

China slams U.S. seizure of Afghanistan's assets as the behavior of bandits

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Beijing, February 17 (RHC)-- China has condemned the United States' decision to seize Afghanistan's frozen assets amid a mounting humanitarian crisis, saying the conduct is no different from that of "bandits."

“Without the consent of the Afghan people, the U.S. willfully disposes of assets that belong to the Afghan people, even keeping them as its own. This is no different from the conduct of bandits,” Chinese foreign ministry’s spokesperson Wang Wenbin said at a press conference.

“As the culprit of the Afghan crisis, the U.S. should not exacerbate the suffering of the Afghan people. It should unfreeze their assets, lift unilateral sanctions on Afghanistan as soon as possible, and assume its due responsibility to ease the humanitarian crisis in the country,” he reiterated.

U.S. President Joe Biden issued an executive order this week authorizing the release of half of the \$7 billion in frozen Afghan funds for humanitarian aid, keeping the other half for a possible payment to the families of the 9/11 victims.

Following the order, thousands of Afghans took to the streets of Kabul and other cities to condemn the measure, arguing that Afghanistan had nothing to do with the September 11, 2001 attacks.

Angry demonstrators also called on the international community to help Afghanistan unfreeze all the assets frozen in the US as well as the European countries. The decision by Biden came only a few days after the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warned that Afghanistan is “hanging by a thread,” as millions of Afghans are at the risk of starvation and death.

Afghanistan has about \$9 billion in assets overseas, including the \$7 billion in the United States. The rest is mostly in Germany, the United Arab Emirates and Switzerland.

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