

**TOPIC:** POTUS AFGHANISTAN PLAN  
**DATE:** August 21 - 22, 2017

**KEY TAKEAWAYS**

- Media outlets and influencers responded to President Trump's August 21 address about United States involvement in Afghanistan with mixed sentiment. While supporters praised the President's strong stance on "killing terrorists" rather than "nation building," detractors use the President's intentional lack of detail as fodder for attacks.
- Both the messaging and comments posted on Conservative news outlets trended more Neutral than Positive, which accounted for the discrepancy between the Political Bias chart and the Sentiment statistics.
- 49% of the event's topic momentum occurred within the first 4 hours of the President's address. The topic regained some momentum this morning as media outlets published their analyses. However, topic momentum will likely decrease over the next 48 hours.

**SUMMARY**

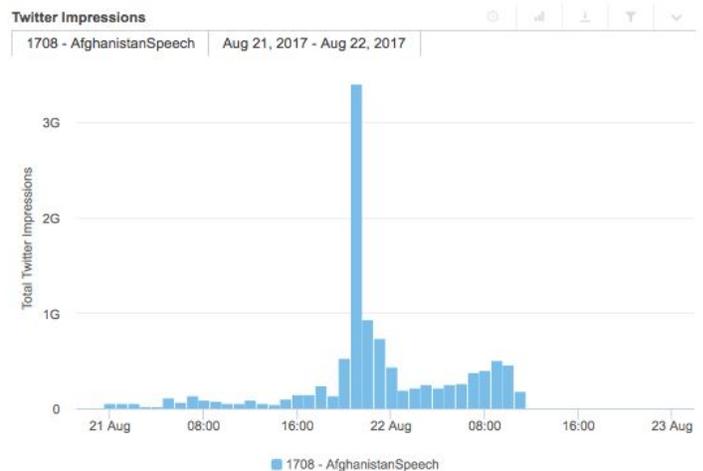
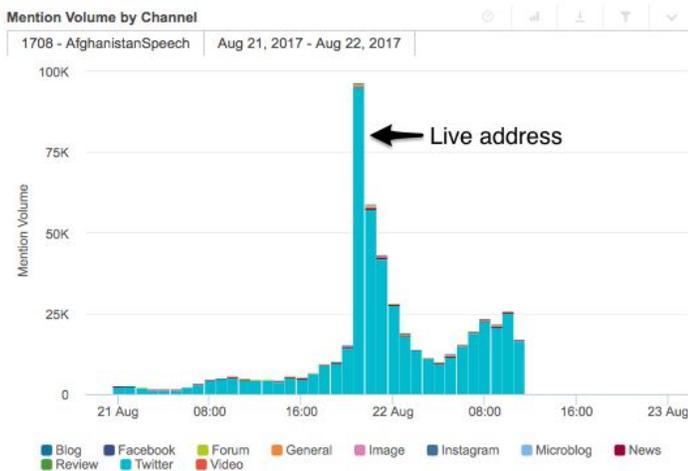
- **Content Volume: 520,498 filtered mentions** across all channels over the last 24 hours related to President Trump's August 21st address about the United States' involvement in Afghanistan.
- **Contribution Channels:** 497,743 Tweets, 8,641 Digital News mentions, 5,410 Forum and Blog posts, 2,224 Facebook posts.
- **Sentiment by Mention Volume:** 29% Positive, 22% Neutral, 49% Negative.
- **Top @Mention Count from Twitter:** @POTUS and @realdonaldtrump were mentioned in 84K Tweets

earning 987M impressions. @stevenmazie of The Economist was mentioned in 35K Tweets earning 42.10M impressions for this [tweet](#), which generated 33K retweets and 70K likes on Twitter.

- **Community Demographics from Twitter:** 45% Female, 55% Male participation from gender identifiable Twitter handles.
- **Impressions & Authors Contribution from Twitter:** 11.24B Total Impressions from 201K unique Twitter profiles.

