



One Hundred Eighteenth Congress
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Foreign Affairs
2170 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

January 12, 2023

The Honorable Antony Blinken
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Blinken,

The Foreign Affairs Committee is continuing to investigate the Biden Administration's catastrophic withdrawal from Afghanistan. Past requests for documents and information on the withdrawal dating back to August 2021 have generally gone unanswered for well over a year. On October 14, 2022, I renewed these requests and requested the preservation of documents related to the withdrawal. Therefore, I hereby request that you now provide the Committee these documents without further delay.

This letter renews past requests for documents and information with updates, modifying and adding additional requests as the Committee has uncovered new information over time. Please provide all documents, information, and any other item requested below no later than January 26, 2023.

It is imperative that the State Department provide complete responses to these longstanding requests, and the Committee will not tolerate continued delay. In the event of noncompliance, the Committee will use the authorities available to it to enforce these requests as necessary, including through compulsory process.

Please provide the Committee the following documents and information:

1. All documents and communications referring or relating to the withdrawal from Afghanistan, whether provided through unclassified or classified channels as necessary, including but not limited to:

- a. All State Department dissent channel messages from 2020 and 2021 relating to the deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan, the potential effects of President Biden's rapid withdrawal, and recommendations to mitigate the threat to U.S. embassy personnel in Kabul, as well as all responses to those dissent cables drafted by the Policy Planning Staff (S/P), including drafts and final versions;
- b. All reports, intelligence assessments, and intelligence community products since January 01, 2021, relating to the potential collapse or sustainability of the pre-Taliban government, as well as any documents or communications referring or relating to these documents;
- c. All cables and intelligence community products since January 1, 2021 regarding the threat of ISIS-K or any other terrorist group to Hamid Karzai International Airport (HKIA), including those leading up to the August 26, 2021 attack at HKIA;
- d. All F-77 reports from U.S. Embassy Kabul from January 1, 2021 to the present;
- e. All documents and communications referring or relating to State Department coordination with other departments, agencies, and/or the White House on the Afghanistan withdrawal (including the evacuation and relocation effort);
- f. All documents resulting from State Department internal reviews related to the Afghanistan withdrawal (including the evacuation and relocation effort);
- g. All documents and communications referring or relating to U.S. engagement and/or communication with the Taliban since January 01, 2021;
- h. All documents and communications referring or relating to the Taliban's compliance with the agreement signed with the United States at Doha, Qatar, on February 29, 2020;
- i. All documents and communications referring or relating to the relationship between the Taliban and Al-Qaeda since February 29, 2020, including any relationship between the Taliban and the Haqqani Network, and any relationship between the Haqqani Network and Al-Qaeda;
- j. All documents and communications referring or relating to engagement with foreign governments (including the government of Afghanistan) and NATO pertaining to the withdrawal from Afghanistan (including the decision to withdraw);

- k. All documents and communications referring or relating to the August 26, 2021 terrorist attack at Hamid Karzai International Airport;
 - l. All documents and communications referring or relating to internal coordination regarding the Afghanistan evacuation, including the situation at HKIA;
 - m. All documents and communications referring or relating to the ending of contractor support for the Afghan military;
 - n. All documents and communications referring or relating to the closure of Bagram Airfield;
 - o. All planning and decisional documents and communications referring or relating to the evacuation of American citizens and other U.S. persons from Afghanistan;
 - p. All planning and decisional documents and communications referring or relating to the evacuation and resettlement of Afghans, including but not limited to Operation Allies Welcome, Operation Allies Refuge, and the SIV, P1, and P2 visa programs;
 - q. All documents and communications referring to relating to the establishment and membership of the State Department's SIV and Afghanistan Task Force(s), as well as any documents suggesting the degree, if any, to which the Task Force(s) synchronized their efforts with the Department of Defense and other agencies.
 - r. All documents referring or relating to the destruction at United States facilities in Afghanistan of documentation regarding Afghan visa applicants and recipients, including information regarding documentation not digitized or archived prior to destruction; and
 - s. All documents and communications responsive to any congressional request pertaining to Afghanistan since August 01, 2021.
2. A list of all interagency meetings (including planning exercises) relating to Afghanistan since January 01, 2021. Please identify the meeting subject, date, location, all State Department attendees, and all other known attendees.
 3. A list of all State Department and all other U.S. Government meetings and engagements with the Taliban since January 20, 2021.
 4. The texts of the five unclassified opening statements delivered at the State Department's June 15, 2022 classified briefing on Afghanistan.

