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Organization for Policy Research & Development Studies (DROPS)

Afghan Peace Talks

February 2019

DROPS ANALYSIS

Afghan Peace Talks: No Major Progress in February

By Bismillah Alizada, Deputy Director of DROPS

February saw developments around the Afghan peace talks that further revealed complexities the the internal, regional and global dynamics of the Afghan conflict. These developments included Moscow Talks, tensions between India and Pakistan, and another round of talks between the Taliban and US negotiating teams in Qatar.

First and foremost, lack of consensus among the Afghan political class over peace talks manifested itself in participation of oppositions of the Afghan government in Moscow Talks with the Taliban delegation on February 5 and 6. The meetings saw participation of almost all Afghan politicians who are not in the body of the Afghan government. The talk, however, did not go beyond the general statements by the Afghan participants. The Taliban delegation, on the other hand, used the platform as an opportunity to put forward their demands in clear words and aggressive tone, highlighting a change of the Afghan constitution among others. Although all the participants talked about a follow-up meeting in Doha towards the end of February,

such a meeting did not take place.

Another crucial development that laid bare the lack of consensus among Afghans on the peace talks was a major campaign launched by Afghan women in Afghanistan and beyond. With the help of the office of first lady of Afghanistan, a group of Afghan women launched Afghan Women for Peace twitter page, an online platform advocating for women's rights and their inclusion in the Afghan peace process. Other Afghan women published opinion pieces in international media outlets including the New York Times, the CNN, the Guardian, as well as national outlets including Daily Hashte Subh and Daily Etilaat Roz to express their views and concerns over the ongoing peace talks. Another group of women published an open letter signed by hundreds of Afghan women, five Nobel peace laureates, and many other dignitaries in support of inclusion of women in the peace talks.

In addition to these internal complexities, developments in the region also proved that the peace talks in Afghan can be vulnerable to shifts in the regional political and security dynamics. One such shift was the recent escalation of tensions between India and Pakistan following the Pulwana attack that killed over 40 Indian security forces in the Indian-controlled Kashmir. The Indian government retaliated by bombing Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), a Pakistan-based group who claimed responsibility for the attack. Following the bombing, Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi said the development could affect Afghan peace talks, proving the fragility of Afghan peace talks in the face of shifts in regional politics of the regional actors.

The fifth round of talks between the Taliban and US negotiating teams that was held on February 25 and 25 in Doha, Qatar seems to have made no major progress on the direct talks between the Taliban and the Afghan government and a ceasefire. Although both parties claimed that the talks were productive, reports shows that the talks were still focused on withdrawal of US troops and security assurance by the Taliban, two major topics on the agenda that will not lead to any agreements until ceasefire and direct talks with the Afghan government is secured.

All in all, the prospects of peace talks still remains gloomy. Lack of consensus among Afghans on peace talks manifests itself in various forms every day. Regional consensus, if there is any, is yet another crucial point that remains remains terribly fragile. Making progress in the talks on inclusion of the Afghan government and agreement on a ceasefire proves too difficult. Given all said, the lights at the end of the tunnel still remains dim for any significant progress in near future.

STUDIES/INITIATIVES BY AFGHAN THINK-TANKS & ORGANIZATIONS

Declaration: Afghan Women's National Consensus for Peace

28 February 2019, approximately 3500 women from across Afghanistan gathered in Kabul to discuss peace and ways to preserve women's rights in the Afghan Peace Talks. Initiated by the First Lady of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in cooperation with Afghan Women's Network, Ministry of Women's Affairs, and many other CSOs, the conference aimed to amplify the voices of Afghan women with regards to peace talks.

The one-day long conference concluded with a 15-point declaration.

[You can find the full declaration here...](#)

Afghan Women Six Point Agenda for Moscow Peace Talks

Afghan women have historically been on the right side of the history. They have consistently sided with democracy and social progress. They have, even when restricted by war and misogyny, taken active part in self-development and the development of the country.

They have stood for elections, led ministries, provided bulk of the country's schooling and healthcare, mothered generations well, and they are the ones that have broken taboos through their art and activism – and in doing so they have risked their lives.

