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Afghaniversary: The US Occupation Turns 13

By Jason Ditz

October 7, 2014

Today, the US occupation of Afghanistan officially entered its awkward teen years, as 13 years ago today marks the first US attacks of the conflict, airstrikes on Kabul and Kandahar.

The Afghan War at 13 seems very much like it did in years past, with the Taliban in control of vast territory and the Pentagon claiming “progress” that doesn’t seem to have any real impact on the ground.

Untold billions wasted, the advancement of the Afghan War into adolescence doesn’t mean the end is near. Indeed, last week the new Ghani government signed a deal to keep US and NATO forces on the ground “through 2024 and beyond,” ensuring at least another decade of occupation.

The plan right now, at least from a PR standpoint, seems to be claiming the war is ending at the end of the year, when the troop level gets down to 10,000 US ground troops. Yet those troops are staying more or less forever, with re-escalation a possibility at any time.