



# Top security body okays plan to be submitted to FATF

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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister retired Justice Nasirul Mulk chairs a meeting of the National Security Committee at the PM Office on Friday.—PPI

**ISLAMABAD: The National Security Committee (NSC) on Friday reaffirmed its commitment to cooperate with an international watchdog tasked with countering illicit financing, the [Financial Action Task Force \(FATF\)](#), for addressing shortcomings in the country's anti-money laundering and [counter-terrorism financing](#) regimes.**

“The committee reaffirmed the commitment of the country to work with FATF and other international organisations in achieving common goals and shared objectives,” a statement issued by the Prime Minister Office on the NSC meeting said.

It was the first NSC meeting that was chaired by caretaker Prime Minister Nasirul Mulk.

## *Finance minister briefs National Security Committee about upcoming meeting of global money-laundering watchdog*

Pakistan would be placed on the FATF ‘grey list’ because of certain shortcomings identified by the watchdog. However, before Pakistan is put on the list an action plan has to be negotiated outlining the steps the country would be required to take. The action plan has been in the works for weeks now, but it is yet to be adopted.

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The NSC approved the presentation of the proposed plan to the FATF at its upcoming meeting.

The NSC statement effectively constitutes the high-level political commitment that FATF requires from the country to implement the legal, regulatory and operational reforms needed.

Finance Minister Shamshad Akhtar briefed the NSC about the upcoming FATF meeting in Paris and the measures, both administrative and legal, taken so far by the country to meet the watchdog's requirements.

“While reviewing various actions taken towards fulfilling country's international responsibilities under the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) framework, the meeting expressed satisfaction over the progress made so far. The committee directed that the progress should be shared with the FATF Secretariat in the upcoming meeting,” the NSC statement said.

Earlier, Pakistani officials had said at a background briefing that some of the demands being made by the FATF were unreasonable. Besides the main concern about the freedom with which Hafiz Saeed and his organisations were operating until a few months ago, the FATF has expressed concerns about the integrity of Pakistan's overall financial system, the inadequacy of monitoring and regulatory mechanisms and the abysmally low conviction rate on unlawful transactions.

The US and some of its allies like the UK, France and Germany had sponsored the move for Pakistan's inclusion in the grey list. Washington, it is believed, had done so to pressure Islamabad into meeting its demands vis-à-vis the region, where the two are suffering from a serious strategic misalignment. Lately the two sides are making a fresh attempt at reconciling their differences and reaching a common ground.

There has been a round of telephonic conversations between Prime Minister Mulk and US Vice President Pence and between Army Chief Gen Qamar Bajwa and Secretary of State Michael Pompeo over the past couple of days. The conversations had focused on advancing bilateral ties, supporting the peace and reconciliation process in Afghanistan, and dealing with the terrorist groups in the region.

“The prime minister also shared with the committee members contents of his telephonic discussion with US Vice President Mike Pence on 07 June 2018,” said the NSC statement.

Besides Mr Mulk and Ms Akhtar, the meeting was attended by Foreign and Defence Minister Abdullah Hussain Haroon, Interior Minister Azam Khan, Law Minister Syed Ali Zafar, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee Gen Zubair Mahmood Hayat, Chief of the Army Staff Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of the

Naval Staff Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi, Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Mujahid Anwar Khan, National Security Adviser retired Lt Gen Nasser Khan Janjua and Director General of the Inter-Services Intelligence Lt Gen Naveed Mukhtar.  
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