

*Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2024*

**Statement on the Third Anniversary of the Terrorist Attack at Hamid Karzai International Airport in Kabul, Afghanistan**

*August 26, 2024*

Three years ago, an ISIS suicide bomber launched an attack of deliberate evil at Abbey Gate outside of Kabul Airport, killing 13 American servicemembers and more than 100 innocent Afghans. Today—and every day—we honor our fallen:

Marine Corps Staff Sgt. Darin T. Hoover;  
Marine Corps Sgt. Johanny Rosario Pichardo;  
Marine Corps Sgt. Nicole L. Gee;  
Marine Corps Cpl. Hunter Lopez;  
Marine Corps Cpl. Daegan W. Page;  
Marine Corps Cpl. Humberto A. Sanchez;  
Marine Corps Lance Cpl. David L. Espinoza;  
Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Jared M. Schmitz;  
Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Rylee J. McCollum;  
Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Dylan R. Merola;  
Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Kareem M. Nikoui;  
Navy Petty Officer Third Class Maxton W. Soviak;  
Army Staff Sgt. Ryan C. Knauss.

These 13 Americans—and the many more that were wounded—were patriots in the highest sense. Some were born the year the war in Afghanistan started. Some were on their second or third tour. But all raised their hand to serve a cause greater than themselves, risking their own safety for the safety of their fellow Americans, allies, and Afghan partners. They embodied the very best of who we are as a nation: brave, committed, selfless. And we owe them and their families a sacred debt we will never be able to fully repay, but will never cease working to fulfill.

We also owe their brothers- and sisters-in-arms, who served and sacrificed for our freedom and future during America's longest war: 20,744 American servicemembers were wounded; 2,461 made the ultimate sacrifice. They were sons and daughters, mothers and fathers, spouses and friends. No matter how much time passes, the pain of their loss will remain real and raw. And so will the pride we feel in their service. From the deserts of Helmand to the mountains of Kunduz and everywhere in between, these women and men worked alongside our Afghan partners to protect our Nation. And deployment after deployment, tour after tour, they dared all, risked all, and gave all to keep us safe.

Today, our longest war is over. But our commitment to preventing attacks on our homeland—or our people—never will be. We will continue to disrupt terrorist activity, wherever we find it. We will continue to deliver justice to terrorists who plot against America, just as we have over the last 3 years with the leader of al-Qaeda and the global leader of ISIS. And we will do so without deploying thousands of American troops to ground wars overseas.

Ever since I became Vice President, I carried a card with me every day that listed the exact number of American servicemembers who were killed in Iraq and Afghanistan, including Taylor, Johanny, Nicole, Hunter, Daegan, Humberto, David, Jared, Rylee, Dylan, Kareem, Maxton, and Ryan. Because we must never forget the immense price that was paid for our freedom. We must never forget that each beloved servicemember we lost was a human being, who left behind entire families and communities. And together, we must never stop striving to be worthy of their ultimate sacrifice.

Today we vow we never will. May God bless each of our fallen heroes, may God bless all those who served and sacrificed, and may He keep them and their families close: today and always.

NOTE: The statement referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist organization.

*Categories:* Statements by the President : Terrorist attack at Hamid Karzai International Airport in Kabul, Afghanistan, 3d anniversary.

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