



## Organization for Policy Research & Development Studies (DROPS)

# Afghan Peace Talks

April 2019

### DROPS ANALYSIS

#### **Emerging Consensus on Intra-Afghan Talks and Ceasefire; Yet No Concrete Steps Taken**

By Bismillah Alizada, Deputy Director of DROPS

Expectations were high in early April that the talks on the political settlement of Afghanistan's conflict would be taken to another level by an intra-Afghan dialogue that was scheduled for mid-April, and a national consultative peace jirga that was scheduled for late April to facilitate a national consensus on peace talks and negotiation agenda. As April draws to a close, no much of the expectations have come true, for various reasons that will be discussed below. Hence, no major development has occurred in April as to the two major topics of contention between the US and the Taliban: ceasefire and intra-Afghan dialogue. More importantly, the prospects for inclusion of the Afghan state in the talks with the Taliban also remains unclear.

An intra-Afghan dialogue that was [first scheduled to take place in Doha, Qatar on April 14-15](#), but then it was [postponed for April 19-21](#) as per decision of the Reconciliation Leadership Council under President Ghani. The meeting was eventually [cancelled indefinitely](#) by the Qatari government seemingly following an [objection by the Taliban to a list of 250 participants](#) introduced by the Afghan government. Other reasons including [mismanagement](#) and intentional [disruption of the Afghan government](#) were also cited. There seems to be some credence for all

the three reasons put forward as the list was [received with discord](#) both by the Taliban and the Qataris, the issue of mismanagement was seriously raised by Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah, and the accusation of disruption by the Afghan government was [spelled out by Russian officials](#). When placed in the context of the Consultative Loya Jirga that the Afghan government was striving to hold before any intra-Afghan talks with the Taliban, it even makes more sense that the Afghan government may have intentionally disrupted the event. However, it must be noted that the event held a positive potential to facilitate direct talks between the Taliban and the Afghan government as representatives of the Afghan government would, for the first time, participate in such talks (although Taliban had earlier said that they will be [participating in personal capacity](#)).

Notwithstanding the cancellation of Doha Talks, as the intra-Afghan talks was dubbed, the US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad [began his sixth round of multinational trips](#) to US, India, Pakistan, Russia, Qatar and Afghanistan on April 21. His first meeting in London with officials of the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Italy, Norway and the European Union was held on 23 April that culminated into [a joint statement](#) in support of the Afghan peace, placing emphasis on the two major topics of ceasefire and intra-Afghan talks. Khalilzad's next stop was Moscow where he [held a trilateral meeting](#) between US, Russia and China on the Afghan peace on April 25. The [statement released after this trilateral](#) insisted, among others, on a comprehensive ceasefire and intra-Afghan talks. Following the two important meetings, Khalilzad [visited Kabul to brief the Afghan government](#) on the recent developments with regards to the Afghan peace before he departed for another [meeting with Pakistani officials scheduled for April 29-30](#), which drew support from Pakistan of intra-Afghan talks and ceasefire, although the latter was only tacitly stated by the Pakistani officials as "[reduction in violence](#)." On Khalilzad's itinerary is a trip to India, which will take place [in early May](#).

These meetings were of crucial significance as they were aimed at rallying support for the Afghan peace from major global powers including the UK, the EU, Russia and China, as well as from important regional players including Pakistan and India. It is also important to note that, these meetings have had positive outcomes in the form of firm support for the two priorities on the agenda of talks with the Taliban: intra-Afghan talks and a comprehensive ceasefire. These two topics are also top priorities for the Afghan government who has incessantly called for a ceasefire and direct intra-Afghan talks that should include the Afghan state. To create a stronger ground, the Afghan government called for a contentious four-day Consultative Peace Loya Jirga [that was attended by 3200 delegates from across the country](#).

The Jirga, which costed USD 5 million, was seemingly aimed at [determining a framework for, and redlines in, talks with the Taliban](#). However, its legitimacy [was questioned](#) by prominent political figures and critics who dubbed it as "election campaign" by the incumbent president. Former president of Afghanistan, Hamid Karzai, even [called on President Ghani to postpone it](#), warning of its "possible negative impacts on the peace process." There were [allegations of coverage restrictions](#) placed on media. The 23-Article Resolution issued on May 03 at the

conclusion of the Jirga placed heavy emphasis, among other things, on intra-Afghan dialogue, ceasefire, fundamental rights liberties of citizens, the Republic of Afghanistan, and preserving the constitution while allowing for amendment through constitutional means.

Although no major steps have been taken towards an intra-Afghan dialogue and a comprehensive ceasefire, developments in the month of April reveals that now there is consensus on the two topics internationally and nationally. Yet, it should be highlighted that the mechanism for intra-Afghan dialogue remains unclear, the representativeness of the Jirga remains questioned, and the support for displayed by regional and global powers remains merely words.

## **Studies by Afghan/Foreign Think-Tanks and Organizations**

### **Joint Statement on Trilateral Meeting on Afghan Peace Process**

**By the Governments of the United States of America, Russia, and China**

Representatives of US, China and Russia met on April 26, 2019 in Moscow to discuss the Afghan peace talks. Named "The Trilateral Meeting on the Afghan Peace Process", the meeting was aimed at bringing about a consensus amongst the three countries on the issue of talks with the Taliban to end the war in Afghanistan. This was the second trilateral on the US, China and Russia on peace in Afghanistan, and the [first one was held in Washington DC](#), on March 20-21.

To read the full text of the final declaration of the second trilateral meeting, [click here....](#)

### **National Inquiry on Women, Peace and Security**

**By: Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission**

Although women have achieved significant success in Afghanistan with great efforts and numerous sacrifices in various political, social, economic and cultural areas for more than a decade and a half, they still face serious challenges and high levels of vulnerability. Women are the main victims of the armed conflict in Afghanistan, the continuation of the war will lead to continuous human rights violations of all the country's citizens, particularly women.

With regard to the above, the AIHRC has launched a "National Inquiry on Women,

Peace and Security" to assess the negative consequences of the war on women's lives, assess women's access to their human rights, receive views, concerns and demands of women. This national inquiry has begun since the 17th of Dalw 1397 and is still ongoing.

To read the primary findings of the report, [click here...](#)

## **Policy Paper: 'Europe - US' Meeting on Supporting Peace in Afghanistan**

**By Foreign and Commonwealth Office**

Special Envoys of the United Kingdom, United States, Germany, France, Italy, Norway and the European Union met in London on 23 April 2019.

Respectful of the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Afghanistan, participants discussed the Afghan people's desire for a lasting peace. A comprehensive political settlement is the only solution.

To read the full policy paper, [click here...](#)

## **AAN Q&A: Between 'Peace Talks' and Elections – The 2019 Consultative Peace Loya Jirga**

**By Jelena Bjelica and Thomas Ruttig**

The four-day Consultative Peace Loya Jirga will commence on Monday, 29 April 2019. This assembly – the sixth loya jirga since 2001 – was convened by President Ghani with the aim of discussing the framework for negotiations with the Taliban. Originally scheduled to start on 17 March, it had to be delayed for organisational reasons. Like the three most recent of these loya jirgas, it has been labelled as 'consultative', a qualification that changes this institution's constitutional definition as a decision-making body. In this dispatch, AAN's Jelena Bjelica and Thomas Ruttig (with input from the AAN team) provide answers to six basic questions about the loya jirga.

To read the full text, [click here...](#)

## **Preventing Catastrophe in Afghanistan**

Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) Brief written by Daniel F. Runde

This brief presents a summary of key historical events in Afghanistan since 1989 and outlines a possible worst-case scenario following a U.S. and allied withdrawal from the country. The United States, Afghanistan, and its allies must work together in search for greater Afghan self-reliance, security, and stability in order to avoid a catastrophic scenario. Only then will Afghanistan be able to free itself of foreign presences and embark on its own journey to prosperity and self-reliance.

To read the full paper, please [click here...](#)

## **DEBATE: Afghan Women's Role In Peace Process**

By TOLONews

In this program, host Sadaf Amiri discusses the role and influence of Afghan women in Afghanistan's peace process and the concerns about their rights after a peace deal.

