with knives’.

### Media workers

Media workers continue to be harassed, threatened and detained by the de facto authorities for infringing on a broad but often opaque set of restrictions on media activities. Between April and June, ten journalists were detained. Nine of these were released after a relatively short period of detention while the status of another remains unclear and it is likely he is still in prison.

Cases during the reporting period include:

- Three journalists were reportedly detained at their places of residence on 5 April in Baghlan province by Taliban intelligence officers. All three worked for local television stations. The exact reason for their arrests was unclear. They were released after one day.
- Four journalists from local television and radio stations were detained by Taliban officials from the Ministry for the prevention of vice and the promotion of virtue on 9 May in Khost province. The detentions were apparently linked to programs broadcast during the festival of Eid that marks the end of Ramadan, likely because the programs included music. The journalists were released the following day.
- A journalist was detained in the capital Kabul on 19 May and released the following day.
- A journalist was detained on 18 June on the highway while driving through Zabul province. The detainee was travelling through Zabul on his way to Kabul to renew a visa for Iran where he had been living for the last year. He was reportedly tortured by Taliban officials and released after two days.
- A journalist was arrested by the Taliban on 28 April in Badakhshan province. He had previously worked in local radio but had been unemployed since the Taliban takeover when many media outlets were shut down. It is unclear if he remains in detention at the time of writing.

Freelance sports journalist Khairullah Parhar was released in early May after being detained on 9 January and held for nearly four months. French-Afghan journalist Mortaza Behboudi who was detained the same week as Parhar remains in detention despite repeated calls for his release from international journalism bodies.

In addition to this pattern of detentions, Taliban officials frequently threaten journalists not to criticize the de facto authorities in public statements. It is also common for media workers to be called to meetings with Taliban intelligence and officials from the ministry for the prevention of vice and promotion of virtue where they are given guidance on what they can and cannot broadcast or print, and threatened with detention or other punishments if they infringe upon the regulations. In one recent example, intelligence officials in Kunduz province on 20 May invited journalists to a meeting during which they called journalists who criticize the authorities as ‘rebellious’ and threatened them with serious consequences if they continued.

Officials also continue to eradicate women from the media space. Most female media workers have already been removed from their jobs, but the Taliban are trying to go further by banning women’s voices in radio commercials. Officials from the Ministry of Information and Culture in Ghazni province on 30 April warned media outlets in the provinces that they would be punished if they did not comply. Local authorities in the province had already banned women from dialing into radio programs.

Foreign journalists have also been affected by media controls, with Susanna George from the Washington Post being the latest foreign correspondent to be banned from reporting in the country. George was previously the Afghanistan and Pakistan bureau chief.

Social media content producers have been targeted in the clampdown on freedom of speech, with dozens having been detained and threatened since the Taliban takeover in August 2021. In a recent incident, staff from the Kabul Fans YouTube channel had their office raided on 19 April. Several staff were beaten by unidentified gunmen who broke equipment, confiscated mobile telephones and stole cash. The raid was reported to the Taliban authorities but no action was taken.

## **Poets and musicians**

The Taliban clampdown on freedom of speech and expression has also affected poets, writers and musicians. Between April and June, two poets were detained and a singer from Nuristan was shot dead by unknown gunmen. The singer, Muslim Golzar, had reportedly recently returned from Pakistan to attend a wedding when he was attacked on 5 June. One poet and writer was arrested in Ghazni on 28 April, while a second poet who is originally from Panjshir province – a key centre of opposition to Taliban rule - was detained on 1 June in Kabul. He had previously been critical of the Taliban but had been mostly living in Iran since the Taliban takeover. A singer from Panjshir was released on 16 April after spending three months in prison, during which time his health reportedly deteriorated significantly.

## **Higher education personnel**

Three university lecturers were arrested between April and June. An English professor was arrested on 4 April in Faizabad, Badkshshah; another lecturer who was also a writer was detained on 9 April in Faryab province and released two days later. The third arrest on 19 April was that of a Sharia lecturer from Panjshir province who was reportedly accused of having relations with the National Resistance Front (NRF).

