



Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov says Taliban plan to attend Afghan talks in Moscow

In what seems to be a lukewarm diplomatic accomplishment, the Taliban accepted the negotiation offer of Russia to discuss peace talks in Afghanistan, just hours after the Afghan government declined the offer to attend. The infamous militant group seeking recourse of their relations with the outside world announced that it would send senior members to Moscow to go forward with the proposed peace talks. The United States was also invited to be a part of the talks but like Afghanistan, they declined to attend.



Stanekzai is third from the right. PHOTO: NUNN.ASIA

Approximately four senior officials of the Islamist group are speculated to attend the talks, with the delegation being led by Sher Mohammad Abbas Stanekzai, the head of Taliban's political office in the Doha, Qatar. This decision was made just hours after Afghanistan publicly announced that they would not attend the Moscow conference to discuss future plans for the country on the 4th of September. Statements from the Afghan foreign ministry revealed that the country did not want to enter negotiations with foreign parties and would attempt to sort out political differences with the Taliban directly.

However, the current steps are a diversion from some of the actions taken by the Afghan administration a few days back. Recently, the office of Afghanistan's national security adviser urged Moscow to assist in pressurising Taliban to pursue peace talks with the Afghan government. Yet, currently, it seems like Kabul is rethinking their plans to hold the talks with Taliban.

A senior Kabul based diplomat voiced his opinion regarding the futility of talks in Moscow if the Afghan government wasn't a part of the meeting. The Russian Embassy in Kabul, however, released no comments regarding the move of Afghanistan.

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