# Call for Input to inform the High Commissioner’s report to the Human Rights Council on the impact of casualty recording

# Submission by Pak Institute for Peace Studies and Every Casualty Counts

15 February 2023

Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS) is an independent, Pakistan-based think-tank established in January 2006. PIPS is committed to providing in-depth and objective analysis of global and regional issues. To this end, PIPS plays an active role in promoting understanding of the perceived and real threats to regional and global peace by focusing on a variety of peace and security issues. For further information, please contact [pips@pakpips.com](mailto:pips@pakpips.com).

Since 2007, PIPS has maintained and analysed a database of security incidents in Pakistan, which was digitalised in 2011. It is the only comprehensive database about internal security issues in Pakistan and includes detailed records of casualties of armed violence. The Conflict and Security Database team monitors around 30 local and national newspapers, magazines and journals, as well as social media pages on a daily basis. The team follows up on these reports through an extensive network of regional correspondents who cross-check information and seek further details of issues covered by the media. PIPS researchers also consult police and hospital records, as well as social media. Further information on the database and our methodology are available at <https://www.pakpips.com/about-pips-database>.

## Impact

The Conflict and Security Database was initially created for internal use by PIPS staff, due to the lack of any other comprehensive and reliable source of information on security incidents. PIPS needed data in order to understand the situation accurately, and to enable meaningful analysis. Without such information it is impossible to assess the successfulness of measures taken to improve the security situation, or to create evidence-based policy. Detailed data and analysis are essential for good policy making.

The Conflict and Security Database documents all types of armed violence, and disaggregates information on factors such as perpetrator, victim, target, and type of incident (see examples in Appendix 1 below). This disaggregation allows for detailed analysis over extended periods of time and geographic scope, including identification of vulnerable groups, which we use to help policymakers take more effective action to protect civilians. The database also disaggregates attacks on education and medical targets, contributing to global monitoring of these issues.

PIPS made the Conflict and Security Database publicly available online in 2011, as a tool to assist policy makers and security analysts better understand and respond to violence in Pakistan. The database currently has around 100 external individual and organisational subscribers, which demonstrates the appetite for reliable information on casualties. Subscribers to the database include local and international news media, research organisations, non-governmental organisations and the diplomatic community (including international embassies in Islamabad).

A major strength of the database is the breadth of coverage. We are able to analyse more than 15 years of casualty records to develop a thorough understanding of different insurgent groups and other violent actors. We have identified their changing tactics, approaches and geographical spread, and used this to help inform security policy. PIPS database also helps counteract misinformation activities by armed groups who use social media to exaggerate the number of casualties they have caused, in order to increase fear and strengthen their perceived military and political power. By detailed cross-checking of militants’ claims against other sources of information on casualties, PIPS is able to ensure the public is accurately informed.

PIPS publishes its casualty records and analysis in a variety of formats, including [monthly](http://pakpips.com/app/reports/) and [annual reports.](https://www.pakpips.com/publications#1512730923805-d52fde57-07fa) These reports are disseminated to a list of over one thousand contacts, including staff in government departments and policymakers besides media and civil society organisations, etc. Our casualty information is regularly cited in news media and by government officials (see Appendix 2, below).

As well as sharing our records and analysis with policymakers, PIPS has directly contributed to the policy-making process. For example, recommendations we made based on our casualty records were incorporated within the [National Security Policy](https://www.nation.com.pk/27-Feb-2014/text-of-national-security-policy-2014-18) (2014) and [National Action Plan](https://nacta.gov.pk/nap-2014/) (2015). (Notably, the number of violence-related fatalities fell from [7,611 in 2014 to 4,653 in 2015 following introduction of the action](https://thediplomat.com/2016/12/is-pakistans-national-action-plan-actually-working/) plan.) PIPS has also been commissioned by government institutions to produce reports such as ‘[Pakistan’s achievements in the war on terror - but at what cost](https://www.pakpips.com/article/book/pakistans-achievements-in-war-on-terror-but-at-what-cost-a-special-review-of-the-current-decade)’ (2019), which includes analysis of a decade’s worth of casualty records.

