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## US halts detainee transfers amid torture concerns

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Amid concerns over human rights violations and torture, the US military has halted transferring detainees to some Afghan prisons, a move that may fuel new tensions between the two countries, a leading American newspaper reported on Thursday.

But an Afghan official spurned the allegation of torture as baseless. Prisons department head Amir Mohammad Jamshidi insisted prisoners in their custody were being treated in a humane manner.

The New York Times quoted US and International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) officials as saying that the process of moving prisoners to Afghan control had been shelved on the basis of reports regarding inmates' mistreatment in certain jails.

Jamie Graybeal, a spokesman for the NATO-led force, told the newspaper the transfers had been halted as a result of what he called credible information. "In the remaining 23 months of the ISAF mission, we will continue to support the Afghan government in its efforts to improve problems identified."

A consistent demand of the Karzai administration, nationwide prisoners' handover to the Afghan government resumed last year after it was suspended in 2011, when the United Nations reported widespread torture at Afghan-run prisons.

Although one Pentagon official explained the move would not affect detainee transfers at the Bagram jail in central Parwan province, others alleged that certain Afghan commanders had been identified as potential violators of human rights.