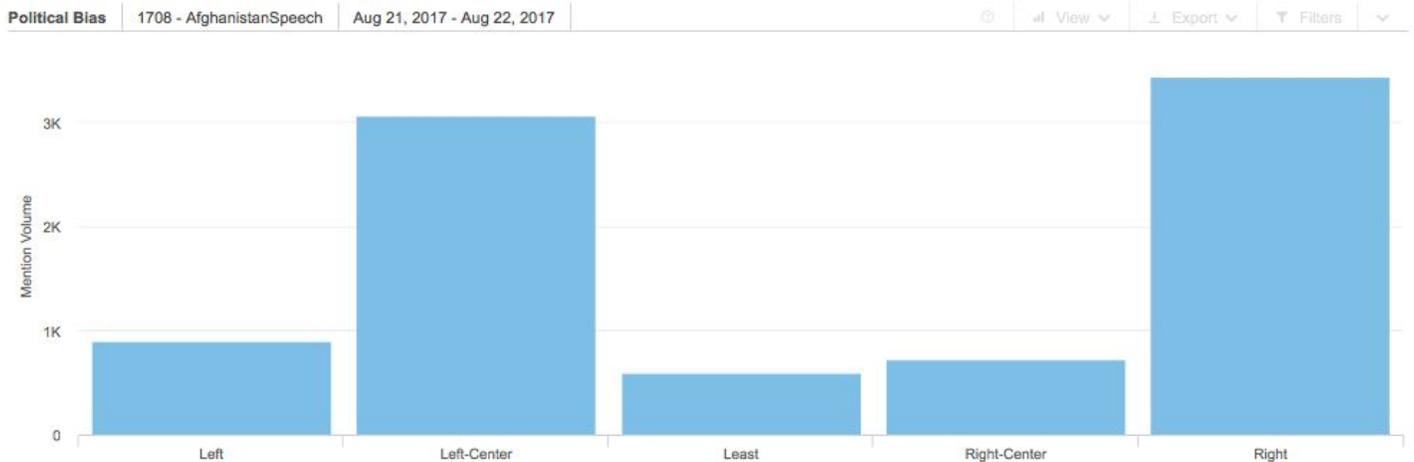
**24-HOUR TOPIC MOMENTUM**

Hourly topic momentum for the last 24 hours. Left chart is Mention Volume broken down by Channel. Right chart is Twitter Impression Volume.



**POLITICAL BIAS**

Mention volume broken down by political bias of the source.



**WHITE HOUSE CONTRIBUTION**

Top Content from the White House.

- **Donald J. Trump** @realDonaldTrump [21st Aug](#) RT [@marcorubio](#): Good [#AfghanStrategy](#) & excellent speech by [@POTUS](#) laying it out to the nation. *Retweets: 0 Replies: 0 Impressions: 36.44M*
- **The White House** @WhiteHouse [21st Aug](#) [@VP](#) Mike Pence: Donald Trump's new American strategy for Afghanistan will undo past failures <https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2017/08/21/trump-speech...> *Retweets: 1.1K Replies: 389 Impressions: 24.48M*
- **The White House** @WhiteHouse [21st Aug](#) President Trump: Afghans will secure and build their own nation, and define their own future. We want them to succeed. *Retweets: 909 Replies: 112 Impressions: 22.76M*
- **Cliff Sims** @CSims45 [21st Aug](#) "We are not nation-building again - we are killing terrorists." - [@POTUS](#) *Retweets: 118 Replies: 14 Impressions: 1.35M*
- **Cliff Sims** @CSims45 [21st Aug](#) [@POTUS](#) on Afghanistan: "Our nation must seek an honorable and enduring outcome worthy of the tremendous sacrifices that have been made." *Retweets: 75 Replies: 6 Impressions: 653K*
- **Helen Aguirre Ferre** @haferre45 [21st Aug](#) [@POTUS](#) Today 20 US designated foreign terrorist organizations are active in Afghanistan & Pakistan, the highest concentration in any region *Retweets: 6 Replies: 0 Impressions: 10K*

**POLITICIAN CONTRIBUTION**

Selected content from Republicans and Democrats.

