# NATIONAL SECURITY DIVISION REPORT

## National Security Division Report

Week ending April 30, 2021

**Special Immigrant Visas for Afghans - Who Were Employed by/on behalf of the U.S. Government**

Thousands of Afghans seek refuge in the United States, especially those who worked tirelessly with American forces during the war. Since major combat operations ended in 2014 and the possibility of a complete withdraw of U.S. troops from the country, many interpreters fear they will forever be left behind.

With the Taliban's targeted attacks and assassinations on interpreters, many see fleeing the country as their only option. Many of our Afghan allies feel abandoned, especially as May comes closer, seeing the start of the significant drawdown of U.S. troops and will culminate with a total withdraw on September 11, 2021.

Congress has instructed that visas should be processed in no more than nine months (though their program), but at the current rate for the Afghan visas on average take around four years, and others wait even longer than that.

Roughly 18,000 plus applicants are filing for this visa as of April 2021.
The official statement from the U.S. Department of State is as follows,

"The Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2021, as enacted on December 27, 2020, authorized 4,000 additional SIVs for principal Afghan applicants, for a total of 26,500 visas allocated since December 19, 2014. The Department of

State's authority to issue Special Immigrant Visas (SIVs) to Afghan nationals under section 602(b) of the Afghan Allies Protection Act of 2009, as amended, will continue until all visa numbers are allocated under the Act are issued."
They go on to say, "This program is completely distinct from another program authorizing SIVs for certain Iraqi and Afghan translators/interpreters who worked directly with the United States Armed Forces or under COM authority, although some translators and interpreters may qualify under both programs."

The American Legion foresaw this issue in 2018 when our National Executive Committee unanimously passed Resolution No. 16, which called for Congress and the president to recognize Afghan and Iraqi Special Immigrant Visa recipients who "stood shoulder to shoulder" with U.S. troops and diplomats. Right now, military equipment is being removed from Afghanistan. But people are our greatest asset. No one will help us in future fights if we leave them behind to be killed.

Many experts fear another incident of what took place during the end of the Vietnam war in Saigon as the North Vietnamese invaded the southern capital. There are roughly four to five airfields in the whole country of Afghanistan that can support such a mass migration, all the while possibly taking fire on their way out.

The American Legion supports our allied Afghans that supported our U.S. troops during their time-fighting terrorism in their nation. They did so with honor, distinction, and with the possibility of death and great bodily harm. We must act swiftly to ensure that those who qualify for this visa get what was offered and, in many cases, promised to them.

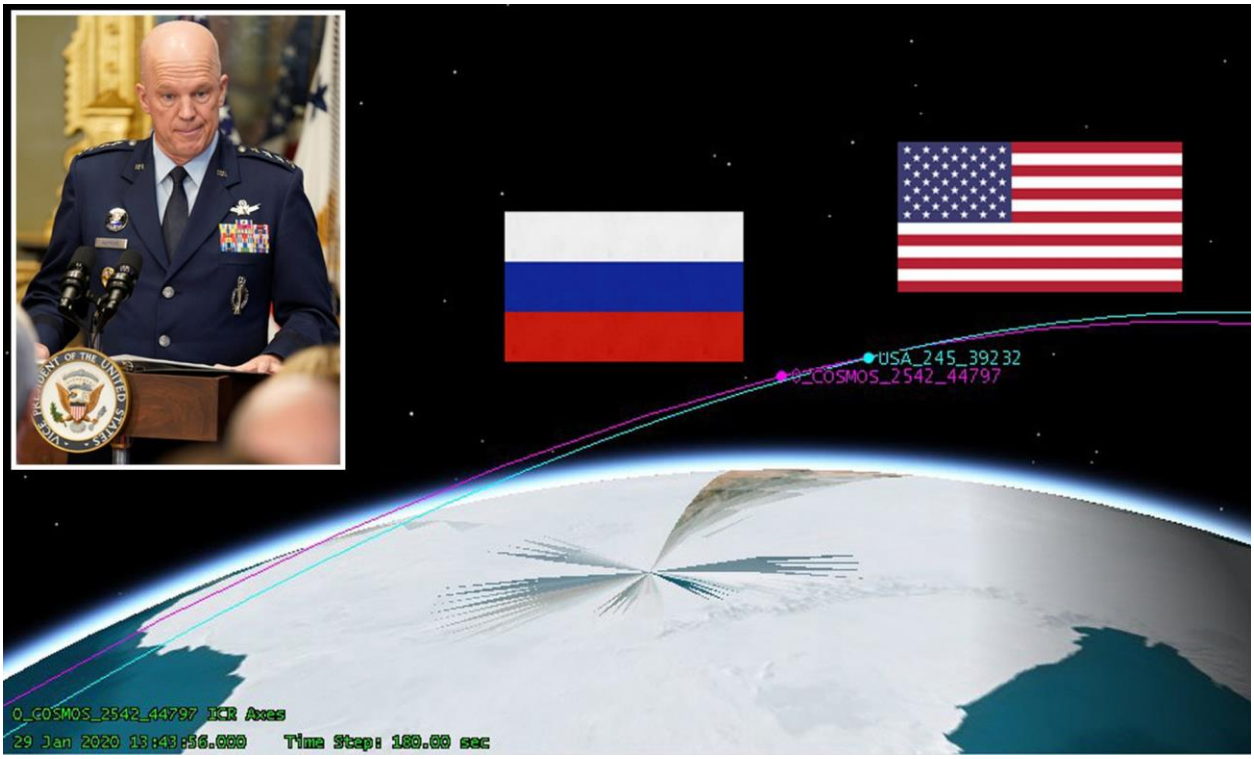
**Resolution No. 16: Recognition for Afghan and Iraqi Combat Translators**

