

Service dogs left for dead in Kabul by departing U.S. troops

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FILE PHOTO: Dogs caged in the Nowzad Conrad Lewis Clinic in Kabul, Afghanistan. (Photo: Global Look Press / Oleksandr Rupeta)

Washington, September 1 (RHC)-- The American Humane Society has condemned the U.S. government for apparently leaving a number of service animals behind after withdrawing from Kabul. Footage on social media showed the dogs in cages and roaming around the airport.

“I am devastated by reports that the American government is pulling out of Kabul and leaving behind brave US military contract working dogs to be tortured and killed at the hand of our enemies,” American Humane President and CEO Robert Ganzert said in a statement on Monday.

“These brave dogs do the same dangerous, lifesaving work as our military working dogs, and deserved a far better fate than the one to which they have been condemned,” Ganzert continued.

Images circulating on social media in recent days showed the dogs confined in cages at Hamid Karzai International Airport in Kabul after their handlers had left the country. While the US military drew criticism for giving its own dogs seats on evacuation flights, those dogs are considered non-commissioned officers by the military, and outrank their handlers. The contract working dogs enjoy no such luxury.

Dogs are considered unclean by the Taliban, and Ganzert’s concerns about potential mistreatment have been backed up by other animal activists in Afghanistan. Former British Marine Pen Farthing managed to evacuate 150 dogs and cats from his animal shelter in Kabul over the weekend, but told the Daily Mail on Monday that Taliban fighters stabbed one of his dogs on the way through a security checkpoint to the airport, and shot two dogs he left behind with a friend.

The Pentagon insists that it didn’t leave any dogs in cages, “including the reported working dogs,” spokesman John Kirby said on Tuesday. Kirby claimed that the dogs were left in the care of Kabul Small Animal Rescue (KSAR), a local charity run by an American woman named Charlotte Maxwell Jones.

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