



Afghan-Canadian Interpreters Team
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08 July 21

The Honourable Marco Mendicino, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship
365 Laurier Ave W.
Ottawa, ON
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Dear Minister:

The United States' and NATO's withdrawal has created conditions of tremendous uncertainty inside Afghanistan. The recent advances of the Taliban are unsettling and the potentially violent consequences that await people in authority and their supporters cannot be ignored.

Though presently at the juncture of the 10th anniversary of the end of Canadian combat operations in Afghanistan and the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, the imminent withdrawal of NATO forces leads us to assess that a cataclysmic civil war looms. Timely and decisive action is required for practical and moral reasons.

There is an acute need to ensure the safety and well-being of those Afghan nationals who served alongside Canadian soldiers, development officers and diplomats during our intervention. Between 2006-2011, at least six interpreters were killed alongside our troops. Many more are likely to die without our immediate assistance.

There are at least 115 former interpreters, cultural advisors and locally employed persons and their families who will be threatened by the Taliban. If and when they are found they will likely be imprisoned or worse, for their service in support of our mission. Many Canadian veterans are in contact with the Afghans who served alongside them and their stories are harrowing. These people are considered "comrades-in-arms" and their plight is affecting these veterans - as it should all Canadians.

An immigration program with an empowered Government point-of-contact and logistical support that is fit for purpose in bringing these brave and loyal Afghans to Canada is needed. The current programs are unfortunately ill-suited to the crisis at hand.

780 Afghans and their families were resettled in Canada between 2009-2011 under a special Immigration measures program. This short-lived yet effective program should be re-established immediately if we wish to save lives.



Every other NATO participating nation is in the process of expediting immigration processes and in some cases evacuating those Afghans and their families that supported their national missions.

We the undersigned as former Canadian Task Force Commanders call upon the government to take decisive action and bring our interpreters to safety in Canada.

Respectfully Yours,

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Major-General (Ret'd)

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