



[U.S. Secretary of State Blinken Meets with Qatari Officials for Talks on Afghanistan and Praises the Gulf Nation's Support of the Evacuation Operation](#)

United States Secretary of State Antony Blinken and other top U.S. officials met with Qatari leaders in Doha this week, as the two countries continue to coordinate humanitarian efforts in Afghanistan. The U.S. and Qatar engaged in discussions regarding the ongoing situation there, with Blinken thanking the Gulf nation for its vital role in supporting the recent evacuation operation. Qatar, as Blinken pinpointed, has been one of the most significant and instrumental contributors to the endeavor. The United States has a major airbase in Qatar which has been the gateway for over 58,000 people who have been airlifted out of Afghanistan following the Taliban takeover. Additionally, today, Qatar Airways helped evacuate approximately 200 people from Kabul to Doha on a plane which delivered emergency aid – the first international flight to leave since the U.S. pullout. All told, this week's talks between the U.S. and Qatar signal an intent for sustained collaboration on Afghanistan in the aftermath of the United States' official troop withdrawal, and highlight the important part that Qatar has played in working with the U.S. to alleviate the humanitarian crisis.

Blinken's trip, while purely focused on Afghanistan, will not involve a meeting with the Taliban. A senior State Department official stated while an open line of communication exists between the U.S and the Taliban, there is no need at this moment for a face-to-face meeting. The talks held this week in Doha are instead focused on continuing to strengthen ties between the U.S and Qatar, particularly as they pertain to their coordinated efforts to provide humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan. The primary goal of the meeting is to ensure a system remains in place to work with Qatar in aiding the transport of refugees out of Afghanistan.

During a press briefing, Secretary Blinken reminded the Taliban of their pledge to let all Americans leave safely from Afghanistan. Worryingly, there have been increasing recent reports of the Taliban blocking those who wish to leave from doing so. The Taliban has also been seen to harass protestors advancing for women's' rights in the streets of Kabul. Secretary Blinken has reiterated that if the Taliban wishes to be recognized and dealt with amongst the wider international political and diplomatic community, it needs to earn that recognition which involves at least a notable acknowledgement of respect for human rights and a dedication to staying by their word when it comes to their dealings with other governmental entities.

Blinken has said that the United States estimates there are around 100 more people in Afghanistan who hold American citizenship, most of which is comprised of duo-citizenship between the U.S and Afghanistan. The United States is also still in the process of determining the number of eligible refugees from those who were American assets in the Afghan government and security forces' fight to stave off the Taliban. When asked about specific plans regarding the evacuation, as all U.S. military personnel have left, Blinken declined to answer under the fear that details could undermine the mission moving forward. Clearly however, the latest developments of this week demonstrate that the United States will continue to collaborate with Qatar in the ongoing humanitarian support efforts in Afghanistan.