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Pajhwok

Taliban's office in Qatar termed a new game

By Mir Agha Samimi

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The Afghanistan National Front (ANF) said on Saturday the establishment of Taliban's office in Qatar was aimed at exploiting the current situation in the country, not at the insurgents' involvement in the political process.

On the sidelines of the second Bonn conference, the US, Germany and Qatar agreed to set up a Taliban office in Qatar, a move supported by the Afghan government and welcomed by the fighters.

A statement from the ANF said it believed the office creation was a whole new game, which in no way meant the Taliban's involvement in the political process.

ANF spokesman Syed Husain Fazil Sancharaki last week hailed the plan as a positive step toward peace. However, he stressed the political process should not be affected by talks between the US and militants.

The statement said the Front strongly supported peace efforts that did not damage achievements of the past 10 years. "The ANF believes the peace policy of the government is a failure."

It claimed the government-appointed team for reconciliation talks had failed to agree on a clear definition of militancy and provide work opportunities for the people.

But Aimal Faizi, the presidential spokesman, said the objective behind the opening of the Taliban office was to find an address for direct talks with militants and bringing peace to the country.

"We are obviously against offices which are used for the benefits of others. The first article of the law on the peace mechanism is very clear and expressive," he said.

The Afghan government was playing no role in the US-Taliban parleys, the spokesman explained, saying Kabul wanted to lead the reconciliation drive.