Another lecturer called Zakaria Osuli, whose case was discussed in SRMO's previous quarterly report, was released on 10 April. He was reportedly in very poor health after being tortured during two months in detention and had to pledge he would not participate in any activities against the de facto authorities prior to his release. Another lecturer was released in Takhar province after being detained for approximately two months; he had reportedly criticized the Taliban in the media before to his arrest.

In a separate incident on 7 May, four employees from the Department of Higher Education in Panjshir province were detained by Taliban intelligence for unknown reasons.

## **Education projects, schools and teachers**

Several education professionals were detained or killed during the reporting period, but few details were available about the motivation for these arrests or killings. One school principal and one school teacher were killed, the former on 26 April in Baghlan province and the latter on 12 June in Kabul. Seven education professionals including three school principals and four teachers were detained; in another case an unknown number of teachers were reportedly detained in the northern city of Mazar-e Sharif on 16 May after a school was raided and found to be giving secret lessons to girls; several of the students were also reportedly taken away by Taliban officials. Other teachers were detained in Kapisa, Parwan, Baghlan and Panjshir.

There were also disturbing reports of school poisonings and arson attacks. These included the reported poisoning of around 70 male and female students plus two teachers at two separate schools in Sar-e Pul province on 3 June, and the poisoning of around 40 female students at a religious school in Farah province. There were four reported arson attacks on schools between April and June, two of which targeted girls' schools. Incidents took place in the provinces of Zabul, Faryab, Ghazni and Kunar.

The de facto authorities in April announced a ban on all education projects in Kandahar and Helmand. The ban applies to courses in computer science and foreign languages including English, some of which were run in coordination with NGOs. Similar bans were announced in other provinces during the reporting

period. Reports from Samangan province said that the Taliban issued an order on 7 June that NGO equipment that was previously being used for such training courses would be collected by education officials. In some provinces the ban only appears to apply to girls, while in others entire projects have been closed down.

## **Abuses targeting other professional groups**

### **Medical personnel**

Taliban authorities have over the last year and a half increasingly obstructed women's access to healthcare by imposing impractical regulations regarding the use of male chaperones. In addition to female medical staff being banned from working in some areas, there has also been a pattern of incidents where medical personnel have been detained or killed, though the motives remain unclear in many cases. In the last three months, SRMO recorded four killings of doctors, one detention of a doctor and one detention of a hospital director. Furthermore, doctors at a provincial hospital in the city of Herat reportedly went on strike on 1 June after a Taliban fighter beat one of their colleagues after accusing him of not giving Taliban patients enough attention. That incident came after Taliban forces seriously injured two doctors and the hospital manager on 22 May by beating them up in the Baharak district of Badkhsan province. The Taliban troops accused the medical staff of not taking care of one of their patients.

### **Religious scholars**

Since the Taliban took power in August 2021 they have arrested numerous religious scholars who disagree with them on matters of religious ideology. Several scholars have also been assassinated by unknown gunmen. Between April and June, 8 religious scholars were detained and two were killed. One was reportedly escorted from a meeting of mullahs by Taliban officials on 29 April in Panjshir province after advocating for greater ethnic representation in the Taliban administration; he was released soon after. Seven other scholars were reportedly detained in Daikundi province on 17 June, though no further details are available over the reason for their arrest. A scholar called Mufti Ruhollah was reportedly shot dead on 2 May in the Pul-e Charki area of Kabul. Malavi Nooruddin, a scholar from the Nahrin district of Baghlan province was shot dead on 6 May.

## **Violence against women**

### **Sexual Assault**

During the reporting period, 5 cases of rape were recorded in the database. Of these, three were allegedly perpetrated by members of the Taliban, while two other were committed by unknown individuals. An employee at a health clinic in Badakhshan was reportedly raped by her boss, a Taliban member, on 29 March and later committed suicide. In another case, two Taliban members reportedly broke into the house of a former army officer from the previous government and raped his 25 year old daughter. The victim was also savagely beaten. In Panjshir province, a policewoman was reportedly raped in the city of Bazarak on 2 May. A Taliban commander has reportedly been arrested in connection with that attack. Another Taliban member was apparently released on 4 May in Kandahar after having been detained several months ago on charges of having 'illicit sexual relations' with several women. Meanwhile in western Herat province two young girls were reportedly raped on 12 June after being kidnapped by unidentified men; the girls were found abandoned several hours later and taken to hospital.