Panelists:

1. Habiba Sarabi, deputy head of the High Peace Council
2. Mahbooba Saraj, member of Afghan Women's Network
3. Maryam Sama, a women's rights activist who ran for parliamentary elections
4. Shinkai Karokhail, a women's rights activist who ran for parliamentary elections
5. Horia Musaddiq, a women's rights activist

To watch the full debate, [click here...](#)

## **DEBATE: Afghan Youth's Role In Peace Process**

**By TOLONews**

In this debate, host Yaser Ibrar discusses the role and status of Afghan youth in the peace process, the difference in perception of today's youth, the red lines and the ideology of the Taliban towards young generation of Afghanistan during their time, the protection of the current gains of the society and also the designation of the peace negotiating team which will meet the Taliban in Doha.

Panelists:

1. Nazar Mohammad Motmaen, political analyst
2. Omar Sadr, university lecturer
3. Orzala Ashraf Nemat, women's rights activist
4. Iqbal Khyber, head of People's Peace Movement

To watch the full debate, [click here...](#)

## **Special Interview With NATO Civilian Envoy Nicolas Kay**

**by TOLONews**

In this program, host Shabeer Ahmadi has interviewed NATO Senior Civilian Representative for Afghanistan Nicolas Kay about the Afghan peace process and the importance of intra-Afghan dialogue which is considered as a key to achieving sustainable peace in the country.

To watch to full interview, [click here...](#)

## **Interview: Hekmatyar Discusses Peace Talks, Qatar Meeting**

**By TOLONews**

In this program, host Yaser Abrar interviews Hizb-e-Islami leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar about the peace talks, the upcoming Qatar meeting, Hekmatyar's refusal to attend the meeting of the Reconciliation Leadership Council, the peace Jirga, and the announcement of Taliban's so-called spring offensive.

“Government should not try to form a delegation without any authority or a delegation which is under its dominance,” Hekmatyar said. “And also, no one should lead the council who believes in war.”

To watch to full interview, [click here...](#)

## **Special Interview With US Special Representative Zalmay Khalilzad**

**By Tolonews**

In this program, host Lotfullah Najafizada interviews US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad, who is visiting Kabul for the sixth time since last November on his mission for Afghan peace.

Khalilzad says that the United States is seeking peace and political settlement in Afghanistan and that the withdrawal of foreign forces will be conditions-based. “We are seeking peace and a political settlement, not a withdrawal,” Khalilzad said. “We want a peace which will provide the ground for withdrawal.”

He said that “it is not true that the withdrawal of the foreign forces from Afghanistan will happen ahead of a peace deal”.

To watch the full interview, [click here...](#)

### **OPINION PIECES & COMMENTARIES**

#### **A peace deal that makes a run around women’s rights is no peace at all**

**By Murwarid Ziayee**

For as long as I’ve lived, my country has been at war. Like most Afghans, there is nothing I want more than for peace and security to finally come to Afghanistan. But I am more afraid of the kind of “peace” that was being negotiated recently by the US President’s Special

#### **Will talks with the Taliban bring peace or chaos?**

**By Dawood Azami**

For the first time in 18 years, the US government seems serious about withdrawing its forces from Afghanistan and winding up the longest war in its history.

Since October, US officials and representatives of the Taliban have held

Envoy to Afghanistan, Zalmay Khalilzad and the Taliban in Qatar, than I am of the status quo. These can hardly be called peace talks at all if one considers the kind of peace they will mean for Afghan women. Afghan women like me already know what life awaits in an Afghanistan where the Taliban yield power — or are handed power unilaterally by a US Government in a rush to shake off its association with Afghanistan.

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## **Ashraf Ghani's grand plan for sustainable peace in Afghanistan**

**By Samim Arif**

Peace, once seen as an impossible prospect, has now become part of the national discourse in Afghanistan. Last month, for example, around 3,500 women from all ethnic and linguistic groups in the country issued a joint communique calling for a peace in which Afghan women would not be subjected to the horrors of the Taliban era once again.

The Afghan government is also committed to peace, but just like the women of Afghanistan, it is not ready to settle for any "peace deal". It wants a peace that would reinforce the values of the republic and the fundamental rights and liberties of the Afghan people, not one that would inevitably lead to the

five rounds of direct talks and are about to embark on a sixth - aimed at ensuring a safe exit for the US in return for the insurgents guaranteeing that Afghan territory is not used by foreign militants and wouldn't pose a security threat to the rest of the world.

A US-led military coalition overthrew the Taliban in 2001 for sheltering al-Qaeda, the militant group that Washington blamed for the 9/11 attacks.

[Read more...](#)

## **Why Is Zalmay Khalilzad Such a Controversial Figure in Afghanistan?**

**By Sayed Ziafatullah Saedi**

When the name Zalmay Khalilzad appeared on the news as a potential nominee for President Trump's Afghan peace initiative, different reactions surfaced. Some non-Afghan commentators, though not all, welcomed his appointment given his impressive background. Yet, inside Afghanistan, Khalilzad's appointment was not much welcomed. Indeed, a group of Afghan political activists set up a petition to urge the U.S. government to reconsider their decision given Khalilzad's "ethnonationalism motivated" prior conduct in Afghanistan, as the petition put it.

Khalilzad is widely acknowledged in the West for his exceptional diplomatic talent. Yet, this is not how he is received



collapse of the state and reversal of the gains of the past 18 years.

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## **US-Led Afghan Peace Effort Gains Momentum**

**By Ayaz Gul**

ISLAMABAD — Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani has established a new leadership council comprising government officials, opposition politicians and civil society representatives that will manage national peace efforts and put together an "effective" team of negotiators for possible talks with the Taliban insurgency.

Addressing the inaugural meeting of what is named the "Leadership Council for Reconciliation" on Sunday, Ghani said he hopes the effort under the government "umbrella" would lead to ending the bloodshed in Afghanistan.

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## **The Afghan Government Can't Make Peace With the Taliban on Its Own**

**By Hekmat Khalil Karzai**

For most Afghans, the day when their country is free of any foreign troops will be a day to celebrate. More important is winning a dignified peace. The two aims

in his birthplace...

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## **Why the Taliban Should Read the Afghan Constitution**

**By Ghizaal Haress**

During the February meeting in Moscow, Taliban representative Sher Mohammad Abbas Stanikzai highlighted the constitution of Afghanistan as a major impediment to peace. He labelled it "the constitution of the Kabul Administration" and dismissed it as invalid, copied from the West, imposed on a Muslim society, and arbitrarily implemented. According to the Taliban, for the constitution to be acceptable to them it must be based on Islamic principles, national interests and historical achievements. It must also ensure human dignity, national values, social justice and human rights, as well as guaranteeing ...

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## **Why the Taliban Are in Control of the Afghan Peace Process**

**By Umair Jamal**

U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan Zalmay Khalilzad visited Kabul and Islamabad last week. The visit came as the United States prepares for another round of talks with

are intricately linked, and their realization seems closer than it has been for years. The U.S. government's announced intention to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan, and hold direct talks with the Taliban, has created significant momentum. Meanwhile, an intra-Afghan dialogue has started between a number of Afghan politicians and the Taliban. The two tracks, U.S.-Taliban and Afghan-Afghan, complement one another. However, neither can truly succeed ....

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سه مانع عمده صلح و مذاکره با طالبان:  
پاکستان، هندوستان و اشرف غنی

سنجر سهیل

چندی پیش در جریان سفری از روی تصادف با یکی از مقام‌های ارشد سازمان ملل متحد در هواپیما همراه شدم. او قرار بود به دوحه، پایتخت قطر، برود تا بتواند گفت‌وگوها میان امریکا و طالبان را از نزدیک نظارت کند. در جریان صحبت با او در رابطه به گفت‌وگوهای صلح میان امریکا و طالبان در قطر، بحث ما به این‌جا رسید که موانع عمده صلح در افغانستان کی‌ها و چی‌ها هستند. ما دیدگاه‌های متفاوتی داشتیم، اما به چند نکته توافق داشتیم؛ این‌که در حال حاضر، روند صلح افغانستان با سه مانع عمده مواجه است: پاکستان، هندوستان و اشرف غنی.

این مقام ارشد سازمان ملل یک امریکایی است که از سال‌ها پیش به این سو در افغانستان فعال است. او پیش از کار با سازمان ملل متحد، در امریکا نیز مصروف فعالیت‌های مرتبط به افغانستان در یکی از سازمان‌های معتبر این کشور بوده است. من در این‌جا نمی‌خواهم هویت او را افشا کنم، چون نه خودش این را می‌خواهد و نه این کار به مصلحت روند جاری گفت‌وگوهای صلح

the Taliban later this month in Qatar, Doha.

