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### Bush could send troops into Pakistan to strike Bin Laden

*\* Pakistan terms such action 'unacceptable' and 'counter-productive'*

ISLAMABAD: The US would send troops into Pakistan if intelligence was received enabling a strike at Al Qaeda chief Osama bin Laden, AFP quoted US President George W Bush as saying on Wednesday.

Pakistan angrily reacted to the US president's remarks he made in an interview to CNN, by saying, "such concerns have been expressed on a number of occasions. We have made it clear that any such action would be unacceptable."

Bush reaffirmed his confidence in President Musharraf's commitment in the war against terror and also acknowledged the difficult situation in combating terrorists along rugged mountainous areas bordering Afghanistan. Bush said he is thankful to Pakistan for its key cooperation in the fight against terror, reported APP.

About Musharraf, Bush said, "He has been an absolute reliable partner in dealing with extremists and radicals, and it's a tough situation in the remote parts of Pakistan. But there are many examples of where the Pakistanis have, in cooperation with the US, brought to justice members of Al Qaeda's hierarchy. And I'm thankful for that."

Troops unacceptable: Foreign Ministry spokesman Muhammad Sadiq told a private TV channel on Thursday that any direct action by US troops would be counter-productive, NNI reported.

Sadiq said that Pakistan and the US were partners in the anti-terror war and the positions of both are well defined and understood.

He said Pakistan's own forces had carried out operations against Al Qaeda and other 'terrorist entities' and that they would pursue the same policy in future.

Last year, Bush caused uproar in Pakistan when he made a similar declaration.

When reminded of the declaration and asked in the interview about his current views, the US president said his stance had not changed. agencies

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