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Suicide Truck Bomb, Insurgent Gun Fight in Afghanistan Kills 5

By [John Glaser](#)

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A truck bomb [slammed into and then exploded a checkpoint](#) near the offices of the United Nation's refugee agency in Kandahar, Afghanistan on Monday, an attack which was immediately followed by three armed insurgents attacking the location on foot. Five people, including three UN employees were killed in a gun fight that lasted seven hours until the three insurgents were killed.

The attack comes just days after another major insurgent suicide bombing against international forces killed up to 17 people, 9 of whom were American contractors and 5 of whom were US soldiers. Afghan officials have [blamed the Haqqani network for the attack](#) and President Hamid Karzai [extended his condolences for the US deaths after awkward criticism](#) that he initially expressed condolences only to the families of the four Afghan victims.

The attacks are further indications of the failure of the surge and of the war generally. Still, the US is desperately hoping for improvements as Secretary of State Hillary Clinton [attends a conference in Istanbul Wednesday for regional talks](#) with Afghanistan's neighbors.

In the face of worsening instability, increased violence and casualties on all sides, and no sign of subservience to imperial demands on the part of Afghan or Pakistani leaders, the Obama administration continues to talk of progress and the beginning of the drawdown leading to the full withdrawal in 2014. But analysts and officials [repeatedly contradict the plan to withdraw completely by 2014](#), promising

