

From: **Christian Hertenstein** <chertenstein@bullpenstrategygroup.com>
Date: Mon, Aug 23, 2021 at 5:34 PM
Subject: ICYMI: Afghan MP Naheed Farid's Op-Ed in USA Today
To:

In case you missed it, Naheed Farid, Afghan MP and advisory board member to the Afghanistan-US Democratic Peace and Prosperity Council, published the following op-ed in [USA Today](#):

Joe Biden Abandoned His Moral Authority At The Kabul Airport

After my home province of Herat, Afghanistan, [was taken last week](#), the Taliban came to my home to kill me and my family. They didn't find us, but they ransacked our house and stole our possessions. I am now among the [tens of thousands of displaced persons](#) fleeing Afghanistan because of threats on our lives. While my exit from the country was harrowing, I watched in horror as the U.S. government [limited or stopped Afghan civilians from leaving](#) the country only to prioritize its own personnel, whom the Taliban are not hunting.

As a female member of Parliament in a country that was undergoing the messy transformation into modern democracy, I understand the necessity of realpolitik. But as [chair of the Parliament's committee](#) on human rights, civil society and women's affairs, I also believe that moral authority is a necessity to democratic power.

President Joe Biden has a small window to reclaim his.

Kabul airport is our lifeline

The United States appears to have taken control of [Kabul international airport](#), and it should maintain control until every civilian with a way to exit the country departs.

Biden declared that the United States will [abandon the airport by Aug. 31](#), though now he might extend the deadline. America cannot turn its back on the Afghan people. Their dash to freedom hinges on control of the airport. The Taliban have what they want – Kabul – and have no interest in giving the United States a reason to reenter the country.

Washington responds to optics and after decades observing it, the Taliban know which buttons launch American fire.

Many in America are looking for bits of hope from Afghanistan. Tuesday's news conference by the Taliban is being replayed by the media, taking their assurances on the [rights of women and protection of vulnerable Afghans](#) at face value. I caution them.

The Taliban can't be trusted

When I was 12 years old, the Taliban took control of Herat, where I lived most of my life. The inhumane brutality of these men is something I cannot forget. I have women in Afghanistan messaging me on WhatsApp, asking how they can protect themselves, as the Taliban go door to door looking for evidence of Western sympathies. Diplomas are now death warrants. Reports of the Taliban seizing [biometric data to identify American assets](#) means that no one will be able to hide their past life.

Afghanistan is not safe for those who embraced the freedoms U.S. liberation bestowed. Journalists, activists, judges, parliamentarians (like myself), musicians, artists and members of the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces will be hunted unless they are evacuated from the country. The United States, NATO partners and the rest of the international community must welcome these Afghans and quickly.

We must use the Kabul international airport to temporarily house Afghans until they can evacuate. I urge more countries to welcome vulnerable Afghans. These are people who share the democratic values the West was so eager to export.

President Biden's resolve to leave Afghanistan is clear, but the way in which he leaves will define his presidency and the future conversation on human rights. We are begging him to continue holding Kabul international airport, allow it to shelter those escaping and welcome Afghan refugees.

His moral authority is waiting on the tarmac in Kabul. We hope he reclaims it.

Naheed Farid is a member of Parliament from Herat and chair of the human rights civil society and women's affairs committee. She is also an advisory board member at the [Afghanistan-U.S. Democratic Peace and Prosperity Council](#) in Washington, D.C.

ABOUT US

The Afghanistan-U.S. Democratic Peace and Prosperity Council (DPPC) is an organization dedicated to furthering a long-term alliance, forged in a strong mutual commitment to shared ideals, between Afghans and Americans. Based in Washington, D.C., the DPPC promotes policies to ensure a sustainable peace process, strong democratic institutions, women's and children's rights, anti-corruption, good governance, and economic development. The DPPC's mission is to support legislation and policies that provide a better future for young Afghans and help the reformers in Afghanistan Parliament to move the country along the path to self-sufficiency.

These materials are being distributed by Bullpen Strategy Group on behalf of the Afghanistan-U.S. Democratic Peace and Prosperity Council. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice.



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Joe Biden Abandoned His Moral Authority At The Kabul Airport: Female Afghan Parliamentarian

[USA Today](#) | [Naheed Farid](#) | August 20, 2021

[View Source](#)

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