## Recommendations

Casualty recorders rely on the availability of information from numerous sources to compile and verify accurate and comprehensive casualty records. It is essential in this regard that States uphold their international obligations to **protect the freedom of opinion and expression**, including the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds. News media and independent investigators must be able to access information directly from official sources, and should not be prevented from visiting incident sites or interviewing witnesses.

Whilst international human rights instruments recognise that states may legitimately place restrictions on the right to freedom of opinion and expression for the purpose of protecting national security or public order, these restrictions must only be applied where strictly necessary and lawful. States should strive for maximum transparency regarding casualties of armed conflict and violence at all times.

Appendix 1: Examples of disaggregated casualty information from PIPS 2022 annual report

Graphical user interface, application

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Graphical user interface, application

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Graphical user interface, application, table

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## Appendix 2: Examples of media use of PIPS casualty data

Iftikhar A. Khan, “Terror attacks in Pakistan surge by 51pc after Afghan Taliban victory,” Dawn, October 20, 2022, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1715927/terror-attacks-in-pakistan-surge-by-51pc-after-afghan-taliban-victory>

Imran Mukhtar, “Pakistan witnesses 51pc increase in terrorist attacks in a year,” The Nation, October 20, 2022, <https://www.nation.com.pk/20-Oct-2022/pakistan-witnesses-51pc-increase-in-terrorist-attacks-in-a-year>

Times of India, "Pakistan records 51% rise in terror attacks in one year after Taliban got power in Afghanistan: Report", October 20, 2022, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/94981466.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst>

[Brookings,](https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2022/02/11/pakistans-ambivalent-approach-toward-a-resurgent-tehrik-e-taliban-pakistan/) "Pakistan's ambivalent approach toward a resurgent Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan," February 11, 2022, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2022/02/11/pakistans-ambivalent-approach-toward-a-resurgent-tehrik-e-taliban-pakistan>