In Kabul, Khalilzad advised the Afghan leadership to work on Intra-Afghan dialogue if Afghanistan wants to have a peaceful and inclusive future. "We discussed how the international community can best support them [the Afghan government] in an Afghan-led, Afghan-owned peace process," said Khalilzad while referring to his engagements in Afghanistan.

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عمق خون‌بار یک استراتژی؛ انگیزه‌های  
حمایت پاکستان از طالبان چیست؟

یاسین احمدی

پاکستان کشوری‌ست که از بدو جدایی از هند درگیر منازعات حاد مسلحانه به‌خاطر سرزمین و محدوده‌های جغرافیایی بوده است. در چنین شرایط بدیهی است که ارتش به عنوان بازوی اصلی نظام، اختیار گفتن حرف اول و آخر را در این کشور داشته است. پیامدهای این وضعیت چه در داخل و چه در خارج گونه‌ای مفرطی از نظامی‌گری‌ست که از گذشته‌های دور در این منطقه شاهد آن بوده‌ایم. در واقع ارتش، نیروهای اسلام‌گرا و احزاب سیاسی، سه بازیگر اصلی صحنه‌ی سیاست پاکستان به شمار می‌روند و در این میان فرمانده ارتش، رییس‌جمهوری و نخست‌وزیر از استوانه‌های تعیین‌کننده‌ی قدرت در پاکستان بوده‌اند.

این مقاله در ده بخش نوشته شده است:

برای خواندن بخش اول مقاله [اینجا کلیک کنید...](#)

برای خواندن بخش دوم مقاله [اینجا کلیک کنید...](#)

برای خواندن بخش سوم مقاله [اینجا کلیک کنید...](#)

برای خواندن بخش چهارم مقاله [اینجا کلیک کنید...](#)

برای خواندن بخش پنجم مقاله [اینجا کلیک کنید...](#)

برای خواندن بخش ششم مقاله [اینجا کلیک کنید...](#)

میان امریکا و طالبان و نیز روند صلح در افغانستان است.

برای خواندن مقاله، [اینجا کلیک کنید...](#)

برای خواندن بخش هفتم مقاله [اینجا کلیک کنید...](#)

برای خواندن بخش هشتم مقاله [اینجا کلیک کنید...](#)

برای خواندن بخش نهم مقاله [اینجا کلیک کنید...](#)

برای خواندن بخش دهم مقاله [اینجا کلیک کنید...](#)

## The real reasons why Afghanistan might see chaos

By Salman Rafi Sheikh

While there have been too many reports in the mainstream western media about possible “chaos” in Afghanistan following a deal between the US and the Taliban and the latter’s return to institutional politics from the battlefield, these reports have paid too much and rather un-necessary attention to how a Taliban return to politics would undo the so-called “democratic gains” Afghanistan has supposedly made during the US military’s 17 years long stay in Afghanistan.

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## Angelina Jolie: Why Women Are the Key to Lasting Peace in Afghanistan

By Angelina Jolie

When the Taliban seized power in 1996, it waged a war against Afghan women. Girls’ education was banned. Women were confined to the home and denied the right to work. They were flogged, beaten, mutilated and stoned to death

## جنگ غنی و خلیلزاد و ترس یک جامعه هولناک

عباس فراسو

پروسه صلح با طالبان با وجودی که امیدواری‌هایی برای ختم جنگ ایجاد کرده است، اما در عین زمان نگرانی‌های مشروعی را برانگیخته است. از یک طرف شکست پروسه صلح و سقوط دولت نگرانی‌های عمیقی را در خصوص تداوم و فراگیر شدن جنگ به میان آورده و از طرف دیگر این سوال مطرح است که افغانستان پس از «توافق صلح» چه جامعه‌ای خواهد داشت. آیا در آن درد، رنج و الم انسان کاهش خواهد یافت؟ آیا افغانستان به سوی یک جامعه صلح‌آمیز می‌رود که در آن صلح به معنای مثبت (صلحی فراتر از غیبت جنگ) برقرار شود؟ یا برعکس، به سوی یک جامعه هولناک خواهد رفت که در آن ممکن جنگ نباشد (حتا ممکن باشد) اما در اصل یک شکنجه‌گاه بزرگ و یک سرای درد و فقر و دهشت باشد؟

برای خواندن مقاله [اینجا کلیک کنید...](#)

## Ex-ambassador: Don't leave Afghanistan without a deal built on national unification

By Richard Olson

When I led the U.S. team trying to bring peace to Afghanistan, we coined a term — “dirty reconciliation” — for the United States making a deal with the Taliban that protected our minimal security interests, while abandoning both the

for supposed immorality. This is not ancient history. These are living memories for millions of Afghans. And they have become present concerns, as U.S. government representatives negotiate with the Taliban about a settlement that could see it return to a position of power and influence in Afghanistan.

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### **Imran Khan said Pakistan doesn't have use for militant groups. Take it with pinch of salt**

**By Husain Haqqani**

Prime Minister Imran Khan's statement that Pakistan does not have use for militant Jihadi groups anymore comes at a time when Pakistan faces blacklisting by the international terrorist-financing watchdog, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and must be taken with a pinch of salt.

If his comments in a New York Times interview have the blessing of Pakistan's all-powerful military, they cannot be trusted any more than the previously broken promises on the subject. If, however, Khan said what he said without clearing it with army chief General Qamar Bajwa first, Pakistan's politics is about to take another interesting turn.

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Afghan government and any attempt to preserve the gains made in Afghan society since 2001. The idea was purely a scenario to be avoided, not an actual strategy. But the possibility of such a deal now seems more likely.

In order to avoid a dirty deal, the United States needs to signal clearly that ...

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### **The 'constitutional puzzle' of Afghan peace process**

**By Salman Rafi Sheikh**

The US president Donald Trump recently said in a joint press conference with NATO Secretary that significant "strides" have been made towards peace in Afghanistan. Indeed, in a major development, the Taliban have agreed to 'see' Kabul officials in the next round of talks in Doha. Although these officials will only come in their personal capacity, there is little gainsaying that this could turn into a first proper step towards a truly 'intra-Afghan' dialogue.

This development has come at a time when a draft withdrawal deal has already been agreed between the US and the Taliban, ensuring a phased-withdrawal of the US forces from Afghanistan in lieu of a Taliban guarantee that Afghan soil will not ...

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## **US-Taliban negotiations: marginalising women is no path to peace**

**By Nargis Azaryun and Susan Hutchinson**

There are major problems with the current negotiations over Afghanistan, underway since last year between the United States with the Taliban in an attempt to find a peaceful solution to the long-running war so that US troops can be withdrawn.

US President Donald Trump appointed Afghan-born Zalmay Khalilzad as chief negotiator. Yet three main issues confound Khalilzad's approach: the negotiations undermine hard-won democracy in Afghanistan, women have been entirely excluded from the process, and the talks risk all the progress that has been made over the past 17 years.

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## **Can an Interim Government Provide a Peaceful Solution to the War in Afghanistan?**

**By Mohammad Shoaib Haidary**

It is important that any peace deal should further legitimize the current state, strengthen the post-2001 democratization process and include all the parties involved in the conflict.

## **'We Won't Be Silenced,' Afghan Female Musicians Tell Taliban**

**By Eltaf Najafizada**

Fresh from a sold-out concert tour of the U.K. and Sweden, Afghanistan's first female conductor is convinced music can help deliver peace to her war-torn country. If only the Taliban would listen.

At just 22, Negin Khpelwak has already stared down threats and intimidation from her conservative relatives, who wished she would take on any career but music. Now, like many of her fellow citizens, she is watching peace talks between the U.S. and the Taliban with growing alarm.

"We can bring freedom, peace and honor to Afghanistan," said Khpelwak, who leads the country's the first all-female Zohra Orchestra who've played classical Western and Afghan music at the World Economic Forum ..."

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## **The State of Play in U.S.-Taliban Talks and the Afghan Peace Process**

**By Johnny Walsh**

The latest round of U.S.-Taliban talks concluded on March 12, with both sides noting progress but conceding that no breakthroughs had been made. After two weeks of discussions in Doha,

With the US stating its intention to withdraw troops from Afghanistan, the doors have opened for political settlement to end more than 17 years of war. Prominent Afghan political leaders, a document by the RAND Corporation and the US peace envoy all call for an interim government as a political settlement to end the conflict. With an interim government now a possible solution, what are the preconditions...

