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## US stresses Pakistan's role in Afghan reconciliation

Nov 15, 2012

The United States on Thursday welcomed Pakistan's decision to release Afghan Taliban prisoners, in a move to promote the ongoing reconciliation drive in Afghanistan.

Pakistan could play a vital role in ending the conflict in Afghanistan, US Deputy Chief of Mission Richard Hoagland told journalists in Islamabad, a day after the High Peace Council's delegation concluded its visit.

The US had already asked the Afghan government to pursue the reconciliation process, Hoagland said, calling for of those who abided by the law of the land and renounced the insurgency.

Pakistan has agreed to free several Taliban prisoners as part of its support for the effort to end the war in the neighbouring country, according to a joint statement from the Peace Council and the foreign ministry in Islamabad.

The statement said the decision was made "in support of peace and reconciliation process and in response to the request of the Afghan government and [High Peace Council](#)."

Led by Salahuddin Rabbani, the council delegation held extensive talks with Pakistani military and civilian leaders over the past three days. The two sides called on the Taliban to sever ties with Al-Qaeda and other international terrorist networks.

To facilitate the peace talks, Afghanistan and Pakistan will work with international partners to remove from the UN sanctions list the names of potential negotiators for the Taliban and other groups.