



This is not the way to withdraw U.S. military from Afghanistan: A response to President Trump

Washington, D.C. (October 8, 2020) – President Trump’s call today to withdraw all U.S. military from Afghanistan by the end of 2020 undermines the interests of both the United States and Afghanistan.

Intra-Afghan talks, brokered by the U.S. and focused on pursuing peace and social and democratic reforms, have only just begun. Politically motivated violence continues to claim and devastate the lives of innocent Afghans. Afghanistan remains vulnerable to exploitation by international terrorist groups as a safe harbor to organize and carry out their deadly work. And there is still more progress to be made to help Afghans advance equality for women and protect the rights of other vulnerable groups.

A full retreat from Afghanistan will only frustrate these efforts, leaving Afghans more exposed to the threats they faced before 2001 and the world – including the United States – less protected from violent extremism.

We do not object to right-sized reductions in U.S. military presence in Afghanistan, as the situation requires. But for our sake and the sake of Afghanistan and the world, now is not the time to abandon the Afghan people. Now is the time to remain vigilant, to support the Afghan security forces in their front-line efforts to bring peace to the country. And now is the time to continue to provide development support that builds on the great social, economic and governance gains Afghans have welcomed since 2001.

The Alliance in Support of the Afghan People (or ASAP) represents a cross section of American national security, military, civilian and human rights leaders who advocate for continued U.S. engagement that protects, sustains, and advances the progress the Afghan and American people have made in Afghanistan since 2001. For more information: <https://www.allianceforafghans.org/>