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## MPs commend presidential rejection of Pakistan aid

Dec 06, 2016

Wolesi Jirga members on Monday welcomed the rejection of \$500 million Pakistani aid by President Ashraf Ghani at the Heart of Asia Conference in Amritsar.

Representatives from about 40 countries and groupings like the European Union attended the two-day event, which was aimed at exploring ways of dealing with the challenges Afghanistan faces.

Addressing the conference, the president on Sunday called cross-border terrorism a grave concern. "We need aid to fight the scourge." He believed the \$500 million promised by Pakistan for Afghanistan's reconstruction could be better spent on combating terrorism.

Mohammad Naeem Lalai Ahmadzai, a public representative from Kandahar province, said all Afghan people and their representatives supported the stance of Ghani.

Obaidullah Barakzai, another lawmaker, said: "The recent step by Ghani against Pakistan is commendable, Pakistan, if it is interested in aiding Afghanistan, should stop financing and arming terrorists. It doesn't need provide Afghanistan with cash assistance."

Other legislators followed suit, saying the refusal of \$500 million reconstruction assistance was in accordance with Afghan people's wishes. They expressed support for the presidential stance.

Speaker Abdul Rauf Ibrahimi also eulogized the president's rejection of Pakistan aid, saying Ghani echoed people's pain caused by Islamabad's interference in Afghanistan.

The refusal of aid drew a harsh reaction from Prime Minister Advisor on Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz, who told a hurriedly-called media briefing in Islamabad on his return from Amritsar that Ghani stated what India wanted.