

Islamabad, Kabul agree on joint action against Taliban

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Islamabad: Pakistan and Afghanistan on Sunday agreed to resume the peace process with a mutually agreed quadrilateral framework which includes China and the US.

According to a statement released by the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR), the two sides agreed upon the joint cause after Pakistan Army Chief Gen Raheel Sharif met Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah in Kabul.

"With a shared responsibility, all stakeholders would support and ensure success of an Afghan-led dialogue and reconciliation process," read the statement.

The first round of quadrilateral meeting will be scheduled in January to work out a clear and comprehensive road map for a meaningful peace process with a clear demarcation of responsibilities of each stake holders at all stages.

The statement said both sides agreed that they would pursue peace and reconciliation with Afghan Taliban groups, who are willing to join the process.

"Elements who would still continue to pursue violence will be dealt, under a mutually worked out framework." read the media release.

During his meetings with the Afghan chief executive and president, General Sharif laid stress upon instituting an effective mechanism for better coordination among the two countries about individuals and tribesman crossing the border.

Gen Sharif and the Afghan leaders agreed to jointly counter the terrorism threat and vowed not to allow use of their respective soil against each other through active intelligence sharing and Intelligence Based Operations.

Emphasizing the need to improve bilateral relations it was decided to establish a hot line contact between the Director General of Military Operations of both countries.

Gen Raheel Sharif arrived in Kabul on a day-long visit for deliberations on resumption of the Afghan reconciliation process and instituting a border management mechanism. He last visited Kabul along with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in May this year.

Gen Sharif's Sunday visit was initially planned for earlier this month - before the December 9 Heart of Asia ministerial meeting in Islamabad - but got delayed because of bilateral tensions.

The two countries were also without any mechanism on border management since a tripartite commission, involving Pakistan, Afghanistan and coalition forces, completed its mandate following the end of International Security Assistance Force's Afghan mission in December 2014.

Border clashes between Pakistan and Afghan security forces increased in the absence of the coordination mechanism.

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