



LEARNING THE LESSONS OF NATO'S ENGAGEMENT IN AFGHANISTAN¹

RESOLUTION

The Assembly,

1. **Honouring** the service and sacrifice of Allied, partner country, and Afghan personnel who served shoulder to shoulder over the past twenty years in Afghanistan;
2. **Paying tribute** to the Allied soldiers, the soldiers of partner countries, and civilian staff who ensured the safe evacuation of over 120,000 Allied citizens, partner country nationals, and at-risk Afghans from Kabul in August 2021;
3. **Supportive** of Allied and partner efforts to resettle eligible Afghan nationals who assisted NATO and Allied operations in Afghanistan;
4. **Recalling** the Allies' powerful demonstration of solidarity with the United States when NATO invoked Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty for the first and only time in its history following the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001;
5. **Underlining** that the UN-mandated NATO mission in Afghanistan followed the terror attacks of 11 September 2001, which were orchestrated from Afghanistan, and that, due to the effort and solidarity of over 50 nations, no terror attacks on Allied soil have been organised from Afghanistan since;
6. **Determined** to ensure Afghanistan never again serves as a safe haven for global terrorism and to preserve the gains made to that end over the last twenty years;
7. **Highlighting** that NATO's presence in Afghanistan contributed to unprecedented political, economic, and social achievements for the Afghan people, especially for Afghan women and girls;
8. **Affirming** that any Afghan government must adhere to its international obligations; safeguard the human rights of all Afghans, particularly women, children, and minorities; uphold the rule of law; allow unhindered humanitarian access; and ensure that Afghanistan never again serves as a safe haven for international terrorism;
9. **Troubled** by reports of arbitrary detentions, intimidation, and violence committed by the Taliban against the Afghan people;
10. **Deeply concerned** by the possibility of humanitarian crisis, civil war, an increase in crime, illegal migration, human and drug trafficking and regional destabilisation within and beyond Afghanistan;
11. **Stressing** that any Afghan government which fails to meet its international obligations risks deep international isolation;

¹ presented by the Defence and Security Committee and adopted by the Plenary Assembly on Monday 11 October 2021

12. **Acknowledging** that the collapse of Afghanistan's institutions raises questions which Allies must address together;
13. **Welcoming** an Allied commitment to learn lessons from their engagement in Afghanistan and **determined** to contribute actively to this process;
14. **Convinced** that the lessons drawn from NATO's engagement in Afghanistan are directly relevant to and must be reflected in NATO's next Strategic Concept;
15. **Confident that** NATO's next Strategic Concept will reflect the range of complex security threats facing the Alliance, particularly the challenge of international terrorism as it has evolved over the two decades since Allies first engaged in the country;
16. **URGES** member governments and parliaments of the North Atlantic Alliance:
 - a. to conduct a thorough, clear-eyed, and comprehensive assessment of the Alliance's 20-year engagement in Afghanistan;
 - b. to incorporate lessons learned into NATO's new Strategic Concept and the broader NATO 2030 agenda, particularly lessons relating to political consultation, threat assessment, in-operation decision making and adaptation processes, intelligence, counterterrorism, partner training and capacity-building, anti-corruption, and counter-narcotics;
 - c. to harness the NATO Parliamentary Assembly as a forum for open discussion on the Allied engagement in Afghanistan, where Allied lawmakers can debate difficult questions, agree on necessary lessons, and maintain cohesiveness while the Alliance undertakes next steps;
 - d. to participate in the work of the international community aiming to pressure any Afghan government to respect its international obligations, using all diplomatic, political, and economic tools available to the Allies to ensure the new Afghan authorities forgo violence and reprisals; support an inclusive political process respecting the basic human rights of all Afghans and guarantee women's participation in political and civil life; prevent Afghanistan from again becoming a safe haven for global terrorism; permit eligible Afghans and non-Afghans to leave the country safely if they wish, allow unfettered humanitarian access to Afghanistan and to take more responsibility for the refugee crisis and not to leave its heavy burden to neighbouring countries alone;
 - e. to integrate the lessons learned into the reflection process in order to adapt the Alliance's counterterrorism approach to new strategic circumstances, engaging regional and international partners to ensure Afghanistan never again serves as a safe haven for international terrorist organisations, but also to meet the challenge of international terrorism wherever it threatens Allied interests and populations;
 - f. to cooperate actively with countries in the region and relevant organisations such as the UN and the EU to support Afghan refugees, mitigate the impact of the ongoing humanitarian crisis, and maintain regional stability;
 - g. to increase efforts to prevent terrorism by supporting stability and the related development of security capabilities in regional partner countries, in order to avoid possible interactions with fundamentalist groups in the Mediterranean area.