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### **Women and Afghan Peace Talks: ‘Peace consensus’ gathering left Afghan women without reassurance**

**By Thomas Ruttig**

Around 3,000 women came together after months of preparations for the National Women’s Consensus for Peace (Ejma-ye Melli-ye Zanan bara-ye Solh, or ejma for short) held in Kabul’s Loya Jirga tenton 28 February. 700 of them – according to President Ashraf Ghani (the original text of his speech alternating between Pashto and Dari can be found here) – attended from the provinces. (1) The event was a response to widespread demands – from within government and outside – for “meaningful participation” of women in the hoped-for peace talks with the Taleban...

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Qatar, American officials said they were close to reaching a final agreement on a potential U.S. troop withdrawal and a Taliban pledge to no longer allow terrorist attacks from Afghanistan. But how far can these talks go without the Afghan government involved? Is Afghanistan’s post-2001 progress in jeopardy? And what do regional actors think about the talks? USIP’s Johnny Walsh examines the state of play in the Afghan peace process.

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### **An Afghan Peace on Whose Terms?**

**By Marvin G. Weinbaum and Samad Sadri**

Remaining hopes for intra-Afghan talks and the success of a U.S.-Taliban meeting scheduled later this month in Qatar are both predicated on a belief in a changed Taliban. The group is thought to have evolved from the puritanical totalitarian regime of two decades ago into a more pragmatic, less dogmatic movement. Supposedly, the chastised Taliban have learned that today’s Afghanistan requires them to become more inclusive and tolerant, especially in their treatment of women. The Taliban are also depicted as no longer insistent on monopolizing power.

This picture is essentially false, ...

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## NEWS

### **US peace envoy Khalilzad visits Kabul, discusses intra-Afghan talks**

US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad arrived in Kabul and met with government officials on Monday.

During the visit, Khalilzad met with President Ashraf Ghani's Chief of Staff Abdul Salam Rahimi and his special envoy Umer Daudzai, Khalilzad said on Twitter.

"We discussed the urgency of making progress on intra-Afghan dialogue," Khalilzad said.

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### **Women Must Be At The Table In All Negotiations: Khalilzad**

The US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad, who arrived in Kabul on Sunday evening, held meetings with Afghan officials and members of the civil society on Monday and discussed the ongoing efforts for peace and the urgency of making progress in intra-Afghan talks.

His first meeting was with President Ghani's Special Envoy Umer Daudzai and Ghani's Chief of Staff Abdul Salam Rahimi. "We discussed the urgency of

### **US envoy hopes for Afghan peace deal before September presidential election**

The US special envoy to Afghanistan hopes for a peace agreement between the Afghan government and the Taliban before presidential election which is scheduled for September 28.

Zalmay Khalilzad, who has held several rounds of talks with the Taliban, said that considering delaying the upcoming vote for two times, there is a chance that the Taliban and non-Taliban sides reach peace agreement before the event. He also said that preparations should be taken for the vote.

[Read more...](#)

### **Govt Will Invite Taliban To Attend Peace Jirga: Daudzai**

The Afghan government will officially invite the Taliban to attend the Grand Consultative Jirga on Peace which is scheduled for April 29, President Ghani's Special Envoy and head of the High Peace Council's Secretariat, Umer Daudzai, said on Tuesday.

At last 2,500 delegates are expected to attend the assembly from around the country where they will determine the path towards peace.

Daudzai said the Jirga will become a

making progress on intra-Afghan dialogue," he said.

[Read more...](#)

## **Afghans Will Set Limits For Talks: Ghani**

President Ashraf Ghani in meeting with civil society members and journalists at the Presidential Palace on Tuesday evening warned that pressure on government to act "illegally" regarding peace is not acceptable.

Ghani said peace has conditions and that Afghans will set the limits for talks.

"The peace talks are without conditions but peace has conditions and the Afghan nation will set the limits for the talks. It will not be acceptable for us if there is pressure on us to act illegally," Ghani said.

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## **Peace Will Not Mean 'Talibanization' Of Afghanistan: Abdullah**

Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah on Wednesday said that peace with the Taliban will not mean the "Talibanization" of Afghanistan or underestimating the rights of the Afghan people.

Abdullah said that peace with the

joint and national gathering if the Taliban attends it.

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## **Positive Things Happening in Afghanistan: Trump**

US President Donald Trump says that the Afghan war has been an "endless war" but pointing to the Afghan peace talks emphasized that lots of positive things are happening in Afghanistan.

Meeting with the NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg at Whitehouse on Tuesday, Trump labeled the war in Afghanistan "ridiculous and unfortunate" adding that 19 years have passed since the war began.

Trump said the US and its NATO allies have made great strides in Afghanistan and are working to end the long-lasting war.

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## **Will strongly defend every inch of Afghanistan until peace: Ghani**

Afghan forces will strongly defend every inch of homeland until peace, President Ashraf Ghani said on Tuesday.

Addressing civil society activists and media representatives in the presidential palace, Ghani said that peace talks should be conducted with



Taliban somehow should be ...

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## **US needs to consult with Afghanistan and its neighbours on withdrawal: China**

The United States needs to consult with Afghanistan and its neighbours on withdrawal from the country, China's ambassador has said.

Speaking in an exclusive interview with 1TV, Liu Jinsong said that China hopes that the US withdraws from Afghanistan in a gradual, orderly and responsible manner.

[Read more...](#)

## **Peace Jirga Not Discussed In Meeting With US Envoy**

Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah said the peace Jirga was not discussed in Afghan leaders' meeting with US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad.

The High Peace Council says that the structure of the peace Jirga's organizing committee has been finalized.

Almost 2,500 delegates from all over the country will be invited to attend the Jirga, the grand assembly, which officials say will help Afghans to determine the path toward peace.

careful deliberation.

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## **NATO Allies Want Peaceful Solution In Afghanistan: Stoltenberg**

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg who addressed a press conference ahead of the NATO Foreign Ministers' meeting in Washington D.C. on Thursday said the alliance wants a peaceful solution to the Afghan conflict and that they strongly support the efforts that would end to such a solution.

[Read more...](#)

## **Afghanistan's inclusive team for talks with Taliban to be formed next week**

Afghanistan's inclusive team to negotiate peace with the Taliban will be formed next week, sources told 1TV on Thursday.

In November last year, President Ashraf Ghani formed a 12-strong team for talks with the Taliban, but the group, who has met with Afghan opposition politicians, refused to negotiate with the team.

Government sources said that the new team will involve representatives of political movements, civil society and women.

[Read more...](#)

## **Islamabad ‘Must’ Change Its Policy Towards Kabul: Khalilzad**

The US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad on Thursday warned Pakistan to change its policy towards Afghanistan; otherwise, “Islamabad and Washington’s ties will not improve”.

Khalilzad made the remarks while talking to a number of youths from Bamiyan, Jawzjan and Parwan provinces in a video conference.

[Read more...](#)

## **Qureshi Vows Support To Afghan Peace As He Meets US Envoy**

US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad, who is in Islamabad as part of his multi-nation trip on Afghan peace, met with Pakistan’s Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi on Friday.

Pakistan’s Foreign Ministry says in a statement that Ambassador Khalilzad briefed the Foreign Minister on the outcome of Doha talks and his recent engagements in the region, Pakistan’s Foreign Ministry and that he also shared updates on his meetings...

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## **‘Collective Sacrifices’ Will Be Honored In Afghan Peace: Pompeo**

The US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, who addressed the NATO’s Foreign Ministers meeting in Washington D.C., said that in the Afghan peace talks they will make sure that the United States will never be threatened from Afghanistan’s soil and the sacrifices of the past 18 years are not “wasted”.

[Read more...](#)

## **Peace Jirga Will Cost Nearly \$5 Million: Finance Ministry**

As the High Peace Council gets closer to hosting one of the biggest national gatherings on peace called the Consultative Jirga scheduled for later this month, the Ministry of Finance confirmed that the event will cost Afs369 million – almost \$5 million.

At least 2,500 delegates from around the country, 30 percent of them women, will attend the Jirga to determine the right way towards the peace process as well as the red lines for talks with the Taliban, according to the High Peace Council.

[Read more...](#)

## **Khalilzad ‘Appreciates’ Pakistan’s Efforts For Afghan Peace**

The US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad held talks with Pakistan’s Chief of Army Staff Gen. Qamar Javed Bajwa on Friday and discussed issues around regional security and the ongoing peace efforts in Afghanistan, Pakistani media reported.