**RESOLVED, By The National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2018, That The American Legion urges the president of the United States and the U.S. Congress to recognize the contributions of Afghan and Iraqi Special Immigrant Visa recipients and Priority 2 Refugee Admissions Program recipients who stood shoulder to shoulder with, assisted and protected U.S. military servicemembers, U.S. diplomats and government agents, non-governmental organizations and media organizations during U.S. involvement in those countries.**

## Russia Trailing U.S Spy Satellite with TWO Spacecrafts

A top Space Force official has lashed out at Russia for trailing a U.S. spy satellite with two spacecraft.

Gen John Raymond, the chief of space operations for America's newly-minted Space Force, said the two Russian satellites began pursuing the multi-billion dollar U.S. satellite in November and have at times flown within 100 miles of it. 'This is unusual and disturbing behavior and has the potential to create a dangerous situation in space,' Raymond said in a statement to Business Insider.




*Head of Space Force slams Russia for trailing U.S. spy satellite with TWO spacecraft*

'The United States finds these recent activities to be concerning and do not reflect the behavior of a responsible spacefaring nation.'

The confrontation marks the first time the U.S. military has publicly identified a direct threat to a specific American satellite by an adversary.

Pentagon, White House, and Congressional backers had said that Russia's actions demonstrate the need for the Space Force, which became the sixth military branch when President Donald Trump signed the $738billion National Defense Authorization Act into law in December.

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**Resolution No. 26: Support For The United States Space Force**

**RESOLVED, By The National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled virtually on October 14-15, 2020, That The American Legion urges Congress to appropriately support the United States Space Force's commitment to attract, retain, and train quality people who will be molded into a force capable of flexibly responding to threats to America's national and economic security that will enhance readiness through its continued focus on total force integration and modernization programs that will maintain America's dominance in space well into the 21st century.**

## Biden appeals for unity to confront China

President Joe Biden sounded the alarm about the competition with China and other adversaries in his speech to a joint session of Congress on Wednesday, calling for unity of action despite serious questions about whether American democracy can prevail.

"America's adversaries — the autocrats of the world — are betting it can't," he said. "They believe we are too full of anger and division and rage. They are wrong. And we have to prove them wrong." He cited the global race for technological advantage, warning that "China and other countries are closing in fast."

"We have to develop and dominate the products and technologies of the future: advanced batteries, biotechnology, computer chips, and clean energy," he said.

The president's hawkish critics weren't buying it. "All told in just 100 days, Biden has already spent or proposed over $6 trillion. Not a single dollar of that goes to our national defense," said Sen. Jim Inhofe, the top Republican on the Armed Services Committee. "Biden's team has said the right things about China and Russia, but they're not doing anything to back it up."

Biden also doubled down on his decision to withdraw all U.S. forces from Afghanistan this year over the objections of commanders. But he also insisted the war on terrorism is far from over.
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DEFENSE POW/MIA ACCOUNTING AGENCY
FULFILLING OUR NATION'S PROMISE

April 23, 2021: USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted For From World War II (Blanchard, W.)
April 23, 2021: USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted For From World War II (Wiegand, L.)
April 23, 2021: Soldier Accounted For From Korean War (Johnson, C.)
April 26, 2021: USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted For From World War II (Mitchell, W.)
April 27, 2021: USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted For From World War II (Holmes, H.)
April 27, 2021: USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted For From World War II (Alexander, H.)
April 28, 2021: USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted For From World War II (Saunders, C.)
April 28, 2021: USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted For From World War II (Battles, R.)

## Legislative Issues

• Availability of Healthcare benefits for residents at the Armed Forces Retirement Home in proposed language of the FY22NDAA – The American Legions support funding that provides long-term solvency and viability of the Armed Forces Retirement Home (Resolution No. 107, 2016)
• Quality of Life for Service members and their Families – We owe our military men and women a debt of gratitude we can never repay for all that they — and their families — sacrifice to serve our country. The American Legion supports a fully fun• Ensure the Coast Guard is paid – The American Legion supports a fully funded United States Coast Guard (Resolution No. 23, 2016)
• Expedited Citizenship through Honorable Military Service – The American Legion supports measures to ensure the process of naturalization through military service is completed before discharge (Resolution No. 15, 2018)
• Cybersecurity and Critical Infrastructure – The American Legion supports refined processes and policies that will enhance interagency cybersecurity and promulgate best practices and standards and ensure the protection of critical infrastructure from cyber and other electronic attacks. (Resolution No. 20, 2017)
• Addressing the Forever Wars – The American Legion advocate for elevating diplomacy to build a better, safer world (Resolution No. 22, 2020)

*Staff Activity:*

- Staff met with community relations and engagements for the Airforce and Space force on a video conference. This was a reintroduction to the new team to discuss their agendas and mission statements. Topics discussed were the F-35 its capabilities, mission capabilities, and ceremonies that include flyovers. The National Security Division looks forward to working closely with its staff and foster a working relationship.
- The staff processed 27,280 rounds of ammo through the military donations program, 86 clips, 72 rifles, and one static display.

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*Week ending 04/30/2021*