

# *Afghanistan Invasion and Occupation Proved Failure*

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After months of discussions with Afghan President Ashraf Ghani, President Obama has announced his plans to keep U.S. troops in Afghanistan but reduce them from the current 9,800 to 5,500 before he leaves office in early 2017, essentially abandoning the commitment he made early in his presidency and during the 2008 campaign to bring the war in Afghanistan to an end. Obama cites the deterioration of security and weakness of Afghan forces as the reason for keeping the troops in Afghanistan. Here is what he had to say.

“The bottom line is in key areas of the country the security situation is still very fragile. And in some places there's risk of deterioration. Fortunately in President Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah there is a national unity government that supports a strong partnership with the United States. During their visit earlier this year President Ghani and I agreed to continue our counterterrorism cooperation. And he has asked for continued support as Afghan forces grow stronger.”

The announcement comes weeks after the U.S. resumed bombing in Afghanistan, where on October 3 the United States Air Force AC-130 gunship attacked Medecins Sans Frontieres' hospital in Kunduz, killing 22 people, injuring 30, and 33 remain missing.

Let's face it. President Obama's announcement is an extraordinary admission of what most serious analysts know of the situation, which is that more than a decade and a half after the U.S. invasion of

Afghanistan in 2001 nothing has improved. None of the objectives have been met, and in fact the situation is worse. The invasion and occupation has been a failure. While the U.S. and NATO want to wash their hands of the larger mess that's been created, they can't allow it completely to go to those forces that are going to be hostile to both the Afghan government and to larger U.S.-NATO interests in the region.

President Obama says that the US had to be in Afghanistan to prevent Al-Qaeda from doing anything harmful there or against America. But Al-Qaeda was insignificant there then. And it is even moreso now. This continues to be an incredible bogeyman used to deflect attention away from the real resistance that emerged right away to foreign occupation in Afghanistan. That came largely under the banner of the Taliban that became an umbrella group for various resistance forces in Afghanistan. And of course now there is the added dimension of a far greater terrorist threat, in the form of ISIS.

It's scandalous. Targeting the Doctors Without Borders hospital is just the tip of the iceberg. This sort of thing has happened routinely throughout a decade and a half of this occupation. All sorts of war crimes, drone attacks, special forces, invasions into homes that have humiliated the population. Add to that the puppet regime, first of Hamid Karzai that was parachuted into Kabul and the corruption, the arrogance and incompetence of that regime, which simply siphoned off billions of dollars to its cronies and its allied warlords.

The Afghani population did not take too kindly to this. And so that's why so many grievances have emerged that provide the resistance force that has emerged against the occupation and the government in Kabul.

Obama went on to say: "I believe this mission is vital to our national security interests and preventing terrorist attacks against our citizens and our nation.

This is ridiculous. In fact it has been this aggressive, incompetent, humiliating occupation which has increased the likelihood of a greater security threat to the United States.

The emergence of ISIS has been precipitated by the type of social conditions created by the wars and occupation, not just in Afghanistan but in Iraq as well and what's been going on in Syria.

It is disingenuous for the U.S. administration to cite the emergence of such forces that present a threat when in fact it's their policies that create the conditions for the radicalization of people who see nothing but despair and deeply repressive and violent policies being applied in their own backyards.

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