5. How many American citizens and lawful permanent residents (LPRs) does the State Department estimate currently remain in Afghanistan?
 - a. How many have been evacuated since August 13, 2021?
 - b. How many of those came from outside Kabul?
 - c. How many Repatriation Assistance Requests did the State Department receive before August 31, 2021 from U.S. citizens in Afghanistan? How many Repatriation Assistance Requests from U.S. citizens in Afghanistan did the State Department receive after August 31, 2021?
 - d. What is the status of efforts to evacuate remaining U.S. citizens and LPRs?
 - e. Will the Administration commit to continuing evacuations of U.S. citizens, personnel, and Afghan partners until all of them are evacuated?
6. How many diplomatic personnel were working and residing at Hamid Karzai International Airport (HKIA) on or before August 13, 2021? How many were working at HKIA after August 13, 2021? What were their functions? Please provide a breakdown that includes government employees and contractors.
 - a. How long did the Administration intend to keep the additional roughly 6,000 U.S. troops at HKIA?
 - b. What was the status of Turkey's presence and role in securing HKIA?
 - c. Please provide details regarding this new embassy space and how it was secured. Please further provide details regarding the division of security responsibilities at the new space between DoD and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS).
 - d. When was DS told the scope of duration of security responsibilities at HKIA?
 - e. Please provide the number of staff members of State Department and USAID implementing partners (that are parties to grants, contracts and cooperative agreements) who were estimated to be in Afghanistan on August 13, 2021? How many were estimated to have remained in Afghanistan after our August 31, 2021 withdrawal?
 - i. How many did the U.S. Government identify that wanted to leave and were considered at risk?

- ii. Within this population, what was the breakdown between U.S. citizens, LPRs, SIV eligible individuals, those eligible for P1/P2 consideration, or humanitarian parole? What was the geographic breakdown of these individuals across Afghanistan?
- 7. Since the Taliban has regained control over Kabul, what is the status of ongoing U.S. assistance programs throughout Afghanistan, including programs previously conducted in coordination with the Afghan government as well as broader humanitarian and development assistance projects conducted through implementing partners? What are the Administration's intentions for rescinding and/or reprogramming foreign assistance in Afghanistan? More specifically:
 - a. Please provide a full breakdown of all U.S. funded foreign assistance programs and activities in Afghanistan, specifying by amount, account, geographic focus and implementing partner.
 - b. Please explain the status of funding outlined in Congressional Notifications issued since August 2021.
 - c. What actions did the Biden Administration take regarding U.S. assistance programs in Afghanistan in anticipation of the withdrawal from Afghanistan and in immediate response to the Taliban's takeover of the country?
 - d. Please explain the decisions made as to whether and how to continue U.S foreign assistance programs in a Taliban-controlled environment.
 - e. What specific safeguards are in place to prevent U.S. taxpayer-supported humanitarian aid from benefiting the Taliban?
 - f. How has the Department utilized the up to \$500 million Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance funds that President Biden authorized on August 16, 2021? How have these funds been deconflicted with other government funding (e.g., DoD)?
 - g. Please explain the status of security assistance programs that were underway with the Afghanistan security forces, to include the Afghan National Police, and what the Department is doing to account for defense equipment provided to these security forces, including but not limited to equipment provided under the Department's authorities.
 - h. Please explain the status of Russian helicopters purchased beginning in 2013 with U.S. taxpayer dollars for use by the Afghan Air Force.

- i. What disclosures, whether voluntary or directed, did the Department review for possible violations of the International Traffic in Arms Regulations, that involve Afghanistan beginning on August 30, 2021?
8. Please provide an accounting of all consultations with NATO allies and partners on the timing and tactics of the withdrawal, given that some allies have said publicly that Washington presented them with a *fait accompli* rather than any true opportunity to weigh in.
9. In 2021, did the State Department ever reconsider its Congressional Notification dissolving the Bureau of Contingency and Crisis Response, given the logistical challenges we then faced and knew we were likely to continue to face?
 - a. In the absence of a senior bureau official for the Bureau of Contingency and Crisis Response during August 2021, which Assistant Secretary (or equivalent) official was responsible for providing aviation, logistics, and medical support to crisis response operations and remains responsive to relevant congressional committees for briefings on those capabilities?
 - b. What bureau and senior bureau officials at the State Department were responsible for developing plans for evacuating U.S. citizens, employees, and contractors from Afghanistan? Who was the senior Department official responsible for contingency planning regarding Kabul? If then-Deputy Secretary McKeon and then-Acting Undersecretary for Management Carol Perez shared authority, how was responsibility divided?
 - c. When did supporting U.S. embassies such as those in Kuwait, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates first inform their respective host governments that the U.S. Mission in Afghanistan was planning for a NEO?
 - d. Please provide the classified PowerPoint used in Kabul outlining Mission Afghanistan evacuation plans.
 - e. Prior to July 2021, what role did Bagram Airfield play in Mission Afghanistan's emergency planning and evacuation plans?
 - f. After the U.S. departed Bagram Airfield in July 2021, how were Mission Afghanistan's emergency planning and evacuation plans changed to reflect the loss of Bagram?
10. What is the U.S. Government's current relationship with the Taliban?

11. Please provide a detailed description of U.S.-Taliban engagement since August 16, 2021.

12. Who was responsible for making vetting-related decisions for Afghan evacuees at “lily pad” sites?

a. What identification documents did the Department consider sufficient to establish an evacuee’s identity?

b. Specifically for Doha, explain the procedures used by the State Department to create a one-page identification document for those evacuees moved from Al-Udeid Air Base to Camp As Sayliyah (CAS).

a. What were the criteria for issuing evacuees this one-page document?

b. How many of these documents were issued to evacuees who had no passport?

c. How many were issued to evacuees with no passport and no Afghan national I.D. card (*tazkira*)?

d. How many were issued to evacuees who did not have a passport, *tazkira* or an Afghan army or police identification badge?

e. Were DS-232 forms in lieu of passports? If so, were they required in all cases? What, if any, other forms of documentation were used in lieu of passports?

f. Were the files containing all the one-page identification cards created at Al Udeid Air Base archived by the Department, and if so, where are those files located?

