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## Afghans against security deal with US

1/18/2013

During the demonstration on Monday, the protesters once again expressed opposition to the so-called Bilateral Security Agreement. The participants also called for an immediate withdrawal of the US forces from the country.

The US has more than 43,000 troops in the war-torn country.

The demonstrators blamed the US military for killing civilians and said that the US soldiers should not be granted legal immunity at all.

The issue of whether or not to grant legal immunity to American forces remains a sticking point. Washington says there will be no deal without immunity while Kabul considers it a violation of its sovereignty.

The security deal remains to be ratified or rejected by the grand council of Afghanistan, or Loya Jirga.

Our Kabul correspondent Fayeze Khorshid says public anger is boiling up in Afghanistan over the security pact as people continue to come out in protest at the deal.

Meanwhile local sources in the eastern city of Jalalabad say thousands of demonstrators poured into streets of the city on Sunday, chanting anti-US slogans and torching American flags and effigies of US President Barack Obama.

The demonstrators said the deal between Washington and Kabul will pave the way for a prolonged US military presence in the country.

Washington had promised to withdraw all combat forces from Afghanistan by 2014. However, it has been locked in negotiations with Kabul over a strategic partnership beyond the 2014 deadline.

Thousands of Afghan civilians, including a large number of women and children, have been killed during night raids by foreign forces and CIA-run assassination drone strikes in the country since the US invasion in 2001.