



INTERVIEW-Pakistan says US policies polarise world.

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ISLAMABAD, April 14 (Reuters) - Pakistan, a key U.S. ally in the war on terror, said on Monday American policies were polarising the world between Muslims and non-Muslims, and creating a highly charged and potentially violent atmosphere.

Criticising the use of force against Iraq, Interior Minister Makhdoom Faisal Saleh Hayat said Washington should adopt a more humane approach as the world's sole superpower, and practise the higher moral values that it preaches.

"He talks of the maintenance of higher moral values, but these values have to be amply demonstrated outside," he told Reuters in an interview, in a reference to U.S. President George W. Bush.

Hayat said at times the United States seemed to put too much emphasis on its own short-term interests and not enough on its global responsibilities.

"There is a very strong feeling that the United States always has very limited and very short-term objectives."

Washington justified its invasion of Iraq because it said Saddam Hussein's regime possessed weapons of mass destruction which could be used against the West.

"They talk of their own apprehensions, their own perceptions. Now at times they could be right, but at times their perceptions need to be right-sized. The overall strategy needs to be re-thought."

"The U.S. as the sole superpower has certain other functions to fulfil also," he added. "These functions should certainly have a more humane dimension."

Hayat complained of double standards in the way United Nations resolutions over Palestine and the disputed mainly Muslim region of Kashmir had not been implemented for decades, while Iraq was attacked even without U.N. approval.

"The Iraq war hasn't helped to bridge the gap between the West and Muslim countries," he said. "Until these double standards are eliminated, the gap is going to get wider."

The new doctrine of preemptive war would "certainly add to the highly charged atmosphere", he said.

Asked if it might unleash a new era of violence around the world, Hayat said: "I wouldn't rule it out."

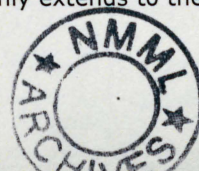
PROMISES NOT KEPT IN AFGHANISTAN

U.S.-backed forces toppled the Taliban regime in Afghanistan late in 2001. Hayat warned that support for the Taliban could resurface in Afghanistan because the West had failed to fulfil its promises to rebuild the country.

"There is a lot of despondency," he said. "The international community has not been able to come up to the expectations of the Afghan people, even their own commitments."

"It is only natural people start losing faith in the system, and it would be only natural if a wave of sympathy would again start to reemerge or resurge for the Taliban," he said.

Hayat said there had been a great deal of hope that peace would be restored in Afghanistan. "Today Mr Hamid Karzai is the president of Afghanistan but unfortunately, tragically his regime only extends to the outskirts of Kabul. What are the coalition forces in Afghanistan doing?"



He said there was a strong feeling that the priorities of the United States had changed. "The level of interest of the United States in Afghanistan has not been the same as it was six months ago."

Hayat complained that poppy cultivation for the production of opium and heroin had risen to record levels after the fall of the Taliban, but U.S.-led coalition forces had done nothing to address the problem.

"Two-thirds of that is on our western borders," he said. "We have asked the Americans, we told the commanders of allied forces - what hampers you, or what restricts you from totally neutralising this cultivated land?"

"They say that is not within our mandate," he said. "Now, when we are told such things, it certainly is something which is hard to digest."

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