

RELEASE IN FULL

Draft Statement by DoD Senior Leaders

The release these classified documents is a serious and potentially damaging act that this Department strongly condemns.

The disclosed documents detail military activities between January 2004 and December 2009. I want to make clear that they represent an incomplete snapshot in time, and they are not representative of current efforts and progress in the war in Afghanistan and in our relationship with Pakistan.

The disclosure of classified information by individuals and organizations puts the lives of the U.S. and partner service members at risk and threatens our national security. So again, we strongly denounce the release of these documents because ultimately, it makes it more difficult for this Department to protect and defend our nation.

Talking Points

It would be off the mark to focus on the past at the expense of understanding the present:

- We have a new integrated strategy that takes into consideration the interrelated regional factors influencing Afghanistan and Pakistan.
- We have a new commander who brings a wealth of experience to our mission in Afghanistan.
- The tireless efforts of the Afghan National Security Forces and the National Directorate of Security resulted in the safety of the largest ever gathering of foreign leaders in Kabul on July 19th, when the Government of Afghanistan's reaffirmed its commitment to taking full authority over its own security in 2014.
- Additional U.S. and Allied forces continue to flow into Afghanistan to provide security for the population and to train with the security forces, as well as to provide critical assistance to improving governance and development. In addition to now partnering with about 60% of Afghan units, these forces have allowed us to confront the Taliban in ways and in areas never reached before, and increasingly to separate them from the population.

- Since last November, recruiting and retention have improved, such that over 42,000 Afghans have joined their security forces and received training, and an additional 80,000 will join the ranks in the next 15 months to become over 305,000 strong.
- Even as we begin to transition security responsibility to Afghans over the next year, we will sustain a robust commitment in Afghanistan going forward. We will partner with the Afghan people for the long term – toward a future of greater security, prosperity, justice, and progress.
- We have said repeatedly how hard this effort is going to be, and that progress will be slow and deliberate. But in places like Marja and elsewhere, polls tell us that the Afghan people see themselves as more secure than they were one year ago.
- To accomplish our mission to disrupt, dismantle, defeat and destroy al Qaeda and its extremist allies, we will continue to deny them safe haven by strengthening the capacity of the Afghan security forces and the Afghan government. To that end, we also are working side-by-side with our Pakistani partners.