

Global Outrage Over 'Barbaric' Kabul Airport Attack

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Here is a round-up of the reaction to Thursday's attack on a mammoth airlift operation put in place after the Taliban's power grab in Afghanistan.

President Joe Biden vowed to hunt down those behind the suicide bombings (File)

Paris, France: The Taliban has joined global leaders and NATO in condemning twin suicide bombs that ripped through crowds waiting to be evacuated outside Kabul airport, killing at least 85 people, including 13 US troops.

Here is a round-up of the reaction to Thursday's attack on a mammoth airlift operation put in place after the Taliban's power grab in Afghanistan.

United States

President Joe Biden vowed to hunt down those behind the suicide bombings that killed 13 American troops in the worst single-day loss for the Pentagon in Afghanistan since 2011.

"We will not forgive. We will not forget. We will hunt you down and make you pay," Biden, visibly shaken, said in an address from the White House during which he said the evacuations of vulnerable people would continue until August 31.

There remained an "opportunity for the next several days, between now and the 31st, to be able to get them out", he said.

"Knowing the threat, knowing that we may very well have another attack, the military has concluded that that's what we should do. I think they are right."

Taliban

The Taliban condemned the blasts, but pointed out they happened in an area that was under the control of US military.

"The Islamic Emirate strongly condemns the bombing targeting civilians at Kabul airport," a statement released by the group's spokesman on Twitter said.

"The explosion took place in an area where US forces are responsible for security."

European sorrow, outrage

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson condemned the attack as "barbaric", paying tribute to the "phenomenal effort" of those involved in the evacuation operation.

He said that Britain would "keep going up until the last moment".

French President Emmanuel Macron expressed "his condolences to the families of the American and Afghan victims" and saluted "the heroism of those who are on the ground to carry out the evacuation operations."

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said: "The international community stands with the Afghan people."

For Poland's President Andrzej Duda, the bombings were an "act of cowardice," while Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi condemned "this vile and horrible attack against defenceless people seeking liberty".

Norway deplored that "innocent civilians trying to leave the country have become victims of this terrible act of cruelty."

Sweden meanwhile paid tribute to the US service members: "We are grateful for all your efforts in making this historic evacuation operation possible."

Canada

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau pledged to work with partners to resettle refugees in his country.

"Our hearts break for the people of Afghanistan and the loved ones of the victims, including the brave women and men of our allies," he said.

NATO

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said: "Our priority remains to evacuate as many people to safety as quickly as possible."

Middle East nations

Saudi Arabia's Foreign Ministry rejected the attacks as "incompatible with all religious principles and moral and human values."

The ministry said it stood "with the Afghan people" and offered "condolences and sympathy to the families of the victims and the Afghan people".

Turkey's Foreign Ministry deplored "this heinous attack in the strongest terms," while Egypt decried the "gruesome terrorism."

Iran, meanwhile, condemned "the targeting of Afghanistan's defenceless people and any terrorist operation in which women, men, youth, and children are attacked."

Foreign ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh "hoped that with the establishment of an inclusive government in Kabul, organisations and related institutions take charge of their duties in protecting the lives and properties of the people."

South America

Brazil urged all involved "to guarantee the protection of civilians, the respect of international humanitarian law, including the unimpeded access of humanitarian aid, and the respect of human rights, especially those of women and girls."

Chile meanwhile called for "those who wish to leave the country" to be able to do so safely.

Africa

African Union Commission chair Moussa Faki Mahamat tweeted: "The @AfricanUnion joins the world in prayer & deep sorrow for the innocent lives lost in yesterday's horrific terrorist attacks at #Kabul airport, that we condemn in the strongest terms. Terrorism threatens our common humanity everywhere."

- AFP