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NATO: Russia, China Should Help Pay for Afghanistan After 2014

By Jason Ditz

April 19, 2012

NATO chief Anders Fogh Rasmussen and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov traded comments today on Afghanistan, with Rasmussen pushing Russia and China to pay for the massive NATO-created Afghan military after the 2014 “end” to the war and Lavrov suggesting that NATO just not end the war in 2014.

“We would welcome financial contributions from Russia, China and other countries,” Rasmussen noted, as the question of how the \$4 billion annual expense is going to be paid for continues to be a hot issue of debate among NATO member nations.

Afghan President Hamid Karzai tried to address some of this issue earlier this week, demanding the US pledge a minimum of \$2 billion a year as a condition for keeping occupation troops in the nation through 2024. Britain has promised \$110 million annually.

Lavrov was critical of the whole discussion, insisting that the 2014 date was “artificial” and that if Afghanistan is such a mess NATO just shouldn’t leave. Of course unspoken in this is that NATO doesn’t actually plan to leave in 2014, and the date is mostly illusory as the start of a “transition” likely to last many years, with the US openly negotiating for at least another decade of war beyond that date.