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## India backs Karzai for delaying Afghan-US security agreement

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The External Affairs Minister of India Salman Khurshid who visited Afghanistan to inaugurate the National Agriculture Science and Technology university backed president Hamid Karzai's stance on Afghan-US bilateral security agreement.

Khurshid said he backs president Karzai's calculations in delaying the signing of a Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) with the United States.

"I know that he (Afghanistan President, Hamid Karzai) has, he is making some careful calculations about when the Bilateral Security Agreement should be signed, and, I think, the Americans are also reflecting on how to move forward," Khurshid quoted by India's ANI news agency said.

He said, "But clearly, this is, I don't think it's a stalemate situation, I think it's more of a fine tuning situation, but, what you can see, and I am certainly able to see, that there is a tremendous amount of confidence amongst the trained personnel, both the police and the army."

Salman Khurshid visited southern Kandahar province of Afghanistan on Saturday and inaugurated the National Agriculture Science and Technology university with president Hamid Karzai.

India is one of the major donors of Afghanistan and has invested over \$2 billion in reconstruction and infrastructure projects in the country so far.

The bilateral security agreement once signed will give a legal framework for the presence of US forces in Afghanistan.

The draft agreement was endorsed by majority during the consultative Loya Jirga in November last year. However, president Karzai set new conditions for the signing of the agreement.

Karzai said US forces should immediately stop raids on Afghan homes and peace talks with the militant groups should be started before he sign the agreement with Washington.