



STATEMENT

Conservative Statement on the Special Committee on Afghanistan's Report

June 8, 2022

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ottawa, ON – The Hon. Michael Chong, Conservative Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Luc Berthold, Deputy Leader of the Official Opposition and Québec Political Lieutenant, today released the following statement after the Special Committee on Afghanistan tabled its report titled “Honouring Canada’s Legacy in Afghanistan: Responding to the Humanitarian Crisis and Helping People Reach Safety”:

“The Special Committee on Afghanistan, established through a Conservative motion last November, completed its study on the government’s evacuation and withdrawal from Afghanistan last August.

“While Conservatives support the Committee’s report, we believe that additional evidence from witnesses and observations need to be added. That is why Conservatives have tabled a supplementary report to provide Canadians with a more complete understanding of Canada’s evacuation and withdrawal from Afghanistan.

“The manner in which the Canadian government withdrew from Afghanistan last August was a betrayal of the legacy of the over 40,000 Canadians who fought in the war in Afghanistan, the diplomats who served during and after the war, and the Afghans who served alongside our soldiers and diplomats.

“Despite clear and vocal calls from experts, veterans, and NGOs in the weeks and months leading up to August 15, 2021, the government was slow to act to evacuate those who had risked their lives to support our mission in Afghanistan. Instead, the Prime Minister put partisan considerations ahead of the extraordinary emergency before it and advised the Governor General to dissolve Parliament, triggering an election. This decision has damaged Canada’s international reputation for years to come. Allies and competitors around the world will question the strength of the Canadian government’s commitments and whether the government is willing and able to back up these commitments with effective action.

“The impact of the lack in political leadership and interdepartmental coordination on Canada’s response to the crisis is clear. While NATO allies such as the United States

and the United Kingdom respectively evacuated 122,000 and 15,000 people between August 14-30, 2021, Canada performed proportionately poorly – evacuating only 3,700 individuals. Nine months after the fall of Kabul and 10 months since the Special Immigration Measures were first announced, many Afghans remain stranded in Afghanistan or in third countries without even an application file number or a unique client identification number. The Canadian government had a moral duty to evacuate these Afghans and their families and failed to do so.

“Conservatives will continue to hold the government accountable and be a voice for those fleeing violence and persecution. We will not abandon those who are at risk because they wore a Canadian flag on their sleeve or on their heart.”

The Conservative’s supplementary report can be found [here](#).

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