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Afghan defense minister could sign US security deal, says Kerry

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^[1]The US Secretary of State John Kerry said Tuesday that the Afghan defense minister Bismillah Mohammadi or any the government of Afghanistan could sign the bilateral security agreement between Kabul and Washington.

While speaking during a press conference in NATO foreign ministerial, John Kerry once again insisted that the security agreement between Kabul and Washington should be signed soon.

Kerry also said that all NATO foreign ministers have expressed their support to the bilateral security agreement, and somebody from the government of Afghanistan or the Afghan defense minister can sign it.

“I think it is important for the agreement to try to move forward. It doesn’t have to be pres(ident),” Kerry quoted by Reuters said.

“You know, his minister of defense (Bismullah Khan Mohammadi) can sign it, the government can sign it, somebody can accept responsibility for this,” Kerry said.

“But I think it is important, for planning purposes, for people who have been extraordinarily patient, who are trying to allocate major amounts of money to sustaining this effort in Afghanistan, to have knowledge of where they are going,” Kerry added.

In the meantime, the NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen insisted on a “timely signature” of the bilateral security agreement with Washington.

US and NATO officials have also warned that both Washington and the alliance would have to withdraw all forces from Afghanistan if the agreement is not signed, which could jeopardize the Afghan security and up to \$8 billion in annual aid to Afghanistan.