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## US: Pakistan Must ‘Bite the Bullet’ on Supply Route to Ease Tensions

By Jason Ditz

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Fresh off of withdrawing negotiators from the country, US officials are now pressing Pakistan to “bite the bullet” and agree to unconditionally allow NATO supplies into Afghanistan, saying that this was the only way to “ease tensions with the United States.”



Pakistan closed the border to Afghanistan in late November, after US warplanes attacked a pair of Pakistani military bases, killing 26 soldiers. The Pakistani parliament has conditioned

reopening the border on the US agreeing to halt drone strikes and apologizing for the November attack.

In May the Pakistani cabinet empowered the military to negotiate an agreement with the US on the border issue at some lesser terms, [but this too has stalled, with the US flat refusing to apologize](#) for the attacks and has escalating the drone strikes. The fallback alternative, an increase in the fee for border crossings, was also condemned by the US as “price gouging.”

At this point it seemed pretty clear that the US wanted Pakistan to simply knuckle under on the issue and give the US back the route with no strings attached. Having repeatedly insisted that the US is “losing patience” with Pakistan over perceived slights, they are now making the demand more or less formal, insisting that Pakistan must not only take the constant US attacks, but be grateful and thank the US for the privilege.