



Kabul seeks support for peace

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Highlights

- Afghanistan is seeking India's support for its peace process, as well as for military hardware like helicopters, says Ambassador to India Dr. Shaida Abdali, ahead of President Ashraf Ghani's visit to Delhi and talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi .

Expected Outcomes of the Prez Ghani's Visit

- Afghanistan and India are strategic partners and according to the SPA, there is a particular clause on regular strategic consultations between the two countries.
- Afghanistan is currently facing a very critical time in all respects, and certainly need to sit down with all friends and strategic partners like India to discuss how to deal with terrorism and security issues that ultimately affect all of us.

Afghan's request for more military hardware

- The Strategic Partnership Council meeting (headed by the Foreign Ministers) in Kabul to discuss the progress made and decisions taken by both countries.
- With regard to defence and security, Afghanistan understand India's limits in terms of what it can do to help Afghan security forces.
- We have recently signed a MoU that aims to deliver another four helicopters to Afghanistan, and hope they will come to Afghanistan in the near future, procured by India from Belarus.
- Currently Afghanistan is transitioning from Soviet-era equipment to the NATO-system of equipment and for the short term of transition, as we wait for about 200 U.S. made helicopters including Apaches that we will get by 2022, also need India's help to fill the gap.
- Technical and security teams of both the sides have been meeting and hope that more will happen as Indian security teams assess Afghanistan's needs.

Can India do more?

- Both the country's representatives discussed peace and security issues, and also the development projects India is funding in Afghanistan.
- More wholesome approach through the Heart of Asia process and the Istanbul process, which would encourage regional players to help fight terror.
- In the trilateral talks we discussed completion of the Chabahar port project with Iran, which we hope the U.S. will back, as these are our common objectives: to build Afghanistan economically and to give us alternative access to trade.