“During the meeting overall regional security situation with particular reference to ongoing Afghan reconciliation process were discussed. The visiting dignitary appreciated Pakistan’s efforts towards peace process, ...

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## **Pakistan PM warns of consequences if Afghanistan doesn't form interim government**

Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan on Friday repeated his call for interim government in Afghanistan, as he warned of rejection of election results and anarchy without it.

Khan made the comments less than two weeks after he said that Kabul should set up an interim government to help smooth peace talks with the Taliban.

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## **Govt Seeks Political Consensus On Peace Jirga**

President Ghani’s Special Envoy Umer Daudzai, who also heads the committee assigned for holding the Grand Consultative Jirga on Peace, at a press conference on Saturday briefed media on developments in preparations to hold the event on April 29.

Daudzai said delegates from all districts, even districts under Taliban influence, will be invited to attend the Jirga – which is an assembly of almost 2,500 delegates, 30 percent of the women, from across the country who will decide on the future path towards peace as well as the red lines in the talks with the Taliban.

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## **US Eyes Reducing Diplomatic Staff In Afghanistan: Report**

US officials have said that Washington is considering reducing its diplomatic footprint in Afghanistan as part of a broader effort to extricate the United States from its costly and deadly 18-year conflict, Foreign Policy reported on April 5.

The State Department is preparing to cut by half the number of US diplomats posted in Kabul in 2020, according to

Afghanistan recalled its ambassador in protest at what it described as “irresponsible” remarks.

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## **Khalilzad To Meet Afghan Leaders As He Wraps Up Islamabad Visit**

US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad wrapped up his two-day visit to Islamabad where he held meetings with Pakistani officials to discuss issues around the Afghan peace process and Pakistan’s role in this regard.

Khalilzad said in a tweet on Saturday evening that during his Islamabad visit, he thanked Pakistan for recent efforts supporting the Afghan peace ...

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## **Afghanistan forms leadership council for reconciliation**

Afghanistan has established a leadership council, involving also politicians outside the government, to discuss reconciliation with the Taliban.

President Ashraf Ghani chaired the first meeting of the council in the presidential palace on Sunday, which was attended also by his predecessor Hamid Karzai, speakers of Lower House and Upper House, and representatives of other layers of society.

three US officials familiar with internal deliberations as quoted by Foreign Policy.

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## **Uzbekistan Offers Samarkand as a Venue for Afghan Peace Talks**

Uzbekistan continues to quietly position itself as a partner in the peace process between the Afghan government and the Taliban. While the movements of Zalmay Khalilzad, the U.S. envoy heading negotiations with the Taliban for the Americans, are closely tracked by international media, the parallel movements of Uzbek diplomats, namely Foreign Minister Abdulaziz Kamilov, are less high profile, but nevertheless may prove just as important.

[Read more...](#)

## **US Envoy Leaves Kabul After 'Productive' Talks With Ghani**

The US Embassy in Kabul said in a statement that the US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad departed Kabul Sunday evening following productive talks with President Ghani on accelerating a settlement process, reducing violence across Afghanistan, and supporting Afghan security forces if violence continues.

“He discussed with President Ghani ...

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## **Taliban willing to meet Afghan government representatives in Qatar**

Taliban are willing to meet Afghan government representatives in an intra-Afghan dialogue expected to be held next week in Qatar, a Pakistani newspaper reported on Monday.

A senior Qatari anti-terrorism official, who is the main character behind his country's involvement in the Afghan talks, informed President Ashraf Ghani about Taliban's willingness during his recent visit to Kabul, Daily Times reported citing a diplomatic source.

[Read more...](#)

## **Kandaharis Push For Ceasefire As Hopes Rise On Peace**

Kandahar civil society activists, tribal elders, youths and religious scholars at a ceremony on Monday said they see a ceasefire and direct talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban as key factors to move forward the ongoing efforts for peace in Afghanistan.

They said they want a prominent role for religious scholars in the peace process which has seen some developments in the recent months.

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## **Taliban Should Not Insist On Islamic Emirate's Return: Ex-Member**

As the debates on peace and a future system in Afghanistan increases among Afghans around the country, a former Taliban member of the Taliban, Sayed Akbar Agha, said that the group "should not" insist on the reestablishment of an Islamic emirate system in the country as part of the peace process and that instead they should enter direct talks with the Afghan government.

Speaking at a gathering in Gardez city, the center of Paktia province ...

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## **Kabul backs EU offer to act as guarantor in peace process**

Afghan government in a statement on Tuesday backed the European Union's offer to act as a guarantor in peace process.

The statement said that EU has had successful experiences in acting as guarantor of peace agreements in various countries.

The statement welcomed also EU's offer to help make the peace ...

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## **EU calls for Kabul-Taliban talks to begin as soon as possible**

EU foreign ministers on Tuesday called for talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban to begin as soon as possible, as they met in Luxembourg on Monday.

In the conclusions adopted by its council, the EU said that it encourages the Afghan government of Afghanistan and the Taliban to intensify their efforts towards a peaceful and negotiated settlement of the conflict.

[Read more...](#)

## **Afghanistan says talks with Taliban in Qatar will be held between 19-21 April**

Afghan government said on Wednesday that the talks with the Taliban in Qatar will be held between 19 and 21 April.

Fraidoon Khwazoon, deputy spokesman for Afghan Chief Executive, revealed the dates following the second meeting of Leadership Council for Reconciliation that was chaired by President...

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## **Peace Talks Aim To Move Afghanistan Forward: Pompeo**

The US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo says that the Afghan peace talks are aimed at moving Afghanistan

## **Reconciliation Council Set To Finalize Qatar Meeting Delegation**

The newly-established Reconciliation Leadership Council with an initial 37 members is expected to hold its second meeting on Wednesday to decide on major issues around peace, including naming a delegation to attend the Qatar meeting.

The first meeting of the council was held on Saturday, April 6, where the delegates discussed red lines ...

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## **Afghan government will be at the center of any peace deal with Taliban: Pompeo**

Afghan government will be at the center of any peace deal with the Taliban, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Tuesday.

Pompeo said this after being asked by US Senator Linsey Graham if the Afghan government will be a meaningful participant in any peace deal.

[Read more...](#)

## **Reconciliation Council Convenes Working Groups Meeting**

Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah on Thursday presided over the meeting of

forward adding that Washington does not want Afghanistan to move back.

Speaking before the US Senate's Foreign Relations Committee, Pompeo said Washington is trying to end the endless Afghan war through talks and in these talks, the achievements, especially women rights, will be preserved.

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### **UN Allows Senior Taliban Leaders to Travel for Peace Talks**

ISLAMABAD — The United Nations recently granted a waiver to senior Taliban leaders, allowing them to travel and take part in peace talks with the United States to end the 18-year-old war in Afghanistan.

The U.N. Security Council sanctions committee that deals with the Taliban says the nine-month exemption period beginning on April 1 is meant to allow the men to participate in ...

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### **Khalilzad, Uzbekistan Leaders Discuss Afghan Peace Process**

The U.S. Special Envoy for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad held talks with the Uzbekistan President Shavkat Mirziyoyev and Foreign Minister Abdulaziz Kalimov in Tashkent,

working groups of the newly established Reconciliation Leadership Council at the Sapidar Palace where views were exchanged on some fundamental issues pertaining the authority of the council including the finalization of the government's peace negotiating delegation with the Taliban, the Qatar delegation and the inclusion of some other delegates in the structure ...

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### **Women's Rights Our Red Line In Peace Process: Ghani**

President Ashraf Ghani, who met a group of women in Faryab province on Thursday, said that women's rights remain the Afghan government's red line in the peace process – which has seen some developments in recent months following efforts by the Afghan government and its international allies.

The inclusion of women in the peace process and defending from their rights in future talks with the Taliban has been a much-debated topic in recent days.

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### **Khalilzad Praises Uzbekistan's Offer To Host Intra-Afghan Talks**

Four days after leaving Kabul, US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad held talks with Uzbekistan President Shavkat

the capital of Uzbekistan and discussed the Afghan peace process.

“We discussed critical role region plays in achieving and sustaining peace, and in accelerated regional integration afterwards,” Khalilzad said in a tweet on Friday.

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## **Women’s Rights Our Red Line In Peace Process: Ghani**

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The inclusion of women in the peace process and defending from their rights in future talks with the Taliban has been a much-debated topic in recent days.

