

## 'Karzai is corrupt', says French foreign minister

Afghan President Hamid Karzai is 'corrupt' but must be supported and 'legitimised', French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner said in an interview published Thursday in the Paris-based International Herald Tribune.

'Karzai is corrupt, ok,' Kouchner said, adding: 'We have to legitimise him,' so that NATO will ultimately be able to leave Afghanistan.

Although western governments have become increasingly disenchanted with Karzai since the summer's fraud-marred election, this direct personal attack on the Afghan president is one of the strongest criticisms yet.

Kouchner also said that the NATO alliance in Afghanistan was 'not working at all'.

'What is the goal? What is the road? And in the name of what?' Kouchner said. 'In [Europe](#) we are acting and fighting and going to war, but we are not talking to one another, and it's shameful.'

The outspoken French foreign minister also questioned Washington's strategy. 'Where are the Americans? It begins to be a problem,' he said. 'We need to talk to one another as allies.'

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