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Taliban Seeks Delay as Jirga Urges Afghan Peace

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The Taliban has requested more time to respond to a peace proposal put forward by a large traditional Afghan assembly, or jirga, held in Kabul on August 1, 2025. The event, attended by over 1,000 tribal elders and community leaders, called on the Taliban to engage in dialogue aimed at ending decades of war and political instability in Afghanistan since the group's return to power in 2021.

Organized by the High Council for National Reconciliation (HCNR), the jirga appealed for a ceasefire and advocated for the formation of an inclusive government. Participants also

emphasised the need to address urgent humanitarian issues and ongoing human rights concerns. The council stressed that only through comprehensive talks involving all ethnic and political groups can Afghanistan move toward a lasting peace.

Taliban spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid acknowledged the appeal and confirmed that the group had taken note of the jirga's recommendations. However, he stated that the Taliban required more time to hold internal consultations before providing a formal response. He cited the country's sensitive internal dynamics and the presence of various political and ideological factions within the group as contributing factors to the delay.

The jirga was chaired by Abdul Rasool Sayyaf, a former peace negotiator and influential political figure. In his remarks, Sayyaf proposed a peace framework that called for inclusive dialogue but explicitly ruled out any demands for regime change. Delegates at the gathering expressed concern over restrictions on women's education and broader civil liberties under Taliban rule. They urged the group to demonstrate a commitment to international human rights norms and to act in the interest of the Afghan people.

In addition, participants underscored the importance of ensuring that Afghan territory is not used for transnational terrorism. This concern follows previous international incidents, including the 2022 killing of al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri in Kabul. The jirga's resolution included a demand for assurances that Afghanistan would not become a base for extremist activity.

Although the Taliban has not provided a timeline for its response, the jirga's call reflects a growing domestic push for political stability and economic recovery. It also signals a broader desire among Afghan communities to end prolonged conflict and avoid further isolation on the international stage.