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## **Taliban’s Offensive Announcement ‘Reckless’: Khalilzad**

Hours after the Taliban announced their so-called spring offensive, the US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation, Zalmay Khalilzad, who

Mirziyoyev and the Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan Abdulaziz Kalimov and discussed the Afghan peace process.

“We discussed critical role region plays in achieving and sustaining peace, and in accelerated regional integration afterwards,” Khalilzad said in a tweet on Friday.

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## **Taliban Unleashes Afghan Spring Offensive Despite US Push for Peace**

The Taliban announced Friday its annual spring offensive in Afghanistan amid a U.S.-led push for a negotiated settlement to the 18-year-old war with the Islamist insurgency.

The offensive dubbed “Al-Fath,” which means “victory” in Arabic, commenced throughout the country early Friday morning with an objective to establish an “Islamic system” in an Afghanistan “cleansed from American occupation,” said a Taliban statement.

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## **Critics Brand Peace Jirga An Election Campaign**

Representatives of some political parties and movements on Sunday branded the government’s proposed Consultative Grand Jirga on Peace a “politically-motivated” as the country



has held five rounds of talks with Taliban members, said the announcement is “reckless” and is “indifference” to the demands of Afghans for peace.

“It is irresponsible to suggest that an increase in violence is warranted ...

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### **Taliban Offensive Announcement ‘Illegitimate’: ARG**

The Presidential Palace, also known as ARG, in a statement on Saturday condemned the Taliban’s announcement of the so-called spring offense and said it is an evident sign of the will of the group to continue the “illegitimate” war in Afghanistan.

The statement says that the announcement comes amid “thorough” efforts by the Afghan government to end the “imposed” war in Afghanistan and amid the ongoing talks between a delegation of the group and the United States.

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### **Disabled Soldiers Want A Role In The Peace Process**

While the peace process enters a new stage, some soldiers with disabilities and families of fallen troops called on the Afghan government and the

prepares for the presidential elections scheduled for late September.

Fawzia Kofi, member of Mohammad Hanif Atmar-led Peace and Moderation election ticket, described the allocation of \$5 million budget for the Jirga as the “misuse” of the national budget.

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### **Reconciliation Council Yet To Form Qatar Delegation**

The newly-established Reconciliation Leadership Council so far has not announced a final decision on the delegation which will attend the Qatar meeting on April 19 while the council announced on Wednesday that the Qatar delegation and the government’s negotiating team will be finalized on Saturday.

The council’s third meeting which was expected to be held on Saturday was postponed.

Sources said the meeting was delayed due to “disagreements” ...

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### **Khalilzad Pushes For Ceasefire As Peace Efforts Continue**

The US Special Envoy Zalmay Khalilzad, who has held find rounds of talks with the Taliban on Afghan peace, says that agreeing on a ceasefire is the

international community to provide them the opportunity to be part of the upcoming consultative Loya Jirga on peace and in the structure of the Reconciliation Leadership Council, which has been formed to create a unified stance on peace.

[Read more...](#)

## **Jirga Preparations On Track Amid Waves Of Oppositions**

Despite opposition by some of Afghanistan's mainstream political parties and six presidential candidates, officials from the High Peace Council on Tuesday said that preparations for the Grand Consultative On Peace are underway and that at least 15,00 delegations been finalized so far.

The Jirga is scheduled for April 29, where almost 2,500 delegates will attend to decide on the future of the peace talks in Afghanistan.

[Read more...](#)

## **Afghanistan names 250-member delegation for talks with Taliban in Qatar**

Afghan government on Tuesday named a 250-member delegation for peace talks with the Taliban in Qatar this week.

The delegation includes representatives of political parties, political figures,

“quickest” way to prevent casualties and that he will continue to push Taliban senior representative to allow their representatives to come to the table of negotiations to discuss this matter.

“The quickest way to prevent ...

[Read more...](#)

## **Afghanistan to send 150 delegates to talks with Taliban in Qatar: report**

The delegation includes ministers, provincial governors and political leaders, the BBC reported citing an unidentified government source. 40 members of the delegation are women, it said.

A source told 1TV that more than 90 politicians will independently travel to Qatar under the leadership of former president Hamid Karzai.

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## **Qatar event won't be 'wedding party', Taliban says criticizing Afghan delegation's strength**

Taliban in a statement on Wednesday criticized strength of delegation from Afghanistan for peace talks in Qatar, saying the event will be a conference not a wedding party or a reception.

Afghan government on Tuesday named

Jihadi leaders, martyrs' families, High Peace Council, religious clerics, parliament, civil society, women, youths, journalists, government officials ...

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## **List Of Qatar Delegation 'Not All-Inclusive': Say Critics**

Hours after the Afghan government announced a "finalized" list of Qatar delegation, some critics said the 250-member list requires to be inclusive and that it should represent people from all over the country.

The list shows that 90 delegates have introduced by political parties and movements and 150 others have been introduced by government.

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## **Political Leaders Hope Qatar Meeting Will Lead To Peace**

As a scheduled meeting between Afghan politicians and the Taliban in Doha, Qatar, inches closer, some of Afghanistan's influential politicians and former Jihadi leaders on Wednesday expressed their hope that the upcoming intra-Afghan meeting will help to restore lasting peace in the country.

Among those expressing their hopes over a positive outcome of Qatar talks were former Jihadi leader Abdul Rab Rasul Sayyaf, former President ...

a 250-member delegation for talks with the Taliban, which are scheduled to begin on Friday in Qatar capital Doha.

[Read more...](#)

## **Taliban Has No Way Except Talks With Afghan Govt: Ghani**

President Ashraf Ghani on Wednesday met with members of the delegation who will hold a meeting with the Taliban in Qatar on April 20.

He said the Afghan delegation which is preparing to hold discussion with the Taliban in Doha are carrying an important mission which is a dignified peace within the framework of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

[Read more...](#)

## **Afghan Delegation's Trip To Doha Postponed**

The Afghan delegation's trip to Doha, Qatar, for talks with the Taliban was delayed for issues around the 250-member team's formation, sources confirmed.

The delegation was expected to leave Kabul for Doha on Thursday.

This comes a day after, President Ashraf Ghani met with members of the delegation who will hold a meeting with the Taliban in Qatar on April 20.

[Read more...](#)

## **Atmar boycotts peace Loya Jirga, calls it election campaign**

Mohammad Haneef Atmar, former national security adviser to President Ashraf Ghani and a leading electoral rival, has boycotted consultative Loya Jirga on peace expected to be held later this month.

The announcement comes a day after the government chief executive, ...

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## **Former top US general skeptical about Taliban peace talks**

A former top US general has expressed skepticism over peace talks with the Taliban, as he said that the Afghan government is missing from the process.

US special envoy Zalmay Khalilzad has held multiple rounds of peace talks with the Taliban in recent months, but ...

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## **EU opposes idea of forming interim government in Afghanistan**

The European Union on Thursday expressed its opposition to the idea of forming interim government in

[Read more...](#)

## **Afghan peace talks in Qatar delayed due to disagreement over participants**

Afghans' peace talks with the Taliban, scheduled to begin on Friday in Qatar, have been delayed due to disagreement over participants, a government source said Thursday.

This is the second time the meeting is postponed.

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## **Russia, Tajikistan presidents discuss Afghanistan situation**

Russian President Vladimir Putin discussed the situation in Afghanistan with his counterpart from Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon on Wednesday.

Addressing a press conference following the meeting in Moscow, the two leaders stressed the importance of the Afghan settlement for stability in the region.

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## **We Need To Engage In Talks From A United Front: Spanta**

Former National Security Advisor Rangin Dadfar Spanta on Thursday said that Afghanistan needs to engage in peace talks and political dialogue with

Afghanistan.

This comes as President Ashraf Ghani's mandate expires in May and some presidential candidates have ...

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## **NATO Envoy Sees Good Opportunity For Peace In Afghanistan**

NATO Senior Civilian Representative for Afghanistan, Nicholas Kay, in an interview with TOLONews said he sees a good opportunity for peace in Afghanistan and that in such a sensitive time, peace efforts should be expedited.

He said that in the meantime, involved parties should remain “patient” because reaching peace will take.

[Read more...](#)

## **Abdullah Says ‘Mismanagement’ Interrupted Doha Meeting**

Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah, who addressed the Council of Ministers meeting on Monday, said the Qatar conference was “interrupted” due to “mismanagement” and with that, an opportunity for talks was lost.

The meeting was canceled over the disagreement of Qatari government with the 250-member list proposed by the Afghan government as the Presidential

the opponents from a united position and that it should involve a limited team of experts and negotiators familiar with the process rather than sending a large delegation.

