AFGHANISTAN
Weekly Report
1 – 7 June 2017
Key events

- At least 18 people were killed and dozens wounded in three back-to-back explosions including an IED and two suicide vest bombings (SVESTs), which tore through a cemetery in the Khair Khana area of Kabul on the afternoon of 3 June. The attack occurred during the fuel for the son of Senator Alam Ezadyar. Salem Ezadyar was killed in the mass rally in Kabul on 2 June after security forces opened fire on demonstrators.
- A rocket landed less than a mile from the presidential palace in Kabul, where foreign dignitaries were holding talks on 6 June. The round landed outside an Indian diplomat’s home not far from the NATO headquarters and the US Embassy, however no casualties were reported.
- A remote-controlled bomb in a motorcycle detonated outside western Herat city’s Great Mosque on 6 June, killing nine and injuring more than a dozen. Taleban militants denied responsibility for the attack.

National overview

As officials from 24 international delegations gathered in Kabul for a peace conference, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani has asserted that far more people were killed in last week’s large truck bomb explosion than initially reported (now over 150), making it the deadliest attack in the capital since 2001. The violence that preceded the long-planned meeting, named the Kabul Process, underscored the fragile security in Kabul. In a speech, President Ghani scolded western countries for attempting to negotiate with the Taleban on their own. The one-day conference aimed to reboot peace talks and enlist neighbors in a regional fight against terrorism. President Ghani warned the Taleban — which is steadily gaining ground and controls 40 percent of Afghanistan — that his government wants talks but that the offer will not be offered indefinitely. Peace negotiations with the insurgent group have faltered, and the Taleban said on 6 June that it will negotiate directly with the government only after foreign troops leave Afghanistan. Instead of drawing down however, the United States is weighing a request to increase the number of US troops in the country by up to 5,000, in addition to the 8,500 already deployed in advisory and support roles. Nothing is likely to be decided until there is a better understanding of the Trump administration’s evolving policy in the region. Meanwhile in his speech, President Ghani also accused Pakistan of waging “an undeclared war of aggression” against his nation; Afghanistan’s intelligence service blamed the Haqqani Network supported by Pakistan’s ISI Intelligence Agency for the bombing outside the diplomatic Green Zone in Kabul last week.
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Nangarhar, 1 June 2017:
At least one security officer was killed and three civilians injured during a suicide car bomb explosion close to the airbase in Behsud district. No group has so far claimed responsibility for the incident. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack, though the Islamic State militant group is active in the province.

Kabul, 6 June 2017:
Militants fired a rocket that landed in the yard of an Indian diplomat’s home not far from the NATO headquarters and the US Embassy. No casualties were reported. The rocket landed less than a mile from the presidential palace in Kabul, where foreign dignitaries were holding talks on 6 June.

Herat, 6 June 2017:
A remote-controlled bomb attached to a motorcycle detonated outside the northern gate of western Herat city’s Great Mosque on 6 June, killing at least nine people and injuring more 16 others. Taliban militants denied responsibility for the attack.

Farah, 4 June 2017:
Unidentified gunmen shot and killed the Baghlan provincial governor’s three bodyguards while they were traveling along the highway between Farah and Farah Rod in Bala Boluk district on 4 June. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack.

Olive Group Proprietary

Significant Events 1 – 7 June 2017
Afghanistan Weekly Report
**Central**

- **Kabul City**: 07 Jun 17, (01) INS suicide attacker, who is currently in Mohammad Agha District in Logar Province, riding (01) corolla vehicle, Gold in color, full of explosive materials and the plate number of the vehicle has not been proved yet, intend to enter in Kabul City to conduct BBIED and VBIED attacks, targeting the protestors within Kabul.

- **Kabul City**: 07 Jun 17, Haq ani Network INS are planning to conduct BBIED and VBIED attacks, targeting Governmental facilities, ANSF (111) division, US Army HQ and Marshal Mohammad Qasim Fahim Military university in Kabul City.

