



red-t.org
New York

OPEN LETTER

PROTECTING TRANSLATORS AND INTERPRETERS WORLDWIDE



aiic.org
Geneva

May 2021

His Excellency Jens Stoltenberg
Secretary General
North Atlantic Treaty Organization
Boulevard Léopold III
B-1110 Brussels
Belgium



fit-ift.org
Paris

Re: Resolute Action

Dear Mr. Secretary General,



iapti.org
Buenos Aires

The undersigned representatives of the world language community, together with their humanitarian partners, are profoundly concerned about the safety of our colleagues in Afghanistan. Engaged locally to provide a vital service as civilian interpreters for NATO-led forces, they became the "face of the coalition," working at great personal risk to themselves and their families. Now, with the withdrawal of troops from the Resolute Support Mission, this risk has risen exponentially.



criticallylink.org
Vancouver

At the April 14 joint press conference, you stated that there will be "an orderly, coordinated and deliberate drawdown of troops." We believe the same structured approach must be taken in resettling interpreters. While some of these linguists have found refuge via national programs, countless others have been waiting years in vain for a protective visa. Considered traitors and fearing retaliation for their collaboration, they have either gone into hiding at home or fled abroad. There is now little time left to save them.



wasli.org
Melbourne

We therefore ask that you urgently encourage NATO allies to implement actionable plans for relocating their past and present linguists prior to full withdrawal. In situ offices, if sufficiently staffed, could process visas with all due speed or, where backlogs exist, interpreters could be extracted to locations outside Afghanistan and their applications processed from there.



ciuti.org
Brussels

We echo your gratitude to all those who sacrificed so much to ensure member states are safe from terror attacks orchestrated from Afghanistan. But we must remember that this shared security is due, in no small measure, to the work of local interpreters. Resolute action is now needed to keep them safe in return.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Maya Hess, President, Red T
Uroš Peterc, President, International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC)

Cont'd



OPEN LETTER

PROTECTING TRANSLATORS AND INTERPRETERS WORLDWIDE

Page 2



Linda Fitchett, Chair, Conflict Zone Group, AIIC
Kevin Quirk, President, International Federation of Translators (FIT)
Aurora Humarán, President, International Association of Professional Translators and Interpreters (IAPTI)



Angela Sasso, President, Critical Link International (CLI)
Christopher Stone, President, World Association of Sign Language Interpreters (WASLI)
Maurizio Viezzi, President, Conférence Internationale Permanente d'Instituts Universitaires de Traducteurs et Interprètes (CIUTI)
Loredana Polezzi, President, and Sue-Ann Harding, Chair of the Executive Council, International Association of Translation and Intercultural Studies (IATIS)
Lucio Bagnulo, Head of Translation, Language Resource Centre, International Secretariat, Amnesty International



Betsy Fisher, Director of Strategy, International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP)
Romana Cacchioli, Executive Director, PEN International
Urtzi Urrutikoetxea, Chair, Translation and Linguistic Rights Committee, PEN International
Bill Rivers, Chair, FIT-North America
Donald Barabé, President, Ordre des traducteurs, terminologies et interprètes agréés du Québec (OTTIAQ)



Ted Wozniak, President, American Translators Association (ATA)
Ellen Elias-Bursac, President, American Literary Translators Association (ALTA)
Aimee Benavides, Chair, National Association of Judiciary Interpreters & Translators (NAJIT)
Erika Gonzalez, President, Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators Inc. (AUSIT)
Jason Scanes, CEO, Forsaken Fighters Australia Inc.
Annette Schiller, Chair, FIT Europe



Stéphan Barrère, President, European Forum of Sign Language Interpreters (EFSLI)
Daniela Perillo, President, European Legal Interpreters and Translators Association (EULITA)
Lieven Buysse, President, European Network for Public Service Interpreting and Translation (ENPSIT)
Bruno Chanteau, President, Société française des traducteurs (SFT)
Abdul Raziq Adeel, President, Association des interprètes et auxiliaires afghans de l'Armée Française



Norma Kessler, President, Bundesverband der Dolmetscher und Übersetzer e.V. (BDÜ)
Marcus Grotian, Chair, Patenschaftsnetzwerk Afghanische Ortskräfte e.V.
Paul Appleyard, Chair, Institute of Translation and Interpreting (ITI)
Sara de Jong, Co-founder, The Sulha Alliance