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## Taliban, Karzai Govt in Secret Talks

By Jason Ditz

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After President Hamid Karzai publicly withdrew from peace talks with the Taliban, there was a brief effort to “coax” him back to the table, but after that the latest effort at a peace process seemed to just die down.

But that’s just the public show. Behind the scenes, officials from the Karzai government and the Taliban admit that talks have resumed and are ongoing, in secret, and are making at least a little progress.

The big issue right now is the post-occupation constitution. The Taliban has reportedly given some consideration to endorsing it, but says they have three clauses that they oppose. They did not say what those are.

There’s been a lot of speculation that the peace process is going to end in some sort of power-sharing deal giving the Taliban de facto control over the southeast, and getting them to at least endorse the constitution in theory would be a big step toward making that happen. Officials familiar with the talks say that they remain in “a fragile place” and could just as easily collapse.