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| [Afghan Taliban's rise to power results in terror attack surge in **Pak** by 51 per cent](https://www.google.com/url?rct=j&sa=t&url=https://ground.news/article/afghan-talibans-rise-to-power-results-in-terror-attack-surge-in-pak-by-51-per-cent&ct=ga&cd=CAEYACoUMTU5MzIwNTczNjU5OTY1OTYxODIyGjIwZjZiYzI0ZWE5ZTNjYWI6Y29tOmVuOlVT&usg=AOvVaw2CIvJYmG6vLPm-CRU2Dy7z) - Ground News  [Taliban proving dangerous for **Pakistan**, 51% increase in terrorist attacks in 1 year](https://www.google.com/url?rct=j&sa=t&url=https://www.compstudio.in/taliban-proving-dangerous-for-pakistan-51-increase-in-terrorist-attacks-in-1-year/&ct=ga&cd=CAEYACoUMTU5MzIwNTczNjU5OTY1OTYxODIyGjIwZjZiYzI0ZWE5ZTNjYWI6Y29tOmVuOlVT&usg=AOvVaw0GLkECAuMhpHr3tywRqAnn) - Comp Studio  [Taliban Proving Harmful For **Pakistan**, 51% Improve In Terrorist Assaults In 1 12 Months](https://www.google.com/url?rct=j&sa=t&url=https://www.24newsgovtjobs.com/taliban-proving-dangerous-for-pakistan-51-increase-in-terrorist-attacks-in-1-year/&ct=ga&cd=CAEYACoUMTU5MzIwNTczNjU5OTY1OTYxODIyGjIwZjZiYzI0ZWE5ZTNjYWI6Y29tOmVuOlVT&usg=AOvVaw1DHLYbTTLGV1GE3cI6gN4I) - 24NewsGovtJobs  [Full Coverage](http://news.google.com/news/story?ncl=https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/pak-records-51-rise-in-terror-attacks-in-one-year-after-afghan-taliban-got-power-in-afghanistan-report/articleshow/94982559.cms&hl=en&geo=US) |
| [**Pakistan: Growing Militant Attacks Linked to Taliban Takeover of Afghanistan**](https://www.google.com/url?rct=j&sa=t&url=https://www.voanews.com/a/pakistan-growing-militant-attacks-linked-to-taliban-takeover-of-afghanistan-/6798440.html&ct=ga&cd=CAEYBCoUMTU5MzIwNTczNjU5OTY1OTYxODIyGjIwZjZiYzI0ZWE5ZTNjYWI6Y29tOmVuOlVT&usg=AOvVaw1eyiBEbZ2CQUfDCLwQWxB7)  [voanews.com](http://voanews.com)  Officials dismiss the violence as "isolated incidents of terrorism." Islamabad attributes the resurgence in militancy to the Taliban takeover of the ... |
| [**Afghan Taliban's rise to power results in terror attack surge in Pak by 51 per cent - ANI News**](https://www.google.com/url?rct=j&sa=t&url=https://www.aninews.in/news/world/asia/afghan-talibans-rise-to-power-results-in-terror-attack-surge-in-pak-by-51-per-cent20221020174128&ct=ga&cd=CAEYBSoUMTU5MzIwNTczNjU5OTY1OTYxODIyGjIwZjZiYzI0ZWE5ZTNjYWI6Y29tOmVuOlVT&usg=AOvVaw2OYoFeajUZpzap4oNjXio0)  ANI News  Islamabad [**Pakistan**], October 20 (ANI): Due to the rising power of the Taliban in Afghanistan, Pakistani soil has witnessed a 51 per cent increase ...  [Afghan Taliban's rise to power results in terror attack surge in **Pak** by 51 per cent - ZEE5](https://www.google.com/url?rct=j&sa=t&url=https://www.zee5.com/articles/afghan-talibans-rise-to-power-results-in-terror-attack-surge-in-pak-by-51-per-cent-3&ct=ga&cd=CAEYAioUMTU5MzIwNTczNjU5OTY1OTYxODIyGjIwZjZiYzI0ZWE5ZTNjYWI6Y29tOmVuOlVT&usg=AOvVaw1lH0N60cWb9JIae-s0Xvc9) - ZEE5  [Terrorist attacks in **Pakistan** increase by 51% after Taliban took over Afghanistan](https://www.google.com/url?rct=j&sa=t&url=http://serateshgh.com/international/terrorist-attacks-in-pakistan-increase-by-51-after-taliban-took-over-afghanistan/%3Futm_source%3Drss%26utm_medium%3Drss%26utm_campaign%3Dterrorist-attacks-in-pakistan-increase-by-51-after-taliban-took-over-afghanistan&ct=ga&cd=CAEYAioUMTU5MzIwNTczNjU5OTY1OTYxODIyGjIwZjZiYzI0ZWE5ZTNjYWI6Y29tOmVuOlVT&usg=AOvVaw14waJ83LP-6nO-K8-MfQqi) - صراط عشق  [Full Coverage](http://news.google.com/news/story?ncl=https://www.aninews.in/news/world/asia/afghan-talibans-rise-to-power-results-in-terror-attack-surge-in-pak-by-51-per-cent20221020174128&hl=en&geo=US) |
