

RELEASE IN FULL

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**From:** Abedin, Huma <AbedinH@state.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 21, 2012 3:34 AM  
**To:** H  
**Subject:** Fw: NATO orders probe of Quran disposal in Afghanistan (AP)

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**From:** OpsNewsTicker  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 21, 2012 02:12 AM  
**To:** NEWS-Mahogany; NEWS-Afghanistan  
**Subject:** NATO orders probe of Quran disposal in Afghanistan (AP)

KABUL (AP) - The commander of international troops in Afghanistan has ordered an investigation into what NATO says was improper disposal of a large number of Islamic religious materials, including Qurans.

U.S. Gen. John Allen insists the incident at Bagram Air Field was not intentional. He apologized for it in a phone call to The Associated Press on Tuesday.

Sixty or seventy local Afghans gathered outside the base to protest against the destruction of materials, including the Muslim holy book, which is highly offensive to the Afghan people.

Allen says that when the American-led coalition learned of the actions, it intervened and stopped it. He says the materials that were recovered will be handled by religious authorities.

*NewsTickers alert senior Department officials to breaking news. This item appears as it did in its original publication and does not contain analysis or commentary by Department sources.*