# Obama's Afghanistan strategy expected soon

*by UPI*

WASHINGTON -- As U.S. President Barack Obama nears announcing his Afghanistan war strategy, observers are drawing distinctions between Obama and his immediate predecessor.

Aides to Obama said they were still deciding how the announcement, which could come this week, would be made, The New York Times reported Monday.

But as former President George W. Bush's tenure became defined by the war in Iraq after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the United States, Obama's presidency could be shaped by the war in Afghanistan in concert with the war in Iraq and a disintegrating global economy, observers told the Times.

Obama's approach to decision-making differs from Bush. U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates -- a holdover from the Bush administration -- said in an interview earlier in March.

Obama "is somewhat more analytical and he makes sure he hears from everybody in the room on an issue," Gates said.

While Bush was interested in hearing different viewpoints, he "didn't go out of his way to make sure everybody spoke," Gates said.

Even though war was and is a part of both presidencies, Obama's and Bush's styles differ, the Times said.

After the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, Bush embraced the global war on terror "as a kind of central theme of his thinking," Lee Hamilton, a Democrat, former congressman and co-chairman of the bipartisan Iraq Study Group who occasionally advises Obama, told the Times. "And he viewed all of his actions, including the accumulation of executive power, even the phrase 'enemy combatants,' as flowing from the commander in chief's powers. With President Obama, conceptually it is very different."

Copyright Â© 2009, by United Press International. All Rights Reserved.