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## US, Afghans Reach Deal on Night Raids

By [Jason Ditz](#)

April 8, 2012

Putting to rest Afghan President Hamid Karzai's long-standing complaints about the night raid policy of US troops raiding the homes of Afghan civilians in the middle of the night with little to no legal oversight, [the two nations have signed a pact which would legalize the practice, albeit in a somewhat different form.](#)

Under the [deal](#), the US will play a "support" role in all future raids, with the Karzai government itself conducting the hugely unpopular attacks on private residences. The captives from such raids would be under Afghan control, and a judge would get to decide after their capture whether or not they remain in custody.

Exactly when this new system for the raids will begin is unclear, as Afghan officials concede that they don't have any legal system set up to cover this sort of operation. Night raids were the last major issue for a deal to secure a US occupation force in Afghanistan through 2024.

The real question, however, will be how the civilian population reacts, particularly in the Pashtun-dominated south, where the overwhelming number of raids are conducted. The objection to the raids wasn't solely to their being conducted by foreign occupation forces, and without a search warrant, but to the notion of troops bursting into their homes in the middle of the night in general.

The deal will provide the US more cover than they have had in the past when such night raids go wrong, but even if the warrants curb the large number of civilian deaths and wrongful detentions somewhat it may add to the negative popular sentiment toward the Karzai government.