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Taliban Statement: Open to Power-Sharing in Afghanistan

By Jason Ditz

December 23, 2012

Taliban officials have issued a statement today suggesting a major change in policy, expressing an openness to a power-sharing deal and pledging to grant numerous rights to women that were denied under their pre-occupation government.

“We are not looking to monopolize power. We want an all-Afghan inclusive government,” noted the Taliban officials who delivered the statement in a speech during a recent conference. Karzai government officials “welcomed” the comments but said they didn’t believe they would lead to a deal.

Yet while the Karzai government has publicly downplayed the chances of peace several times recently, they are putting a lot of effort into the process, assuming they need to make other arrangements for post-2014, when the NATO occupation will be considerably smaller.

Pakistani Army Chief Gen. Parvez Kayani is also putting quite a bit of effort into it, saying the peace deal in Afghanistan is his “top priority.” Pakistan has struggled mightily to cope with the spillover from 11+ years of the NATO war, and believes that without NATO to fight the insurgency, still concentrated along their border, will pick the Pakistani military as a next target.