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www.afgazad.com

afgazad@gmail.com

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J. Ditz

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Afghan President Ghani Backtracks on Ousting Security Officials, Raising Questions

President ordered resignations, then refused to accept them Posted on Categories

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The mass resignation of top Afghan security officials, and the subsequent refusal of the president to accept those resignations, is raising a lot of questions within Afghanistan. In particular, reports that President Ghani ordered the resignations in the first place, then declined them, [has many doubting what he's hoping to accomplish](#).



Ashraf Ghani

The situation started early Saturday, with the resignation of national security adviser Hanif Atmar. It was speculated that Atmar, who cited “serious” policy differences with Ghani, [is planning to run for president in 2019](#).

Later Saturday, [three more officials resigned](#). Those included Defense Minister Tariq Bahrami, Interior Minister Wais Barmak, and NDS chief Masoom Stanekzai. Reportedly, the three were ordered to submit resignation letters by President Ghani.

This would've made sense if Ghani wanted to purge his security leadership, but by Sunday morning, it was announced that Ghani [refused to accept the resignation of those three](#), and told them to continue their duties for the “betterment of the security situation.”

Ghani's advisers had suggested the resignations were initially sought because of the mounting failures in the security sector. Ghani is facing growing pressure from the public over such failures, and his inability to tackle such problems.

Analysts have warned Ghani's credibility is badly damaged, and that now the credibility of the rest of the security leadership are too, since they're seen as wanting to resign, and practically one foot out the door.

The Taliban has continued to seize territory across Afghanistan, and holds more now than at any time since the 2001 US invasion.