

## **National Security Division Report**

Week ending April 16, 2021

### **Biden to Withdraw All Combat Troops from Afghanistan by Sept. 11**

After years of arguing against an extended military presence in Afghanistan, President Biden is doing things his way, with the deadline for withdrawal set for the 20th anniversary of the terrorist attacks.



President Biden will withdraw American combat troops from Afghanistan by Sept. 11, declaring an end to the nation’s longest war and overruling warnings from his military advisers that the departure could prompt a resurgence of the same terrorist threats that sent hundreds of thousands of troops into combat over the past 20 years.

In rejecting the Pentagon’s push to remain until Afghan security forces can assert themselves against the Taliban, Mr. Biden forcibly stamped his views on a policy he has long debated but never controlled. Now, after years of arguing against an extended American military presence in Afghanistan, the president is doing things his way, with the deadline set for the 20th anniversary of the terrorist attacks.

A senior Biden administration official said the president had come to believe that a “conditions-based approach” would mean that American troops would never leave the country. The announcement is expected on Wednesday.

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**Resolution No. 22: Addressing the ‘Forever War’**

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## **The U.S. to add 500 new Wiesbaden-area soldiers in Germany, Austin says**

STUTT GART, Germany — Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin on Tuesday announced plans to permanently base hundreds more U.S. troops in Germany, where the former Trump administration wanted to withdraw nearly 12,000 service members.

“These forces will strengthen deterrence and defense in Europe. They will augment our existing abilities to prevent conflict and, if necessary, fight and win,” Austin told reporters in Berlin, following his meeting with German Defense Minister Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer.

Austin said about 500 more troops would be based in the Wiesbaden area, home to U.S. Army Europe and Africa headquarters. The deployments could begin as early as the fall, the U.S. defense chief said.

“This move will also create more space, more cyber and more electronic warfare capabilities in Europe,” said Austin, who is traveling on his first trip through Europe as defense secretary.

The added troops will “greatly improve our ability to surge forces at a moment’s notice to defend our allies,” he said.

Two new units — a Multi-Domain Task Force and Theater Fires Command — will bring 500 soldiers and 750 family members to U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden.



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## **Resolution No. 42: Foreign Policy Objectives**

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## **The United States, China, and Taiwan: A Strategy to Prevent War**

Taiwan “is becoming the most dangerous flashpoint in the world for a possible war that involves the United States, China, and probably other major powers,” warn Robert D. Blackwill, Council

on Foreign Relations (CFR) Henry A. Kissinger senior fellow for U.S. foreign policy, and Philip Zelikow, University of Virginia White Burkett Miller professor of history.

In a new Council Special Report, *The United States, China, and Taiwan: A Strategy to Prevent War*, the authors argue that the United States should change and clarify its strategy to prevent war over Taiwan. “The U.S. strategic objective regarding Taiwan should be to preserve its political and economic autonomy, its dynamism as a free society, and U.S.-allied deterrence—without triggering a Chinese attack on Taiwan.”

“We do not think it is politically or militarily realistic to count on a U.S. military defeat of various kinds of Chinese assaults on Taiwan, uncoordinated with allies. Nor is it realistic to presume that, after such a frustrating clash, the United States would or should escalate to some wide-scale war against China with comprehensive blockades or strikes against targets on the Chinese mainland.”

“If U.S. campaign plans postulate such unrealistic scenarios,” the authors add, “they will likely be rejected by an American president and by the U.S. Congress.” But, they observe, “the resulting U.S. paralysis would not be the result of presidential weakness or timidity. It might arise because the most powerful country in the world did not have credible options prepared for the most dangerous military crisis looming in front of it.”

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## **Resolution No. 38: Taiwan Straits Dialogue**

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**DEFENSE POW/MIA ACCOUNTING AGENCY**  
FULFILLING OUR NATION'S PROMISE

April 9, 2021: [USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted For From World War II \(Montgomery, C.\)](#)

April 12, 2021: [Soldier Accounted For From Korean War \(Valentine, N.\)](#)

April 14, 2021: [USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted For From World War II \(Drwall, S.\)](#)

April 15, 2021: [USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted For From World War II \(Goodwin, R.\)](#)

## **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 funded quality of life (Resolution No. 85, 2016)

- 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 spoke with staff from the Department of Defense Intelligence Division, where we received an unclassified briefing regarding tensions between China and Taiwan. The National Commander was also on the call. Additionally, staff attended a private tour of the new WWI memorial with the National Commander.*

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Week ending 04/16/2021*

**NATIONAL  
SECURITY  
DIVISION  
REPORT**