

**2021-2022 Student Debate Series**  
***Twenty Years Later: The United States' Obligation to Democracy in Afghanistan and Around the World***

Tuesday, October 26, 2021  
3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Virtual Program (Zoom)

**Central Question: "Does the United States have a military, economic, and political obligation to promote democracy in Afghanistan and other countries?"**

In response to the above debate prompt, students will be divided and assigned to one of the following two teams. In preparation for the debate, students should take note of their assigned team and read through both the general background resources and all team-specific resources. Students should take notes on the resources provided and may do additional research if they choose in order to help strengthen their arguments during the debate.

- **Team Affirmative**

*"Based on our studies and research, **yes**, the United States does have a military, economic, and political obligation to promote democracy in Afghanistan and other countries."*

- **Team Opposed**

*"Based on our studies and research, **no**, the United States does NOT have a military, economic, and political obligation to promote democracy in Afghanistan and other countries."*

### **Debate Preparation & Resource Guide**

#### **Tips for Preparing**

We have provided a number of **general background resources**, as well as team-specific resources below. Please read and review these resources as preparation for the program. We recommend that you come to the Debate Series program prepared with notes on these resources, as well as a draft opening statement, so you are ready to craft well-thought, detailed statements with your team members in the allotted time. It is also important to consider the other team's potential main arguments and talking points as a means of strengthening your assigned team's arguments and talking points. Finally, you may want to conduct additional research outside of these resources, but we ask that you practice good digital literacy and utilize vetted resources from reputable news or analysis organizations. Are you not sure if a site is vetted and reputable? Discuss with fellow debaters or talk to your teacher/faculty adviser.



## Rebuttal and Closing Statements

Students do not need to prepare either of these statements prior to the program, but should be aware of the statement structures.

### Rebuttal Statement

Respond to and criticize the arguments presented by the opposing side. Prove that the other side's logic and arguments do not make sense. Provide sound counter-arguments.

### Closing Statement

Summarize your team's main arguments. Emphasize the strongest points made throughout the debate. Make sure to include facts to support your position and address any counter arguments.

## General Topic Background Resources

- [The U.S. War in Afghanistan](#) (Council on Foreign Relations) - Overview/Timeline
- [Longest war: Were America's decades in Afghanistan worth it?](#) (AP News) - Article
- [Democracy Promotion: An Objective of U.S. Foreign Assistance](#) (Congressional Research Service) - Report \*Pages 1-8 (stop at the section "Democracy Promotion in Restrictive Environments") and Pages 19-20
- [After Capitol Riot, Can America Still Promote Democracy Abroad - And At Home?](#) (Forbes) - Article (with option to listen to audio of interview)

**Team Affirmative Resources** – *"Based on our studies and research, **yes**, the United States does have a military, economic, and political obligation to promote democracy in Afghanistan and other countries."*

- [Why Democracy Promotion is in the Strategic Interest of the United States](#) (Truman National Security Project) - Opinion Article
- [Choose Freedom: Revitalizing American Support for Democracy and Human Rights in the 21st Century](#) (Nicole Bibbins Sedaca, George W. Bush Presidential Center) - Publication
- [America should support democracy - but we have to be smarter about it](#) (The Washington Post) - Opinion Article

**Team Opposed Resources** – *"Based on our studies and research, **no**, the United States does NOT have a military, economic, and political obligation to promote democracy in Afghanistan and other countries."*

- [Costs of the Afghanistan War, in lives and dollars](#) (AP News) - Article
- [Americans put low priority on promoting democracy abroad](#) (Pew Research Center) - Article
- [It wasn't hubris that drove America into Afghanistan. It was fear.](#) (The Washington Post) - Opinion Article