[Read more...](#)

## **Critics Label Qatar Meeting Cancellation ‘A Lost Opportunity’**

The cancellation of the intra-Afghan meeting in Qatar met with strong reaction by Afghan critics and former Taliban members who called it “disappointing” and a “lost opportunity” towards peace in the war-ravaged Afghanistan.

The meeting was canceled on the disagreement of Qatari government ...

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## **Iran, Pakistan Ready To Help Afghan Peace: Imran Khan**

Pakistan’s Prime Minister Imran Khan, who is in Iran for bilateral talks, said at a joint press conference with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani that peace in Afghanistan is in favor of both Iran and Pakistan and that the two countries are ready to help efforts for political settlement in Afghanistan.

He said that “the four decades of war in Afghanistan has affected Pakistan and Iran and added that Pakistan hosted at

Palace mentioned in a statement on April 16.

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### **Taliban meets with women's rights activists, others after talks with Afghan officials collapse**

The sudden cancellation of eagerly awaited talks between Taliban officials and Afghan leaders, planned to begin last Friday in Qatar, seemed a stunning reversal in slow-going efforts to bring a peaceful negotiated end to the 17-year Afghan war.

As it turned out, the moment did ...

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### **Khalilzad Begins New Multi-Nation Trip On Afghan Peace**

US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad has embarked on a new multi-nation trip on Afghan peace in which he will visit Afghanistan, India, Pakistan, Qatar, Russia and the UK from April 21 to May 11, the US Department of State said in a statement on Monday.

This would be the US Special Envoy's sixth visit to Kabul on Afghan peace

one point four million refugees and today it hots 2.7 million Afghan refugees".

[Read more...](#)

### **Intra-Afghan dialogue convened in Doha as soon as possible: Pompeo**

The US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo spoke with President Ashraf Ghani and encouraged all sides to reach an understanding on participants of intra-Afghan dialogue and underscored the US's solidarity with the Afghan people's pursuit of a comprehensive peace agreement, the US Department of State said in a statement.

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### **Taliban team at Afghan peace talks in Qatar to include women: spokesman**

KABUL (Reuters) - Women will be included for the first time in the Taliban delegation to peace talks in Qatar this month, the movement's main spokesman said on Monday, ahead of the latest round of meetings aimed at ending the war in Afghanistan.

For a group notorious for its strictly conservative attitude to women's rights, the move represents a step towards addressing demands that women be included in the talks, intended to lay the

since last November.

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## **Preparations In Full Swing For Peace Jirga: Daudzai**

President Ghani's Special Envoy for Peace Umer Daudzai who addressed a press conference in Kabul on Sunday briefed media about developments in preparations for the upcoming Grand Consultative Jirga on Peace and said preparations are in full swing in this respect.

Daudzai says the peace Jirga will be held as scheduled on April 29 and that there will be no delay in it.

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## **Khalilzad Begins New Multi-Nation Trip On Afghan Peace**

US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad has embarked on a new multi-nation trip on Afghan peace in which he will visit Afghanistan, India, Pakistan, Qatar, Russia and the UK from April 21 to May 11, the US Department of State said in a statement on Monday.

This would be the US Special Envoy's sixth visit to Kabul on Afghan peace since last November.

foundations for a future peace settlement.

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## **Seventh Presidential Candidate Boycotts Peace Jirga**

The Grand Consultative Jirga on Peace scheduled for the end of this month was boycotted by another presidential candidate – a move which has been done by six election tickets.

The peace Jirga, according to the High Peace Council, will host almost 2,500 delegates from around the country, who will discuss the future of the peace process.

[Read more...](#)

## **Private Sector Details List Of Demands Amid Peace Efforts**

The Afghan private sector is expected to offer a list of demands pertaining the protection of banking system, long-term guarantees safeguarding business activities and Afghan women's investment to the High Peace Council, the Taliban, and the international community amid recent diplomatic efforts at national and international levels for ending the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan.

Speaking to a gathering in the view of current diplomatic efforts for peace...

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## **Politicians Asked To Reverse Peace Jirga Boycott Decision**

Days after a number of politicians and political movements boycotted the upcoming Grand Consultative Jirga on Peace, President Ghani's Special Envoy Umer Daudzai called on the opposition parties to reverse their decision and said the move in a sense is "disparaging" Afghanistan's traditions and national prides.

Almost 3,000 delegates from around the country will attend the Jirga, which is a grand assembly of Afghans on ...

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## **Past Years Achievements Should Be Defended: Khalilzad**

The United States Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad says that the achievements made in the past one and half decade should be defended, and these gains should be used as a cornerstone and foundation for more progresses in peace process as well for further developments in a post-peace government.

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## **Ghani Wants Women's 'Active' Role In Peace Jirga**

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## **US hopes intra-Afghan talks in Doha will be held soon; Khalilzad embarks on new trip**

US Secretary State Mike Pompeo has expressed disappointment at the postponement of intra-Afghan peace talks in Doha as he spoke with Afghan President Ashraf Ghani over the phone.

During the conversation, the sides agreed that the Doha conference presents an important opportunity to advance peace, said Morgan Ortagus, a spokesperson for the US Department of State.

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## **Russia, US, China Aim to Cajole Taliban into Inter-Afghan Talks**

Russia, the United States and China will this week try to press Afghanistan's Taliban insurgents to hold talks with Afghan politicians and civilians, an important step in a process aimed at ending the Afghan war.

Representatives of the three countries will meet Thursday in Moscow hoping to accelerate the pace of talks with the ...

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## **US Official: Afghan Peace Deal Could Trigger Internal Woes**



President Ashraf Ghani visited the Loya Jirga hall in Kabul on Tuesday to monitor the preparations for the Grand Consultative Jirga on Peace where he said women should have a “strong” role in the gathering – which is one of the biggest events on peace in the country’s history a senior official put it last week.

Almost 3,000 delegates from around the country will attend the Jirga, which is a grand assembly of Afghans on discussing a “unified pathway” towards peace.

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## **Khan: Pakistan Will No Longer Be Party to Afghan Conflict**

Pakistan says it is “highly dismayed” at the recent surge in hostilities in Afghanistan “from all sides,” warning it would harm ongoing efforts to bring peace to the war-ravaged neighboring country.

Prime Minister Imran Khan issued the statement Thursday as the United States makes diplomatic efforts to seek a negotiated settlement to the 17-year-old Afghan war.

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## **Survey Reveals Women Demand for More Role during Peace Talks**

Afghanistan’s Independent Human

A peace treaty to end more than 17 years of war in Afghanistan could usher in a new era of instability and erase many of the gains made by international reconstruction efforts, a key U.S. official cautioned Wednesday.

John Sopko, U.S. special inspector general for Afghanistan reconstruction, told reporters in Washington that while “we all want peace,” there are concerns that the push for a deal will overshadow critical planning needed for any agreement to have a lasting impact.

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## **Iran criticizes US-Taliban talks**

Iran on Wednesday criticized US talks with the Taliban, suggesting Washington was elevating the role of the militants.

Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif admitted that Iran had also opened dialogue with the Taliban but said that the US push for a deal with the group was “seriously wrong.”

“An attempt to exclude everybody and just talk to the Taliban has alienated the government, has alienated the ...

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## **US, Afghanistan Agree on Need for Intra-Afghan Dialogue With Taliban**

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and

Rights Commission (AIHRC) urges the Afghan government, members of the Consultative Loya Jirga on Peace, and other institutions to work for strengthening the women role during the peace process.

Therefore, the AIHRC has conducted a survey regarding the role of women in the Afghan peace process in 33 ...

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### **No justifiable reason to form interim government in Afghanistan: VP Danish**

There is no justifiable reason to form an interim government in Afghanistan, Second Vice President Sarwar Danish said on Sunday.

Addressing a ceremony in presidential palace to mark Mujahedeen Victory Day, Danish said that the current government will cover delay to ....

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### **Ghani opens Loya Jirga in Kabul to discuss Taliban talks**

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani on Monday inaugurated a four-day Loya Jirga, or grand council, to discuss peace talks with the Taliban.

The gathering has been convened amid stepped up diplomatic efforts to end the war in Afghanistan. US officials have

Zalmay Khalilzad, chief U.S. negotiator with the Taliban, emphasized the importance of an intra-Afghan dialogue in a meeting Saturday evening between the two in Kabul.