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Afghan Women's public statement on Doha Peace Talks

The solution to the conflict in Afghanistan should be reached through peaceful means. We, the women of Afghanistan, therefore, wholeheartedly support peace talks between all parties

Afghan Women's Declaration related to One Billion Rising on Violence against Women "Afghan women's will not go back"

"The One Million Campaign on Violence against Women" is a global civilian movement in which women and men stand against all forms of discrimination and violence against women, and defend all their rights. The Afghan Women's Network has been joining the global campaign since 2013, and has been campaigning for violence against women annually by launching marches and gatherings, in partnership with its member institutions and other civil society organizations throughout Afghanistan.

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Why is it Important for Afghan Women to be Involved in all Stages of a Cease-fire in Afghanistan: Findings and Recommendations

On 24 February 2019, Mariam Safi

to the conflict. However, any peace deal that excludes a firm guarantee of our rights, that we have won through hard fought gains to access and exercise in the last seventeen years, will be absolutely unacceptable.

We insist on trust building measures from the Taliban in order that they show their goodwill towards protecting women's security and women's rights as are within the framework of Islam and laid out in our laws and constitution. Trust building measures include re-opening girls schools in Taliban controlled areas, protecting women's NGO offices from attack ...

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(Director of Organization for Policy Research and Development Studies), Shaharзад Akbar (Political Activist), and Ghazaal Habibyar (former Acting Minister of Mines and Petroleum) briefed a gathering hosted by NATO Senior Civilian Representative's office in Kabul, Afghanistan, comprised of national CSOs, First Lady's Office, The High Peace Council, Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission and members of the international community on the concerns and recommendations of Afghan women with regards to the design, implementation and monitoring of a possible upcoming cease-fire in Afghanistan.

[Read all recommendations here...](#)

OPINION PIECES & COMMENTARIES

Explainer: Why There Are Two Competing Tracks For Afghan Peace

By Frud Bezhan

As the prospect of a negotiated end to the war in Afghanistan is closer than it has ever been, the peace process with the Taliban could be derailed by competing agendas.

Longtime rivals Russia and the United States have backed separate negotiations with different stakeholders, muddling the complex process.

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Understanding the Taliban will be key to peace in Afghanistan

By Nadir Naim

On January 28, following six consecutive days of talks in Qatar's capital Doha, Washington's main negotiator Zalmay Khalilzad announced that the US and the [Taliban](#) finally have a "draft framework" in place for a deal which could pave the way for peace talks with the Afghan government.

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“Nothing is agreed until

Through the Taliban's Eyes:

everything is agreed”: First steps in Afghan peace negotiations

By Thomas Ruttig

The contours of the latest round of US-Taliban negotiations in Qatar have begun to emerge. After six days of meetings with representatives of the insurgents, US special ‘reconciliation’ envoy Zalmay Khalilzad came to Kabul on 27 January 2019 to brief the Afghan leadership. He [told the New York Times](#) that a “framework” had “in principle” been agreed upon. The framework seems to mainly consist of two key topics that need to be further negotiated: the withdrawal of all foreign forces and Taliban guarantees against a post-agreement return of al-Qaeda-type terrorist groups to Afghanistan.

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Afghanistan: the tensions inside the Taliban over recent US peace talks

By Michael Semple

When members of the Taliban’s Political Commission in Doha [sat down](#) with US peace envoy Zalmay Khalilzad on Jan. 21, talks were expected to last only a couple of days. Instead, the two sides talked for six days. By the end of the week, many Afghans hoped there might even be a ceasefire announcement.

Peace Prospects in Afghanistan

By Baheer Wardak

The peace talks went on uninterrupted, a marathon session for six intense days, yet barely a moment in a war that has lasted so much longer.

Still, Zalmay Khalilzad, US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation, emerged from the negotiations with the Taliban in Qatar last month with a message of hope, choosing to broadcast his message via a social media platform that didn’t even exist when the conflict in Afghanistan began.

Having assumed his assignment to end the longest war in American history, Khalilzad was upbeat.

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What Is Wrong with Afghanistan’s Peace Process

By Mariam Safi and Muqaddesa Yourish

President Trump’s announcement of an impending withdrawal of United States troops from Afghanistan and Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad’s declaration that the Americans and the Taliban have “[in principle](#)” agreed to a framework for a deal have been described by both sides as a leap toward ending the war in Afghanistan.

Eventually, an exhausted Khalilzad flew to Kabul, to brief the Afghan government and political leaders that there [was progress](#) but no final deal. Members of the Taliban told researchers working with me that the negotiators were cautiously optimistic. They had concluded that a peace deal might actually be attainable.

