

## U.N. Secretary General's decision of declaring security 'Phase IV' in the NWFP and FATA region of Pakistan and its impact

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U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon declared security 'Phase IV' in Pakistan's North West Frontier Province (NWFP) and FATA "with immediate effect" on November 2, 2009. The impact of 'Phase IV' will limit the number of international staff members at duty stations to those vital emergency, humanitarian relief, security and other operations considered to be essential by the U.N. Secretary General. All other internationally-recruited staff members involved in the maintenance of programme activities will be relocated out of the NWFP and FATA. The 'Phase IV' threat level that the U.N. has assigned is only one level below full evacuation.

The decision has been taken by the U.N. Secretary General bearing in mind the deteriorating security situation in the region. It applies to Pakistan's NWFP and Tribal Areas and comes amid a wave of recent attacks in the country - mostly in NWFP and FATA region – in which many people were killed and injured. The following list shows the number of attacks that have taken place in NWFP and FATA in October, November and December 2009:

### ATTACKS IN FATA

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Killed</b>	<b>Injured</b>
1	October 8	Baicheena	1	2
2	October 17	Waziristan	2	4
3	October 17	Jandola	1	2
4	October 19	Hendi Zavar	12	0
5	October 21	Surkot	12	NS
6	October 21	Mamoond Agency	0	5
7	October 22	Tarkho	0	2
8	October 22	Barkhlozo	0	1

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9	October 23	Suran Darra Chowk	18	6
10	October 25	Fort Salop	2	4
11	October 27	Safi	0	3
12	October 31	Sur Dhand	7	12
13	November 1	Bara	0	4
14	November 1	Bara	0	4
15	November 5	Sararogha	5	2
16	November 5	Akakhel	0	0
17	November 10	Barkhlozo road	0	1
18	November 11	Ghanam Shah	10	2
19	November 11	Nawagai	0	4
20	November 17	Ghazi Gul Killay	0	0
21	November 18	Jandola-Srarogha	0	3
22	November 27	Mamoond Agency	1	0
23	December 6	Chinari	0	4
25	December 6	Malangi	2	2

**Source:**

<http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/pakistan/database/bombblast.htm>

**ATTACKS IN NWFP**

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>killed</b>	<b>Injured</b>
1	October 12	Alpuri	45	41
2	October 15	Kohat	11	22

3	October 15	Peshawar	1	12
4	October 16	Peshawar	15	19
5	October 20	Mansehra	0	3
6	October 23	Peshawar	0	15
7	October 28	Peshawar	117	200
8	October 31	Hangu	0	0
9	October 28	Peshawar	117	200
10	October 31	Hangu	0	0
11	November 4	PAF Range road	2	0
12	November 5	Hangu	0	0
13	November 8	Peshawar	18	39
14	November 9	Latifabad (Peshawar)	3	5
15	November 10	Charsadda	34	100
16	November 11	Dir	0	1
17	November 12	Hangu	2	6
18	November 13	Peshawar	13	60
19	November 13	Bannu	10	22
20	November 14	Peshawar	15	21
21	November 16	Badaber	3	30
22	November 19	Peshawar	20	50
23	November 26	Peshawar	0	3
24	December 1	Dherai	1	13
25	December 2	Arawali	0	0
26	December 3	Peshawar	0	1

**Source:**

<http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/pakistan/database/bombblast.htm>

This surge of violence in Pakistan has prompted the U.N. to withdraw its international staff from the NWFP and FATA. The NWFP has suffered repeated attacks in the current and past few months. Parts of NWFP, including its capital Peshawar, have been the site of numerous bombings and attacks in 2009.