### **Suicides of women**

14 suicides were recorded in the database between April and June (in Kapisa (2), Ghazni (2), Sar-i pul, Faryab (4), Kandahar, Ghor, Takhar, Badghis and Badakhshan). A woman in Badakhshan reportedly killed herself after being raped by a Taliban member who was in charge of the health clinic she worked at. The alleged perpetrator reportedly gave her anesthetic prior to the attack; she killed herself several days later by taking poison. Two of the other suicides were reportedly young women who had been forcibly engaged and killed themselves to avoid the marriage (one in Badghis province and one in Sar-i pul province). In one case the girl's father had reportedly arranged the engagement in return for 700,000 Afghanis. One suicide in Faryab province was reportedly in response to domestic violence. In a further case in Ghazni province, a young nurse who also worked as a social activist was killed by hanging but it was unclear if she had killed herself or had been murdered.

### **Murders of women**

Women facing domestic violence and those who are at risk of so-called honour killings have no access to protection assistance or other support in Taliban-ruled Afghanistan. Between April and June, 18 murders of women were reported, plus an additional death in which it was unclear if the woman had been murdered or had committed suicide. The true number of killings of women is certainly higher than this, but these cases illustrate the types of violence women face on a daily basis.

A pregnant woman was reportedly killed on 26 April by two Taliban members in Ghor province. Family members of the victim say she was sexually assaulted by the perpetrators before being killed. Another woman was raped and then killed by three unidentified men on 12 June in Herat province; her two children were also killed in the attack. In a case in Balkh province, a Taliban member reportedly shot dead his niece and a young man he believed she was having a relationship with on 4 May. In another case, the bodies of a young man and woman were found in a river in Kunar province on 10 June. Locals reportedly heard shooting and it is likely the two were also killed for having a relationship outside marriage.

Other killings of women were reported in Faryab (3), Sar-i pul (2), Ghazni, Badghis (2), Jawzjan, Uruzgan (2), Paktia, Ghor, Badakhshan and Parwan.

### **Other Taliban abuses including corporal punishment**

This quarterly report is primarily intended as a means of tracking human rights abuses targeting civil society. However, given the scale of the human rights crisis in Afghanistan, SRMO is also monitoring and recording information about other human rights abuses that are reported and can be verified by SRMO's networks. The section below provides a brief overview of cases recorded between April and June to illustrate current trends.

The legal situation remains opaque, with Taliban officials claiming the legal system is now fully based on sharia but with differing interpretations of what that means in practice across the country. Detention without trial is common and detainees have no access to legal advice or representation. Relatives of prisoners are often refused visitation access and in many cases officials won't even acknowledge that people are in their custody.



The de facto authorities frequently use corporal punishment for those found guilty of various crimes – particularly so-called moral crimes - in Taliban courts. The deputy head of the Supreme Court on 4 May stated that 79 floggings and 37 stonings had been handed down as punishments since the Taliban courts were established, but reports by SRMO and other human rights groups suggest the numbers are far higher. Between April and June, eight floggings were recorded in the SRMO database, along with four executions. Three of those were teenagers, reportedly aged 13, 14 and 16; they were shot dead after being arrested for an unknown crime and their bodies were left in a public place.

Testimonies from former prisoners and their relatives suggests that torture is systematic in detention centres, particularly those run by Taliban intelligence. In addition to the deaths from torture discussed in the section on former security forces, at least four civilians reportedly died from torture in Taliban custody between April and June.

A further 15 civilians were reportedly killed by Taliban members in a range of incidents including personal disputes and heavy handed Taliban behaviour. For example, one civilian was killed on 10 April at a checkpoint in Faryab province when a Taliban soldier opened fire on a vehicle carrying young men returning from a party. In another example a local farmer was shot dead on 13 June by a Taliban commander in Samangan province after he tried to complain to officials from the central government about the behaviour of local Taliban. Civilians also face general brutality from Taliban soldiers; in one recent case a young man from Panjshir was seriously injured on 12 April after Taliban soldiers forcibly removed a tattoo from his hand.

