**Taliban is 'Armed Insurgency,' Islamic State is Terror Group, Says US**

**Washington:** The White House has controversially drawn a distinction between Afghanistan's Taliban and the Islamic State, and described the Taliban as "armed insurgency."  
  
"The Taliban is an armed insurgency. ISIL is a terrorist group, so we don't make concessions to terrorist groups," White House deputy press secretary Eric Schultz said on Wednesday.  
  
He was responding to questions on whether the Jordanian government's prisoner trade with Islamic State terrorists for a kidnapped pilot was the same as American's swap with Afghanistan's Taliban last year for the freedom of US soldier Bowe Bergdahl.  
  
The two are different, Mr Shultz said, because Islamic State, also known as ISIS or ISIL, is a terrorist group operating in Syria and Iraq.  
  
Asked to clarify his comment on the prisoner swap with the Taliban, he said, "I don't think that the Taliban, the Taliban is an armed insurgency. This was a winding down of the war in Afghanistan, and that's why this arrangement was dealt."  
  
The comments are being seen as a sign that the US is leaving the door open for talks with the Taliban, which ruled Afghanistan until it was overthrown by American forces in 2001 after 9/11.  
  
In December, terrorists of the Pakistan Taliban attacked a school in Peshawar in Pakistan, killing 150 people, mostly children. The Afghanistan Taliban condemned the attack.  
  
The State Department's list of Foreign Terrorist Organizations does not list the Taliban but includes the Pakistani Tehreek-e-Taliban; the Afghan Taliban are on a separate Specially Designated Global Terrorist list since 2002. The National Counterterrorism Center lists the "Taliban Presence in Afghanistan" on a map of global terrorism presences.

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