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'US in touch with Haqqani for safe exit from Afghanistan'

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The United States will not slap the "terror" label on the Haqqani Network for the safe exit of its troops from Afghanistan, a senior Pakistan diplomat has said.

Background discussions with diplomats and security analysts suggest that the United States is currently in contact with the Haqqani Network to secure guarantees that they would stop targeting US troops in Afghanistan, reports The Nation.

"Pakistan would not react even if the US declares the Haqqani Network a terrorist organisation but would want that all the Afghan resistance groups including the Haqqanis are pushed into the peace process," the diplomat said.

He said the Haqqanis, being Afghan citizens, operate from within Afghanistan and they have no presence in Pakistan. Pakistan supports an Afghan-owned and Afghan-led peace and reconciliation process and is committed to facilitate it to make it a fruitful process, he added.

Foreign policy experts and security analysts believe that Pakistan does not have much leverage when it comes to Haqqanis as they operate independently. But they said "like other resistance groups, including Afghan Taliban, Haqqanis are equally key stakeholders in Afghanistan".

They believe that it is a complex situation where besides the Al Qaeda, the Afghan Taliban and other resistance groups like Haqqanis were operating in Afghanistan. They questioned the

intention and combat capacity of Afghan and US-led forces in sorting out non-state entities like these and their continued accusations against Pakistan, which itself is victim of terrorism.