### **Abuses targeting former security forces and police**

As detailed in previous SRMO quarterly and annual reports, hundreds of former security forces have been detained and killed since the Taliban takeover. Nearly two years on, detentions and killings continue to be reported on a weekly basis. Many cases have involved individuals who fled Afghanistan after August 2021 but then returned for funerals, weddings or to arrange documentation. Between April and June, 35 former security personnel were detained (including 3 women) and 15 were killed (including 1 woman). Six relatives of former security personnel were also detained, while another was raped (see below).

The dead body of a former National Directorate of Security (NDS) officer was handed over to his family on 30 May in Herat. He had been detained 20 days earlier. The former officer had recently returned to Herat from Iran, where he had fled after the Taliban takeover. His body reportedly showed signs of extensive torture. Another former NDS officer was shot dead in front of his house in Kabul on 11 April by unknown gunmen. A former female NDS officer was reportedly detained by Taliban intelligence on 22 June in Helmand. Her dead body was found abandoned the following day.

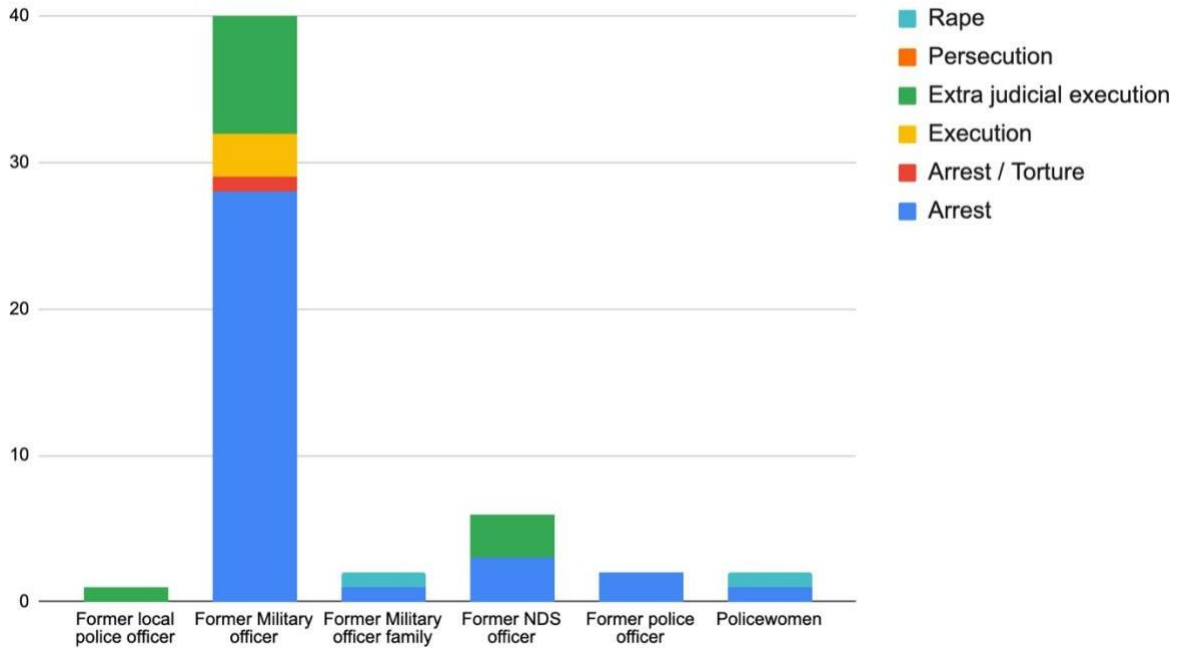
In addition to the 15 killings during the reporting period, one former National Directorate of Security (NDS) official reportedly committed suicide on 9 April after being severely tortured in Taliban custody in Khost province. He reportedly had his hands and legs broken, pointing to the scale of torture in Taliban detention facilities, many of which are in unofficial detention sites. In another case, a former military officer was moved from detention to hospital in Baghlan province on 13 May. He was in a coma at the time of the transfer. The former officer had reportedly been tortured during 8 months in the custody of department 40 of the intelligence service.

