

Statement of Ambassador Jawad on U.S. Casualties in Afghanistan

Afghan Embassy, Wash. DC - Press Release

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By

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As we approach the Fourth of July, it's important to reflect on the sacrifices that brave American patriots have made for freedom, both in the U.S. and in Afghanistan.

It was over 200 years ago that American revolutionaries boldly declared their independence from Great Britain, kicking off a war premised on the principles of freedom, justice and equality. Many lost their lives, and on this July 4, like every one before it, Americans recognize the sacrifice they made for their country and cause.

In 2001, U.S. soldiers entered Afghanistan to liberate the country from the tyranny of the Taliban and help the Afghan people fight for the same principles that motivated America's struggle for independence. Since then, Afghanistan has written a new constitution, elected a president and parliament, and set forth on a path towards peace and prosperity. Women have been granted rights they were long denied by the Taliban, and are now active participants in Afghanistan's nascent democracy. Children have access to education and healthcare, and millions of refugees are returning home with renewed hope. With the help of brave soldiers from the U.S. and many other countries, the Afghan people are seeing a future of freedom, justice and equality.

The fight in Afghanistan has not come without sacrifices, however. Since 2001, 541 U.S. and 331 NATO servicemen and women have lost their lives securing Afghanistan and defending freedom. This past month of June has been particularly difficult, with 28 U.S. soldiers losing their lives.

These deaths are tragic, but they are not in vain. Those valiant U.S. and NATO servicemen and women were fighting for the freedom of the Afghan people and for the security of Afghanistan, the U.S., the region and the world. They will be remembered for their distinguished service and valor while embarking on the courageous task of bringing peace, security and reconstruction to Afghanistan. When a U.S. or NATO soldier falls, the Afghan people see it as a loss of their own.

I would like to convey our most sincere condolences to the friends, families and loved ones of each and every one of these fallen soldiers. They have served with bravery and distinction, and their sacrifice will allow Afghanistan the freedom, justice and equality that so many patriots have fought for and that Americans celebrate every Fourth of July.

I would also like to express my gratitude to the continuing support from the U.S. and NATO countries. Their commitment and willingness to send more troops to Afghanistan will allow us to move forward in this vital fight for freedom and security.

