

Personal statement, 25.08.2021

Today, the Bundestag was presented with a mandate for a subsequent vote on the deployment of armed forces for evacuation from Afghanistan.

We believe the mandate is wrong. The mandate is a so-called robust mandate. It allows the use of military force. It is not geographically limited to Kabul, but applies throughout Afghanistan. Soldiers from the Rapid Forces Division and the Special Forces Command are deployed as part of the operation. This type of deployment offers a clear potential for escalation.

With the Bundeswehr mission, the German government wants to pretend that it is capable of acting. I wants to conceal the failure of NATO's intervention policy and its foreseeable evacuation fiasco. After all, the German government has failed across the board in evacuating endangered people from Afghanistan. The fact that tens of thousands of Afghans are now in mortal danger is the result of its inaction and its filibustering. Despite all warnings, the German government has failed to make a realistic assessment of the situation. Bureaucratic hurdles have prevented local staff from leaving in time. Until recently, the federal government wanted to deport to Afghanistan. The right-wing rhetoric from the CDU that "2015 must not be repeated" underscores the hypocrisy.

Only a fraction of the people in danger have been given the chance to leave the country. Human rights activists and threatened Afghan citizens were not on the German government's list of priorities. With the foreseeable end of evacuation flights, these individuals are left alone. Many of them have waited desperately outside Kabul airport in recent days, only to be turned away. Others have not even been able to reach Kabul airport from other parts of the country. They are internal refugees or have to flee to Afghanistan's neighboring countries.

These are all reasons that make approving the mandate impossible from a LEFT perspective.

The German government must put pressure on the Taliban and the U.S. to achieve safe passage for people in need of protection and civilian evacuation measures. It needs generous reception programs for Afghan refugees, an increase in the UN Refugee Assistance Fund, and a general halt to deportations of refugees from Afghanistan.

With the defeat of Western imperialism in Afghanistan, NATO's intervention policy has also failed resoundingly. The consequence must be: an end to the military logic of the intervention policy. The war in Afghanistan must not be fueled by a renewed military deployment, it must be ended. What DIE LINKE has always said is coming true: democracy, human rights and development cannot be brought and bombed in from the outside.

It needs the pressure of DIE LINKE in parliament and the pressure from the streets for an immediate stop of foreign missions and all arms exports as well as for open borders for all people in need.

Even though we are against the deployment of the Bundeswehr, we have submitted to parliamentary group discipline and voted with abstention. DIE LINKE is in favor of the evacuation of vulnerable people from Afghanistan. DIE LINKE has long called for the evacuation of the Bundeswehr's local staff and other endangered persons and had this demand voted on in the Bundestag in June 2021. All other parliamentary groups were against it.

Christine Buchholz

Achim Kessler