

Rylance, M., Pilger, J., Dent Coad, E., Edwards, J., Lake, B., Lucas, C., MacNeil, A., Hussain, I., Saville Roberts, L., Williams, H., Williamson, C., Courtney, K., German, L., Qureshi, M., Evans, M., Hudson, K., Margolyes, M., Markham, K., Khan, J., Martinez, F., de la Tour, A., Brittain, V. and Dorling, D. (2018) Heavy price paid for war in Afghanistan, Letter, The Guardian, October 5th, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/oct/05/heavy-price-paid-for-war-in-afghanistan>

Heavy price paid for war in Afghanistan

The 17-year war has been a costly disaster, deepening the country's crisis and helping to spread violence across the region and beyond, say actors including **Mark Rylance**, MPs including **Imran Hussain**, and other campaigners

Letters

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Afghan civilians hold pictures of the victims and damage caused by US airstrikes, during a protest in Kunduz, Afghanistan. Photograph: Najim Raheem/EPA

This weekend marks the 17th anniversary of the US coalition's invasion of [Afghanistan](#), triggering a war that has lasted four times as long as the first world war.

Some 3,546 Nato soldiers have been killed in [Afghanistan](#), 456 of whom were British, while a conservative estimate suggests 217,000 Afghans have died as a direct result of the fighting.

During each of the past 17 years, Afghanistan has continued its descent into poverty, violence, environmental degradation and instability. It is one of the poorest countries in the world, and one of the most dangerous.

Donald Trump has increased US bombing and, therefore, civilian casualties have risen too. The July 2018 UN assistance mission in Afghanistan (Unama) report described fatality rates in early 2018 as being “the bloodiest on record”, at an average rate of 28 Afghan civilian casualties per day.

Despite this, and the fact that neither the US nor the UK have a plan for Afghanistan, more British troops are joining 15,000 US and 6,000 other Nato forces in Afghanistan.

Like all the other recent western military adventures, the war on Afghanistan has been a costly disaster, deepening the country's crisis and helping to spread violence across the region and beyond. We demand that the UK government withdraws its military and instead concentrates on helping to bring stability and peace to Afghanistan.

Mark Rylance Actor, **John Pilger** Journalist, **Emma Dent Coad** MP, **Jonathan Edwards** MP, **Ben Lake** MP, **Caroline Lucas** MP, **Angus MacNeil** MP, **Imran Hussain** MP, **Liz Saville Roberts** MP *Leader of Plaid Cymru's parliamentary group*, **Hywel Williams** MP, **Chris Williamson** MP, **Kevin Courtney** Joint general secretary, NEU, **Lindsey German** Convener, *Stop the War Coalition*, **Murad Qureshi** Chair, *Stop the War Coalition*, **Maya Evans** Co-ordinator, *Voices for Creative Non-Violence*, **Kate Hudson** General secretary, *Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament*, **Mairead Maguire** Nobel peace laureate, **Miriam Margolyes** Actor, **Kika Markham** Actor, **Jemima Khan** TV, film and documentary producer, **Francesca Martinez** Comedian, actor and author, **Andy de la Tour** Actor and author, **Victoria Brittain** Author, **Danny Dorling** Professor of Geography

