
TALIBAN SAYS IT CAN'T JOIN U.S.-BACKED PEACE EVENT IN TURKEY

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Afghanistans Taliban said it cant participate in a peace conference in Istanbul slated for April 16 that had been aimed at reaching a political agreement between the country and the Taliban militants.

Our current position is that we cant participate in the conference during that date, although the Istanbul conference is still under our consideration, the Islamic groups spokesman Mohammad Naeem said in a text message, without providing further details.

The Afghan government and the Taliban were expected to reach a political agreement at the conference to pave the way for a road map that could help end a 20-year war. It was to be a UN-led peace event facilitated by the U.S., which is looking to pullout its remaining 2,500 troops from the country following any political settlement among Afghans.

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