

United States President Joe Biden has said he 'stands squarely' behind the decision to withdraw troops from Afghanistan as he faces withering criticism over the Taliban lightening conquest of the war torn country.

The American President said, "How many more American lives is it worth?" asked the Democratic president.

He said that despite the "messy" pullout, "there was never a good time to withdraw US forces".

On Sunday, the Taliban declared victory after Afghan President Ashraf Ghani fled and his government collapsed.

He's address followed a dramatic day at Kabul's international airport, where hundreds of civilians desperate to flee the country forced their way inside on Monday.

Many thronged the runway, running alongside a moving military transporter aircraft as it prepared for take-off.

Some clung to the side of the plane, and at least two of them are reported to have perished when they fell from the aircraft after it had left the ground.

American troops killed two armed Afghans who were part of the crowd that breached the airport perimeter. Seven people reportedly died in total.

The militants' return to rule brings an end to almost 20 years of a US-led coalition's presence in the country.

Kabul was the last major city in Afghanistan to fall to a Taliban offensive that began months ago but accelerated in recent days as they gained control of territories, shocking many observers.

Former US President George Bush said he and former First Lady Laura Bush feel "deep sadness" over the events unfolding in Afghanistan.

"Laura and I have been watching the tragic events unfolding in Afghanistan with deep sadness.

"Our hearts are heavy for both the Afghan people who have suffered so much and

for the Americans and NATO allies who have sacrificed so much,” the former president said in a statement.

Evacuation flights from Afghanistan have resumed a day after the Taliban’s military takeover raised panic in Kabul and thousands mobbed the city’s international airport in a desperate attempt to flee.

A Western security official told the Reuters news agency on Tuesday that the Kabul airport’s tarmac and runway – which troops from the United States control – were now clear of crowds. The official said military flights evacuating diplomats and civilians from Afghanistan have started taking off.

At least seven people died in Monday’s chaos, including several people who clung to the sides of a jet as it took off.

The Taliban have meanwhile declared the war in Afghanistan over and a senior leader said the group would wait until foreign forces had left before creating a new governance structure.

Britain cautioned the Taliban that Afghanistan must never be used to launch terror attacks but added that the West must try to positively influence the armed group.

Britain fears the Taliban’s return and the vacuum left by the West’s chaotic withdrawal will allow militants from al Qaeda and Islamic State to gain a foothold in Afghanistan, just 20 years after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks on the United States.

Britain’s Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said the UK would try to see if it could moderate the new rulers of Afghanistan and even try to convince them to be “inclusive.

The Taliban’s rapid takeover of Afghanistan poses a new challenge for big US tech companies on handling content created by a group considered “terrorists” by some world governments.

Social media giant Facebook confirmed that it designates the Taliban a terrorist group and bans it and content supporting it from its platforms.

The Taliban declared a general amnesty for all government officials and urged them to return to work, two days after taking power following a lightning sweep through the country.

“A general amnesty has been declared for all... so you should start your routine life with full confidence,” said a statement from the Taliban.

Europe has to create humanitarian corridors to receive refugees fleeing from Afghanistan, and also to avoid uncontrolled flows of illegal immigrants, the European Union’s Economy Commissioner said.

“I think that Europe will inevitably have to equip itself for humanitarian corridors and organised reception, also to avoid uncontrolled flows of illegal immigrants. Or, at least, the countries that are willing to do so, should,” Paolo Gentiloni told Italian daily *il Messaggero*.