

Ukraine to allow NATO Afghan passage

by UPI

KIEV, Ukraine -- Ukraine, seeking NATO membership, says it will allow the organization to move non-military cargo across its land to Afghanistan.

The Ukrainian Foreign Ministry said an agreement was signed Thursday in Brussels by NATO Secretary-General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer and Ukrainian NATO envoy Ihor Sagach, RIA-Novosti reported.

Ukraine has been pursuing NATO membership since pro-Western President Viktor Yushchenko was inaugurated in January 2005. However, opinion polls indicate that the majority of Ukrainians continue to oppose joining NATO.

NATO is seeking alternative routes to supply the U.S.-dominated International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan. The effort is due to worsening security on the main land route from Pakistan and the imminent closure of a U.S. airbase in Kyrgyzstan.

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