

URGENT ACTION NEEDED UPDATE – Battle Buddies at Camp As Sayliyah stays open, 29 Sep 2026

From: **Shawn VanDiver** <shawn@afghanevac.org>

Date: Tue, Sep 29, 2026 at 12:16 PM

Subject: Battle Buddies MASSIVE NEWS: We won the CAS extension and now we need EVERYONE to get noisy

To: 2026 AfghanEvac and Battle Buddies lists <2026-all@afghanevac.org>

Hello team,

Camp As Sayliyah stays open. Secretary Rubio is signing a diplomatic note to Qatar extending the camp for nine months, a day before it was due to close. The AP has the story: <https://apnews.com/article/afghans-qatar-camp-refugees-rubio-trump-5ebbc85b0564a52227cba75ae66ff9ac>

This is exactly what we have been advocating for, and it is your win. Every virtual delegation you joined, every letter you drove through Count Them In, every reporter you briefed, and every veteran you put in front of a member of Congress made it impossible for this camp to close quietly. Thank you. We are grateful to Secretary Rubio and the Qataris, and we are saying so publicly, because the fastest way to get the next right call is to recognize this one.

The timing is as good as we could have asked for. For the first time in a long while, the facts, the paperwork, and the calendar are lined up in our favor:

- **The OIG report is out.** Like every OIG review before it, it found that the security vetting of Afghan allies worked (afghanevac.org/oig-asylum). State's comment to the AP still repeats the "without properly vetting them" line. The government's own inspectors have now answered that.
- **The U.S. government brought these people to Qatar.** Every person at CAS was screened by the U.S. government and flown there by the U.S. government.
- **The FY2027 Presidential Determination is still unsigned.**

Rep. Scott Peters and 21 colleagues from the House and Senate wrote to Secretaries Rubio and Mullin today making the same case (attached). The letter builds on the September 22 arrival of two Afghans under an exception to policy and asks the Departments to prioritize military families and family reunification cases beginning with CAS, and to name Afghan allies in the FY2027 PD with a dedicated allocation.

Here is the resolution we are asking for, and the language to use.

State told the AP it will work to identify "options for voluntary resettlement of all Camp As-Sayliyah residents." Good. We are hopeful this gets resolved with people at the forefront. That means:

- **Get cases up to speed right now.** Redo medicals and finish processing for everyone at CAS who is eligible to come, for every U.S. military family member, and for every family reunification case.
- **As soon as possible, and reflected in the Presidential Determination.**
- **For denied cases, safe third-country options** where the Afghans we brought out of Afghanistan have a real opportunity to prosper.

Hold both halves of that. **The win is not complete until the eligible are on planes and the denied have somewhere safe to land.**

Our full statement is attached.

Our social post is here, and we would be grateful if you would share it from your own accounts and tag @AfghanEvac: [Instagram](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [X](#)

What we need from you through Thursday:

- **Push Count Them In.** afghanevac.org/count-them-in. Every letter that lands before the PD is signed matters more than any letter after.
- **Get your members of Congress on the record** welcoming the extension and calling for the PD to reflect CAS, military families, and family reunification.
- **Send us your military families.** If you are working with a service member or veteran with family at CAS who is willing to talk to press or a congressional office, reply to this email. We honor every condition on anonymity.

Thank you,
Shawn VanDiver

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