[Read more ...](#)

Don't Trust the Taliban's Promises

By Hussain Haqqani

In his State of the Union address, President Donald Trump [tied](#) the withdrawal of U.S. troops to a peaceful settlement in Afghanistan. For a famously mercurial president, that may be no guarantee. But if the United States goes ahead with this course, negotiations should focus on fashioning a peace deal that can last instead of seeking a fig leaf to justify U.S. withdrawal.

At present, the framework agreement looks all too much like the negotiated exit of the Soviet Union three decades ago under the cover of the [1988 Geneva Accords](#). The Soviet withdrawal brought no peace or reconciliation to Afghanistan, and unless backed up with serious precautionary measures, neither will the U.S. exit.

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But a hasty American withdrawal will jeopardize for Afghans the future of hard-won gains such as constitutional rights, freedoms of citizens and democratic institutions. The United States must recognize that the absence of war — the focus of current talks — alone will not translate to peace in Afghanistan.

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Denying women a seat at Taliban talks is a huge mistake

By Swanee Hunt and Wazhma Frogh

(CNN) After September 11, the United States [justified](#) deep engagement in Afghanistan in part due to the Taliban's harsh repression of women. Now, after sustaining [2,351 deaths](#) and more than 20,000 injuries, and spending [north of a trillion dollars](#), the United States is negotiating peace with the draconian regime it once abhorred.

Like ISIS in the Middle East and al-Shabaab in Africa, the Taliban often uses ultra-conservative interpretations of the Quran to force women into cruel marriages with huge age differences where wives may be abused. Worse yet, women are barred from working outside the home, learning to read, or appearing in public without head-to-toe coverings. Defiance means public flogging or even death.

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Amid Peace Talks, What's Really At Stake For Afghan Women

By Lady Liberty

As tentative peace talks aimed at ending 17 years of war and instability in Afghanistan progress, many observers are worried that hard-won, fragile advances in women's rights will be reversed if a deal is reached with the Taliban and U.S. troops withdraw.

[Freshta Jalalzai](#), an Afghan-American journalist covering the war for RFE/RL's Afghan Service, known locally as [Radio Azadi](#), says these fears are well-founded, but the uncertain future of Afghan women and girls is only part of the story.

[Read more ...](#)

The Afghan Government Is Missing From Afghanistan's Peace Process

By Krishnadev Calamur

Can a peace process work if it excludes the government of the country in conflict? We may be finding out.

At present, there are two distinct efforts under way to bring peace in Afghanistan: In one, Zalmay Khalilzad,

She's a Force of Nature, and She Just Declared War on Peace With the Taliban

By Rod Nordland

KABUL, Afghanistan — The driver of a car that was stopped in the middle of the road, blocking traffic, was shocked when a passing motorist rolled down the window and shouted at him, "Dirty donkey."

He was even more surprised when he looked up to see that the insult came from a woman. A woman driving a car. A woman driving a car without wearing the obligatory hijab.

That was Laila Haidari, who runs a popular cafe in Kabul that allows men and women to dine together, whether married or not, with or without a head scarf, and uses the profits to fund a rehabilitation clinic for drug addicts.

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Amid US talks with Taliban, Afghan women remain vigilant

By Scott Peterson

The Taliban imposed strict rules when they controlled Afghanistan in the late 1990s: Attending Friday prayers in the mosque was mandatory, for example, enforced with beatings at the end of a whip.

And music and images of people were forbidden, so Taliban checkpoints were marked by shimmering clouds of magnetic tape, which was pulled from

the State Department's special representative for Afghanistan reconciliation, has held [several discussions](#) with Taliban leaders. In the other, [a meeting in Moscow this month](#) brought together influential Afghans, including former President Hamid Karzai, and Taliban leaders. Conspicuously missing from both? The Afghan government.

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In Afghanistan, there is renewed hope for peace. Why did it take 12 years and more than 100,000 killed?

By Graeme Smith

The first time I felt hopeful about peace in Afghanistan, I was a young reporter working for this newspaper. My right ear was bothering me with a persistent tinny sound after I had stood near Canadian artillery as the troops slammed shell after shell into the Panjwai valley. They fired so many rounds that they ran out of ammunition and left me temporarily half deaf.

