



Written by [John F. McManus](#) on July 8, 2021

UN Wins, USA Loses After 20 Years in Afghanistan

After the destruction of New York's Twin Towers in September 11, 2011, U.S. leaders launched immediate retaliation. Blaming Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda for the attack that killed 3,000 while destroying the two skyscrapers and more, U.S. planes conducted a bombing raid on al-Qaeda forces located in Afghanistan. U.S. leaders hoped in vain to count bin Laden among the al-Qaeda they killed. Their response was quickly followed by sending U.S. Special Operations forces into the country where they collaborated with numerically small Afghan forces in an anti-Taliban campaign. But the deeply committed Islamic Taliban force grew steadily stronger over the years and is now in virtual control of most of the beleaguered country.



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Omitted from almost all discussion about the response to the 9/11 attack is the decisive role played by the United Nations, which is no friend of America or of freedom. Almost immediately after the sensational destruction of those New York City buildings, the UN announced formation of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), a coalition of military forces from various nations led by the United States. ISAF would be subject to UN oversight.

Within months of the initial U.S. bombing run, al-Qaeda joined with the Taliban. Bin Laden himself was reported to be seriously ill in the early days of the U.S. involvement in Afghanistan, and reports claimed he had likely fled to Pakistan. In May 2011 — 10 years after the attack on New York's Twin Towers — a Navy SEAL team, accompanied by televised coverage actually shown in the White House for President Obama and a select few, claimed to have killed the former head of al-Qaeda. Whether he was still alive and killed during that much-hyped raid is questionable to say the least. But we're getting ahead of the way the "war" in Afghanistan would be conducted.

By early 2003, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld claimed an end to the role of 8,000 U.S. forces in the war-torn country. Rumsfeld's boss, President George W. Bush, even started sending troops from Afghanistan over to Iraq. Soon, the Bush-Rumsfeld team was no longer in power and Barack Obama was leading our nation. And NATO, by definition a UN "Regional Arrangement," was publicly named as the overseer of combat efforts in the country. In 2009, President Obama had beefed up the U.S. commitment to smash or defang the Taliban, and the number of U.S. forces in the country rose to more than 50,000. As 2009 was drawing to a close, Obama announced a "surge" of U.S. presence and 100,000 uniformed Americans were now in Afghanistan. Casualty numbers grew, but even the larger number of U.S. forces never came close to destroying or pacifying the Taliban. And the UN, acting mostly through its NATO subsidiary, quietly continued to maintain overall control of the effort.



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Next came NATO's backing away, something that was arranged by the UN. Its replacement was another UN creation labeled the "Resolute Support Mission." Newly elected President Donald Trump initially agreed in 2017 to maintain U.S. presence in the country. Toward the end of 2018, American negotiators began discussing peace with Taliban leaders who had become a force not only militarily but also politically. The next president, Joe Biden, has been allowed to reduce U.S. force numbers to approximately 1,000.

There has never been any question that an unchained U.S. military could have toppled the Taliban. But UN permission to do so never arrived. So, after spending approximately \$2 trillion, and after 2,300 American troops died (plus close to 700 from other countries who aided the U.S. in the fruitless endeavor), the United States may finally be out of a half-hearted war that could have been won but was conducted under overall UN supervision. The emboldened Taliban has already seized control of additional portions of Afghanistan and are steadily taking control over remaining areas from the weak Afghan military and police

Like the Vietnam War, U.S. hasn't admitted being the loser. And the UN hasn't sought to embarrass America and cheer as the dictatorial Taliban take control. Summing up, the 20 years of military struggle was arranged to be another loss for the United States. But the 20 years of military struggling with the UN in charge allowed another crack in the U.S. Constitution's requirement that Congress must declare war if our nation is to be involved in one. Such a declaration would be the first step toward victory. But the Taliban are the winners and the UN control over our nation has been increased. So one other step needs to be taken by U.S. leaders: Withdraw completely from the United Nations. If our nation is going to retain its sovereignty, quitting the UN has to be accomplished.



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