- **Kabul City**: 07 Jun 17, (09) BBIEDEs, belonging to Haqani Network transferred by Mullah Riaz from Khost Province into Kabul City. The BBIEDEs are planning to conduct aggressive attack, targeting Governmental facilities, Intelligence Centers, MoD, ANSF facilities and Kabul airport.

- **Kabul City**: 07 Jun 17, Haqani Network INS are planning to conduct a VBIED attack, targeting Kabul Airport and NDS HQ in Kabul City.

**East**

- **Pachiragam District**: 07 Jun 17, a large number of the armed INS, led by Sadaqat, Fatih and Haqani have been placed in Ger Khel and Pachir areas. They are planning to conduct guerrilla and aggressive attacks on ANSF CPs and/or over ISIS around mentioned District.

- **Khugyani District**: 07 Jun 17, a Group of the armed INS have been placed in Wazir and Tangi areas in order to conduct attack on ANSF CPs around mentioned District.

**North**

- **Dasht e Archi District**: 07 Jun 17, The Taliban mine and IED maker named Khudai Nazar and Muhammad Amin placed a lot of remote control mines on the main and sub routes of ANSF in Kolabi village of the mentioned district, targeting ANSF personnel and vehicles.

**West**

- **Shindand District**: 31 May 17, a number of armed Taliban men under the command of Mola Najeb named governor of Taliban in collusion with the men of Mola Samad moved from Masyan village of the mentioned District, are planning to conduct aggressive attacks over security CPs in Qala Pisar, Qala Dokhtar and central core of the mentioned District.

- **Adraskan District**: 31 May 17, INS are planning to emplace IEDs in Khwajah Orya, Pul Rod Gaz and Sarasarkhak areas. Intend to conduct guerrilla attacks, targeting ANSF convoys.

**South**

- **Kandahar City**: 07 Jun 17, INS under the command of Tur Jan plan to carry out explosion attack in Kandahar city.

- **Nad Ali District**: 07 Jun 17, The Taliban groups intend to carry out massive guerilla attacks over the security CP named Malek in the mentioned district areas.
On 3 June, three explosions, one IED and two SVESTs, struck the funeral service of a victim of anti-government protests in Kabul, killing at least 18 people and injuring dozens. Among the dead was a former deputy attorney general and a well-known preacher. The speaker of the Afghan Senate and several senior members of Jamiat-e-Islami, one of the country’s prominent political parties, were among the wounded. No group immediately claimed responsibility for the bombings. The Taleban denied any involvement. CEO Abdullah Abdullah was among other senior government officials at the funeral prayer; he was not injured. More than a thousand people had gathered for the final prayer for the son of the deputy speaker of the Senate, who was killed on 2 June during protests in Kabul calling for the resignation of the government for what many said was its failure to stop the truck bombing last month. Security forces had opened fire to disperse the crowd, killing three.

The demonstration came after the commander of Kabul Garrison asked protesters not to hold public gatherings because of a high threat level from groups planning to target protests. In other developments this week a rocket struck an Indian diplomatic compound in the capital on 6 June, causing no casualties. Representatives of about two dozen international delegations met a kilometre away from the blast site to discuss efforts to end the country’s ongoing civil conflict. The rocket struck a tennis court a few blocks away from where the Indian ambassador and other foreign dignitaries were meeting with senior Afghan officials. A Taleban social media account said the group had targeted a “command centre of foreign invading forces”. Notoriously inaccurate, rockets are an occasion fired into the city, often towards the fortified downtown area that houses a number of other foreign delegations, the headquarters of the international military mission, and government ministries.
Two would-be Pakistani suicide bombers were reportedly detained by security forces in Parwan province on 4 June. The suspects were arrested in the Pul-e Pacha area of Bagram district and their suicide vests confiscated. It remains unclear what the intended target was. Separately, coalition ground troops on 3 June shot and killed a militant who was attempting to plant a mine under a culvert in the Qala-e Nasro village of Bagram. Meanwhile the Taliban’s shadow deputy governor for Kapisa province was killed during a military operation in the province; at least ten other insurgents were also killed during the offensive, which was conducted in the Khamir Daran area between Koh-e Safi and Tagab districts. Elsewhere in the region an IED detonated in Logar province on 1 June. The blast took place in the Pul-e Gumran area of Mohammad Agha district; one APPF officer was killed and two others injured as a result.

