

I continue to oppose the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and applaud President Obama for making clear his intention to withdraw troops from both countries. Our presence only aggravates the situation and delays the inevitable time when locals must take control of their own futures.

From the start I was skeptical about what our military could accomplish in either country. I believe that the past nine years have proved beyond a reasonable doubt that invading and occupying Afghanistan and Iraq has been a monumental foreign policy blunder that has resulted in thousands of lives lost, billions of dollars squandered and no improvement to our national security.

I have repeatedly voted to fix this failed policy by eliminating all funds for war except those exclusively used for troop safety and withdrawal. The first step toward getting us there is a detailed plan for a drawdown, including the departure of the many contractors who operate there.

There's no question that our military is the most powerful in the world. But it has become crystal clear that military might alone cannot sustain peace. Political and military leaders agree on this, but we need to turn that agreement into action.

I wrote an op-ed in Politico titled "The sword alone will not bring peace" where I lay out my desire to see increased funding for our diplomatic mission. Until we can sustain peace, our military's prowess in creating peace will never be sufficient.
<http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0610/38174.html>

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