



THE WAR IN AFGHANISTAN

[Operation Enduring Freedom](#) – Afghanistan (2001–14) followed the United States invasion of Afghanistan of 7 October 2001. Following the September 11 attacks in 2001 on the U.S., which President George W. Bush blamed on [Osama bin Laden](#) who was living or hiding in Afghanistan and had already been wanted since 1998, President Bush demanded that the Taliban, who were de facto ruling the country, hand over bin Laden. The Taliban declined to extradite him unless they were provided clear evidence of his involvement in the attacks, which the U.S. dismissed as a delaying tactic, and then on 7 October 2001 launched Operation Enduring Freedom with the United Kingdom. The U.S. was initially supported by the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia and later by a coalition of over 40 countries, including all NATO members. The war's public aims were to dismantle al-Qaeda and to deny it a safe base of operations in Afghanistan by removing the Taliban from power. Since the initial objectives were completed at the end of 2001, the war mostly involved U.S. and allied Afghan government troops battling Taliban insurgents. Enduring Freedom ended in 2014 and was replaced by Operation Freedom's Sentinel. The War in Afghanistan is the longest war in U.S. history.