

To win war against Taliban, destroy its sanctuaries in Pakistan: Armyman tells US Senate

07/12/2016 21:32 by admin

Washington: A former US Army official has sought elimination of Taliban's terror sanctuaries in Pakistan alleging that Pakistan's military provides intelligence, training and logistics assistance to them.

Terror

"What's required is a new strategy with a commitment to force the elimination of sanctuaries in Pakistan," General (rtd) John M Keane, a former vice chief of the army and chairman of the Institute for the Study of War, told members of the powerful Senate Armed Services Committee on Tuesday during a Congressional hearing on worldwide threats.

"Taliban sanctuaries exist in Pakistan where the Pakistan military provides intelligence, training, and logistics assistance to enhance Taliban's operational performance while providing a continuous safe haven," he said.

Keane said no insurgency has ever been defeated while it maintains sanctuary outside the conflict area.

"We are in this current situation largely because the war in Iraq itself became protracted and the much-needed forces could not be applied to Afghanistan. US ground forces, particularly the Army, is too small to fight two counter insurgencies simultaneously," he added.

He also stated that the Obama's policy was not to win the war but to end US involvement.

"The new administration must call for a political and security assessment and face the harsh realities of possibly squandering 15 years of US combat in Afghanistan war not winnable," he asserted.

"What's required is a new strategy with a commitment to force the elimination of sanctuaries in Pakistan and a commitment to provide to the ANSFs the enablers they need to turn the momentum: intelligence, attack helicopters, strike fighter support, medevac, anti-IED capabilities," Keane said.

"Without an on-the-ground assessment, I honestly cannot tell you if that is sufficient, how many additional troops are required to support those functions and for how long," he said.

Senator Jack Reed, Ranking Member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, said the decisions by the President to maintain approximately 8,400 US troops in Afghanistan into 2017 and to support the Afghan Security Forces has laid the foundation for a sustainable future for US and international security presence in Afghanistan.

"The decision also sent an important message to Afghans, the Taliban and others in the region, including Pakistan, regarding the commitment of the United States for progress in Afghanistan," he said.

"Assuming the continued support of the Afghan government and the support of its people, I hope the next administration will follow a conditions-based approach to US presence in Afghanistan that provides flexibility in the number of military personnel deployed, to support of our longer-term strategy, there," Reed said.

- PTI inputs