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Trump Calls Off Taliban Peace Negotiations

Many months of tough negotiations between US and Taliban officials came to a draft agreement which some analysts believe was going to be formally finalized as a peace deal this weekend. That will not happen.

President Trump took to Twitter on Saturday announcing that he has “called off peace negotiations” with the Taliban, citing anger over one of the Taliban’s car bombings in Kabul last week.

Trump also revealed that he had planned secret talks with both Afghan President Ghani and Taliban leaders at Camp David, but that in the course of his new decision, he had canceled those meetings as well.

It is unclear, then, whether Trump’s saying he “called off” the negotiations just refers to this weekend, or to the entire process. The US State Department was unclear, and referred questions to the White House.

Trump’s meeting with Ghani was meant to sell his government on the peace process, and by all indications the Afghans were warming to the idea. It’s not clear why Trump isn’t meeting Ghani, who apparently made his way to the US for the secret talks.

It’s not clear where negotiators would even go from here after Trump’s move, since by all

accounts the deal was already reached and just not finalized. There aren't really additional issues to tackle, and Trump didn't appear to be making new demands as much as railing at past behavior.

There is also no real alternative to the deal for the US, since the war is plainly being lost, and has been for awhile. In absence of a deal to withdraw, the US may simply be waiting for an outright military defeat.

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