**REPUBLICANS**

- **Marco Rubio** @marcorubio [21st Aug](#) Good [#AfghanStrategy](#) & excellent speech by [@POTUS](#) laying it out to the nation. *Retweets: 5.7K Replies: 6.9K Impressions: 52.33M*
- **John McCain** @SenJohnMcCain [21st Aug](#) I commend [@POTUS](#)'s new strategy for [#Afghanistan](#). We must move past last admin's failed policy of postponing defeat. [bit.ly/2wyUi05](http://bit.ly/2wyUi05) [pic.twitter.com/zZGqrkSD9i](http://pic.twitter.com/zZGqrkSD9i) *Retweets: 633 Replies: 1.4K Impressions: 5.90M*
- **Leader McConnell** @SenateMajLdr [21st Aug](#) The US cannot permit terrorist organizations to train, recruit and plot from ungoverned sanctuaries. [bit.ly/2x79XBF](http://bit.ly/2x79XBF) *Retweets: 63 Replies: 48 Impressions: 389K*
- **Kevin McCarthy** @GOPLeader [21st Aug](#) [@POTUS](#) has made the right call – this framework for action is the right thing to do for Afghanistan, the United States, and the world. *Retweets: 114 Replies: 49 Impressions: 364K*
- **Rob Portman** @senrobportman [21st Aug](#) Look forward to hearing more from Sec. Tillerson & Sec. Mattis on how [#POTUS](#)' [#Afghanistan](#) strategy will help make America safer. *Retweets: 19 Replies: 21 Impressions: 115K*
- **Jim Inhofe** @JimInhofe [21st Aug](#) [@POTUS](#) reaffirmed our commitment to victory in Afghanistan & marked a new beginning in our approach to supporting our Afghan partners *Retweets: 12 Replies: 24 Impressions: 53K*

## DEMOCRATS

- **Senator Tim Kaine** @timkaine [21st Aug](#) The American public deserves more details from POTUS on Afghanistan. Congress should ask for the specifics and then debate & vote on an AUMF *Retweets: 2.5K Replies: 138 Impressions: 4.90M*
- **Nancy Pelosi** @NancyPelosi [21st Aug](#) President Trump's speech on Afghanistan policy was low on details but raises serious questions about the future. [goo.gl/PHf8Lq](http://goo.gl/PHf8Lq) *Retweets: 658 Replies: 319 Impressions: 2.16M*
- **Kirsten Gillibrand** @SenGillibrand [22nd Aug](#) Until @POTUS can define what success in Afghanistan looks like, sending more troops to fight there is a disservice to their sacrifice. *Retweets: 211 Replies: 29 Impressions: 1.00M*
- **Rep. Pramila Jayapal** @RepJayapal [21st Aug](#) Donald Trump's address on Afghanistan was short on specifics and strategy and lacked a clear path to end the longest war in our history. *Retweets: 148 Replies: 6 Impressions: 196K*
- **Steve Cohen** @RepCohen [21st Aug](#) After 16 years we haven't made great progress in #Afghanistan. Trump didn't make me believe that we will be successful. #GodBlessOurTroops [pic.twitter.com/YvfmX6GTY3](http://pic.twitter.com/YvfmX6GTY3) *Retweets: 41 Replies: 8 Impressions: 152K*

## MEDIA CONTRIBUTION

Web and Twitter mentions of key news sites, including User Comments and Outbound Virality (shares of pages to Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn).

