The State Department said that “the U.S. government should be held accountable.”

“Due to a cause for great concern,” the department said, the $60 million had been withheld “due to the government’s failure to meet conditions for the distribution of the funds.”

The withheld $60 million had been designated for Afghanistan’s National Procurement Management System to provide oversight of the Afghan government’s use of $131 billion in loans and grants from the U.S. Treasury that was intended that was never spent.

The statement said the project would be restarted and continue using “a U.S. government ‘off-budget’ mechanism given the Afghan government is returning about $100 million to the U.S. Treasury that was intended that was never spent.”

The department added that “the U.S. government cannot trust the Afghan government to manage U.S. Government resources.”

“Leaders and officials of the Afghan government are playing a leadership role in the Afghan government’s campaign and possibly fund a fraudulent vote,” the statement said.

The aid cuts announced Thursday coincided with U.S. President Donald Trump’s December decision to suspend funding for about $100 million in military aid to Afghanistan over what his administration’s failure to keep Congress informed about the negotiations.

American soldiers are “the first to pay the price” for the Afghan government’s corruption, a senior U.S. diplomat told his country’s lawmakers, according to an account of the talks made by Rep. Mike McCaul of Texas, the ranking Republican on the panel, described the Khalilzad session as “robust and informative.”

The congressional hearing followed a clash in which the administration refused to allow him to appear.

McCaul said the committee be permitted to exercise its oversight powers “in a robust and informative manner.”

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