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Admiral: US Supplies to Afghanistan Triple in Cost without Pakistan Route

By Jason Ditz

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In comments today Vice Admiral Mark Harnitchek, the director of the Defense Logistics Agency, provided some of the most specific details about the costs of the supply lines for the NATO occupation of Afghanistan yet seen by the public.

According to Vice Adm. Harnitchek, a cargo container from the US to Afghanistan costs about \$20,000 in shipping by the current overland routes, and that cargo sent by sea to Karachi and then ferried in across the Afghan-Pakistan border costs only about a third of that price.

Coupled with recent claims by Leon Panetta that the loss of the Pakistan route costs an additional \$100 million a month, that would amount to about 7,500 containers are sent per month.



And despite some unconfirmed reports that the loss was actually putting a strain on supplies to the occupation, Harnitchek insists that supply rates inside Afghanistan have “never been higher.” It’s just costing far, far more.

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Pakistan closed the border in late November, after a US air strike targeted a pair of military outposts and killed 24 soldiers. Pakistan has offered to reopen the borders for \$1,500 per truck, which seems like it would be a significant saving for the US over the current situation, but Leon Panetta blasted it as “price gouging.”