When the dust settled after the NATO offensives against the Taliban in the fall of 2006, I went back to the Panjwai valley to speak with elders trying to foster negotiations with the insurgency. There was optimism among the old men as they dialled their cheap mobiles to reach Taliban officials and government leaders.

music and videocassettes confiscated from passing motorists. But it was the severe restrictions inflicted upon women two decades ago that are most widely remembered: The Taliban forced women to be chaperoned and wear the all-enveloping burqa in public, and barred them from working or getting an education.

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Atwood and Roy back call to include women in Afghan peace talks

By Caroline Davies

[Arundhati Roy](#) and [Margaret Atwood](#) are among a group of international writers and activists backing claims that US peace talks with the Taliban are excluding Afghan women's voices and risk pushing back the rights of women in the country.

In an [open letter](#) published in the Guardian, Atwood, the author of the dystopian novel [The Handmaid's Tale](#), and Roy, who won the Man Booker prize for [The God of Small Things](#), along with hundreds of Afghan women and young people, call for "global solidarity to keep women's voices alive".

"We, the women of [Afghanistan](#), will not go backwards," the letter states. "History has taught us the bloody lesson that you cannot have peace without inclusion."

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NEWS

IGC Thanks Qatar for efforts in backing peace in Afghanistan

International Contact Group (ICG) on Afghanistan thanked Qatar for its efforts in building peace in Afghanistan and decided to hold its next meeting in Doha this year.

This was stated in the final statement of the group's meeting held in London from January 30 to 31.

Dr Mutlaq bin Majed al-Qahtani, HE the Minister of Foreign Affairs' special envoy for Counterterrorism and Mediation in Conflict Resolution, presided Qatar's delegation to the meeting.

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Taliban, Afghan opposition hold Moscow talks without government

Senior Afghan politicians, including former President [Hamid Karzai](#), and a [Taliban](#) delegation held 'fruitful' talks about the adoption of a new constitution, interim government and women rights at a meeting in Moscow.

"We are exchanging our views. So this is the first step which we are taking towards peace and inshallah (God

Taliban: US vowed to pull out half its Afghan troops by April

MOSCOW: The Taliban, which has a delegation in Moscow for talks, said on Wednesday that the United States vowed during recent talks with it to pull out half of its troops from Afghanistan by April, the RIA news agency reported.

The United States held peace talks with the Taliban in Qatar last month that ended with signs of progress towards the withdrawal of thousands of foreign troops from Afghanistan and an end to more than 17 years of war.

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Afghan president offers Taliban local office, but group wants Doha instead

KABUL (Reuters) - Afghan President Ashraf Ghani on Sunday offered the Taliban the possibility of opening an office in Afghanistan but the proposal was swiftly spurned by the group that is determined to keep his government out of accelerating peace talks.

Ghani has expressed alarm at the Taliban shutting his administration out of negotiations with the United States as

willing) in the future we will have more meetings," said the head of the Taliban delegation, Sher Mohammad Abbas Stanekzai.

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Khalilzad travels to Belgium, Germany, Turkey, Qatar, Afghanistan, Pakistan

US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad will lead an interagency delegation to Belgium, Germany, Turkey, Qatar, Afghanistan and Pakistan from February 10-28, the US Department of State said in a statement Sunday.

The trip is part of an overall effort to facilitate a peace process that protects US national security interests and brings all Afghan parties together in an intra-Afghan dialogue through which they can determine a path for their country's future, the statement said.

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Afghan Women Six Point Agenda for Moscow Peace Talks

Afghan women have historically been on the right side of the history. They have consistently sided with democracy and social progress. They have, even when

well as recent Moscow talks with Afghan opposition politicians, and repeated earlier offers to give the group a secure official address to aid any future diplomacy between the two sides.

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President Ghani reacts to Taliban's comment on Afghan constitution

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani on Saturday rejected Taliban's comment on Afghan constitution. Meeting with Afghan politicians in Moscow this week, Taliban delegation chief, Sher Mohammad Abbas Stanikzai, said that the Afghan constitution was imported from the West.

"Those who are not aware of this country threaten that the Afghan constitution is imported. You should prove to them that the Afghan constitution is national and the Afghan people, the young generation of Afghanistan, religious scholars, women are provident," Ghani said.

