

“THIS IS NOT A WAR AGAINST THE AFGHAN PEOPLE.”

— PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH

# HALT THE BOMBING TO SAVE A PEOPLE.

Unless the American people act quickly, a deadly combination of winter and war will cut off millions of Afghan civilians from food aid they need to survive. In the spring, when melting snows uncover the corpses of the young and frail across this tragic landscape, will peace and security be any nearer...for anyone?

Amid our own anger and sorrow about the September 11 attacks, we cannot ignore the fact that our bombing in Afghanistan is setting the stage for a horrible, and totally preventable, humanitarian tragedy.

According to international relief agencies, over 7 million Afghan civilians, one-third of the population, are at risk from famine.

Unless we halt the bombing and allow food aid to start moving in time, hundreds of thousands of children, women, the elderly, and the disabled face death from starvation and exposure.

Even before allied bombing began October 7, three years of drought had cut Afghanistan's grain production in half.

Based on World Food Programme data, aid groups say that 3,500 metric tons of food should have been crossing the Afghan border daily to meet current needs and to stockpile sufficient food for the winter.

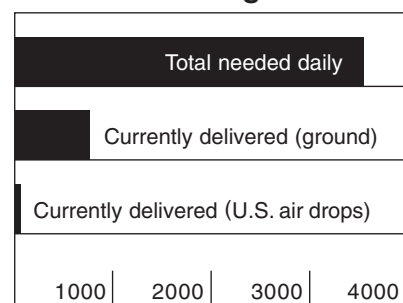
But since the bombing started five weeks ago, food aid transport has reportedly fallen 75% short.

Truckers understandably refuse to risk the war zone. Ground action, and air strikes misdirected at relief depots (the US military confirms bombing Red Cross warehouses on October 16, October 25 and October 26), are disrupting NGO food distribution networks.



**“ARE WE GOING TO PRESIDE OVER THE DEATHS FROM STARVATION OF HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS — MAYBE MILLIONS — OF PEOPLE THIS WINTER BECAUSE WE DIDN'T USE THE WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY BEFORE WINTER CLOSES?”** — UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Mary Robinson

#### Food Aid into Afghanistan:



Sources: ChristianAid, US Air Force

*“...as the onset of winter leaves millions potentially facing starvation in a country that was largely dependent on food aid before the current war began, the humanitarian crisis may soon begin to compete with the priority of overthrowing the Taliban regime in the minds of many alliance partners.”*

— Time magazine

To its credit, the US government is the main grain supplier through the World Food Programme, International Red Cross, and NGOs, and has pledged hundreds of millions of dollars, along with other nations, to Afghan relief efforts.

**The challenge is whether food aid can be delivered in time to save lives.**

Even if the US military air-drops its entire store of 2 million Humanitarian Daily Rations, for example, it will total 2,000 metric tons—less than 4% of

the 55,000 tons of food required to stave off famine this winter.

Massive ground shipments, perhaps supplemented by pallet-size low-level air drops, are now the only feasible solution.

The United Nations has warned that mass starvation looms.

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has backed a bombing pause to allow delivery of humanitarian supplies.

Almost ignored in the US press, but widely covered in the United Kingdom, leading aid groups with personnel on the ground in Afghanistan declare that a human catastrophe is imminent unless bombing is suspended.

In mid-September, the US created an alliance around the surrender of

one man. Two months later, millions of innocent Afghan lives are now in danger. The goal of the military campaign has grown disturbingly vague.

Can we rescue a people, tangibly delivering the hope of peace, food, and goodwill in a land torn apart by powerful forces? Or will we destroy the people of Afghanistan in an attempt to pursue the outside perpetrators of injustice, whatever the cost?

This is the choice. Let us choose life and hope, in the memory of those who died tragically on September 11, and in the memory of all those who have fought and died, in so many wars, to win a decent world for all of us.

**Please contact President Bush**  
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Urge them to act wisely, compassionately, and quickly to save the people of Afghanistan. In spite of our own deep national loss, let us not lose the will to be courageously humanitarian.

**Today, November 11**, has been a day of remembrance for wartime loss and veterans' sacrifice since the WWI armistice was signed on this date in 1918. We invite you to observe a moment's silence for peace 11am, local time. **To support** organizations delivering relief in Afghanistan: [www.veteransforpeace.org/reliefagencies.htm](http://www.veteransforpeace.org/reliefagencies.htm)

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