### POSITIVE

- **[Trump rules out Afghan troops withdrawal](#) - BBC - 8/22/17**
  - **Outbound Virality:** Facebook: 5.6K Interactions; Twitter: 642 Tweets; LinkedIn: 36 Shares
  - President Trump has committed to stepping up the US military's engagement in Afghanistan, but details were few and far between. [...] The president did, however, put pressure on neighbouring Pakistan, warning that the US would no longer tolerate it offering "safe havens" to extremists - an accusation swiftly dismissed by a Pakistani army spokesman.
  - *Related: [Trump backs off Afghan withdrawal, lambasts Pakistan over terrorist 'safe havens'](#) - Dawn*

### NEUTRAL

- **[Trump to ask Americans to trust him on Afghanistan](#) - CNN - 8/21/17**
  - **Outbound Virality:** Facebook: 28K Interactions; Twitter: 1.1K Tweets; LinkedIn: 53 Shares
  - While Trump will be unveiling a crucial national security decision, it will be impossible to divorce his speech from its political context. His inflammatory news conference last week in which he equated white supremacists and counterprotestors who clashed in Charlottesville, Virginia, triggered a stampede away from the President by senior Republican lawmakers, corporate CEOs and others that left him more isolated than ever before.
- **[Trump Outlines New Afghanistan War Strategy With Few Details](#) - New York Times - 8/21/17**
  - **Outbound Virality:** Facebook: 4.5K Interactions; Twitter: 682 Tweets; LinkedIn: 20 Shares
  - President Trump put forward on Monday a long-awaited strategy for resolving the nearly 16-year-old conflict in Afghanistan, but he declined to specify either the number of troops that would be committed, or the conditions by which he would judge the success of their mission there.
  - *Related: [Trump declares US will 'win' in Afghanistan, but gives few details](#) - CNN Politics*
- **[No decision yet on size of U.S. troop increase in Afghanistan: Mattis](#) - Reuters - 8/22/17**
  - **Outbound Virality:** Facebook: 2.4K Interactions; Twitter: 580 Tweets; LinkedIn: 23 Shares
  - "When he brings that to me, I will determine how many more we need to send in," Mattis told reporters during a visit to Baghdad. "It may or may not be the number that is bandied about." U.S. officials have said Trump has given Mattis the authority to send about 4,000 additional troops to add to the roughly 8,400 already in Afghanistan.

### NEGATIVE

- **[Donald Trump's Afghanistan speech ended up being all about Charlottesville](#) - CNN - 8/21/17**
  - **Outbound Virality:** Facebook: 8.9K Interactions; Twitter: 433 Tweets; LinkedIn: 7 Shares
  - President Donald Trump used a speech ostensibly focused on his decision about the future of America's role in Afghanistan to issue a call for unity and healing in the United States, a clear attempt to patch over the damage caused by his repeated unwillingness to condemn white supremacists and neo-Nazis following their violent protests in Charlottesville.
- **[As Trump Rolls Out War Plan, Taliban Are Gaining](#) - New York Times - 8/21/17**
  - **Outbound Virality:** Facebook: 720 Interactions; Twitter: 431 Tweets; LinkedIn: 15 Shares

- The Pentagon is also aware that after so many years of war, the American public may not stomach — and the American military may not be able to afford — another huge troop buildup in Afghanistan's infamous graveyard of empires. So the Afghan national security forces, weak as they are, are expected to do their own fighting.
- [Too many have died in Afghanistan already. Trump must not draw us back - The Guardian - 8/22/17](#)
  - **Outbound Virality:** Facebook: 850 Interactions; Twitter: 271 Tweets; LinkedIn: 1 Share
  - The test of any professed opposition to Donald Trump is what response is forthcoming when he starts dropping bombs or sending soldiers to die. There were those who spoke in grave tones about Trump's threat to world peace — even implying he was an American Hitler — but got teary-eyed as soon as he sent missiles hurtling towards a Syrian airfield. Now he has unveiled plans to send more American soldiers to the graveyard of Afghanistan — and he wants Britain to follow suit. His latest military escapade must be resisted.
- [Donald Trump's New Afghanistan Plan Promises More Killing - and Little Else - The Intercept - 8/21/17](#)
  - **Outbound Virality:** Facebook: 666 Interactions; Twitter: 194 Tweets; LinkedIn: 4 Shares
  - Trump, however, did neither. His audience was left with nothing but excuses and contradictions. Trump refused to say how many troops he was sending, or set any goals or timetables for withdrawal. "We are not nation-building again," he stressed, boasting that "we are going to participate in economic development to help defray the cost of this war to us."
- [Trump's new Afghan strategy rings all too familiar in longest war - Politico - 8/21/17](#)
  - **Outbound Virality:** Facebook: 236 Interactions; Twitter: 135 Tweets; LinkedIn: 0 Shares
  - President Donald Trump says he is pursuing a "dramatically" different strategy in Afghanistan that will bear better results — but some of the Pentagon's own experts expect to see few dramatic changes despite the president's soaring promises about America's longest-ever war.

