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## Karzai seeks to thaw frosty ties with Pakistan

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Afghan foreign ministry says President Hamid Karzai will soon visit Pakistan in order to improve ever-deteriorating relations between the two neighboring countries.

The ministry of foreign affairs announced on Sunday that President Karzai will visit the neighboring country in the near future to discuss Afghan peace process with the Pakistani officials.

The announcement comes after a national and foreign affairs advisor to Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif recently visited Kabul to formally invite president Karzai to Islamabad.

Karzai has frequently criticized Islamabad for failing to take practical steps towards Afghanistan reconciliation process.

The visit is expected to take place weeks after a senior Afghan official said the opening of Taliban's political office in Doha was a plot orchestrated by the United States and Pakistan to break up Afghanistan.

"The opening of the Qatar office, the way it happened was a plot and Afghanistan foiled that plot and this plot was aimed at splitting or breaking up Afghanistan," President Hamid Karzai's chief of staff, Karim Khorram, said in mid July.

The ongoing tensions cast a spotlight on the depth of distrust between Kabul and Washington. This comes while the relations between Kabul and Islamabad are also traditionally mired in distrust.

The Islamabad government facilitated the ongoing controversial peace talks between the Taliban militants and the United States in Qatar.

Pakistani negotiators have been persuading the Taliban leadership in recent weeks to embark on peace talks with the Americans and the Afghan government.

Washington and its allies have supported peace talks with the Taliban after US-led forces lost ground against the militants in recent months across Afghanistan.

Senior Pakistani officials have welcomed the dialogue between Taliban and the United States in Doha, but the Afghan government has expressed serious concerns about the ongoing US-led peace process with Taliban in Qatar.

Senior Afghan officials say the move contradicts the US security guarantees, noting that the Taliban militants will be able to use their Doha office to raise funds for their campaign in Afghanistan.

The Kabul government has suspended strategic talks with Washington to discuss the nature of US presence after foreign troops withdraw in 2014.

Afghanistan and Pakistan blame each other for the Taliban violence plaguing both countries. Both countries accuse each other of supporting militants to maintain their safe havens along the border.

The United States and its allies invaded Afghanistan in 2001 as part of Washington's so-called war on terror. The offensive removed the Taliban from power, but after more than 11 years, insecurity remains across the country.