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Afghan Clerics Call on US to Obey Karzai

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Afghanistan's Ulema Council Saturday said that if the US military does not hand over Bagram prison to Afghan control and withdraw from Maidan Wardak province, its continued presence will be regarded as an "occupation" of Afghanistan.

In a released statement from the Islamic clerics, they said that Muslims should not obey "infidels" under any conditions.

The Afghan Ulema stressed that President Hamid Karzai's decisions to insist on full control of Bagram prison and expel US special forces from Wardak were in the interests of Afghanistan and any assessment of these judgments should take that into consideration.

"My advice to analysts is to consider the interests of our country. If the infidels have prisons [here], is it in the interest of the country? If the infidels torture women, children and our elders, is it in the interests of the country? No, these are not in the country's interest," Afghan Ulema Council spokesman Enayatullsh Baligh said at a gathering in a Kabul mosque.

The statement says that the Great Allah does not allow Muslims to accept the sovereignty of infidels, and that the president's speech is the wish of the people.

However, not all religious scholars agree. Some believe that the Ulema Council statement has been influenced by political interests.

"The Ulema who are members of the National Council of the Ulema work for this government. It is not correct to say we are under the sovereignty of infidels. The [Bagram] agreement has been signed and the foreigners should hand over the prison, but that is no reason to say a country of 30 million people is under the sovereignty of infidels," Islamic scholar Abdul Hadi Hedayat told TOLONews Saturday.

Meanwhile, Parliament said that they will decide on Karzai's recent speeches against the US on whether he speaks for the people.

"The administrative board should make a bill and give to the different heads of the [parliamentary] commissions and finally bring it to a general session to decide on what the decision of the people is," deputy speaker Mirwais Yasini said in Saturday's parliamentary session.