Wardak province meanwhile recorded elevated levels of violent activity. During the reporting period Afghan airstrikes targeted insurgent positions in Jalrez district, killing 15 militants on 1 June. At least 16 others were also killed in similar air raids two days later. ANSF personnel also launched a joint security operation in Jalrez on 3 June, killing 35 militants and injuring 60 others. Five villages in Jalrez were reported to have been cleared of insurgent presence. In the province’s southern Sayedabad district, two patrolling Afghan army soldiers were wounded when their vehicle struck an IED in the Mashin Qala area on 6 June.
Local officials said at least seven rockets were fired on the city of Kunduz, two of which landed near the governor's compound on 6 June. Two civilians were wounded as a result. Meanwhile around 1,000 families have fled their houses for safety as fighting for the control of Imam Sahib began during the reporting period. Talaben militants were reported to have launched a coordinated offensive against security positions on 4 June. At least 10 militants and three security personnel were killed in the clashes. Control of Imam Sahib would allow the Taleban to receive greater support from their fighters based in the neighboring Qala-e Zal and Khwaja Ghar districts pressure on the provincial capital Kunduz city. Elsewhere in Imam Sahib at least 11 insurgents were killed in an airstrike on 7 June. Air raids targeted the residence of a militant commander as a group of fighters were assembling IEDs.

Further west, at least six Taleban militants were killed while battling security forces in Faryab. Clashes erupted on 6 June the district of Pashtun Kot, where insurgents targeted a security check post but were pushed back by police. In addition, 10 militants and two police officers were killed when the Taleban stormed several checkpoints in the Khwaja Sabz Posh and Almar districts of Faryab on 7 June, triggering a gun battle; sporadic fighting continued in the area overnight.
Five Taleban militants were killed while attempting to plant an IED in Ghazni's district of Andar; no civilian casualties were reported in the resulting blast on 2 June. Elsewhere in the region at least one person was killed when a suicide car bomb exploded in Nangarhar province on 1 June. Three more were wounded in the explosion, which took place at a checkpoint near the airbase in Behsud district. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack, though the Islamic State militant group is active in the province. Meanwhile 22 Islamic State fighters were killed during security operations in the district of Achin, where the insurgents are also active. Similarly 29 IS militants were killed by airstrikes in the Kot district on 6 June.

Clashes have been ongoing between Taleban and IS fighters for control of the Tora Bora cave complex in Nangarhar's Pachir wa Agam district. A number of local families fled to safety from the Sulaimankhel area of the district, where the heaviest fighting is underway. Nangarhar's governor said security forces were on standby and would conduct raids in case IS made advances. Seven militants and two civilians have been killed so far, while local residents in the Sorai Kali, Jawdri, Saleh Baba Ziyarat and Wochi Lagdi villages clashed with IS insurgents, killing five. Neither militant group has commented on the ongoing clashes. West of Nangarhar, six Haqqani Network fighters including a commander were killed in a landmine explosion in the Musa Khel district of Khost province. The blast took place on 3 June on the outskirts of the district centre.
Herat city remains relatively stable while Badghis and Farah continue to witness targeted assaults against security personnel this week. Sporadic SAF and criminal activity is expected to persist in Herat’s provincial capital, with the majority of attacks on security personnel likely to remain confined to the province’s southern districts. During the reporting period at least nine people were killed and 15 wounded when a bomb attached to a motorcycle went off outside the entrance of the renowned Great Mosque in the city of Herat. The Taliban denied responsibility for the attack. Meanwhile an IED detonated near an ANP vehicle in the Gardana Fajer area of Shindand district on 4 June; one ANP officer was wounded as a result.

