



PRESS INFORMATION

THE EUROPEAN UNION SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE IN AFGHANISTAN
THE EUROPEAN UNION DELEGATION TO AFGHANISTAN

EU and its member states call for immediate stop to targeted killings of civilians in Afghanistan

Kabul, 15 February 2016

UNAMA 2015 report on civilian casualties in Afghanistan paints a grievous picture of the conflict with the highest number of civilian casualties since reporting started in 2009. Every fourth civilian killed or injured is a child.

The findings of the report are of outmost concern. Especially worrying is the continued high number of deliberate, targeted attacks against civilians which are overwhelmingly conducted by insurgents and mainly by Taleban.

The EU and its member states present in Afghanistan call for all participants in the ongoing armed conflict to do their utmost to eliminate all civilian casualties and for the insurgents to immediately stop all targeted killings of civilians.

"After a very bad 2015 in January we witnessed further increases with several targeted horrifying attacks in Kabul on media staff and civilians. The use of indiscriminate and random attacks kills and injures more and more innocent Afghans. This is a clear breach of international humanitarian law and must stop immediately. The UNAMA report also highlights an extremely worrying trend with Anti-Government Elements enforcing cruel and inhuman extra judicial punishments such as executions and lashings to punish women for moral crimes. This must stop at once," said European Union Special Representative and Head of the European Union Delegation to Afghanistan, Ambassador Franz-Michael Mellbin.

The EU and its member states present in Afghanistan also urge all parties in the armed conflict to abide by international humanitarian law and revisit their Rules of Engagement in order to see what further measures can be taken to bring down civilian casualties. The increasing trend of civilian casualties must be reversed.

The UNAMA report lists 11002 civilian casualties in 2015. One in ten civilian casualties was a woman and one in four – or more than 2.500 - was a child. Ground engagements continued to cause the highest number of total civilian casualties followed by improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and suicide and complex attacks.

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