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Obama in Afghanistan to Sign Deal to Continue War Through 2024

By [Jason Ditz](#)

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Months of “not quite public” Obama Administration efforts to negotiate a still-secret pact to ensure that US troops will continue to occupy Afghanistan through at least 2024 came to an end today, with a “not quite public” [visit to Afghanistan by President Obama to sign the pact](#).

The first reports that President Obama had landed in Afghanistan for this A totally unannounced visit were quickly followed by denials from both the White House and the US Embassy in Afghanistan, [which condemned the reports as untrue](#). Later they conceded they were true, and made no attempt to explain why they lied in the first place.

The terms of the deal, which will govern US military operations in the country from the start of 2015 through the end of 2024, have not been made public, and as with President Bush and the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) in Iraq, there was no effort to consult on the long-term pact with Congress.

Interestingly, with the ink now drying on the document and the US officially committed to the occupation of Afghanistan for another decade, officials are continuing to tout 2014 as the “end” of the war. This speaks to how the 2024 date, though openly discussed by the Karzai government in Afghanistan and [privately acknowledged as part of the secret pact](#), has not been publicly presented to the American public. When they will officially spring it on us remains unclear.

The signature comes as the war continues to worsen, and with the release of a new report from the Pentagon which insists that the “[strategy is sound](#)” for the conflict. Despite the length of the

report, there was little indication of what the strategy is, beyond “stay the course,” and what the goal toward which the strategy is aiming, beyond “staying through 2024.”