A statement released by Ghani's office also called for "a future direct meeting with the Taliban led by the Afghan government."

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### **Loya Jirga committees to set agenda by themselves: officials**

There will be 50 working committees in consultative Loya Jirga on peace and they will set the agenda for discussion by themselves, officials said Sunday.

Mohammad Omar Safi, a member of Loya Jirga organizing committee, said that the assembly will be held solely for peace, adding there is no hidden agenda.

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### **US Negotiator Ends 2 Days of Afghan Peace Talks in Pakistan**

The U.S. special representative for Afghanistan reconciliation, Zalmay Khalilzad, has concluded two days of official discussions in Pakistan on how to advance the Afghan peace process.

Officials said Khalilzad arrived Monday in Islamabad and led delegation-level

held several rounds of talks with Taliban representatives, but the group has refused to negotiate with the Afghan government.

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### **Qatar Meeting Likely In Mid-May: Sources**

The meeting between Afghan politicians and Taliban members is likely to take place in mid-May in Doha, Qatar, Taliban sources familiar with the process said on Wednesday.

The meeting will also clarify the agenda of the Samarkand dialogue and will provide a platform for the intra-Afghan talks, sources added.

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### **Afghans Push For Truce As Diplomacy Takes Center Stage**

Hundreds of women in Afghanistan's capital Kabul marched through the city on Thursday, calling on the warring factions to reverse their previous decisions on their military plans and instead engage into the discussion for an immediate ceasefire to end the current bloodsheds.

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### **Ghani Stresses On Keeping The Republic System**

talks with senior foreign ministry officials before meeting Pakistani military chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa and other military leaders. He was ...

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### **'Real Solution' Is A Ceasefire: Khalilzad**

The US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad, who is on a multi-nation trip on Afghan peace, reiterated his call on the Taliban to join other Afghans in their efforts for end the ongoing war and said the real solution to end the bloodshed in Afghanistan is a ceasefire.

Khalilzad said in a tweet that the ...

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### **US, Russia And China Reach 'Consensus' On Afghan Peace**

The trilateral meeting between special envoys of United States, Russia and China in Moscow on Thursday ended with a "trilateral consensus" on the Afghan peace process, reads a statement released by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.

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### **Karzai Asks Ghani To Delay Peace Jirga**

Talking to a large number of new lawmakers and politicians, including the Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah, President Ashraf Ghani reiterated that the republic system will continue and that Afghans deserve “respect” and they will not start everything from “zero”, referring to retaining of the achievements of the past 17 years ...

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### **Peace Jirga’s Legitimacy Questioned Amid Preparations**

As preparations are in “full swing” for the Grand Consultative Jirga on Peace scheduled for April 29, the number of politicians and critics who have boycotted the event is growing and some of them have questioned the legitimacy of the gathering in which almost 3,000 delegates will attend to discuss the future of peace in Afghanistan.

So far, nine presidential candidates, including Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah, have boycotted the Jirga and some of them have called it a “waste of time” and an “election campaign” by President Ashraf Ghani.

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### **Afghans Are Ready For Peace: Abdullah**

Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah met with the US Special Envoy Zalmay Khalilzad in his office on Sunday and

Former President Hamid Karzai in a statement on Saturday called on President Ashraf Ghani to delay the Grand Consultative Jirga on Peace to prevent its “possible negative impacts” on the ongoing peace efforts.

Karzai said that he does not see the consultative Jirga in favor of Afghans.

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### **MoFA Welcomes Moscow Meeting’s Agreements**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) in a statement on Sunday welcomed the agreements and the consensus reached between the United States, Russia and China at a trilateral meeting in Moscow on April 24-25.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan insists on “enduring and dignified” peace, the statement said.

The statement added that the MoFA sees direct talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban as a key step towards achieving enduring and dignified peace.

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### **US Seeking Political Settlement, Not Withdrawal: Khalilzad**

The US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad says that the United States is

discussed issues around the Afghan peace process and welcomed the United States and Khalilzad's efforts for peace, Abdullah's office said in a statement.

Abdullah said in the meeting that he appreciates the US Special Envoy's efforts for peace and assured him that the Afghan people and the Afghan government are ready for the process.

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## **Russia Accuses Afghan Govt Of Disrupting Doha Meeting**

The Russian Federation's Foreign Ministry on Monday criticized the Afghan government for the cancellation of the intra-Afghan meeting in Doha, Qatar, which was scheduled for April 19-21.

On April 18, the Afghan government said the meeting was canceled due to disagreements on the list of the 250-member delegation.

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## **Peace Jirga Begins With 3,200 Delegates In Attendance**

The Grand Consultative Jirga on Peace was started on Monday despite that it has been boycotted by many mainstream political parties and election tickets.

Addressing the inauguration of the

seeking peace and political settlement in Afghanistan and that the withdrawal of foreign forces will be conditions-based.

Khalilzad is in Kabul for his sixth visit since last November and he has held five rounds of talks with the Taliban. In his last round of talks in Doha in mid-March, the US and the Taliban agreed in draft on counterterrorism ...

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## **Delegates Optimistic As Peace Jirga Is 'All Set' To Be Held**

Amid growing criticisms by some of Afghanistan's mainstream political leaders and President Ashraf Ghani's political rivals, official from the Grand Consultative Jirga on Peace on Sunday said that all preparations are on track for the event to be held as per schedule on Monday, April 29.

Almost 3,000 delegates from across the country will attend the Jirga to decide ...

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## **Afghanistan Certainly Needs Peace After Four Decades Of War: Khan**

Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan said Sunday that Afghanistan certainly needs peace after almost four decades of war as he addressed a gathering of business leaders in Beijing.

Jirga, President Ghani's Special Envoy Umer Daudzai said at least 3,200 delegates and 300 guests have attended the event.

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## **Jirga Will Determine Framework For Talks With Taliban: Ghani**

President Ashraf Ghani who inaugurated the Grand Consultative Jirga on Peace said the event will determine the framework for talks with the Taliban – who have refused to attend negotiations with the Afghan government delegates.

Ghani said the Jirga will also seek ways to end war and violence in the country and that the delegates hope to find Afghanistan's pathway for at least one century.

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## **Ismail Khan Skeptical On Peace Jirga's Outcomes**

Former Jihadi leader and a senior member of Jamiat-e-Islami party Mohammad Ismail Khan at a gathering in Herat province on Tuesday said the Consultative Jirga on Peace has been organized by a government which will soon "lose its legitimacy", therefore, the event will not have the expected outcome.

At least 3,200 delegates from around

Khan said that peace in Afghanistan has a huge impact on Pakistan and Central Asian countries under China's global Belt and Road Initiative, ...

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## **Khalilzad Discusses Afghan Peace With Pakistani Officials**

The US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad on Monday met with Pakistani officials in Islamabad, including the Pakistani Foreign Secretary Sohail Mahmood, and discussed the Afghan peace process and the United States efforts for a political settlement in the country, Pakistan's Foreign Ministry officials said on Tuesday.

In this meeting, the Pakistani Foreign Secretary reiterated his country's ...

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## **Delegates Criticize Govt For Limits On Peace Jirga's Coverage**

On the second day of the Grand Consultative Jirga on Peace, a number of delegates criticized the organizers for restrictions on the coverage of the gathering where almost 3,200 representatives from across the country have gathered to decide on the future of the peace process.

the country have attended the Grand Consultative Jirga on Peace which kicked off on Monday, April 29.

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### **Peace Jirga's Admin Board Completed Despite Rifts**

The administrative board of the Grand Consultative Jirga on Peace was completed after all its members – five deputies and five secretaries – were elected by the delegates at the end of the second day of the gathering, sources confirmed.

Almost 3,200 delegates from around the country have gathered in the Jirga to decide on the future of the peace process in Afghanistan. The election of the Jirga's administrative board was supposed to be completed on the first day, but it was reportedly delayed due to rifts ...

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The media outlets have been given the permission to enter the Jirga's hall for one hour in separate groups but they...

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### **Ghani introduces Abdul Rab Rasool Sayyaf as head of consultative peace Jirga**

President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani introduced former Mujahideen leader Abdul Rab Rasool Sayyaf as head of consultative peace Jirga.

The consultative peace Jirga (Grand Assembly) kicked off earlier today with the organizers of the Jirga saying around 3,200 representatives from across the country have participated in the gathering to discuss the future of peace process.

However, most of the prominent political leaders and figures have boycotted the peace Jirga.

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