

# Castro blasts Bush about Iraq war funds

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HAVANA --

Cuban leader Fidel Castro lashed out at President Bush Friday, hours after the American leader approved legislation paying for military operations in Iraq without setting a timetable for troop withdrawal.

In his latest comments as he convalesces from intestinal surgery, the 80-year-old Cuban leader accused Bush of waging a war that was causing conditions in the region to deteriorate.

"Just yesterday, Bush bragged about having won the battle over his adversaries in Congress," he wrote in a four-page statement released to the media. "He has \$100 billion, all the money he needs to duplicate, however he wishes, the sending of American troops to Iraq and continue the slaughter."

In signing the measure Friday, Bush said it would provide a roadmap to help the Iraqis secure their country and strengthen their young democracy.

"Rather than mandate arbitrary timetables for troop withdrawals or micromanage our military commanders, this legislation enables our servicemen and women to follow the judgment of commanders on the ground," he said.

The statement was the 12th by Castro in recent weeks, using the forum to comment on a number of subjects that included an attack on U.S.-backed plans to use food crops for biofuels.

On Wednesday, Castro provided key details about his health and recovery, divulging he underwent not one but several surgeries, the first of which did not go well and has slowed his recuperation.

Castro stunned Cuba and the world in late July, when he announced he was seriously ill and was temporarily stepping aside in favor of a provisional government headed by his brother Raul, the 75-year-old defense minister.