

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001869/26
to the Commission
Özlem Demirel (The Left)
(6 May 2026)**

Subject: Inviting the Taliban to talks in Brussels

Since 2021, Afghanistan has been *de facto* ruled by the Taliban (Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan). Neither the EU nor any of its Member States recognise the Taliban as the country's *de jure* government. According to media reports, the Commission is planning talks with the Taliban and intends to invite their representatives to Brussels for this purpose.

1. What bodies or persons in the Afghan Taliban Government does the Commission regard as legitimate interlocutors, and which Commission departments and officials are involved in the talks with the Taliban?
2. What topics are on the agenda for the talks with the Taliban, and what specific forms of cooperation is the Commission seeking?
3. Which EU Member States are involved in planning the negotiations or are due to take part in the talks?

Submitted: 6.5.2026

**Answer given by Mr Brunner on behalf of the European Commission
(4 August 2026)**

The Commission was asked by 20 Member States and Schengen associated countries in a letter signed by their Ministers in October 2025, to coordinate contacts on returns with the *de facto* authorities, to ensure a coherent European approach.

Their focus is on the return of persons posing a threat to public order or national security. Returns to Afghanistan need to be addressed in a comprehensive and coordinated manner, bearing in mind the challenges arising from the acute humanitarian and human rights situation in Afghanistan.

The Commission and Sweden, on behalf of interested Member States, co-chaired a technical-level meeting with representatives of the *de facto* authorities of Afghanistan responsible for return and readmission, following technical-level discussions in Kabul, in January 2026.

The technical-level meeting aimed to give Member States the opportunity to address practical aspects of the readmission process. 15 Member States participated in the meeting.

Operational engagement with the *de facto* authorities is in line with the Council conclusions of 15 September 2021 ⁽¹⁾ and 20 March 2023 ⁽²⁾.

It does not constitute nor imply recognition, which remains conditioned upon progress on the EU's established benchmarks, especially counterterrorism, inclusive governance and human rights, with particular concern for the rights of women and girls. The EU has strongly condemned the systemic violation of human rights.

The Commission acts in full respect of the Council conclusions and of its international obligations and will continue its unwavering support to all persons concerned by those violations of human rights.

Following a briefing by the Commission and the European External Action Service to the Coordinators of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) on 2 July 2026, the Commissioner for Internal Affairs and Migration held an exchange of views with the LIBE Committee on 14 July 2026 on all aspects of the technical-level meeting.

⁽¹⁾ <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-11713-2021-REV-2/en/pdf>.

⁽²⁾ <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-7264-2023-INIT/en/pdf>.