



Five Taliban have been struck off a U.N. Security Council list of militants subject to sanctions -- a move sought by Kabul to ease reconciliation talks with insurgents, the United Nations said on Friday.

Their removal from the U.N. blacklist followed a review of the list of Taliban and al Qaeda members maintained by a Security Council committee. Two of the five were delisted because they were dead, the committee said in a statement issued by the U.N. Department of Public Information.

Afghanistan had pressed the committee to take some names off the list as part of a scheduled update. A "Peace Jirga" in Afghanistan last month recommended negotiations with moderate Taliban leaders and other insurgents to end a worsening nine-year war in the country.

Diplomats said Afghan President Hamid Karzai had sought the delisting of nearly two dozen Taliban, either because they had joined the government side or because they were dead.

But Russia, which sits on the committee along with other Security Council members, had been cautious about deleting names, they said. Russia is concerned about Islamic fundamentalism and Taliban-linked drug-trafficking in its region, they added.

The sanctions committee named the five delisted as Abdul Hakim Mujahid Muhammad Awrang, a former Afghan ambassador to the United Nations, Abdul Salam Zaeef and Abdul Satar Paktin, as well as Abdul Samad Khaksar and Muhammad Islam Mohammadi, who have both died.

[More...](#)