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US military did not seek full pullout from Afghanistan in 2017

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The top US commander in Afghanistan, Gen. Joseph Dunford has told the US senators that complete US troops pullout from Afghanistan in 2017 was not recommended by any military leader.

Gen. Duford said the military leaders including Afghans would have preferred to see American officials be “a bit more ambiguous” about the troop numbers for 2017.

“I think all of us in uniform, to include the Afghans, would prefer if that were a bit more ambiguous,” he said.

He also added, “Every military leader would want to have the conditions on the ground and the assumptions be revalidated as a transition takes place.”

President Barack Obama revealed his plan for Afghanistan late in May, announcing a residual force of 9,800 U.S. troops will remain there for one year following the end of combat operations by the end of 2014.

The number will be cut in half at the end of 2015, and reduced at the end of 2016 to a small military presence at the U.S. Embassy.

However, the presence of US residual force in Afghanistan would be subject to the conclusion of the bilateral security agreement (BSA) between Kabul and Washington.

President Hamid Karzai has refused to signed the agreement despite it was approved by majority during the consultative Loya Jirga last year.

In the meantime, the presidential contenders Dr. Abdullah Abdullah and Dr. Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai, have vowed to sign the agreement once they take office as the new president of the country.