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# The Ethics of Exit from Afghanistan

August 23, 2021

## From Carnegie Council President Joel Rosenthal

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How does this end? This question loomed from the beginning of the war in Afghanistan, and now seems like a prelude to the tragic final act that is playing out in Kabul.

For his latest [column](#), Carnegie Council President Joel Rosenthal discusses the post-9/11 evolution from counterterrorism to counterinsurgency and analyzes the ethics surrounding the United States' withdrawal from Afghanistan. He argues that, "if there was an ethical failure by the United States, it was not in the decision to leave. The failure was in its initial execution. In leaving any partnership, it most certainly matters how you do it."

Read the full article [here](#).

## Virtual Event on August 26: What Can Be Done to Evacuate Vulnerable Populations, Right Now?

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As the Taliban consolidates their hold on the country and U.S. personnel depart, millions of Afghans now face threats of violence and a future without viable pathways for expatriation and asylum. On **August 26th at 12:00 PM ET**, Carnegie Council invites you to attend a live virtual panel and Q&A to hear from individuals who recently escaped Afghanistan and those currently working to secure safe passage for others out of the country.

The panel will provide attendees with a first-hand account of the situation in Afghanistan, as well as an in-depth discussion on the steps that U.S. and international policymakers can take right now to protect vulnerable Afghans. You can register [here](#). We hope that you will join us for this critical discussion.

## Listen: The Future of Afghanistan & the Ethics of Withdrawal on *The Doorstep & Global Ethics*

## Review Podcasts

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Ali M Latifi, Kabul based journalist for Al Jazeera English, and Said Sabir Ibrahimi, non-resident fellow with NYU's Center on International Cooperation, join *Doorstep* co-hosts Nikolas Gvosdev and Tatiana Serafin to discuss what is happening on the ground in Afghanistan and the expectations for the country's future.

Will the promises of a Taliban 2.0 in 2021 differ from the 1990s? Can the country recover economically to meet the needs of a new younger generation? What is the responsibility of the international community? *The Doorstep* gets behind the scenes of the current media reporting. Listen to the podcast on our [website](#), [YouTube](#), [Apple Podcasts](#), or [Spotify](#).

And in May, just after President Biden announced the withdrawal, Jonathan Cristol, author of *The United States and the Taliban before and after 9/11*, discussed on the *Global Ethics Review* podcast the moral implications of this decision, in particular, its effect on the Afghan people. Listen to the podcast or read the transcript [here](#), listen on [Apple Podcasts](#) or [Spotify](#), or watch on [YouTube](#).

## Read: "America Has a Moral Responsibility to Refugees Fleeing Afghanistan" in *Newsweek*

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In July 2021, [Model International Mobility Convention](#) Senior Fellow Michael Doyle and Research Fellow Mark James Wood wrote an [op-ed](#) for *Newsweek* arguing that America has a moral responsibility to refugees fleeing Afghanistan.

They warned of what is currently unfolding: "As the Taliban continues to retake territory," they wrote, "the stakes for both those who assisted the U.S. (translators, guides, contractors, etc.) and their families have never been higher." We invite you to revisit the piece [here](#).

## Watch: From our Archives, "The Ethics of Exit from Afghanistan"

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At Carnegie Council, the conversation about implementing an ethical withdrawal began more than ten years ago when we hosted a [program](#) on "The Ethics of Exit from Afghanistan." Even then, it was clear that the moral imperative was to be loyal to those who worked and sacrificed together.

Katherine Brown and Robert Diamond, Truman National Security Project fellows with first-hand experience in Afghanistan, discussed how and when—both ethically and pragmatically—the United States should leave the embattled nation. You can access the panel discussion [here](#).



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