Recent detentions included several cases of detentions at border crossings. In one example, a former soldier was reportedly detained at the Spin Boldak border crossing with Pakistan as he was trying to re-

enter Afghanistan on 5 May. Another former soldier was reportedly detained on the same day after crossing the border with Iran in Nimruz province.

Relatives are frequently caught up in attacks on former security force personnel. In one typical example, the wife and two sons of a former military official were beaten up on 7 May when Taliban troops raided their house in Balkh province. The two sons were taken away to an unknown location.

Incidents targeting former security forces



### Abuses linked to resistance activities

Arbitrary arrests of civilians continue to be reported in areas affected by fighting between Taliban troops and a number of resistance groups. 311 detentions were reported during the reporting period. This number includes several mass arrests after which people were released relatively quickly, but other people are detained for long periods or completely disappear with their families uninformed of their wellbeing, or even if they are alive or dead.

The Taliban are also accused of executing prisoners. In a recent example, 8 members of the Afghanistan Liberty Front (ALF) were reportedly summarily executed on 11 April after being captured during fighting in Salang district, Parwan province.

In addition to killings and detentions, the Taliban are accused of forced evictions and purposely setting fire to civilian houses. In one example Taliban troops reportedly set fire to houses on 7 May in the Khost district of Baghlan province. The incident occurred after a clash between Taliban troops and local resistance forces in which several people died. Taliban fighters on 28 May were accused of evicting civilians from their homes in the Annaba district of Panjshir province in order to set up a military base.

## Annex

## SRMO Database Summary: April to June 2023

## Civil Society Incidents

Date	Gender	Target	Perpetrator	Province	Incident Type	Number of victims
02/04/23	n/a	WHRD family	Taliban	Kabul	Extra judicial execution	2
04/04/23	Male	University lecturer	Taliban	Badakhshan	Arrest	1
05/04/23	Male	Journalist	Taliban	Baghlan	Arrest	3
06/04/23	Male	School principal	Taliban	Parwan	Arrest	1
09/04/23	Male	University lecturer	Taliban	Faryab	Arrest	1
12/04/23	Male	School principal	Taliban	Panjshir	Arrest	1
19/04/23	Male	University lecturer	Taliban	Panjshir	Arrest	1
26/04/23	Male	School principal	Taliban	Baghlan	Extra judicial execution	1
28/04/23	Male	Journalist	Taliban	Badakhshan	Arrest	1
28/04/23	Male	Poet / writer	Taliban	Ghazni	Arrest	1
09/05/23	Male	Journalist	Taliban	Khost	Arrest	4
16/05/23	Male	CSA	Taliban	Kabul	Arrest	1
19/05/23	Male	Journalist	Taliban	Kabul	Arrest	1
19/05/23	Male	School principal	Taliban	Parwan	Arrest	1
20/05/23	Male	CSA	Taliban	n/i	Arrest	1
27/05/23	Male	Teacher	Taliban	Parwan	Arrest	1
01/06/23	Male	Teacher	Taliban	Baghlan	Arrest	1
01/06/23	Male	Poet	Taliban	Kabul	Arrest	1
03/06/23	Male	HRD	Taliban	Kabul	Arrest	2
03/06/23	Male	CSA	Taliban	Kabul	Arrest	1
05/06/23	Male	Singer	Unknown	Nuristan	Execution	2
12/06/23	Male	Teacher	Unknown	Kabul	Execution	1

18/06/23	Male	Journalist	Taliban	Kabul	Arrest	1
18/06/23	Male	INGO member	Taliban	Kabul	Execution	1
21/06/23		HRD/CSOs	Taliban	Kabul	Threat	

