



International Refugee
Assistance Project

Press Release: IRAP Statement on the Peace Agreement Between the United States and the Taliban

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IRAP STATEMENT ON THE PEACE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE TALIBAN

(New York, NY) – Today, the U.S. government reached a peace deal with the Taliban in Afghanistan. The [International Refugee Assistance Project](#) (IRAP) is deeply concerned that the U.S. government has not announced plans to ensure that all Afghan partners of the United States, including thousands in the backlog for the Special Immigrant Visa program, will be protected during and after the rapid and complete withdrawal of U.S. troops.

The Taliban, as well as other armed militias that control territory and are not party to the peace deal, have frequently targeted Afghan partners for their service to the U.S. mission. Not only does a U.S. withdrawal mean that those trusted employees lose what little protection they currently have, but it will likely also reduce the U.S. Embassy's ability to process visas. The U.S. government must act immediately to protect its partners, or it risks repeating the mistakes made at the end of the Vietnam War, when the [U.S. government abandoned](#) thousands of its partners.

As former U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan, Ryan Crocker, [noted last year](#): “The State Department and vetting agencies must ensure that our Afghan partners can reach safety before the already poor security situation deteriorates further. The Defense Department, too, must demand this of the State Department in light of the mission-critical services that tens of thousands of Afghans have provided to U.S. troops since 2001. Our Afghan partners have risked — and sometimes lost — their lives and those of their families to support the U.S. mission. As the United States is contemplating its exit strategy, the least we can do is ensure that our closest allies are part of the plan.”

To view the press release, [click here](#).

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