

VIDEO: Retreat of US Forces in Afghanistan? US Military Base under Taliban Control

By [Global Research](#)

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In-depth Report: [AFGHANISTAN](#)

The Taliban is claiming victory in eastern Afghanistan's Korengal Valley following the withdrawal of US forces from a remote outpost.

Days after the US pulled out as part of "repositioning of forces", Al Jazeera visited the valley and found the Taliban had control of the area and access to every part of the camp.

Taliban fighters said they intended to make use of the base in Kunar province to launch attacks and capture more territory in the region.

They also claimed that they had captured tonnes of fuel and ammunition left behind by US forces.

"There is a lot of ammunition left behind - mortars, rockets, and missiles. This, God willing, we will [use] against them," Anwar, a local Taliban commander, told Al Jazeera's Qais Azimy.

Local Afghans were also coming to visit the area, now strewn with litter and debris.

One local man said he believed stability would return to the area, now that foreign forces are gone.

"We don't want Americans, we don't want Germans or any other foreigner. We don't want foreigners, we want peace. We want Taliban and Islam - we don't want anything else."

Korengal Valley, dubbed the Valley of Death by US forces, was frequently the scene of heavy fighting.

At least 42 US troops were killed there over the past five years.

Pull out 'correct'

The US military said it was not alarmed by the claims made by the Taliban.

"When we repositioned our forces we knew that there was a real possibility of insurgent forces going into there," Colonel Wayne Shanks, a US military spokesman, said.

"But we still believe that decision was the correct one based on the resources that we have available and the objectives that we want to achieve."

US officials said the fuel supplies and living quarters had been intentionally left for area residents, while important fighting positions and observation posts were demolished and weaponry and ammunition either removed or destroyed.

The troops abandoned the position following a decision by General Stanley McChrystal, head of US and Nato forces in Afghanistan, to concentrate resources on urban areas.

Mark Perry, an author based in Washington, DC and specialising in US military analysis, said the withdrawal of American forces from Korengal was not necessarily either a victory or defeat, but was in keeping with past strategy.

“This is a pretty small battle,” he said.

“It’s true that we left, but we weren’t going to stay there anyway.”

He said the US military is pursuing a strategy to try to cripple the Taliban and al-Qaeda where possible, and create “a breathing space for the government in Afghanistan to become politically rooted in the society”.

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