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اتمر: اشتراک حکومت در نشست بعدی
با طالبان توافق شده است

محمد حنیف اتمر، رهبر تیم انتخاباتی «صلح و اعتدال»، امروز با سفرای اتحادیه‌ی اروپا در افغانستان و همچنان با مقام‌های امریکا در کابل گفتگو کرده و افزوده است که در نشست مسکو، اشتراک نماینده گان

restricted by war and misogyny, taken active part in self-development and the development of the country. They have stood for elections, led ministries, provided bulk of the country's schooling and healthcare, mothered generations well, and they are the ones that have broken taboos through their art and activism – and in doing so they have risked their lives.

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Ghani Suggests 'Grand Consultative Jirga' For Peace

President Ashraf Ghani on Monday called for a grand consultative Jirga, a traditional assembly, on the peace process in the country amid Washington's marathon diplomatic efforts to facilitate direct talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban who has been fighting against Afghan and foreign forces over the past 18 years.

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Abdullah Says Taliban's Efforts Are For 'Concession'

Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah, who is part of the national unity government established after 2014 controversial elections, once again lambasted Taliban for their refusal to talk with the Afghan government, saying that the efforts of the Taliban have been for "concession" not for having "real talks".

حکومت در نشست بعدی با طالبان، نیز توافق شده است.

ابتدا آقای اتمر با جان باس، سفیر ایالات متحد آمریکا در کابل و جنرال سکاٹ میلر، فرمانده عمومی نیروهای آمریکایی در افغانستان، دیدار کرده و در پیوند به نشست بین‌الافغانی مسکو و پیشرفت گفتگوهای انجام شده میان زلمی خلیلزاد، نماینده‌ی ویژه آمریکا در امور صلح و هیات رسمی طالبان، گفتگو کرده است.

[بیشتر بخوانید...](#)

Khalilzad Says Focus On Peace Accord, Not Withdrawal Agreement

US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation, Zalmay Khalilzad, who is on a six-nation trip to discuss the Afghan peace process said Tuesday while meeting with EU and NATO partners in Brussels that their shared purpose is to reach a peace agreement and not a withdrawal agreement.

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Taliban 'not seeking to seize all of Afghanistan'

The leader of the Taliban's peace negotiations with the US says the insurgents do not want to seize "the whole country by [military] power".

"It will not bring peace to Afghanistan," Sher Mohammad Abbas Stanikzai told the BBC.

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Pakistan Will Appreciate Russia Playing a More Active Role in the Region

The meeting between the Taliban and other important groups and leaders from Afghanistan minus the ruling government representation was quite important as it paved the way for negotiations between these opposing groups. Direct dialogue helped to understand each other's viewpoint quite clearly. Although it was the first meeting, exchange of ideas and goodwill it generated at the early stage was quite laudable. The initial breakthrough was made. This means the start of negotiations between Taliban and other political groups, which is in itself very important as it has initiated the process of dialogue amongst Afghans.

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Ghani, Stoltenberg Discuss Afghan Peace

President Ashraf Ghani met NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg on the sidelines of Munich Security Conference and discussed Afghan-led peace process, fight against terrorism and regional countries' role in this regard, the Presidential Palace said in a statement on Saturday.

In this meeting, Stoltenberg said NATO member countries and partners are

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Exclusive: U.S. may trim over 1,000 troops from Afghanistan in belt-tightening - general

MUSCAT/KABUL (Reuters) - Even before any peace push-related drawdowns, the U.S. military is expected to trim troop levels in Afghanistan as part of an efficiency drive by the new commander, a U.S. general told Reuters on Friday, estimating the cuts may exceed 1,000 forces. U.S. President Donald Trump told Congress this month he intended to reduce U.S. forces from Afghanistan as negotiators make progress in talks with Taliban insurgents, saying: "Great nations do not fight endless wars."

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Russian, US envoys to Afghanistan to meet in Turkey on February 22

Special envoys to Afghanistan of Russia and the United States will meet in Turkey's capital Ankara on February 22, Russian media reported Tuesday.

The meeting between Russia's presidential envoy on Afghanistan, Zamir Kabulov, and US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad is

committed to working with Afghanistan, the statement said.

[Read more ...](#)

Miller Praises Pressure On Taliban By Afghan Commandos

Gen. Austin Scott Miller, Commander of US and NATO Forces in Afghanistan, who visited Herat province on Friday, commended the Afghan Special Forces operations against the Taliban and assured that the US and NATO troops will remain a partner of Afghans in war as well as in peace.

