

# *NATO Pressures Kabul to Sign Security Agreement*

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Kabul, January 30 (RHC)-- The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, NATO, is pressuring Afghan President Hamid Karzai to sign the so-called bilateral security agreement with the United States.

NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen said at a news conference that Afghanistan could face a complete halt in NATO support operations "if it does not sign the Bilateral Security Agreement" with Washington.

The fate of the Bilateral Security Agreement between the two countries remains in limbo as President Hamid Karzai refuses to sign it. The deal which has already received the approval of the assembly of Afghan elders, Loya Jirga, will keep the U.S. forces in Afghanistan beyond the 2014 planned pull-out.

Karzai has warned that he will not allow continued foreign presence if it means more bombs and civilian killings. Afghans also say American forces are responsible for the deaths of many civilians in their country.

Afghan political figures have also heaped scorn on U.S.-led forces for committing unforgivable crimes against Afghan women and children since invading the country in 2001. 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.

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