

Obama: “Afghanistan and Pakistan are the central front in the America’s war against terrorism”

By [Global Research](#)

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US President Barack Obama has emphasized that Pakistan and Afghanistan are the central front in the US so-called war against terrorism.

Speaking to the State Department after Richard Holbrooke was appointed Special US Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, Obama said the worsening situation in the region poses a grave threat to what he called ‘global security.’

“Afghanistan and Pakistan are the central front in the America’s war against terrorism and the deteriorating situation in the region poses a grave threat to the global security. It’s an international challenge of the highest order. That’s why we are pursuing a careful review of our policy.”

The tribal regions along the shared border between Pakistan and Afghanistan have become a safe haven for militants after a US-led invasion in late 2001 toppled Taliban in Afghanistan and sent insurgents to border areas with Pakistan.

Obama said the situation can not be resolved quickly in the region.

“The American people and the international community must understand that the situation is perilous and progress will take time. Violence is up dramatically in Afghanistan. A deadly insurgency has taken deep root. The opium trade is far and away the largest in the world,” he said.

The remarks come as the International Council on Security and Development, an influential research center, said in early December that the US and its allies were in a genuine danger of losing Afghanistan as the Taliban continues to expand its influence on almost 70 percent of the country.

The comments also come ahead of an expected influx of some 30,000 American troops into Afghanistan to combat al-Qaeda-linked and pro-Taliban insurgents that have sent violence skyrocketing in the region over the last two years.

Obama warned that al-Qaeda and Taliban are able to ‘strike from bases embedded in rugged tribal terrain along the Pak-Afghan border’.

US officials say militant activities in the mountains of Afghanistan and Pakistan affect cities in the US, Britain and other western countries.

Meanwhile Holbrooke said Pakistan's situation is "infinitely complex and I don't think I would advance our goals if I tried to discuss it today." He indicated an eagerness to travel to the region and report back to Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

"In putting Afghanistan and Pakistan together under one envoy, we should underscore that we fully respect the fact that Pakistan has its own history, its own traditions, and it is far more than the turbulent, dangerous tribal areas on its western border," Holbrooke said.

The US and its western allies have accused Pakistan of 'not doing enough' to prevent attacks on supply routes as well as cross-border operations carried out by insurgents against foreign troops in Afghanistan.

Pentagon has used the allegation as a pretext to launch drone attacks on Pakistan's tribal regions — a move that has increased tension between Islamabad and Washington and has triggered anti-American sentiments among the Pakistani people.

The Pakistani Army has asked world powers to stop demanding that Islamabad do more to prove its loyalty to the so-called 'war on terror'.

"Such unhelpful statements must stop," said the Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCSC), General Tariq Majid in a statement on Tuesday.

About 1,500 Pakistani soldiers have been killed in fighting against militants in Pakistan since 2002.

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