South of Herat, six members of a family were wounded after their home was hit by an artillery strike blamed on the Afghan National Army on 6 June. Elsewhere in the province unidentified gunmen shot and killed the Baghlan provincial governor’s three bodyguards while they were traveling along the highway between Farah and Farah Rod in Bala Boluk district on 4 June. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack. To the north, three insurgents and as many Afghan border policemen were killed during clashes in Moqur district on 1 June. Separately in Qadis district a civilian opened fire on three others in the Qarchaghi village. One civilian was killed and two others injured as a result on 7 June.
Afghan officials said at least six police officers were killed after two fellow police opened fire on them in southern Kandahar province. Provincial officials confirmed the attack, which they said also wounded the Kandahar City district police chief. Qari Yusouf Ahmadi, a Taliban spokesman, claimed responsibility for the attack in a statement saying that both attackers were their men who infiltrated the police ranks to carry out the attack.

Meanwhile officials in Helmand said a suicide car bomber targeted high-ranking officials traveling in a police Humvee in Lashkar Gah city on 5 June. Reports indicated at least one police officer was killed and a number of others wounded. A spokesman for the provincial governor said police had been on their way to launch an operation to reopen the Kandahar - Lashkar Gah highway when the incident occurred. No group has claimed responsibility for the attack. Earlier this week at least 19 Taliban insurgents were killed or wounded during a security operation in the vicinity of Garmsir and Sangin districts, which remain underway in the Jagrum and Karezak areas of Garmsir as well as the outskirts of Sangin. Separately, coalition airstrikes destroyed three explosives-laden vehicles on the outskirts of Sangin district in Helmand. Five militants were also killed in the raids on 4 June. To the east, six militants were killed in an overnight security operation in the Shah Joy district of Zabul province. Another six fighters were wounded on 2 June.
Politics & Security

♦ Rocket Hits Indian Ambassador’s House In Kabul – Tolo News – A rocket fired off in Kabul city Tuesday morning reportedly landed on the tennis court of the Indian ambassador’s house in the city. The incident happened at about 11:15 am. The house is in the heavily fortified diplomatic quarter, in Kabul, which houses a number of embassies, guesthouses and Resolute Support headquarters. According to a source, no casualties were reported. This comes amid extremely tight security in the capital following last week's deadly explosions and the launch on Tuesday of the Kabul Process meeting. Representatives from at least 23 countries are in Kabul for a meeting aimed at establishing peace in the country. Streets in the city center, especially around the Presidential Palace, the Green Zone and Wazir Akbar Khan have been largely closed off by security forces who are preventing almost everyone from entering the areas. Full Article

♦ ISIS suffer heavy casualties in East of Afghanistan, 44 including foreigners killed – Khaama Press – The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist group suffered heavy casualties during the ongoing military operations in eastern Nangarhar province of Afghanistan. The provincial government media office in a statement said the militants were killed during the airstrikes conducted in Kot district as the Afghan ground forces are busy in clearance and counter-terrorism operations against the terror group. The statement further added that several foreign insurgents are among those killed in the airstrikes. The local residents and security personnel did not suffer any casualties during the airstrikes, the provincial government added. In the meantime, the 201st Silab Corps of the Afghan army said at least 15 insurgents of the group were killed during the separate airstrikes conducted in Achin district. Nangarhar is among the relatively calm provinces in eastern Afghanistan but the anti-government armed militant groups have recently increased their insurgency activities in some parts of the province during the recent years. Full Article

♦ Six Taliban Insurgents Killed in Faryab Clash – Tolo News – At least six Taliban insurgents were killed in a clash with security forces in northern Faryab province on Tuesday morning, local officials said on Wednesday. In addition, a number of other insurgents were injured. The clash started early Tuesday in Pashton Kot district of the province after a group of insurgents attacked a police check post, a spokesman for the provincial police chief, Karim Yourish said. “The clash lasted for a few hours and the security forces were able to thwart the insurgents attack,” Yourish said. However, he did not provide more details about the clash nor about casualties among the police. Full Article