#### JOURNALIST CONTRIBUTION

*Selected content from journalists.*

#### POSITIVE

- **Nicholas Kristof** @NickKristof [21st Aug](#) Not a bad Trump speech on Afghanistan, largely continuing Obama policy. Good to hear him call out Pakistan for its duplicity. *Retweets: 283 Replies: 37 Impressions: 6.21M*
- **Andrea Mitchell** @mitchellreports [21st Aug](#) Trump says cannot repeat in Afghanistan mistake our leaders made in Iraq (referring to Obama withdrawal) and create vacuum for terrorists *Retweets: 63 Replies: 28 Impressions: 5.91M*

#### NEUTRAL

- **Barbara Plett Usher** @BBCBarbaraPlett [21st Aug](#) Key difference on [#Afghanistan](#) is Trump committing to US military presence for indefinite period & not limiting troop #'s *Retweets: 28 Replies: 1 Impressions: 21.42M*

#### NEGATIVE

- **Steven Mazie** @stevenmazie [21st Aug](#) Trump says Afghanistan and Pakistan pose the worst terrorist threat to America. Interesting his travel ban applies to neither country. *Retweets: 32K Replies: 344 Impressions: 41.20M*
- **Barbara Plett Usher** @BBCBarbaraPlett [21st Aug](#) Trump put [#Pakistan](#) on notice over safe-havens for [#Afghanistan](#) militants but didn't say what that would mean in practice *Retweets: 17 Replies: 4 Impressions: 21.15M*
- **Phil Elliott** @Philip\_Elliott [21st Aug](#) There is not a confirmed US Ambassador to Afghanistan at present. *Retweets: 4.7K Replies: 51 Impressions: 9.25M*
- **Brian Stelter** @brianstelter [21st Aug](#) "Trump will ask Americans to trust him on his new Afghanistan strategy, exercising a president's most somber duty..." <http://www.cnn.com/2017/08/21/politics/donald-trump...> *Retweets: 146 Replies: 108 Impressions: 7.23M*
- **Dan Rather** @DanRather [22nd Aug](#) Bottom line conclusion on Pres. Trump's Afghanistan speech? We will continue to spend and bleed; no end in sight. *Retweets: 2.3K Replies: 69 Impressions: 6.80M*
- **Jim Acosta** @Acosta [21st Aug](#) Trump on Afghanistan strategy: "we will not talk about numbers of troops." (Don't the American people deserve to know how many we send?) *Retweets: 3.2K Replies: 549 Impressions: 5.52M*

#### BROADCAST CONTRIBUTION

*Curated clips from local and national broadcast stations.*

- [MSNBC - 8/21/17](#)
- [CBS Evening News - 8/21/17](#)

- [Good Morning America](#) - 8/22/17

#### INFLUENCER CONTRIBUTION

*Selected content from industry experts, analysts, and influential personalities.*