**Former Security Forces Incidents**

Date	Gender	Target	Perpetrator	Province	Incident Type	Number of victims
01/04/23	Male	Former Military officer	Taliban	Kabul	Arrest	1
06/04/23	Male	Former NDS officer	Taliban	Panjshir	Arrest	1
06/04/23	Male	Former Military officer	Taliban	Panjshir	Arrest	1
07/04/23	Male	Former Military officer	Taliban	Parwan	Arrest	1
10/04/23	Male	Former Military officer	Taliban	Takhar	Arrest	4
11/04/23	Male	Former NDS officer	Taliban	Kabul	Extra judicial execution	1
13/04/23	Male	Former Military officer	Taliban	Nangarhar	Extra judicial execution	1
17/04/23	Female	Former police officer	Taliban	Ghazni	Arrest	1
19/04/23	Male	Former Military officer	Taliban	Panjshir	Extra judicial execution	2
19/04/23	Male	Former Military officer	Taliban	Kabul	Arrest	2
20/04/23	Female	Former Military officer family	Taliban	Takhar	Rape	1
22/04/23	Male	Former Military officer	Unknown	Paktia	Execution	1
27/04/23	Female	Former police officer	Taliban	Ghazni	Arrest	1
29/04/23	Male	Former NDS officer	Taliban	Kabul	Arrest	1
29/04/23	Male	Former Military officer	Taliban	Badghis	Arrest	2
29/04/23	Male	Former Military officer	Taliban	Kabul	Arrest	1
02/05/23	Female	Policewomen	Taliban	Panjshir	Rape	1
02/05/23	Male	Former Military officer	Taliban	Nuristan	Extra judicial execution	1
04/05/23	Male	Former Military officer	Taliban	Parwan	Arrest	1
05/05/23	Male	Former Military officer	Taliban	Kandahar	Arrest	1
06/05/23	Male	Former Military officer	Taliban	Nimroz	Arrest	1
06/05/23	Male	Former Military officer	Taliban	Kabul	Extra judicial execution	1
07/05/23	Male	Former Military officer	Unknown	Parwan	Execution	1
13/05/23	Male	Former Military officer	Taliban	Baghlan	Arrest / Torture	1
17/05/23	Male	Former Military officer	Taliban	Takhar	Extra judicial execution	1
18/05/23	Female	Policewomen	Taliban	Daikundi	Arrest	1

18/05/23	Male	Former Military officer	Taliban	Herat	Arrest	1
----------	------	-------------------------	---------	-------	--------	---

19/05/23	Male	Former Military officer	Taliban	Kabul	Extra judicial execution	1
20/05/23	Male	Former NDS officer	Taliban	Kabul	Arrest	1
22/05/23	Male	Former Military officer	Unknown	Kabul	Execution	1
22/05/23	Male	Former local police officer	Taliban	Badakhshan	Extra judicial execution	1
25/05/23	Male	Former Military officer	Taliban	Kabul	Arrest	2
26/05/23	Male	Former Military officer	Taliban	Kabul	Arrest	1
30/05/23	Male	Former NDS officer	Taliban	Herat	Extra judicial execution	1
01/06/23	Male	Former NDS officer	Taliban	Herat	Extra judicial execution	1
03/06/23	Male	Former Military officer family	Taliban	Ghazni	Arrest	1
06/06/23	Male	Former Military officer	Taliban	Kabul	Arrest	2
15/06/23	Male	Former Military officer	Taliban	Panjshir	Arrest	1
19/06/23	Male	Former Military officer	Taliban	Kabul	Arrest	2
20/06/23	Male	Former Military officer	Taliban	Parwan	Arrest	1
22/06/23	Male	Former Military officer	Taliban	Panjshir	Arrest	3
23/06/23	Female	Former Military officer	Taliban	Helmand	Extra judicial execution	1
23/06/23		Former Military officer	Taliban	Parwan	Persecution	

## SRMO

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

SRMO monitors and tracks human rights abuses affecting human rights activists and civil society. The organization also provides regular training on Hostile Environment, Security, Digital and Cyber security, First aid and other topics. In addition, SRMO distributes regular and vital security information and mitigation advice to hundreds of HRDs and WHRDs in the provinces across Afghanistan. The organization provides emergency assistance, including emergency relocation and medical assistance for HRDs at risk. Since the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan in August 2021, SRMO has continued to provide support both to HRDs inside the country and to those who have fled and are now living in exile.

## Methodology

This quarterly report is designed to provide a brief summary of the situation for human rights defenders

in Afghanistan between April and June 2023, along with an overview of the broader human rights environment. It is based on information and cases gathered as part of SRMO's ongoing human rights monitoring work. SRMO maintains a database of incidents and rights abuses affecting human rights activists, civil society more broadly, and Afghan civilians. Cases are only included in the SRMO database if they have been verified via SRMO's networks.