Afghans protesting after truck bomb killed in clash with police – Reuters

Protesters demanding the resignation of the Afghan government after this week's devastating truck bomb clashed with riot police in Kabul on Friday in a confrontation that resulted in at least four deaths. The protests added to pressure on President Ashraf Ghani's fragile and divided government, which has been powerless to stop a string of attacks in the capital that have killed hundreds of civilians in recent months. Wednesday's bomb attack, at the beginning of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, was one of the worst in the Afghan capital since the U.S.-led campaign to topple the Taliban in 2001. More than 1,000 demonstrators, many carrying pictures of bomb victims, rallied in the morning near the site of the blast, which killed more than 80 people and wounded 460. They held Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah responsible. "The international community has to put pressure on them and force them to resign," said Niloofer Nilgoon, one of a relatively large number of women taking part in the protest. "They're not capable of leading the country." Protesters also carried banners bearing slogans such as "Ghani! Abdullah! Resign!" and pictures of Ghani and other leaders with... Full Article
News Summary
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Economics & Business

- Kabul explosion inflicts a financial loss of $10mn – Wadsam – The Afghan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) has estimated the financial loss caused by yesterday's explosion at USD 10mn. “The private sector has suffered a loss of USD 10mn as a result of the attack,” said Siyamuddin Pesarlay, ACCI spokesperson. The ACCI warned that investors might leave Afghanistan if these attacks are not prevented. Meanwhile, Kabul municipality claims that the financial loss is around 4 billion Afghans. The municipality sent 500 employees to clean up the area after the attack. Hotels, banks and telecommunication companies that were in the vicinity have been damaged the most. A huge suicide truck bomb exploded in the diplomatic quarter of Kabul city near the German Embassy and the Afghan presidential palace on Wednesday morning. The area is considered one of the most secure areas of Kabul and also one of the busiest. The streets were packed with commuters, women shopping and children going to school. The blast came a few days into the holy month of Ramadan and is one of the deadliest strikes in the long Afghan war. Full Article

- Afghanistan health sector shows strong progress: World Bank reports – Wadsam – The World Bank today announced the results of a review of progress achieved in the health sector in Afghanistan from 2002-2017. Conducted by World Bank experts and an independent group from the University of Toronto, the review found that many key health indicators had improved more rapidly in Afghanistan than in most other countries that had started at a similar level of development. The under-5 mortality rate dropped 60 percent from 137 per 1,000 live births in 2002 to 55 in 2016. Births attended by skilled health personnel increased to 58 percent from 14.3 percent over the same period. Announcing these results at a Presidential Summit on Health Care in Afghanistan, held today in Kabul, Dr. Timothy Evans, Senior Director for Health Nutrition and Population at the World Bank said, “The progress made in Afghanistan is impressive, especially given the serious security situation the country has faced over the last decade. Afghanistan has set a new benchmark against which to judge other countries affected by conflict, and even more so low income countries that are not facing conflict.” These improvements are consistent with those observed in the quality of care and equity in access to services, and the large increase in the number of health facilities. Full Article

Foreign delegations meet in Afghan capital after bloody week – Reuters

Afghan leaders met officials of two dozen foreign governments and institutions on Tuesday, launching a so-called Kabul Process aiming to set the stage for peace talks and clinch an international pact to end "cross-border terrorism". After a week of violence that included the deadliest ever attack on the capital of Kabul, President Ashraf Ghani said the meeting would be more than a ceremonial effort. But with domestic political tension high, international plans in flux, and the insurgency as powerful as ever, starting any peace process may be an uphill battle. Underscoring the volatile situation, at least one rocket struck an Indian diplomatic compound in Kabul, as the delegations met a few blocks away. Later on Tuesday, a suspected bomb outside a mosque in the city of Herat killed seven people, police said. Ghani told the diplomats attacks in Afghanistan were part of the violence that had struck foreign cities around the world, most recently in London, where three militants drove a van into pedestrians on Saturday before attacking people with knives. Afghanistan is on the front line of a global war against such violence, he said. "We're fighting 20 transnational terrorist groups on your behalf," Ghani said. Full Article
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For all enquiries as to how Constellis can support your business in Afghanistan please contact:

**Mark Lineberry**  
*Vice President, Sales*  
Mobile: +971 (0) 50 650 5941  
mark.lineberry@constellis.com

For more information on this report or on Constellis’ Advisory and Consulting services please contact:

**James Borrelli**  
*Information and Assessments Manager*  
Office: +971 4 360 0836  
james.borrelli@constellis.com

www.constellis.com