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Taliban Denies Peace Talks With US

By [Jason Ditz](#)

July 6, 2011

The Taliban insurgency in [Afghanistan has issued a statement today formally denying any negotiations are taking place with the United States](#), and adding that no such talks would take place until the foreign troops withdraw from the nation.

The statement [comes just two weeks after US officials began “confirming”](#) that such talks were taking place, though they were also quick to insist that the talks were “very preliminary” and hadn’t accomplished anything.

This has [been par for the course](#) for the “peace talks,” which have regularly been confirmed by US officials for years, only to be denied by the Taliban and later confirmed to be some disaster, as with the time when a Pakistani pretended to be a Taliban leader and [bilked NATO out of](#) a large sum of money.

NATO talks seem to usually center around trying to court low-ranking Taliban with an eye toward a military victory, while the Afghan government seems more interested in deals that will end the fighting. In both cases, however, the Taliban leadership has maintained that the talks are predicated on the NATO troops leaving. With NATO remaining through 2014 and some member nations predicting years beyond that, it seems the talks remain a non-starter.