



COVER PAGE » PEACE IN AFGHANISTAN

Ending the Afghanistan War Responsibly

On February 29, 2020, the United States and the Taliban signed an agreement paving a path for the withdrawal of U.S. and NATO troops from Afghanistan. A full military withdrawal is necessary and should proceed without delay. To end the war responsibly, however, the exit of troops must be paired with steps to minimize any further harm to the people of Afghanistan.

After nearly twenty years of war and numerous lost opportunities for peacemaking, the U.S.-Taliban deal is now the only viable option before us. It comes at a time when the novel coronavirus is sweeping the world, with uncertain implications for regional security and a high potential for a humanitarian nightmare. Moving forward, we must commit to making this deal successful by combining it with diplomatic efforts and assistance packages that will improve the prospects for real peace and security. At the same time, we must recognize that there are limits to U.S. ability to control the outcomes, with or without the application of military power.

The Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) is a national nonpartisan Quaker organization that lobbies Congress for peace, justice, and environmental stewardship. We seek a world free of war and the threat of war, conducting research, analysis, education, and advocacy to address the root causes of violence and injustice. In this spirit, FCNL has developed a series of recommendations and accompanying issue briefs informed by expert interviews with individuals who have worked in Afghanistan as diplomats, members of the armed services, civil society representatives, and aid workers. While developments on the ground continue to shift rapidly—perhaps even by the hour—we recommend four core steps to steer U.S. policy on the path to peace:

Issue Brief #1: Support full military withdrawal from Afghanistan

There is no military solution to the problems in Afghanistan. Members of Congress must oppose any legislation that would impede full military withdrawal and should reject the false premises that led us to invade and occupy Afghanistan in the first place.

Issue Brief #2: Ramp up bilateral and multilateral diplomatic efforts

The United States still has an outsized role to play in supporting intra-Afghan talks and engaging other regional actors diplomatically in order to improve the chances for a stable peace.

Read the Issue Briefs

*Support Full Military
Withdrawal from
Afghanistan*

*Ramp Up Bilateral
and Multilateral
Diplomatic Efforts*

*Support Long-term
Afghan-led Solutions*

*Oppose Continued
 Militarized
Counterterrorism in
Afghanistan*

Issue Brief #3: Support long-term Afghan-led solutions

Military withdrawal need not mean abandonment of the people of Afghanistan. On the contrary, the United States should continue to provide carefully calibrated economic, development, peacebuilding, and humanitarian aid to Afghanistan that includes oversight and accountability.

Issue Brief #4: Oppose continued militarized counterterrorism in Afghanistan

We must acknowledge that military counterterrorism operations in Afghanistan and around the world have only exacerbated the root causes of terrorism. Instead, Congress should put the challenge of terrorism in its proper perspective, reject calls to maintain a residual counterterrorism military force in Afghanistan, and invest and properly resource crucial non-military tools to reduce the power and reach of terror networks.

Frequently Asked Questions

FCNL has provided our responses to commonly raised questions regarding military withdrawal from Afghanistan.

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