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From: Abedin, Huma <AbedinH@state.gov>
Sent: Saturday, October 22, 2011 11:27 AM
To: H
Subject: Fw: Afghanistan to back Pakistan if wars with U.S.-Karzai (Reuters)

From: OpsNewsTicker
Sent: Saturday, October 22, 2011 11:20 AM
To: NEWS-Pakistan; NEWS-Afghanistan; NEWS-Mahogany
Cc: SES-O
Subject: Afghanistan to back Pakistan if wars with U.S.-Karzai (Reuters)

ISLAMABAD (Reuters) - Afghanistan would support Pakistan in case of military conflict between Pakistan and the United States, Afghan President Hamid Karzai said in an interview to a private Pakistani TV channel broadcast on Saturday.

The remarks were in sharp contrast to recent tension between the two neighbours over cross-border raids, and Afghan accusations that Pakistan was involved in killing the chief Afghan peace envoy, former Afghan president Burhanuddin Rabbani, by a suicide bomber on Sept. 20.

"God forbid, If ever there is a war between Pakistan and America, Afghanistan will side with Pakistan," he said in the interview to Geo television.

"If Pakistan is attacked and if the people of Pakistan needs Afghanistan's help, Afghanistan will be there with you."

Such a situation is extremely unlikely, however. Despite months of tension and tough talk between Washington and Islamabad, the two allies appear to be working to ease tension.

In a two-day visit to Islamabad, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton issued stern warnings and asked for more cooperation in winding down the war in Afghanistan, but ruled out "boots on the ground" in North Waziristan, where Washington has been pushing Pakistan to tackle the Haqqani network.

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