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US Refuses Karzai's Latest Plea to End Deadly Night Raids

By [John Glaser](#)

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The U.S. and NATO have [refused to put an end to night raids on Afghan homes](#), despite repeated objections and pleas from Afghan President Hamid Karzai.

Night raids have become the top issue among many Afghans, exemplifying for them the grievances they have living under military occupation. Karzai has repeatedly asked they be put to an end, only to be met with [staunch refusals](#) by the U.S. and NATO.

Obama has [more than tripled the incidence of night raids](#), which [very often kill civilians](#), and which a study from back in September found [fuel resentment and undermine the mission](#) in Afghanistan.

“An estimated 12 to 20 night raids now occur per night,” according to [the report](#), “resulting in thousands of detentions per year, many of whom are non-combatants.” And many of the associated tactics, like “mass detention operations, holding entire villages for questioning on site for prolonged periods of time,” may violate international law, the report found.

Civilians bear the brunt of these hardline tactics. As one man from Nangarhar, interviewed in the report said, “They claim to be against terrorists, but what they are doing is terrorism. It spreads terror. It creates more violence.”

[According to senior commanders in the Joint Special Operations Command](#), these various nightly raids get the wrong person 50 percent of the time. For a war-torn population living

through a decade of US military occupation, [ninety-two percent](#) of whom have [never even heard of 9/11](#), these are counterproductive indeed.

NATO spokesman Brig. Gen. Carsten Jacobson, on the other hand, told the media that raids are safe, account for less than 1 percent of civilian casualties and in 85 percent of cases no shots are fired.

But recent history reveals Jacobson's characterization should be met with skepticism. A July United Nations report which claimed that only 30 civilians died in raids during the first six months of 2011 [included only a very small fraction of night raids in which civilians were killed](#), according to officials of the independent Afghan commission that co-produced the report.

According to official statistics later released by the U.S. and NATO, [well over 1,500 civilians were killed in night raids in less than 10](#)