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From:

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Sent:

Friday, February 24, 2012 2:54 PM

To:

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Subject:

Fw: Pakistan urges Taliban to Afghan peace talks (AP)

From: OpsNewsTicker

Sent: Friday, February 24, 2012 02:52 PM

To: NEWS-Mahogany

Subject: Pakistan urges Taliban to Afghan peace talks (AP)

ISLAMABAD (AP) - Pakistan publicly called on the Taliban for the first time February 24 to engage the Afghan government in U.S.-backed peace talks, a potentially significant move that could help pave the way for a settlement to end the decade-long war.

Islamabad's support for the process is seen as vital because of its alleged links to the Taliban and because many of the group's leaders, including chief Mullah Omar, are believed to be based on Pakistani soil.

But the impact of Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani's call depends on whether it is backed by the Pakistani army's shadowy intelligence agency, the ISI, which has been closest to the Taliban. It also remains to be seen just how much sway Pakistan has over the militants.

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