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## US Defense Secretary makes unannounced visit to Afghanistan

December 9, 2016

The US Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter arrived in Afghanistan on an unannounced visit to meet the US troops and senior Afghan officials.

Pentagon spokesman Peter Cook said the Secretary of Defense will receive an update on efforts to support the Afghan forces besides meeting with senior officials and US forces based in the country.

“#SecDef<sup>[2]</sup> arrives in Afghanistan to visit troops, receive an update on efforts to support Afghan security forces & meet with senior officials,” Cook said in a Twitter post.

According to reports, Carter will also meet with President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani this afternoon.

The visit by Carter comes as the US forces have stepped up counter-terrorism efforts by supporting the Afghan forces.

The US forces in Afghanistan conduct regular airstrikes to support the Afghan forces in their fight against the Taliban militants and insurgents belonging to other militant groups including the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist group.

The Obama administration granted broader role to the US forces to conduct counter-terrorism raids amid concerns that the militant groups are attempting to expand foothold in the country.