The decision follows an attack on the U.N. World Food Programme (UNWFP) office in Islamabad on October 5, 2009, in which five people were killed and many other injured. The bombing was the first direct attack on a U.N. agency in the history of Pakistan, but was the fourth attack on the U.N. community in 2009. Previously, the head of the refugee agency, UNHCR, had been kidnapped in Balochistan and held in captivity by insurgents for several months before being released, reportedly after paying a heavy ransom. In another incident, two employees of the UN – one working for the UNHCR and the other for children’s relief agency UNICEF - were killed in the June 2009 suicide bombing at Pearl Continental hotel in Peshawar. Later the same month, another senior UNHCR official was shot dead when militants tried to kidnap him in a camp for IDPs in Peshawar. In all, eleven U.N. staff members have been killed in terrorist incidents in Pakistan in 2009.

The U.N. Secretary General’s decision of suspending long-term development work in such fields as health, education, agriculture and the environment in the tribal areas and NWFP will cost Pakistan heavily. This is a provisional suspension of activities, but still a big blow for a country that is fighting a crucial war against insurgents in South Waziristan and the Malakand region, while also having to deal with the IDPs who have fled the conflict in NWFP. Devoid of the help from the U.N., it will be difficult for Pakistan to overcome the humanitarian crises that result from the war.

The decision of closing down offices in NWFP and FATA will also put the Pakistani government in trouble as far as rehabilitation and reconstruction of these areas is concerned. U.N. agencies were playing a very important role in terms of relief and rehabilitation in the conflict-inflicted areas. The U.N. World Food Programme was playing a critical role by helping the Pakistan government provide aid and other amenities to the IDPs. The WFP make its possible for the government forces to pursue the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and lessen the disturbance to civilian lives.

According to WFP figures, between mid-2008 and April 2009, at least 550,000 people fled their homes in FATA and NWFP. Since early May 2009, when the armed conflict further intensified, another mass displacement of over three million people took place. The UNWFP responded by setting up over 25 humanitarian hubs as well as food distribution points in camps to help millions of displaced people. In addition, one WFP operation is especially focused on addressing food insecurity in the FATA region.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, there is no possible justification for attacking humanitarian workers who are working untiringly and with great determination to feed the poor and displaced people in the country.

Similarly, the U.N. World Health Organisation (WHO) is ramping up its response to the humanitarian crisis by buying ambulances and additional medicines. It is building new warehouses to improve health care for not just the over two million internally displaced people, but also the many more that are hosting them in northwest Pakistan. In the same way, the U.N. High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) is helping Pakistan in tackling the IDP problem. The UNHCR spokesperson, Andrej Mahecic, in his press briefing on November 6, 2009, said that “the UNHCR is stepping up the assistance to people displaced by the military operations in South Waziristan, Pakistan. The agency will shortly distribute tents to families staying with host communities in Dera Ismail Khan and Tank districts of the NWFP.”<sup>2</sup> He further said that since September, the UNHCR is providing relief items as well as helping the authorities in the registration process of IDPs. Besides, the U.N. is increasing its humanitarian relief efforts in collaboration with the National Disaster Management Authority of Pakistan and NGOs.

The sudden downsizing of U.N. offices in NWFP and FATA will make things complicated for the Pakistani establishment. That would surely disturb the food distribution plan and other relief activities in these areas. As the Human Resource Response Plan has assigned 12 U.N. agencies leading roles in fields such as health, food, shelter, education, protection, logistics, etc., in these war-inflicted areas of Pakistan, it will not be easy for the governmental authorities to carry out aid and development work after the U.N. Secretary General’s decision. The government alone does not have the means to extend humanitarian and rehabilitation assistance to the displaced persons because of its limited resources.

Hence, the decision will have far-reaching effects for the State. It could endanger its potential of winning the hearts and minds of the displaced population through successful rehabilitation, which is a pre-requisite for success in the war on terror. With this decision of the U.N. Secretary General, there is a risk of the battle for hearts and minds being lost even as Pakistan’s security forces are scoring victories.

## **Notes & References**

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<sup>1</sup> World Food Programme, <http://www.wfp.org/countries/pakistan>

<sup>2</sup> UN News, ‘UN stepping up assistance to latest wave of conflict displaced Pakistanis,’ November 6, 2009, <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=32865>

