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TALIBAN SURGE IN AFGHANISTAN: EU AND NATO IN STATE OF SHOCK

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Barbara Wesel

EU diplomats appear to have been caught unaware by the Taliban's advance and the rapid collapse of the Afghan government. On Thursday, EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell urged the Taliban to "immediately resume substantive, regular and structured talks," and agree to a cease-fire. He said the EU encourages "the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to settle political differences, increase representation of all stakeholders and engage with the Taliban from a united perspective."

Two days before the fall of Kabul, that seems a bit clueless.

A request to guarantee the safe and orderly withdrawal of all foreigners and Afghans wishing to leave the country followed on Monday morning. It was signed by representatives from the EU and from parts of the international community. Chaotic scenes at Kabul airport, however, show that only military evacuation is still an option; civilian air traffic has been halted. A special EU foreign ministers' meeting was called for Tuesday afternoon.

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