

US and Taliban sign deal to withdraw American troops from Afghanistan

The US and the Taliban have signed a landmark peace agreement after nearly 20 years of war that could result in American troops leaving **Afghanistan** within 14 months.

Afghanistan 阿富汗

The deal also paves the way for talks between Afghans to end one of the longest-running conflicts in the world.

The Taliban have agreed to **sever** ties with **al-Qaida** and other international terror groups and sit down for peace talks with other Afghans, including a government they have always denounced as a US puppet. In return, Washington will start a phased withdrawal of troops.

Sever 割断; 断绝

al-Qaida 基地组织

Civil war — in various iterations — has torn Afghanistan apart over 40 years. With the majority of the population under 30, most have known nothing but conflict. So there is excitement that efforts to negotiate an end to the war have made progress.

But there is also widespread concern about Taliban motives in signing a deal they have described as a “victory”, and fears the US may use the deal as cover to leave regardless of the state of the war.

“Like many Afghans, I have mixed feelings. The general **secrecy** around the deal, the lack of presence of non-Taliban Afghans in the process, the fact that the US-Taliban talks seemed to **marginalise** other Afghan voices, all have made me anxious,” said Shaharзад Akbar, the chair of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission.

Secrecy 保密; 私密

marginalize 边缘化

“However, on the other hand, if the agreement allows for a reasonable timeline for a responsible withdrawal and ensures intra-Afghan talks, there is room for hope about a substantive reduction in conflict and violence. Peace will require much more.”