| [**Terror attacks in Pak jump by 51% after Taliban took over Afg - dtnext**](https://www.google.com/url?rct=j&sa=t&url=https://www.dtnext.in/world/2022/10/20/terror-attacks-in-pak-jump-by-51-after-taliban-took-over-afg&ct=ga&cd=CAEYCCoUMTU5MzIwNTczNjU5OTY1OTYxODIyGjIwZjZiYzI0ZWE5ZTNjYWI6Y29tOmVuOlVT&usg=AOvVaw1XCbH8mJxthanBtV2MqzVB)  dtnext  The purpose of these analytical papers is to expand the knowledge base of key stakeholders on **Pakistan's** Afghan perspective, and its role and ...  [Terror attacks in **Pakistan** jump by 51% after Taliban took over Afghanistan - The Newsmen](https://www.google.com/url?rct=j&sa=t&url=https://thenewsmen.co.in/world/terror-attacks-in-pakistan-jump-by-51-after-taliban-took-over-afghanistan/87233&ct=ga&cd=CAEYAyoUMTU5MzIwNTczNjU5OTY1OTYxODIyGjIwZjZiYzI0ZWE5ZTNjYWI6Y29tOmVuOlVT&usg=AOvVaw2oi8iPPPJLOwgAIjdCxyAB) - The Newsmen  [Full Coverage](http://news.google.com/news/story?ncl=https://www.dtnext.in/world/2022/10/20/terror-attacks-in-pak-jump-by-51-after-taliban-took-over-afg&hl=en&geo=US) |
| [**Terrorist attacks increase by 51% in Pakistan following the Afghan Taliban takeover**](https://www.google.com/url?rct=j&sa=t&url=https://minutemirror.com.pk/terrorist-attacks-increase-by-51-in-pakistan-following-the-afghan-taliban-takeover-68500/&ct=ga&cd=CAEYCioUMTU5MzIwNTczNjU5OTY1OTYxODIyGjIwZjZiYzI0ZWE5ZTNjYWI6Y29tOmVuOlVT&usg=AOvVaw2ddNQGQpb8a8S3766f5E6i)  Minute Mirror  **Pakistan** had a record-breaking 51 percent increase in the number of terrorist strikes in a single year after the Afghan Taliban took control of ...  [**Pakistan** records 51% increase in the number of terrorist strikes since Afghan Taliban Victory](https://www.google.com/url?rct=j&sa=t&url=https://thetruthinternational.com/national/pakistan-records-51-increase-in-the-number-of-terrorist-strikes-since-afghan-taliban-victory/&ct=ga&cd=CAEYBCoUMTU5MzIwNTczNjU5OTY1OTYxODIyGjIwZjZiYzI0ZWE5ZTNjYWI6Y29tOmVuOlVT&usg=AOvVaw3YPpE3A4sVjOc38u004qTI) - The Truth International  [Terror attacks in **Pak** jump by 51% after Taliban took over AfghanistanTerror attacks in ... - hi INDiA](https://www.google.com/url?rct=j&sa=t&url=https://hiindia.com/2022/10/20/terror-attacks-in-pak-jump-by-51-after-taliban-took-over-afghanistanterror-attacks-in-pak-jump-by-51-after-taliban-took-over-afghanistan/&ct=ga&cd=CAEYBCoUMTU5MzIwNTczNjU5OTY1OTYxODIyGjIwZjZiYzI0ZWE5ZTNjYWI6Y29tOmVuOlVT&usg=AOvVaw3GPvQWur7KhjSvzdYUp_Uh) - hi INDiA  [**Pakistan** witnesses 51 percent increase in terrorist attacks in a year](https://www.google.com/url?rct=j&sa=t&url=https://thepakistandaily.com/pakistan-witnesses-51-percent-increase-in-terrorist-attacks-in-a-year/&ct=ga&cd=CAEYBCoUMTU5MzIwNTczNjU5OTY1OTYxODIyGjIwZjZiYzI0ZWE5ZTNjYWI6Y29tOmVuOlVT&usg=AOvVaw1GeDVbyTFpyP8rkiRsKq9y) - The Pakistan Daily  [Full Coverage](http://news.google.com/news/story?ncl=https://minutemirror.com.pk/terrorist-attacks-increase-by-51-in-pakistan-following-the-afghan-taliban-takeover-68500/&hl=en&geo=US) |
| [**Terrorist attacks in Pakistan up 51% after Taliban took power in Afghanistan: report**](https://www.google.com/url?rct=j&sa=t&url=https://worldakkam.com/terrorist-attacks-in-pakistan-up-51-after-taliban-took-power-in-afghanistan-report/989494/&ct=ga&cd=CAEYDioUMTU5MzIwNTczNjU5OTY1OTYxODIyGjIwZjZiYzI0ZWE5ZTNjYWI6Y29tOmVuOlVT&usg=AOvVaw0Op5ottCdJI38TY64KXtnH)  [Worldakkam.com](http://Worldakkam.com)  The **Pak Institute** of **Peace Studies** (**PIPS**) ) noted in its report, “The Impact of the Afghan Situation and **Pakistan's** Policy Response”. |

[Taliban becomes incendiary for General Bajwa, 51 percent increase in terrorist attacks in Pakistan](https://presswire18.com/taliban-becomes-incendiary-for-general-bajwa-51-percent-increase-in-terrorist-attacks-in-pakistan/)