

Pakistan doesn't need F-16s, n-deals to fight terrorists: Afghanistan

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United Nations: Accusing government entities in Pakistan of aiding terrorist networks in violation of United Nations Security Council mandates, Afghanistan's Permanent Representative Mahmoud Saikal said on Tuesday that Islamabad does not need nuclear deals and F-16s to fight terrorists, rather it requires political will and "honest and police action".

Speaking at a Security Council debate on the situation in his country, the envoy raised the recent construction of a border post by Pakistan at Torkham, which Kabul says is an incursion into its territory, and 820 artillery shellings of Afghanistan's eastern provinces of Nangarhar, Khost, Paktika, Kunar and Nouristan by Pakistan.

In the continuing downward spiral of relations between the two neighbors, he warned Islamabad, "Make no mistake, the proud government and people of Afghanistan have not, do not and will not surrender to intimidation, violence, and aggression. Our history is a testimony to this."

Outlining an alarming scenario of far-reaching international threats, Saikal said that Taliban and several terrorist groups were seeking "to turn Afghanistan into a launching pad against Central Asia, South Asia, West Asia and the Far East."

And "other regional terrorist networks, with links to Central Asian republics, Chechnya and China are highly active in our region," he added in a pointed appeal to Security Council members Russia and China, the patron of Pakistan.

Islamic State (IS) and Al Qaeda are trying to re-emerge in Afghanistan despite the recent "heavy blows" they suffered at hands of the Afghan security forces, while "Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan, in coordination with other terror groups, remains a long-term threat to the security and stability of our region," Saikal stressed.

"What is more important, most of these terrorist groups and networks enjoy the facilitation and orchestration services of elements within the state structure of Pakistan who believe in the use of violence in pursuit of political objectives," he said.

Referring to the killing of Taliban leader Mullah Akhtar Mansour last month in a US drone strike, the Afghan envoy said the incident exposed his Pakistani passport with a fake name that enabled Mansour to fly around the country.

Islamabad's "charade of plausible deniability, duplicity, and blame of Afghan weaknesses continues, which must come to an end if we are to succeed in counter-terrorism", he said.

Over the last 15 years several terrorist leaders like Osama Bin Laden of Al Qaida, and Mullah Omar and Mullah Akhtar Mansour of the Taliban have lived and died in Pakistan, he pointed out.

"The fact that notorious terrorist leaders were found and killed in their safe havens there, is a clear proof that the country has violated the sovereignty of other nations," Saikal said.

"This constitutes a flagrant violation" of the Security Council Resolutions imposing sanctions on the Taliban, he added.

On the positive side, Saikal spoke of the inauguration of the Afghan-India Friendship Salma dam in Herat and the signing of a transit trade agreement for the Chabahar Port between Afghanistan, India, and Iran.

"We have already started to export agricultural products through this new trade route," he said."

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