13. Please provide an example of one of these one-page identification documents with personally-identifiable information (PII) redacted. What was the total number of evacuees entering the United States from each lily pad site and how many of the evacuees had an Afghan passport or other passport?

14. What is the current status of SIV, P1, and P2 visa application processing?

a. How many visas have been processed to date for each category?

b. How many applicants for each category have been evacuated to date?

- c. How many applications currently remain outstanding?
 - d. Do P1 and P2 eligible Afghans need to depart on their own from Afghanistan, or will they be considered for evacuation via HKIA and then paroled?
 - e. What are the criteria for such parole, and which Afghans is the Administration considering eligible, or prioritizing, for parole?
15. Statistics from State indicate that a mere 25 percent of those evacuated from Kabul by the US government last August were women. How does the State Department account for this disparity?
- a. The Secretary's Office of Global Women's Issues (S/GWI) states it "contributed to the Department-wide evacuation coordination efforts with at least one S/GWI staff member assigned to the Afghans At-Risk Task Force." Please identify the exact number of S/GWI staff assigned to operational task forces and each of their roles.
 - b. Please identify the total number of task forces involved with the Afghanistan withdrawal/evacuation and staff assigned to each task force.
16. Please provide the requested information and documents regarding the policy actions taken by State to ensure that women were given at least an equal opportunity to evacuate from Afghanistan:
- a. S/GWI states that it supplied lists of high-risk Afghan women leaders and rights advocates to other parts of the United States government, and NGOs to support their relocation and resettlement. Please identify all government and nongovernment entities these lists were supplied to and provide all such lists and drafts of the same to the Committee.
 - b. How many total women were identified on these high-risk lists? How many women on the lists were evacuated during the main evacuation; how many have been evacuated since that time? (Please provide the total number on list, and/or sex-disaggregated data for males and females, for the purpose of comparison.) Of the women evacuated, how many have been resettled?
 - c. What criteria did S/GWI use to select women to prioritize in evacuations? Please provide all internal guidance regarding selection criteria.

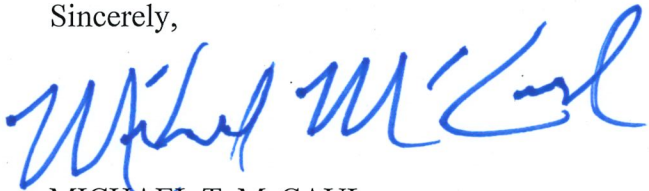
17. Please provide requested information regarding the work of U.S. Special Envoy for Afghan Women, Girls, and Human Rights Rina Amiri:
- Please provide Special Envoy Amiri's travel schedule since assuming her current role.
 - Please provide a list of all meetings Special Envoy Amiri has had since assuming her role.
18. Which third countries did State engage regarding hosting Afghan refugees and/or SIV applicants while they finish processing prior to and in the immediate aftermath of the fall of Kabul? Please identify all countries that offered to host refugees, and the reason the offer was or was not accepted.
19. What is State's current plan for the resettlement of Afghan refugees and/or SIV applicants? Please provide all documents relating to the establishment of new refugee sites.
- What resources is State providing to countries in the region surrounding Afghanistan to prepare for and/or manage increased refugee outflows that have resulted from the premature U.S. withdrawal?
 - What efforts are being made to engage with regional countries surrounding Afghanistan regarding forced repatriation of Afghan refugees, and how does the principle of non-refoulement impact those efforts?
20. What diplomatic agreements were in place as of August 13, 2021 to grant the U.S. counterterrorism strike and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities? What agreements are in place now?
- What is the status of negotiations with regional countries to secure basing and airspace access for U.S. forces to conduct ISR operations in support of our counter-terrorism mission?
 - As of September 1, 2021, what was the Administration's plan to ensure the U.S. had the necessary intelligence collection capabilities, including intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, to help prevent terrorism threats in Afghanistan from reaching the homeland? Did that plan or does the plan now include any U.S. presence on the ground in Afghanistan?
 - What was the Administration's assessment in August 2021 of the amount of time post-withdrawal that it could take al Qaeda and ISIS to regain enough capability to conduct an attack on the homelands of the U.S. and our allies? What is the

current assessment of this ISIS and al Qaeda capability?

21. What negotiations has the Biden Administration conducted with the Taliban prior to, during, and after the Afghanistan withdrawal?
22. What conditions did the Taliban request regarding keeping HKIA open past August 31st, 2021, and what promises did the U.S. government make in return?
23. I also request you declassify and make public as much of this information regarding the deteriorating situation in Afghanistan and the August 26 HKIA attack as possible, while protecting sources and methods.

I look forward to your prompt responses.

Sincerely,



MICHAEL T. McCAUL
Chairman
House Foreign Affairs Committee