Miller said there has been no order on US forces withdrawal from Afghanistan.

[Read more ...](#)

Ghani, Khalilzad Discuss 'Grand Jirga' On Peace

The United States Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad met with President Ashraf Ghani on the sidelines of Munich Security Conference [2019] on Friday where they discussed recent developments on peace in the region as well as the consultative Loya Jirga, a traditional assembly, suggested by the Afghan president at a gathering in Kabul on Feb. 11.

"We discussed next steps on consultative Loya Jirga and the urgent

expected amid stepped up diplomatic efforts for peace in Afghanistan.

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NATO Chief Says Govt Must Play A Role In Peace Process

Wrapping up the two day NATO Defense Ministers meeting in Brussels on Thursday, the alliance's chief Jens Stoltenberg said the organization is in Afghanistan to fight terrorism and to create the conditions for a peace deal.

Stoltenberg said that the alliance went into Afghanistan together with the US and will make decisions going forward together.

[Read more ...](#)

President Ghani And Khalilzad Discuss Peace Process

President Ashraf Ghani and US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad met on Sunday and discussed a range of issues around the peace process, the Presidential Palace said in a statement on Monday.

According to the statement members of the Peace Consultative Board, a negotiating delegation, some politicians, representatives of political parties, a number of scholars, members of civil society, youth, women, representatives

necessity of an intra-Afghan dialogue, as well as key regional developments. We are united in our pursuit of #peace,” Khalilzad tweeted on Feb. 14.

[Read more ...](#)

Khalilzad And Sayyaf Discuss Afghanistan Peace Process

US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad meet with Former Jihadi leader Abdul Rab Rasoul Sayyaf in his residence on Monday.

Productive discussion with Professor Sayyaf this morning (Monday morning), Khalilzad tweeted.

“We agree that a national, inclusive, and unified Afghan negotiating team is urgent and necessary,” Khalilzad said in his twitter.

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Taliban Deputy Chief Arrives in Qatar for Talks With U.S.

KABUL, Afghanistan — The Taliban’s deputy leader, [Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar](#), arrived in Qatar on Sunday, officials said, for what could be the highest-level negotiations yet between the insurgents and American diplomats on ending the long Afghan war.

The next round of talks, scheduled to

of the private sector, MPs, and high-ranking government officials also attended the meeting.

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The Taliban have not changed, warn Afghans living under their rule

Ali Ahmad Alizai has no choice but to obey when the Taliban come knocking on his door demanding food, shelter or a slice of his hard-earned harvest to fund their insurgency.

"The Taliban run a dictatorship here. They have their own laws. We have some security, but no freedom," the farmer told AFP by telephone from a militant-controlled district of Afghanistan's southern Helmand province.

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2019 will be 'decisive' in Afghan settlement: Russia

Russian president's top envoy for Afghan settlement said 2019 will be "decisive" in the peace process. "The peace process is developing rapidly," Zamir Kabulov told an interview with Anadolu Agency, prior to his meeting with U.S. counterpart Zalmay Khalilzad scheduled for Feb.22 in the Turkish Ankara.

begin on Monday in Doha, the Qatari capital, is expected to focus on the details of a framework deal that the two sides [reached in principle last month](#). Under that framework, American troops would withdraw from Afghanistan in return for a Taliban guarantee that Afghan territory would never be used by terrorists.

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Indian violation could affect Afghan peace talks: Qureshi tells Pompeo

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi has said that the Indian misadventure of violating Pakistani airspace could affect the [ongoing Afghan peace process](#).

The foreign minister made the remarks during a telephonic conversation with the US secretary of state on Tuesday.

He apprised his US counterpart about the Indian violation and the sentiments of the Pakistani government, Parliament and the people.

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"This gives us hope that this year we will make good progress in the real restoration of peace in Afghanistan. It will not be easy; there will be ups and downs. It is important for us that the process steadily gets into the mainstream, from which it will be difficult to knock it out," he said.

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US, Taliban Had 'Productive' Meetings In Qatar

The US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad, who sat with Taliban members for the fifth time in Qatar since last September, says the meetings in the last three days with the group's members in Doha were "productive".

When beginning the talks, Khalilzad said that this time he will be talking with a "more authoritative" delegation of the Taliban, pointing at the presence of Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, Taliban's deputy leader and head of the group's Qatar office.

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