



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**Washington, D.C.** - The Special Operations Association of America (SOAA) is calling on the Department of State to take bold and decisive action to bring home the thousands of brave men and women who volunteered to risk their lives to act as interpreters for our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. SOAA commends the Department for attempting to increase the Afghan and Iraqi Special Immigrant Visa programs (SIV). But with the potential of a full U.S. withdrawal by September 2021, it is increasingly imperative to get the more than 10,000 SIV qualified applicants and their families home. Lacking U.S. presence and protection, these brave men, women and their families will face constant risk to their lives if they remain in Iraq and Afghanistan.

SOAA is founded by members of the SOF community who have directly worked side by side with these local interpreters that willingly risked their lives helping to protect Americans. Founder and Executive Director Daniel Elkins explained, "While the SOF community is honored to serve abroad, we are always thankful to be able to come back to the safety of home. To leave behind those that gave up so much to help our country's success is not only a betrayal to the promise we made to these courageous interpreters, but a betrayal to who we are as Americans."

The Special Operations Association of America urges Secretary of State Antony Blinken to boldly lead the Department of State and commit to bringing home those who risked so much for our country, rather than forsake our promises and leave them behind to be killed. Please utilize whatever resources are needed to bring these heroes to safety before September.

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