



Written by on October 29, 2008

## Pakistan Complains to U.S. About Attacks

The summons was in response to a missile strike by Predator pilotless aircraft in Pakistan's South Waziristan region that killed 20 people, including several local Taliban commanders. A similar strike on October 24 hit a religious school in North Waziristan, killing eight people, all of whom were identified as militant fighters, according to village residents.

"It was underscored to the ambassador that the government of Pakistan strongly condemns the missile attacks which resulted in the loss of precious lives and property," Mohammed Sadiq, a Foreign Ministry spokesman, said in a statement reported by Reuters news service.

The statement continued: "It was emphasized that such attacks were [a] violation of Pakistan's sovereignty and should be stopped immediately."

The *New York Times* reported Sadiq's statement said that the missile strikes were "counterproductive" to Pakistan's efforts to convince residents of the border areas to reduce their support for the militants.

"The drone attacks have negative repercussions when the Pakistani government tries to get the support of the people in the tribal area," said Sadiq. "They are not helping meet the objectives of the war on terror."

The *Times* of October 29 also reported: "Many Pakistanis, including representatives of political parties in the government coalition, say they believe the increase in suicide attacks, including the bombing of the Marriott Hotel in Islamabad Sept. 20, is a result of the American strikes." The report observed that the new government led by President Asif Ali Zardari has been under pressure to remove itself from what many Pakistanis view as an American-led war on terror inside Pakistan.

The Bush administration has expressed concern that al-Qaeda is using the Pakistani border region to prepare attacks against the United States and Europe. The U.S. strikes have attempted to quell Taliban and al-Qaeda forces in the Pakistani tribal belt, from which they have launched increasingly lethal attacks against American and coalition forces in Afghanistan.

An AP report about the situation in Northwest Pakistan stated that American commanders have complained that Pakistan has not done enough to control militants in its remote border regions, an area considered "a possible hiding place for Osama bin Laden and al-Qaida No. 2 Ayman al-Zawahri."





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Pakistan is considered an ally in the U.S.-led war on terror, and is also battling militants on its side of the border. It has recently formulated a plan to provide arms to members of local militias, known as lashkars, in its unprotected Northwest regions where Taliban from Afghanistan have threatened villages.

*AP Images*



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