

Tajikistan Seeks Russia-Led Alliance's Aid as Violence Builds on Afghan Border

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The security situation along the remote, mountainous Afghan-Tajik border has deteriorated in recent weeks as U.S. forces quit the region. **Nozim Kalandarov / TASS**

Tajikistan has asked a Russia-led alliance for assistance in dealing with security challenges as the United States pulls out of its southern neighbor Afghanistan and Taliban forces advance.

Tajikistan is part of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), a loose military alliance of ex-Soviet states that also includes Russia, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Belarus.

Speaking to the Permanent Council of the CSTO, Tajikistan's representative Hasan Sultonov, [asked](#) member states Wednesday to "do their part" to aid the country, citing a 2013 resolution by the alliance to provide necessary support to secure the Tajik-Afghan border.

Related article: [Russia Says Ready to Activate Tajik Military Base Amid U.S. Pullout, Taliban Advance in Afghanistan](#)

Following Sultonov's request, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on Thursday [reiterated](#) Russia's allyship with Tajikistan, adding that "if there is an attack on Tajikistan, this will of course receive immediate attention from the CSTO."

Speaking Thursday at a lecture at Far Eastern Federal University in Vladivostok, Lavrov [noted](#) that the threat of terrorism in Afghanistan would only grow as a result of the American withdrawal.

Asked if Russia would consider deploying troops to Afghanistan, Lavrov [said](#) the answer was "obvious."

"We are closely following events in Afghanistan, where there is a tendency towards sharp deterioration, particularly in the context of the hurried exit of U.S. and other NATO forces," he [added](#).

Lavrov earlier this week [said](#) Russia was prepared to activate its military base in Tajikistan, where about 6,000 Russian troops are deployed, to defend against threats to its ally.

The security situation along the remote, mountainous Afghan-Tajik border has deteriorated in recent weeks as U.S. forces quit the region, with over 1,000 Afghan soldiers [fleeing](#) north into Tajikistan this week as the Taliban captured dozens of northern districts.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Andrei Rudenko [said](#) last month that up to 70% of the 1,400-kilometer border has come under Taliban control.

On Thursday, the state-run RIA Novosti news agency [reported](#) that militants planted their flag on a bridge spanning the Panj River, which forms a significant part of the border.

While U.S. President Joe Biden has set a Sept. 11 deadline for a full withdrawal of U.S. troops, two unnamed officials familiar with the matter [told](#) Politico that the withdrawal is "essentially complete," with only about 600 troops remaining in the country.

Russian officials have [warned](#) that a full U.S. exit from Afghanistan — where it has been fighting Islamist forces for nearly 20 years — would spark regional instability and derail peace talks.

U.S. experts have also voiced fears of a power vacuum. On June 23, the Wall Street Journal [published](#) details of a U.S. intelligence community assessment predicting a complete collapse of the Afghan government "as soon as six months after the American military withdrawal from the country is completed."

The Taliban is a terrorist organization banned in Russia.

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