

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5051  
MINORITY (202) 225-5074  
<https://oversight.house.gov>

**MEMORANDUM**

**May 17, 2021**

**To: Members of the Subcommittee on National Security**

**Fr: Subcommittee Staff**

**Re: Hearing on “Examining Next Steps for U.S. Engagement in Afghanistan”**

On **Thursday, May 20, 2021, at 9:00 a.m., in room 2154 of the Rayburn House Office Building and remotely on the Zoom video platform**, the Subcommittee on National Security will hold a hybrid hearing to examine the way forward for U.S. engagement in Afghanistan following President Biden’s decision to withdraw all remaining U.S. military forces from Afghanistan by September 11, 2021.<sup>1</sup>

This is the Subcommittee’s third hearing in the 117th Congress related to U.S. policy towards Afghanistan. On February 19, 2021, the Subcommittee held a hearing to examine the final report released by the Afghanistan Study Group—facilitated by the U.S. Institute of Peace—which Congress established in December 2019 to “consider the implications of a peace settlement, or the failure to reach a settlement, on U.S. policy, resources, and commitments in Afghanistan.”<sup>2</sup>

On March 16, 2021, the Subcommittee held a hearing to consider the eight areas of U.S. reconstruction activity in Afghanistan that Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction John Sopko identified in his “2021 High-Risk List” as especially vulnerable to waste, fraud, and abuse.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> White House, *Remarks by President Biden on the Way Forward in Afghanistan* (Apr. 14, 2021) (online at [www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/04/14/remarks-by-president-biden-on-the-way-forward-in-afghanistan/](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/04/14/remarks-by-president-biden-on-the-way-forward-in-afghanistan/)).

<sup>2</sup> House Committee on Oversight and Reform, Subcommittee on National Security, *Hearing on a Pathway for Peace in Afghanistan: Examining the Findings and Recommendations of the Afghanistan Study Group* (Feb. 19, 2021) (online at <https://oversight.house.gov/legislation/hearings/a-pathway-for-peace-in-afghanistan-examining-the-findings-and-recommendations>).

<sup>3</sup> House Committee on Oversight and Reform, Subcommittee on National Security, *Hearing on the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction’s 2021 High-Risk List* (Mar. 16, 2021) (online at <https://oversight.house.gov/legislation/hearings/the-special-inspector-general-for-afghanistan-reconstruction-s-2021-high-risk>).

## **I. HEARING PURPOSE**

This hearing will address the implications of President Biden's decision to withdraw all U.S. military forces from Afghanistan by September 11, 2021, for U.S. national security and the stability of the region. The hearing will also consider the future of U.S. reconstruction assistance to Afghanistan and the importance of continued oversight to prevent the waste and abuse of U.S. taxpayer resources.

## **II. WITNESSES**

**Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad** (*Invited*)  
Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation  
Department of State

Staff contacts: Dan Rebnord and Matthew Patane at (202) 225-5051.