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## **Pompeo: US Prepared to Remove Troops From Afghanistan**

Says US, Taliban haven't agreed to timeline on pullout yet Jason Ditz Posted on June 25, 2019 Categories News Tags Afghanistan, Pompeo

During a surprise visit to Kabul, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo confirmed that the US is prepared to remove its troops from Afghanistan, ending 18+ years of military presence in the country.

Pompeo says that the US has “made clear to the Taliban” that they are prepared for such a pullout, but said the two sides still have not agreed on a timeline for the exact withdrawal.

This echoes what the Taliban was saying last week, ahead of the Doha talks, which oddly US officials contested at the time. The Doha talks are meant to shore up an exact date for the US exit.

This has been the broad framework of a deal reported for months, that the US would leave and the Taliban would keep ISIS and al-Qaeda out of Afghanistan. Other aspects of the final deal, including a permanent ceasefire and reconciliation between the Taliban and the US-backed government, are expected to come later.

Making a deal to finalize the pullout date could well facilitate the talks on other aspects. It seems likely that the US-backed government, which had been obstructing direct Taliban talks, would want to hold the reconciliation talks before the US leaves outright.

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