

Peace process

The Rules of Procedure for Intra-Afghan Talks

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3 min

[Home](#) » [Resources](#) » [Peace process](#) » The Rules of Procedure for Intra-Afghan Talks

AAN's working translation of the rules of procedures (published by VOA in Dari and Pashto on 9 December 2020 [here](#))

Introduction

The credibility and honour of Afghanistan is bestowed by its Islamic identity and national unity. Our country can be saved from dependencies, [and] direct and indirect interference by others when Islamic justice is safeguarded in the country.

The intra-Afghan negotiations which began on 12 September 2020 are based on the following four principles [*asasat-e chahargana*]:

A: The Doha agreement achieved on 29 February 2020;

B: The demand of the people of Afghanistan [for] durable peace;

C: The commitment of the two Afghan negotiating parties [*tarafl*] to durable peace; and

D: The repeated demand of the UN [for] durable peace

The two sides shall conduct the negotiations based on the following principles:

1. The first session shall start with the recitation of verses from the *kalamullah-e majid* (Holy Quran);
2. The rest of the sessions shall begin and end with prayers;
3. No subject which is against the holy religion of Islam and the country's supreme interests shall be included in the agenda;

4. The negotiations shall be held with the intention and will for success, with honesty and good faith and good atmosphere by the two sides;
5. During the negotiations, mutual respect and decorum of words [*effat-e kalam*] should be maintained to prevent further umbrage [*kadurat*] and an atmosphere of distrust;
6. Both sides shall listen to the speakers carefully and patiently during the negotiations. During negotiations superfluous statements [*harfha-ye ezafi*] shall be prevented [avoided];
7. If during the negotiations, an agreement is not achieved over an issue, it would be best for the issue to be assigned to a joint committee to provide alternatives or [and] other appropriate solutions or deferred for later discussion and agreement;
8. If a disagreement emerges about the interpretation of Sharia texts [*nusus-e sharia*] during the negotiations, a joint committee of the two negotiating teams shall decide about it;
9. On important issues, the balance between the need for more discussions and maintaining the pace of negotiations shall be taken into consideration;
10. Either side of the negotiations shall agree on the appointment of three *katebs* [notetakers] whom they trust to transcribe the negotiations' proceedings;
11. The specified notetakers of each side shall write down the proceedings of the negotiations. At the end of the meeting, both sides compare their notes, and the text of decided points shall be consolidated and confirmed by the assigned committees of the two sides;
12. Heads of the two delegations shall be responsible for managing their members during negotiations;
13. At the end of each meeting, the two sides shall agree on the text [readout] to be shared with the press to avoid creating incorrect understandings [misunderstandings]. The two sides should avoid irresponsible statements;
14. If a delegation needs further consultations during the sessions, a break can be announced at the request of one of the two sides;
15. Breaks shall be announced for the five prayers;
16. The host and facilitator shall only have a host and facilitator role. The facilitator shall not be present in the negotiation sessions;
17. The agreed-upon subjects shall not be discussed and re-negotiated and shall become a part of the final agreement;
18. Keeping confidentiality of documents is very important, and the two sides should avoid disclosing any information that harms the negotiations (except for the issues that the two sides have agreed to publish);
19. Both sides shall have the responsibility to reject rumours spread by different sides about the negotiations that create doubts about the negotiations process or cause social and political problems;
20. The media and other people who under various names want to enter the premise of talks should be kept away from the negotiations venue; and
21. All documents of the intra-Afghan negotiations shall be written in Pashto and Dari, and the documents prepared in both languages shall be equally valid.

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[Doha Talks](#)

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