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Secretary Blinken Pledges Continued Help for Afghans as Withdrawal Anniversary Approaches

Secretary of State meets with #AfghanEvac and coalition members working to support Afghans who served alongside U.S. and allied forces

Washington – Today Secretary of State Antony Blinken pledged to continue to assist veterans and volunteers who are working to help Afghans relocate to the United States. In a meeting with the international non-profit #AfghanEvac and more than 130 members of its coalition, Secretary Blinken, veterans, and frontline civilians discussed roadblocks that must be cleared to help Afghans come to the U.S. and successfully make a new life here.

“I personally, and all of us at State, continue to be deeply grateful for the collaboration with the Coalition on supporting Afghans in relocation and resettling in the United States,” said Secretary Blinken. **“Listening to your stories of challenges and successes exemplifies our close public-private partnership.”**

Since the fall of Kabul and withdrawal of American troops in August 2021, collaborative efforts between #AfghanEvac, the Department of State, and other governmental and non-governmental partners have helped to relocate and resettle thousands of Afghans, many of whom are now able to start new lives in the U.S. where they can thrive and pursue the American dream.

“With the talk of civil war, mass starvation, and further destabilization in Afghanistan, combined with the fact that Ukraine has eclipsed Afghanistan in the headlines, we are extremely worried that the United States government will be inclined to ‘move on,’” said Shawn VanDiver, a Navy veteran and president of the #AfghanEvac coalition.

Earlier this week, the State Department’s Coordinator for Afghan Relocation (CARE) was formally established as a permanent office within the agency’s South Central Asia bureau. This structural change demonstrates the U.S. government’s commitment to this mission can endure.

“We are encouraged that Secretary Blinken remains so committed to this cause, and we are prepared to continue to work side-by-side with him and other partners to ensure that America keeps its promises to our Afghan allies,” VanDiver said. **“Doing anything less will**

result in real harm to Afghans and the servicemembers and veterans who served alongside them.”

The more than 200 organizations that make up the #AfghanEvac coalition have long been advocating for ways to provide new Afghan community members with the stability they need to resettle and thrive in their new lives here.

"Nearly a year ago, civil society and government came together to help our Afghan allies. I'm grateful that the Secretary continues to believe in the strong partnership model that came out of that crisis," said Chris Purdy, Director of Veterans for American Ideals and Outreach. **"Even though we continue to face many headwinds in continuing to resettle our Afghan friends, meetings like this demonstrate the administration's commitment to the people of Afghanistan."**

For twenty years, Afghan allies worked and fought side-by-side with U.S. and allied forces through the longest war in American history. The #AfghanEvac coalition is committed to ensuring that their service, partnership, and commitment to American ideals is honored.

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