##### POSITIVE

- **Geoff De Weaver** @geoff\_deweaver [22nd Aug](#) Trump says rapid Afghan exit would leave 'vacuum' for terrorists <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/us-politics/trump-afghanistan.html> ... #Afghanistan #DonaldTrump #Winning

##### NEGATIVE

- **Alyssa Milano** @Alyssa\_Milano [22nd Aug](#) Is this true, @realDonaldTrump? Trump Finds Reason for the U.S. to Remain in Afghanistan: MINERALS [nyti.ms/2tl5ozD](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/22/us/politics/trump-afghanistan.html)
- **Ann Coulter** @AnnCoulter [22nd Aug](#) Whereas I see Trump as a threat to his re-election. Report: More Troops to Useless Human-Grinder in Afghanistan. [https://twitter.com/thehill/status/...](https://twitter.com/thehill/status/900006175718219777)
- **Brian Klaas** @brianklaas [22nd Aug](#) Trump wants to fix Afghanistan but hasn't bothered to even nominate anyone for 96 of 141 posts at the State Dept & wants to gut its funding.
- **Charles V Payne** @cvpayne [22nd Aug](#) Market reacting to decisive comments from @POTUS on Afghanistan & American Unity -winning former will be tough winning latter isn't optional

#### CONSTITUENT CONTRIBUTION

*Constituent mentions on social media channels, including Twitter and Facebook.*

##### POSITIVE

- **The Reagan Battalion** @ReaganBattalion [22nd Aug](#) Trump followed the advice of the generals on the ground in Afghanistan, and took the risk of angering his base. He deserves credit.
- **LUKE** @LukeMAGA1 [22nd Aug](#) It feels good to know we have a President that will get us across the finish line. 🇺🇸 #AfghanistanStrategy [pic.twitter.com/C8O2EdfZjg](https://pic.twitter.com/C8O2EdfZjg)
- **PinkAboutIt** @Pink\_About\_it [22nd Aug](#) Trump was more than fair about Afghanistan before coming to a decision. Immense respect that he put a lot of time & thought into it
- **TRUMP MOVEMENT** @TRUMPMOVEMENTUS [22nd Aug](#) Good #AfghanStrategy & excellent speech by @POTUS laying it out to the nation Sen. Marco Rubio [pic.twitter.com/qU5QnJGvVn](https://pic.twitter.com/qU5QnJGvVn)
- **Asa J** @asamjulian [22nd Aug](#) I'm not happy nor sad about Trump's Afghanistan speech. These decisions are not easy to make, I'm giving Trump the benefit of the doubt.

##### NEGATIVE

- **Kai Eide** @kai\_eide [22nd Aug](#) At least Trump did not decide to pull out of Afghanistan. That is good! But yesterday's speech is too vague to be called a strategy. <https://twitter.com/washingtonpost/status/900006175718219777> ...
- **John Hergt** @natureofthings7 [22nd Aug](#) "Trump's Afghanistan" speech was perfect no goals to achieve no bench marks to be measured by no responsibility for the blood and \$ spent.
- **Tanya** @tgreene319 [22nd Aug](#) Interesting to hear Republicans like Paul Ryan praise Trump's Afghanistan strategy - the exact same strategy they hated when it was Obama's.
- **Gideon Rachman** @gideonrachman [22nd Aug](#) Decision to fight on in Afghanistan maybe a sign of the problem of filling Trump admin with generals. This is very personal for them.
- **AmNa** @online\_amna [22nd Aug](#) #Trump new Afghan strategy, just blame it on #Pakistan. Why is our foreign office silent??? #PakistanRejectsTrump
- **Sune Engel Rasmussen** @SuneEngel [22nd Aug](#) What stands out, to me, from Trump's speech is the lack of any specificity, and any definition of what the US objective in Afghanistan is
- **Wes Jordan** @wesley\_jordan [22nd Aug](#) Since the Trump admin is now refusing to tell Americans abt wars or troop deployments, will they also be hiding the number of people killed?

**DISCLOSURE**

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