

Afghan President Hamid Karzai Blasts U.S. for Civilian Killing



Kabul, January 16 (RHC)-- Afghan President Hamid Karzai has strongly condemned a U.S. airstrike, which has killed at least eight civilians in the northeastern region of Afghanistan. Karzai said on Wednesday that seven children and a woman were among the victims of the aerial attack in Parwan Province.

The president has ordered an investigation into the incident which also left at least a dozen people wounded. Anger has been on the rise among the Afghan people and officials over the civilian deaths at the hands of the US-led troops. Afghans have held numerous protest rallies countrywide to condemn such attacks. Afghan government officials -- including President Karzai himself -- have also frequently condemned the killing of civilians by foreign forces.

A large number of civilians have been killed or injured at the hands of U.S.-led foreign forces -- most of them in nighttime raids and airstrikes. The casualty rate has risen over the past few months, even though the Afghan government had asked foreign forces to make every effort to avoid killing civilians.

The latest killing comes as the U.S. and Afghanistan are still arguing about a bilateral security deal. Washington has been mounting pressure on Kabul to sign the deal that would allow several thousand U.S. troops to stay in Afghanistan beyond 2014.

Afghan political groups have warned that things will get worse should the U.S. set up permanent military bases in Afghanistan. Afghan political figures have also heaped scorn on the U.S.-led forces for committing unforgivable crimes against Afghan women and children since invading the country in 2001.

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