

(WASHINGTON) --- Congressman Allen West (FL-22) released this statement today on the 10th anniversary of the start of the war in Afghanistan:

"Ten years ago today, our nation went on the offensive against Islamic Totalitarianism, radical Islamic Terrorism and specific individuals who want to harm our country and kill our citizens after a band of thugs declared war on the United States of America, our fellow Americans, and our way of life.

The last decade in Afghanistan has seen peaks and valleys, triumph and tragedy, unspeakable horror and unimaginable bravery during our long and difficult march towards victory.

Americans must never forget that we did not choose this fight – the fight chose us. And while a decade may seem like a long period of time, we must remember that our enemies have been at war with our nation for nearly a generation. From Beirut to the Khobar Towers; from the the USS Cole to the bombing of the World Trade Center; from the US Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania to September 11th, 2001, we must always remember that our country did not ask for this war – they attacked us.

Although our nation faces challenges at home, in order for us to be able to meet the economic challenges it is paramount that we protect our national security. My heart is always with my fellow comrades in arms and their families who are serving in Afghanistan and across our globe. Their sacrifice, courage, and patriotism are the lifeblood of our great nation. Our nation's commitment to our brothers and sisters in uniform reminds us all why America is the greatest and most exceptional nation on the face of the Earth.

While we may not have executed this combat operation perfectly – no war is – we cannot turn a blind eye and pretend that radical Islam does not exist. We cannot ignore the threat even with the killing of Osama bin Laden and other terrorist leaders. The fight continues.

There is evil in this world that must be confronted, lest our nation sees more of its citizens maimed and killed in acts of terror. As a Member of the United States House of Representatives, I will continue to urge the Obama Administration and Congressional leaders to

pressure Pakistan to crack down on terrorists within their borders, in particular the Haqqani Network that has been responsible for so much violence and bloodshed. I will continue to urge our leaders to finish what was started in this part of the world.

As we mark the somber anniversary of the war in Afghanistan, I will always stand by the men and women of our Armed Forces, and will continue to represent their voice in the House of Representatives. I will continue always to protect our nation – as I once did on the battlefield, and as I now am honored to do in the United States Congress.

And I will commit myself to confront the idea that our military and our veterans should be the bill payer for our fiscal irresponsibility. For me that is a reprehensible example of political expediency.

God Bless our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines – may our eternal Father continue to watch over them, their families, and our great nation."

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