



Alliance in Support of the Afghan People Statement on Alleviating the Current Crisis in Afghanistan

Washington, D.C. (August 24, 2021) – More than a week since the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan, the United States and its allies are struggling to provide safe passage out of the country for Afghans who are vulnerable to retribution because of their roles over the last 20 years, as well as for foreign nationals. The twin priorities at this time should be to expedite the evacuation process for all those who are at risk if left behind and to provide for Afghan refugees a secure and humane environment from which they can rebuild their lives outside Afghanistan. To this end, we call on the U.S. government to:

Dramatically speed up the pace of flights out of Afghanistan. With the Taliban threatening to close the airport on August 31, the U.S. and its allies must do everything possible to get out as many Afghans as possible during this window.

Eliminate the arbitrary deadline of August 31 for the completion of the evacuation mission. With hundreds of thousands of Afghans and foreign nationals trying to depart the country from a single airfield in Kabul, it is impossible for them all to leave the country safely by that date. Moreover, the existence of a deadline has itself triggered a panic among many that has contributed to the chaotic and dangerous conditions at the Kabul airport. We must get the job done right and avoid telegraphing our intentions.

Provide safe and secure access to the airport for those eligible to leave the country. At present, the availability of flights is not the problem for Afghans who need to evacuate; the overriding problem is the difficulty and danger of getting into the secured areas of the airport itself. Solving this problem might require negotiating with the Taliban or otherwise securing the extension of the current perimeter around the airport. The U.S. should also coordinate with partner countries to establish corridors free of checkpoints that cut off travel to the airport.

Clarify and streamline criteria for eligibility to evacuate. The current eligibility criteria for Afghans and foreign nationals to evacuate from Afghanistan are too complex. This has created a confusing and unmanageable process for countless potential evacuees and even the personnel managing the evacuation. The U.S. and its allies must clarify these criteria and replace bureaucratic technicalities with common sense when deciding the future of those desperately seeking freedom.

Take the lead in establishing places of temporary refuge for those who make it out of Afghanistan. The U.S. should waive current requirements that prevent direct movement of refugees to this country, by passing enabling legislation, if possible. This will also reduce the burdens and chaos that many refugee host countries are beginning to experience as they take Afghan refugees.

Please let us know if you would like to speak with ASAP leaders to discuss these and related issues.

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/>