



Russia and India Disturbed Over Acceptance of Taliban Takeover in Afghanistan

February 2, 2010 (LPAC)—The British- and Saudi-orchestrated London Conference on Afghanistan (Jan. 28-29), whose outcome was endorsed by Washington and Brussels, has already put India and Russia on guard. Nikolay Patrushev, secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation, has arrived in New Delhi to meet his Indian National Security Advisor Shivshankar Menon for two days (Feb. 1-2). The lead item on the agenda, as reported by the Indian media, of these two security heads is to engage in enhanced counter-terror cooperation, and the shifting strategic situation in Afghanistan in the wake of a Western proposal of reintegrating and power-sharing with the Taliban in Kabul. Both India and Russia are not comfortable with accommodating the Taliban in any power-sharing arrangement in Afghanistan and have resented any contrived distinction between the so-called "good" and "bad" Taliban.

In reality, the London Conference's decision to bring in Taliban as a legitimate power strikes at the heart of a Four Power cooperation. Not only does the London- and Riyadh-orchestrated, and Washington- and Brussels-endorsed, Taliban take-over pose a security threat to regional powers like India, China, Russia, and Iran (for which the Saudi-run Wahhabi Taliban are a dangerous ideological and security challenge), Taliban are Wahhabis, and the Wahhabis are for setting up a Caliphate by destroying sovereign nation-states. In essence, both India and Russia could be worried that it is a declaration of war against major sovereign nation-states in the region such as Russia, China and India.

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